

CHILDREN'S PAGE



The Boy With the Spade.

No weight of age bows him down,
That barefoot boy with his fingers brown.
There's nothing empty in his face,
No burden of the human race.
Are on his back, nor is he dead
To joy or sorrow, hope or dread.
For he can grudge, and he can hope,
Can shrink with all his soul from soap.
No brother to the ox is he.
He's second cousin to the bee.
He looms and lets down his jaw—
And brings it up—his gum to "chaw."
There's naught but sweat upon his brow,
The slanted scarlet forehead now.
His eyes are bright with eager light,
He's working with an appetite.
Ah, not that boy is not afraid
To wield with all his might his spade!
Nor has he any spite at fate—
He's digging engineers for bait.

—Chicago Tribune.

FOLLOWED BY A PANTHER

Hair-Raising Experience of a Party of Boys and Girls in the Blue Mountains.

Well, children, here I am again this morning. I am going to tell you a story that will open your eyes. So all gather around, and be sure you do not interrupt me.

It was years before the palace car invaded the solitude of the Blue Mountains and before the great freight trains of pack mules and prairie schooners had ceased to follow the defiles of that range. I fancy that a party of six—two girls and four boys—have never forgotten a terrible experience they had in these mountains.

It had been the practice of the people of La Grande—and it is kept up now to a certain extent—to spend weeks at a time in the mountains, gathering whortleberries. Several families would usually go together, and to the boys and girls, especially, these trips were great sport. The wagons followed the Meacham road along the Grand Ronde River to the Pelican ranch canyon, and then along the old immigrant road, usually to the Summit House.

There were two large wagons in the party of which I speak, and most of the boys and girls were mounted on Indian ponies. These children—Lloyd Summers, "Joe" Collins, "Nat" Davis, "Kitty" Kinsey, Guy Baker and Edna Hardy, by name—had a gay time and made the mountains ring with their merry cries.

Reaching the old Summit House, a camping place for freighters, they plunged into the dense forest, along an unused trail, to an open space at the bottom of a deep, dark canyon.

Outriggered by his kind.
Some years before, an aged hermit had lived and died in this secluded spot. No one knew where he had come from, and the tragedy of his life was buried in the mountains; but it was said that he had been ostracized from an immigrant train from the East in 1884. Left alone in the mountains, he made a little habitation for himself, and there spent the remaining years of his lonely life, occasionally going out to the Summit House to beg bacon and tobacco from the freighters. At last he came no more, and a party of hunters went that way. Entering his old cabin, they found his skeleton on a low cot. On a table near by was the faded picture of a beautiful child, nearly obliterated by the dampness, and a written sketch of his life. But my story deals with the experience of these young people, and not with the details of the hermit's life.

The party made camp that night near the old, forsaken cabin and speculated much on the causes that led the man to leave the trail and become a hermit. The dell was a beautiful, grassy spot, of about three acres, surrounded by a dense growth of small pine and tamarack saplings, which stood so thickly together that one could scarcely squeeze between them. This growth was particularly dense on the south side.

A delicious supper of bacon, beans and steaming coffee was eaten after twilight, near a big campfire. The knowledge that the whitened bones of the hermit were sleeping but a few rods from the camp and a shuddering effect on the spirits of the boys and girls, and they gathered closely about the campfire, with their elders, listening intently to stories until late. But, soon after retiring, their nervousness was lost in sound, healthy slumber, induced by the fatigues of the trip.

Good Yarn-Tellers.

The party was composed of the families and friends of E. S. McComas, a pioneer, and Joe Neathers, an old stage driver. Both men had been through many adventures and could untold startling stories by the yard. That accounts for the nervousness of the youngsters, who did not then know that, on the following night, they were to have an experience that would put their courage to a severe test.

Next morning all were up bright and early for the day's pleasures. During the forenoon they set the camp in good order, and built the benches and tables, always required to make camp life convenient and comfortable.

After lunch, at 2 o'clock in the afternoon, Lloyd Summers, the oldest boy, remarked to the other children:

"What do you say, kids, to an exploring tour of the surrounding country?"

"Just the thing; let's start right now," was the hearty response from the young people.

So the children started to look about. They went directly west from the camp for about two miles, chatting gaily and making plans for good times during the coming season. It was their intention to remain out only a short time that afternoon. Two of the older boys, Lloyd and Joe Collins, had picked up a gun each, when they started, but had neglected to supply themselves with ammunition other than the single loads that were already in the guns.

"Well, boys," remarked Edna, when they had been out about an hour, "I think we had better go back. You know Mr. McComas warned us not to go too far, or be gone long."

"Yes," said Nat, "it is now half-past four and high time we were in camp. They will be uneasy about us."

But they had become confused by the



dense growth of trees and the bewildering mountains, and, instead of going eastward toward camp, they lost their bearings and took a southerly direction along the mountain side and around the thick growth of saplings.

By way of explanation, I might say here that this growth formed a semi-circle around the south side of the valley where the camp was located.

Before they had gone far, Guy, who was walking behind, suddenly became aware that an animal was following them. He stopped and looked back, but it kept out of sight, and he could not at first see it. Soon it grew bolder and came within 50 feet of them, and then he saw that it was a full-grown panther. Shaking with fright, he called to Joe:

"Look back! There's a—er—panther following us!"

The attention of all the children was attracted by this, and as they stared in horror at the beast, where it stood in the path, loomed its long tail, it slunk back into the shadow of the dense thicket.

"Oh, we'll all be killed and eaten alive," wailed both girls; "why don't you shoot him?"

"No you won't be killed," said the boys, "but we have only two charges in the guns, and we'll not shoot until we are driven to it. If we should wound him, he will be more dangerous than ever."

"And I don't think we are going in the right direction," said Lloyd. "We have certainly missed the way and will have to skirt this thicket to the eastern extremity, in order to reach camp."

This remark brought the children to a realizing sense of their situation. They were separated by an impenetrable growth of trees from the camp and followed by a hungry panther.

Once they tried determinedly to break through the growth, but they were obliged to return to the outer edge, for the saplings grew so closely together that it was impossible to pass between them. As they emerged, they saw the panther, now close behind them. Kitty and Edna were slightly in advance of the boys, and Kitty, seeing the animal, said:

"Look! That animal. I know some of us will be killed."

Scarcely had she finished speaking when the beast leaped into the air and came down right between the girls. Both screamed, and the boys sprang forward, and the beast slunk back into the jungle.

After the children had partly recovered from their fright, they closed up for mutual protection. It was getting dark, and they decided to go down into the valley and follow along the thicket to the other end of the semicircle. Accordingly, they descended the mountain side, and skirted the valley, until they reached an open space about 30 feet square. The panther had become very persistent again and followed more closely than ever.

"We will have to stop here," said Lloyd, who was the responsible member of the party, "and build a fire. It is impossible to go any further tonight."

The other boys then gathered wood and built a roaring fire in the narrow spot. They were surrounded by a leafy forest, and the towering pines with which they were surrounded, the blinding light of the stars and the glow of the thicket all tended to impress the children with a feeling of unrest. The fact that the fierce beast was lurking about the camp, and the seriousness of their situation, Lloyd encouraged the shrinking girls with the remark:

"Don't be scared. We'll be all right. You lie down on this bed of moss, and

intense darkness. Sometimes they were obliged to drive the panther back with blazing brands, as it prowled about. Nat and Guy had the last watch of the night toward morning. Weary with the long vigil and with their tramp of the afternoon before, the boys dropped asleep, with their guns in their hands. The fire died down, and the sleeping children were left in that perilous position, without any protection. The slinking, cowardly beast, which so far had feared to attack them, now crept slowly and stealthily toward them down the trunk of a prostrate tree that had fallen in a tempest.

Still the children slumbered on, unmindful of their danger. Not a sound broke the silence.

Ornithological Rapture.

There's a message stating that an energetic movement is on foot to abolish the use of our plumage on ladies' hats.

But the birds, alas! are not so easily deterred. They are still on the wing, and the birds of the air are still on the wing.

Within a few yards the great, slouching animal crouched on the trunk of the tree and poised for a spring. Then, with a mighty leap, he sprang into the air. The object was to reach the sleeping girls, who were on the opposite side of the fire.

Missed His Prey.
But the brute miscalculated, and landed on all fours in the hot ashes and embers. The instant pain of the burns, and the shrieks of the girls terrified the panther, and, in another second, he leaped over the girls, who were in a sitting posture, making the chill morning air ring with their screams of him.

The party was now aroused, and soon had the fire rekindled. No one seemed to be sleepy after the excitement, and so all remained up until daylight. When morning finally came, Lloyd took a good look around and said to the rest:

"I think that we are directly south of the camp. It usually is a matter of getting back if it were not for this thicket. We will swing around on the mountain side and take a survey from a tree."

Meanwhile, what are the people in the camp doing? They had been expecting

him. Mrs. Bird-Ah! capture him! There goes a message stating that an energetic movement is on foot to abolish the use of our plumage on ladies' hats.

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became more agitated, he picked up his gun and started out in the direction the youngsters had taken, hoping to get track of them before darkness fell. He looked carefully for signs of them, and fired his gun at intervals, as a signal. But his efforts were useless, for the increasing darkness rendered it difficult to make any headway in the thick brush. When he returned to the camp, McComas asked:

"Well, what luck have you had? Did you see anything of them?"

"Not a trace," was the discouraging reply, as he sunk wearily to the ground beside a big fire the campers had built. None of the party retired that night, for sleep was impossible, and the fire was kept burning, in the hope that the blaze would be seen by the children.

The night was probably as miserable for them as for the young folks for they could do nothing until daylight. Their uneasiness was increased by the piercing cries of a panther, which came to them through the dense thicket on the south.

At 12 o'clock Hutchins, who had been growing restless as the hours dragged by, said:

"I can't stand this any longer, and must do something. I am going out again."

"It's no use," protested Mr. McComas; "you can't see anything and had better wait till day break."

Jim was determined, however, and so started back in the same direction he had taken earlier in the evening. The other men waited until the first streak of light appeared, when they began a systematic search.

Joe Discovers the Camp.
But, to return to the children. When they reached an elevated place, Joe climbed a tall tree. After looking around he cried:

"Hurray! There's the camp right over there, about two miles away."

This information was received with shouts of joy by the rest, and when Joe came down from the tree, they started, post-haste, for the camp. They plunged with reckless haste through the tangled woods and reached their destination in about 25 minutes, with their clothes nearly torn off by the brambles. The people at the camp, who had had nothing to eat since noon on the day before, and were nearly famished, went to the camp kitchen and devoured everything they could find, before they told of their adventures. By noon the search party had returned, and its members rejoiced to find that the absent ones had got back safe.

This story, children, is long enough. I could tell you of the good times the young people had during the 10 days' outing, but you wish your faces and put on your best clothes and go to Sunday school. Some other time, I will tell my little friends another story, that isn't so "scary."

—ALICE M. WELLS.

FISHING CORMORANTS.

Trained to Prey Upon Finny Tribe for Human Masters.

What do you think of this children—birds catching fish for their human masters? Yes, trained birds—cormorants—that are tied by the foot and that dive into the water and catch big and little fishes, which they are required to bring to land to those who employ them to save themselves the labor of fishing.

In the Jardin d'Acclimatation in Paris are two cormorants, which have been trained to fish by Felix Bourgeois, a resident of the great French capital, who follows the occupation as a sport. He is said to be the only man in the world who thus fishes as a recreation, although, in several parts of the world cormorant fishing is pursued as a business. The birds of the Paris zoo are expert fishers and have been carefully trained. The long feathers of their left wings have been cut, so that they cannot fly, and to the feet of the birds, when they are employed at their piscatorial task, leather thongs are attached, in order that the movements of the fishers may be controlled by their trainer. In training cormorants, care has to be exercised to prevent their striking their instructor in the face with their heavy, powerful beaks, and for that purpose a wire mask is worn by the trainer. For two or three days each bird is fed on raw fish, and then, when the fish is scarce, it is starved for several days, and at the end of this time complete docility is obtained, and the birds have become accustomed to their master, follow him about like a couple of dogs.

Several live fish are placed in a tank, and the cormorant, having had a collar adjusted to his neck sufficiently tight to prevent his having the fish escape, is allowed to plunge for his prey. In a few seconds he reappears with a fish partly swallowed. He is persuaded easily to perch upon his master's finger, and, plucking the fish from his beak, he disgorges his catch, which immediately is put out of sight, the cormorant being rewarded by a small piece of fish or other agreeable food. The sport is most interesting and even fascinating, especially if the cormorant pits himself against a good-sized fish. The movements and maneuvers of the cormorant in the water are of marvelous rapidity and grace, although on land he is an ungainly animal.

Cormorant fishing is practiced largely as a business in China and Japan. In these countries it usually is carried on at night and in boats. Each fisherman takes five cormorants, and to the prow of the boat is attached a brilliant light, which attracts the fish, and the enormous numbers are caught by the birds. These Chinese and Japanese fishermen attain great skill in the manipulation of their birds. They handle four or five cormorants at a time, and, using long poles, they lead them to the water at the same time. To juggle with the strings—which are held between the fingers of the left hand while the bird is being led in, is a dexterity is a matter requiring the greatest dexterity.

THE SHADE TREE'S STORY.
Uprooted From Its Forest Home and Brought to the Big City.

It is early morning, and the cool Spring breeze blows over my head, and the morning sun is shining through my leaves. Soon the children will be on their way to school, and as they go by, they will sit under my branches and rest. At noon I made the workmen who labor in the streets, while they eat their lunch. At night, when the people are out to take in the pure, fresh air, they stop under my branches and talk over the business of the day. Now, while I wait for the children, I will tell you my history:

When I was still a young sapling, some men came into the forest and took me away from my mother and brought me here, when this large city was only a small village. As the years rolled by, I grew to be a large tree.

I felt very lonesome at first, because I was the only tree by this corner. I thought I should never see my dear old mother again. But, one day, I happened to look down the street, and, to my joy, I saw some men bringing a big tree along in a wagon. I watched them and hoped they would put her beside me on this corner. But my joy turned to sorrow, for I saw she was dead. Then I thought of the dreadful things that might happen to her. Perhaps the cruel teeth of a saw might tear her to pieces and cut her up into lumber; and then, against me might be put a furnace, and the hungry flames might eat her up, without mercy.

As all these thoughts passed through my mind, I shuddered, because I thought, perhaps, that when I was dead, I might have something of the same kind happen to me.

Now I see the children coming, so I will tell you the rest of my history some other time.

FLORENCE B. SAWYER, Aged 12.

Enigma.
I am composed of 13 letters and am the plural of a word meaning a puzzle. My 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 is a kind of tree. My 1, 4, 10, 6, 7, 2, 13 is very delicate. My 1, 4, 10, 6, 7, 2, 13 is to give. My 4, 5, 10 is a kind of grain.

Much Afraid of the Grip.
A crocodile said to a hip:
"I've a notion to pull up and skip;
I'm nothing but weep,
I can't eat or sleep—
I'm so much afraid of the grip!"

GOING AFTER BUTTERMILK
Strange Adventures Encountered by Young Oregonians in the Sunny Southland.

"I'm going to have soda biscuits for supper, so some of you will have to go after buttermilk," called Aunt Katie to the Beardsley girls, Ruth, Meta and Bess, who were piled into a hammock hung near the house.

"Let's get Nina Burt and all go together; it'll be fun," suggested Bess.

Ruth left the hammock and went up to Aunt Katie.

"Are you in a hurry for it?" she asked.

"No; just so you have it here some time this afternoon."

Then Ruth walked to the irrigating ditch or Spanishzanje (pronounced "sankey"), which extended in front of this Southern California residence. Standing upon the bridge which crossed the ditch, she called

geranium hedge, because when I was up the tree I could see a humming-bird on top the hedge, and it acted as though it had a nest near."

The matter seemed worth investigating, so the quartet went over to the hedge that bounded the grove. Yes, there was the bright-plumaged bird, darting restlessly in and out among the geranium flowers.

"If we see the nest, I'll know it," "cane there was one in the house-plant vine on our front porch at Santa Barbara," said Nina, just as though, under the circumstances, any one of the girls wouldn't have recognized it.

But it was not found, although the bird continued its restless flitting, and then the attention of the children was attracted elsewhere, Ruth exclaiming: "Well, see this funny thing!" The funny thing was alive, and was shaped like a toad, while it moved like a lizard. Spines formed a natural collar around its neck.

"That's nothing but a horned toad," pronounced Nina. "I've handled hundreds of them at Santa Barbara." Nina always wanted to tell what she had seen or done at Santa Barbara.

"Pick this one up," suggested Bess.

"Oh, I don't want to now; I'm out of the habit," replied Nina. "But here's a little one I'd just as soon take," she continued.

Sure enough, near by was a horned toad about the size of a dime, and this Nina did allow to climb about over her brown hand and wrist.

"Let's climb this!" Meta suggested. The huge, wide-spreading boughs of the old apple tree to which she referred were cer-

tainly a temptation to any one as fond of climbing as Meta. The others agreed, and soon the tree was full of children.

When Ruth, Nina, Meta and Bess were again on the ground, Bess asked: "Don't you want to cross over to the road now and walk along a while?" Bess liked to pass a certain Spanish adobe house that stood opposite where they were and across the orchard.

"They're all out there; I'm so glad," she exclaimed when the orchard had been left. By "they" Bess meant the Spanish family, and by "there" the open front or covered court of the adobe. This space on the ground floor extended back about half way through the house. Long strings of red peppers hung upon its three walls and were suspended from its ceiling. On the adobe floor were rocking-chairs, a baby's cradle and other articles which showed that the space was used as a room. At present children were playing about the floor; a fat woman, dressed in black with big black enamel over her head, was sewing, while a slender young woman was making lace.

The road ended a short distance above the adobe house, as did also the orchard; the remainder of the way lay through an open field.

Not Very Good.
"If you get hungry, you can just pull a piece of this grass, and you'll find a nut on the end," said Nina, when they entered the field. The girls commenced pulling blades and trying to eat the nuts growing at the roots, but they were not so good as almonds, nor even so good as dillies; in fact, they seemed fitter food for squirrels and gophers than for children.

It did not take long to cross this field, and soon the children had started home with the buttermilk.

"I think there must be trapdoor-spider holes around here," it was Nina who spoke, when they were back in the open field. Strange to say, not one of the three nests when she mentioned the nuts.

"Here's one now! Look at it closely, so's you'll know how to tell them yourselves," Nina was upon her hands and knees. The others were obliged to take the same position and get their eyes very near the ground, in order to detect the little which marked off upon the earth a space shaped like a miniature horse shoe.

"Now I'll show you how to open it," she inserted a pin in the tiny crack and pressed open the door. As it flew back upon its silken hinges, it was seen to be lined with a glistening white substance, which also lined the long tube, or nest.

"I've found one, but I can't get it open," called Ruth, a moment later. "It's bigger than yours," she added. Soon the four girls were bending over Ruth's nest.

"Take this sharp-pointed stick instead of the pin," one of them suggested. The stick worked. The trapdoor spider jumped out almost into the face of Meta, who was nearest, and who had been holding the buttermilk. The spider fell back into the hole, but must have been drowned, for Meta dropped the pail instantly and nearly all the contents drained into the nest.

"There! what'll we do for buttermilk?" was wondered, after the fright had subsided.

"We'll just have to hurry home and get more money," answered Bess.

"Go again, indeed!" snapped Aunt Katie, when the proposal was made to her. She was not the Beardsley girls' aunt, by the way, but a neighbor woman, whom every one called "Aunt Katie," and who was keeping house for them in the absence of their mother. The next time I send you on an errand I'll know better than to tell you I'm not in a hurry," she continued.

"Supper's been over for an hour, and I had to send to the baker's for bread."

AMY MAGUIRE.

Practical Father.
"Papa, he has broken my trusting heart," moaned the old man's son, "what shall I do?"

"Take it round to the quick repair shop," said the practical old man—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Dr. Amos Skeeter—Don't strike! I am a blood specialist, and was merely testing yours. I would advise a course of treatment to increase the number of red corpuscles.

clung persistently. So she carried out her threat of getting down. Then clouds and streaks were thrown. Two of the oranges were hit and loosened from their stems, but in falling they were so badly bruised as to make them no more desirable than the "windfalls" scattered about under the tree.

Although Meta had not secured the coveted cluster, she appeared to feel repaid for her attempt. "Gloria," she said, "I believe there's a humming-bird's nest in that

Monk Made a Capital Pun.
The monk made a capital pun.
To his friends when their dinner was done,
But it took him a long time to laugh
That they had to abandon the fun.

REARED AMONG THE CUBS
Man Child, Foster Son of the Bears, Rises to Much Honor and Wins a Great Chief's Daughter.

Years ago a little child wandered from home and strayed far into the woods. All day long he went from bush to bush, eating berries and picking wild flowers. When the sun went down, he, weary and frightened, laid him down to sleep beneath a blackberry bush.

Presently a great bear shambled along in search of nice, ripe berries for supper, and, seeing the sleeping child, raised him in its arms and carried him away.

The new moon shone into the wood, and the bears, sitting around on their haunches in a wide circle, were holding solemn council. In the center of the circle stood Wuffy-Wuffy, their chief, in shape half man, half bear, and in his arms he held a sleeping child.

"My brethren," he was saying, "we are all agreed to do this child no harm, but to keep and rear it among our cubs."

A loud grunt of approval came from the circle of bears, and, after some further consultation, the council broke