

A NONSENSE STORY.

Do you think all your youngsters know about a game called "Telling a Story?" One person begins a story and goes on until the company are interested, and then suddenly stops at an exciting point, and the one sitting next must take it up and go on. It is a capital game for long evenings. Here is one that grew up in our sitting-room the other night.

We were sitting around the fire, between daylight and candlelight, young folks and kittens, when somebody said:

"Let us tell a nonsense story."

"All right," said papa, "and mamma shall begin."

So mamma began.

"Once there was a cobbler who had his shop in the market place of Bagdad. It was a very small shop, and over the door was this sign: 'Old shoes made as good as new.' A great many old shoes went in the shop door, and if they did not come out quite as good as new the owners never made any complaints, for the cobbler always did his best, and never refused to undertake a job, no matter how bad it was. One day a stranger came into the market place and walked slowly about, looking in at all the shop windows. He was a very small man, with a little shrivelled face, and keen black eyes like a weasel. His hair was long and gray, and he had hands like claws. He was wrapped from tip to toe in a long black cloak, and his shoes had high heels, and narrow, pointed toes, like no other shoes that had ever been seen in Bagdad. When the cobbler saw him looking in at his window he felt the very flesh creeping on his bones, and when the stranger walked in at the shop door the cobbler was so startled that he swallowed all the pegs he had in his mouth. The stranger only nodded, and drew from under his cloak a very ragged shoe. In fact you could hardly call it a shoe, but a lot of holes held together by strings of leather.

"I have read your sign," said the stranger, "and I want you to mend this shoe."

"The cobbler looked at it, and his teeth chattered.

"It is very old," he said.

"Mend it," said the stranger. "I will wait for it." And he sat down right between the cobbler and the door.

"The poor man went to work, and wonderful to tell, the patches grew into place as fast as he fitted them on, so that in half an hour there was as fine a shoe as ever came from the last.

"Here is the money," said the stranger, offering him a curious silver coin.

"You are quite welcome," said the cobbler, putting his hand under his leather apron, for he said to himself, 'I'll not take the fiend's money.' But while his hands were still under his apron he felt the money slip into his pocket.

"Good day," said the stranger. "So long as you spend the shilling wisely it will always come back into your pocket, but when you put it to a bad use you will never see it again."

"He stepped out of the doorway, and though the cobbler ran to the window he was nowhere in sight. It seemed as if he must have sunk right down through the pavement. The cobbler said—"

Mamma stopped suddenly, and papa, who sat next, was obliged to finish the sentence and go on with the story.

"Behabers, but the ould chap must have had pressin' business to be after laving in such haste. Wherever he would be goffe I don' know, and he shut up his shop and started to find the stranger. He sailed five times around the world, and, at last, he was shipwrecked on a desert island a mile and a half east of the north pole. The people were very glad to see him, because the last shoemaker had just frozen to death, and they made him king. One day he went to a Sunday School picnic on the top of one of the highest mountains, and while he was looking for a good place to make the chowder, he saw a small door in a ledge of rock with a sign over it, which read—"

"No admittance except on business," began

Harry, instantly taking up the story. "So the man went in, and found himself at the entrance of a long vaulted chamber. The walls were covered with strange inscriptions, and on a table at one end was a feast of all manner of dainties spread for one person. He sat down and ate until he was satisfied and then turned to go out, but the door was closed and he could not find the smallest opening in the rock. So he took up his lantern and went down a long flight of stairs, and then through a narrow passage until he came out into an immense court. On the stones in one corner a man was lying, who appeared to be dead. He went up to him and found it was his brother. In his pocket he had a card saying:—"

"Good for one drink of old rye whisky," said Fred. "The cobbler called the police, and in half an hour, they rushing up and arrested him for assault and battery. The judge asked him if he owned any real estate in Patagonia, and he paid the old clothes man in barrel staves and jubbe paste. And no one had ever heard of the old woman, so they spoke it in three languages, and had fried eels for dinner. And, afterwards, the cobbler went back to Bagdad and wrote the history of his life in seven volumes, and every one who read it said:—"

"Nonsense!" added mamma, and that was the end of the story.

If you don't think this is funny, just try it some night when everybody is glum and silent and needs a good rousing laugh.—*Christian Union.*

DOLL FURNITURE.

Some ingenious methods of making dolls and doll furniture out of the simplest materials are thus described by an English writer: Very pretty toy ottomans are made of common spoons, the seat of cardboard, and stuffed, and single seats by simply putting each spoon in a chintz bag, with a little wadding on the top, and a piece of ribbon tied in the center. A cigar box, set on end, varnished, and fitted in with shelves, is transformed into a wardrobe, and without shelves, merely with largish dress hooks, fastened round with small tacks, it makes a hanging wardrobe. A sardine box, cut in half and bent into shape, makes a doll's fender. Toy tambourines, to attach to dolls dressed as gypsies, are made out of the lids of pill boxes, the cardboard being replaced by parchment and small gilt spangles let into the edge at intervals, a tuft of colored ribbons on either side. A pill box cut down a little, and a brim of black paper added, makes a sailor hat, or, with a silk bag inside, serves to contain sweetmeats.

The "wish-bones" of fowls may be dressed as sailors, or nurses. The head is made of wool and sealing-wax covered with white calico, which should be slightly painted for the face. The two bones make the legs, the upper portion being stuffed for the bodies. And the shell of a lobster can be turned to very good account, especially if converted into the semblance of Oxford and Cambridge Dons. Two of the lobster's legs make the man's legs, and must be fastened to a square piece of wood for a stand; the outer shell of the body must be placed upright and stuffed, the stuffing covered in the front with black velvet made to look as much like a waistcoat as can be, with a row of steel beads down the front for buttons. Two more legs make arms, and a piece of newspaper placed in them keeps up the delusion. The pincer ends of the claws, with tiny spectacles across them, and a college cap poised on the top, form the head-piece. Sometimes, however, a piece of colored candle is molded into a capital face, with beads for eyes, and fuzzy bits for whiskers, hair and mustaches. An academic robe depends from where the shoulders should be.

Round strawberry baskets can be covered either with chintz or with muslin over pink or blue calico, and fitted up as a complete doll wardrobe, small china dolls, dressed as babies, occupying the center, and white frocks and under linen, hood, cloak, sponge (in sponge bag), and all the details of baby toilette, filling

the several pockets. One of the common mustard boxes, set on end, with two shelves at equal distances, makes a good doll's house, the nursery at the top, the drawing-room below, and the kitchen under that. Paper the walls, carpet the floors, and then proceed to furnish. Seidlitz powder boxes are easily converted into beds; the depth of the box is cut down to half, the lid is sawed edgewise to the top, and widened a little for the overhanging portion, and then the whole is covered with chintz, and furnished with bed, pillows, sheets and blankets.

ANOTHER VIEW OF WOMAN'S MISSION.

We boast of the kindness and loyalty of American husbands, but who in the family best teach and exemplify the laws which make our homes happy and our land a refuge and pattern for the world? The respectable husband and father in America does not strike his wife or severely chastise his children, but with sorrow we say many of them might learn lessons of temperance, industry and virtue from their wives at home; and although they may scoff at the idea of woman as a law-maker, and ridicule the idea of her even possessing the judgment to know what laws she should prefer to be governed by, they recognize her judgment while they ask her advice concerning their business affairs; but of course he would say that is another thing. The husband who leaves his sons in their mother's charge without an hour's unessiness while he is months from home, does not know the judgment and tact which is often necessary to secure peace and justice between growing boys. Yes, more thought and judgment is often expended in governing and directing one hot-headed boy than has ever been expended by one man on the yet unsolved problem of the best manner of conducting the affairs of the Indian Bureau. As much thought has often been expended in keeping amicable relations between the father and his sons as is employed by any one man to keep peace between two nations, and the minister in this family court is oftentimes the mother. To whom are the deaf, the blind, the deformed children unhesitatingly assigned? Who spends sleepless nights studying how she may teach the unfortunate child the habits and pursuits which may make him happy and useful when the home can shield him no longer from the ridicule of the thoughtless and unfeeling? Is it not the mother? Does it require a new set of faculties to determine the best method of teaching the unfortunate in asylums? How many children owe the perpetuity of their health, their life, and their reason to the judgment and care of the watchful mother? And the same might be said of many a husband. Now, while men will give woman the credit due for such service, they will declare her incapable of judging concerning the influences which should be exerted over sons and daughters in companies and in the nation. In this are they entirely honest? But all this ground has been gone over again and again, till it sometimes seems that we of the present generation may live and die without being able to bequeath to our daughters the means of self-protection. Yet, when we look over the past, we can see that progress has been made, and the pathway is smoother over which our mothers, with bleeding feet, have so long walked, searching, perhaps, for straying sons or husbands, with no means of protecting or restraining those who have lost power to control themselves.

A POINT ON BUTTON HOLES.—A mother writes to an exchange as follows: All mothers know how hard it is to keep buttons on and buttons holes from tearing out of the clothes of children who turn somersaults, climb fences, or trees, etc. A good way to strengthen button holes is to sew a long stitch or two from one end of the button hole to the other and several across the ends before working it. I would be glad to learn some way that would serve as well to keep buttons in their proper place. When our ten-year-old boy came home from school last night he had just one suspender button left.