

now!" and with a flourish he unrolled a long strip of paper covered with writing.

"But what does it mean, Peter?" cried the bewildered little woman, staring down the long list of items, while Peter chuckled.

Down on one side was written in a straggling hand: 1 punken pie, 4 punken pies, a punken pie, 2 punken pies. Opposite to these was a list of names, with the figures 42 at the bottom.

"I've been drummen up trade fur you, and that's the result," placidly folding one long leg over the other. "'Tain't nothen to what I can do if you're ekil to it," and the widow gazed into his calm face, amazement in her eyes. "'Tain't much, but it's a starter, and there ain't no reason why more shouldn't follow. There's a good thing in them pies, especially with Widow Munn at one end to bake 'em and Peter Tarbox at the other to boom 'em!"

Then the whole story came out. Peter had thought out his plan; with him to decide was to act, so at each house where he called he told of the wonderful pies, taking his orders in his own quaint fashion:

"You jist put your name down there—that shows you mean what you say—and I'll guarantee to bring you a pie that'll make your hair curl, big as that, yaller as gold, and all fur fifty cents!"

Well the result of a long talk was that the widow would undertake to make all that he could get orders for, and Peter would deliver them on his rounds, taking as his pay "all the blessed pie he could eat".

"'Fraid you don't know what you're binden yourself to, Mis' Munn," said he, as he unhitched Bess. "Like as not it'll end up in bein' called 'Peter Punken Eater,'" he chuckled. "Good night."

In a small town news travels fast. Everyone soon heard of the widow's new business, and for a time Ted had quite a rush of customers.

It had been explained to him at last about the doctor's words and the hundred dollars, and the dear boy's white, excited face and eager words of explanation moved every heart to sympathy.

"I can help like fun," he told them. "Oh, think of it! If we do get the hundred dollars, I may be just as strong as other boys!"

Orders came flying in. Mrs. Jones ordered three pies and bought a great package of sugar.

"You must let us help a little, my dear; we feel so badly to think we never knew the dear child could be cured!" said the good lady.

Neighbors and friends came with orders or offers of help; and as for the pumpkins, they began to pile up in the yard until they fairly threatened to bury the round house.

"It'll be a clear profit if it keeps on at this rate," declared Peter.

"Hope you won't cut your old friends when you get to be a millionaire."

"Peter, we are friends forever!" cried the widow, while Ted pressed a clove upon him, and when he stooped to take it gave him a shy little kiss on his brown cheek.

"Here's a letter I brung up fur you," said Peter; and the widow, after reading it, handed it back to him with a shaking hand.

"Read it!" she gasped, and Peter read slowly, aloud:

"Scarbbam House, Oct. 18th, 18—.
"Mrs. Munn, Dear Madam:—This establishment has for years been famous for its pumpkin pies. The sudden death of our old pie baker compels us to look to some other source. If you will undertake to deliver us fifty pies for thanksgiving next we feel sure our reputation will be safe in your hands. An early answer will oblige,
"Kellogg & Drake."

"Mis' Munn," cried Peter, "write and take the job! This town has got ter rise up and pitch in. I'll go git some gals to help peel, and we'll keep that goldurned little stove a-pipen night and day. We've got a reputation to keep up ekil to anybody's, and we's goen to do it if it takes a leg!"

At first everything was confusion, but order soon reigned in the little kitchen. Everyone wanted to help. Farmer Brown sent a can of sweet milk; the big bundle of spices ordered from the store was sent up without a bill, with the best wishes of the proprietor; and crusty old lawyer Bliss added the last touch by buying three dozen pie plates from Peter and delivered them in person.

At last the great work was at an end.

The widow's tired face was bent over the account book, Ted's tired fingers were piling up the goodly array of coins and bills, while Peter beamed upon them like the kindly, long-legged angel that he was.

"Next to mother I love you better than anybody!" cried Ted, upsetting all his careful piles to hug his friend.

"Ninety-three dollars!" announced the widow. "Peter, how can I ever thank you?" coming over to him impulsively, tears of joy in her eyes.

"Jist trot out any amount of pie you mought have on hand," he laughed, hidsng his confused face behind Ted, "and we'll call it square."

A year has come and gone. The little round house is sending up a hospitable puff of smoke, the white Chrysanthemums fill the air with fragrance, and the store door stands wide open.

But down in the village swings another sign, "Munn & Tarbox," while "Bakery" comes in small letters under the new firm's name, for the little round house is no longer a store.

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