

CHILDREN



The Nest in the Shoe.
Sweet Jennie Wren, with her husband small,
Were viewing sites for a cozy nest;
The bright sun shone on their smiling eyes
A snug, round home in a maple's crest.
They viewed it with a careless glance,
No envious thought of ruffling tempers sweet.
They craved no place in the treetop tall,
That swayed and dipped when the rough
storms beat.

A ragged shoe in the yard they spied,
Flung from the house as a useless thing.
They fluttered in and they fluttered out,
Then straightway began to build and sing.
They gathered hair and a lining soft,
And wove their home with a loving care;
The grass grew fast 'neath the shoe's warm
rays,
And hid the shoe with its contents rare.

The eggs laid there turned to birdies small,
That grew in beauty and strength each day;
When grown too big for the crowding walls,
The old birds taught them to fly away.

A shoeing hole in the empty nest,
But I hope this Spring, when the skies are
blue,
That Madam Wren and her husband dear
Will dwell once more in the ragged shoe.
—Adella Washer in New York Tribune.

VIVIAN'S DECORATION DAY

**Begun in Sadness, but Transformed
Into a Day of Heartfelt Joy
and Gladness.**

You remember, dear children, that last Wednesday was Decoration day, when we honored with prayer and hymn and martial pomp our hero dead.

On that day I was strolling about at Lone Fir cemetery, looking at the beautiful flowers that adorned the graves of the sleeping soldiers, and listening to the programme given in their honor. There were great throngs of people constantly passing, and it was difficult to distinguish any one, but in that crowd was a little girl who attracted my attention because of her singular beauty. Her rich, auburn hair hung in long curls to her waist, and her lovely face was lighted by large, wistful, brown eyes, almost hidden by the long lashes which drooped over them. Beside her walked a venerable old gentleman, whose faded blue coat and military bearing indicated that he had been a soldier. A mass of silvery white hair crowned his head, and, gazing into his fine old face, I was impressed with his noble expression.

I followed them, as they walked slowly away from the crowd toward a solitary grave. The child laid two crushed and withered roses on the mound, and, looking up with a smile, said:

"See, grandpa, how mamma's grave is decorated like the others."

Then she put her hand into that of the old-faced veteran and they moved away. Before I left the spot where I stood a rough, coarsely dressed man, who looked very much like a miner, came up and, placing a great bunch of flowers on the grave, walked rapidly away and was lost in the crowd.

I thought that a beautiful story was connected with the old soldier, the beautiful child and the strange man who had placed the flowers on the grave, for my little friends, and I determined to find out more about them. Several days later I was rewarded, and this morning I will tell you what I learned.

Vivian Grey.
"Grandpa, what is Decoration day for?" asked Vivian Grey, of 7 years, as she left her doll and climbed upon grandpa's knee.



"The room in which the two sat was bare and cold, and Mr. Grey looked sorrowfully about the cheerless place as he told his darling grandchild the familiar story of Decoration day. On his old arm was a G. A. R. badge, which showed that he had given his service to his country."

When but a youth of 20 he had answered Lincoln's first call for volunteers and gone forth into the fray with an Ohio regiment. At last the war ended, and, covered with honorable scars and ruined in fortune, he came to Oregon with an only son. Years passed, and the son married a beautiful young woman, who made for her husband and his father a happy home near Portland. They lived quietly for several years, when the wife died, leaving a lovely little daughter, who was a daily reminder of her mother, both in looks and actions. Young Mr. Grey was so broken with grief that he left home and went to Alaska when the gold fever was at its height, forsaking his aged father and helpless daughter.

Vivian loved her kind grandfather more than any one in the world, and he lavished upon her all the affection of his noble old heart. But for the 32 monthly pension the old veteran received from a Government that was thus grateful for his services, it would have gone hard with Grandpa and Vivian. Their wants were simple and easily supplied, however, and they lived on in their little room a long time before any one found out about them.

So, that evening, Grandpa told Vivian that all the soldiers' graves in the Nation were to be decorated the next day by the boys and girls and remaining veterans. Then he went on and told of the battles he had been in and how he had been wounded and lay, for a day and a night, on a bullet-swept battle-field. Vivian clung closely to the old man during this tale, as though to protect him from any more suffering; then she fell asleep, with her head pillowed on grandfather's arm.

The Absent Boy.
He put her in her little bed and returned to the dying fire, where, sitting down, he reviewed the past. His mind went back to the day when he had left home and everything to answer his country's call.

Then he thought, with a longing heart, of the absent boy in the Ivy North. Only one letter had been received from him during the three years he had been gone. Lastly it was reported that he had been caught in the treacherous ice of the Yukon and every effort was being made to rescue him.

Grandpa looked at little Vivian and thanked God that she had been left to him. How his lonely old heart went out to her when he remembered the countless little deeds of love she performed for him every day. As he thought of the son who had left him, he wondered if he would ever come back. God alone could tell, but he would not complain so long as he had his granddaughter. It was near midnight when he retired.

Decorations dawned bright and clear, and, after breakfast, Grandpa and Vivian started for Lone Fir cemetery. As they walked along they saw the people, laden with baskets of flowers, and little Vivian could not keep back the tears, for she wanted some for mamma's grave.

"Oh, Grandpa, dear," she said, with tears brightening her eyes, "mamma will feel so badly if we don't decorate her grave. She loved flowers so, you remember."

"I know, Vivian, but Grandpa has no flowers and nothing to buy any with; perhaps some one will put some on the grave for us."

When they reached the cemetery Vivian saw two roses crushed under the feet of the crowd. With a cry of joy she ran to them and brushed the dirt from their petals.

"Come, Grandfather," she said, "we can decorate mamma's grave now." Then they walked over to the solitary grave, marked only by a rough head-board, and Vivian dropped the roses, while the old man stood by, withered head.

"I have already told you how the stranger appeared, shortly afterward, laden with a costly floral piece, and laid it on the mound. And I learned afterward from Vivian's own lips how she and grandpa had come to the grave and found them there. She was greatly pleased, and after admiring them, returned to the lonely roses, wondering who had put them there."

Vivian's Father.
Now comes the best part of my story, dear ones. As you may already have guessed, the rough-looking man whom I saw was Vivian's father. He had just returned from the North, and had been hunting high and low for a certain old man and little girl. Leaving the cemetery, he walked all over the city and watched intently the parade of the G. A. R. veterans, thinking perhaps he would find his father there.

But grandpa was too feeble to march with the old boys, and was not there. Then the miner turned wearily back to his hotel, to rest before renewing the search. No one knew where they lived, as they had rooms in an out-of-the-way place.

As the son sat in the hotel lobby, he was tortured with remorse for having left them, and he thought of his bonnie little Vivian. Where was she? Why had he left his aged father? Perhaps both were dead. Then he could stand the haunting fear no longer, and went out into the street again. So the day passed on.

Vivian and grandpa had returned to their rooms late in the afternoon, and were very tired. After a frugal meal they fell asleep. Vivian on the floor and grandpa in his old arm chair.

There came a knock at the half-open door and the strange man looked in. Oh, joy! He saw his little daughter. He saw his feeble old father resting after the long walk. Without waking either he quickly stepped inside and set a large basket filled with wholesome food on the table. Then he piled a great bunch of LaFrance roses by the side of the sleeping child and hid behind the door to see the awakening.

Vivian's Dream.
The old soldier slept on, living over the familiar battle scenes. Vivian, too, was dreaming a childish dream. She stood again beside her mother's grave, when,

put her head out of it. "Poor pussy!" she said. "Come, Molly, here is a pussy." And she lifted me into the room and took me to a fire. There I saw a little girl, who I supposed was Molly. "Go and fetch me a cloth and some milk, Molly," the woman said; and the little girl ran off and soon came back with them. They soon dried me. I was wet because it was raining outside. Then they gave me some milk, and I curled myself up in the woman's lap and went to sleep.

The next thing I remember was hearing the woman say, "Molly, take pussy and come and help me find a basket to put her in for the night." So Molly took me and we all went out of the room. When we had gone up the flights of stairs we went into a little room, which was full of trunks, boxes and baskets. Molly picked up one of the baskets and said: "This will do beautifully for pussy."

GOOD CAUSE FOR COMPLAINT.

Mr. Potato Bug—If that child doesn't discontinue annoying me, I shall speak to his father about it.

hearing exquisite music, she looked up and beheld three dainty fairies, clad in gauzy garments of rainbow hue. In their arms they carried the most beautiful flower she had ever seen, and they heaped them on her mother's grave till the ugly earth was no longer visible. They crowned her grandfather's snowy locks with a laurel wreath and placed bright posies in her tiny hands, and then disappeared. It was all so real that she

woke with a start, crying out, when she saw the roses by her side:

"The fairies did it, grandpa! They brought the flowers!"

The father could restrain himself no longer, and sprang from his hiding-place, gathering her up in his arms.

At this the old veteran awakened and looked at him in a mystified way, as his son exclaimed:

"Father, happy I have come back!"

It was a happy reunion, and little Vivian nestled in her father's arms, while the old veteran, with streaming eyes, talked with the long-absent son. To all three it was a Decoration day to be long remembered. So the little birds sang, I fancy, in Vivian's heart today.

—ALICE M. WELLS.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A CAT.

Pussy Finds a Good Home and Wins First Prize at a Cat Show.

I am a cat living in a comfortable old farmhouse, but I was not born here. I was born in a little town house. When I was 1 month old my master took me to a lonely country lane and left me. I did not know what to do. I could not go after him, because he was on his horse. So I began to cry. Soon I thought it was no use crying; I had better find a home for myself.

So I went the opposite way from which I had come. On, I went, till I felt awfully hungry, so I hid myself in a bush. Soon I saw a bird picking up worms in a field. I waited till it came a little nearer; I pounced on it and played with it till I was tired. Then I dragged it to my bush and ate it. When I had done I started on my travels again. As evening came on I saw a light in the distance, which gave me hope that I might find a home for myself. I would not mind if I had even to sleep in a stable. Soon I saw the gate of the house which the light came from, a few yards off, so I went to the gate and crept under it and dragged myself up to the house. I looked round for a place to get in at. I did not see any, so I went to a window and began to mew. Soon the window opened and a woman

was scolded. The reason is that the great conductivity of the copper draws the heat of the coal before it can burn the cloth.

"Do not try this experiment with a good handkerchief, for if the cloth is not tightly drawn it may burn; but take some worthless piece of linen or quinin, and after you are certain of your experience, you can astonish your friends who do not know the secret."

JAPANESE TOY FROGS.

How to Construct One That Will Give Lots of Fun.

The little folks in Japan make some very interesting paper toys, and none is more interesting than the frog manufactured out of green paper. First, address

to the turn-table, but, getting off a short distance below it, commenced climbing the rustic steps leading to the summit of a bluff. Long-stemmed "Johnny Jumpups," which she promised herself she would gather as she came down, peeped a shy welcome from between these steps.

At the top of the flight, Gertrude paused for a rest. Though the day was pleasant, the sky in the east was overhung with clouds, so she could not see the mountains; nevertheless, merely looking down upon the city was delightful. Her rest finished, she was pleasantly surprised to find a path, part of it laid with a wooden sidewalk, leading—where she would find out.

The path was intersected by a small canyon, and from the bridge that crossed the canyon, she could look down upon the remains of a forest. Following the continuation of the path, she came into a region, country-like enough to be very delightful. Cow-bells tinkled and house-dogs barked. An old horse, coming up to the edge of his pasture, thrust his head over the fence, and Gertrude stopped long enough to rub his nose and give him a few pats.

A Country Road.
Going ahead for a mile or more, she found herself upon a veritable country road. An abundance of trilliums and ferns after which she had come grew in the thickets upon either side of this road. However, the ramble was so enjoyable that she didn't stop to gather any, but continued walking, until the remembrance of her mother's warning, "Be careful where you go!" caused her to retrace her steps.

"I must have a few trilliums before I leave," she told herself, grasping a hazel sapling and climbing, by its aid, to the top of an embankment whereon many of the white blossoms were to be seen. The flowers farther away seemed faint, and so she went after, only to discover that, by going on the other side of a board fence, she could gather trilliums so large and white and golden-centered as almost to resemble calla lilies. Gertrude crawled under the fence.

"I'll pick a few of these, and then hurry home," I've had a real nice time, and I— But her reverry ended in a frightened gasp. For, all at once, the earth beneath her feet changed to a pool, or hole, of water, into which she had been plunged by a sudden "cave-in."

"This is a little the worst scrape I've ever been in," thought the alarmed child.

VERY SENSIBLE CONCLUSION.

"My dear Geese," said the Gander, as the Cow came bellowing across the barnyard and ordered the flock to clear the way, "we have our legal rights and our dignity to maintain, and it therefore behooves us to hold our ground. On the other hand, the Cow weighs a ton and seems reckless of consequences. Therefore, after sober second thought and mature deliberation, I think we will waive our legal rights, forget our dignity and prepare to take care of our precious feathers."

and then she made an attempt to scramble out. But the attempt, although repeated several times, was unsuccessful. The circumference of the hole through which she had fallen was about that of

a small-sized barrel, but the pool itself covered a much larger area, as she could tell by wishing around. How deep it was, she had no way of learning, except by slipping to the bottom, which she avoided doing by resting her outstretched arms upon the ground. She felt a dread of slipping down, for she feared she could never get out if she did, and that she might be drowned.

Perhaps she would not be able to hold herself up a great while longer, for already her arms were beginning to ache and she was shaking with cold. Again she tried to crawl out, and again she failed. She was handicapped by the necessity of being very careful, lest she should allow herself to drop. She called for help; but although her voice rang loud and clear through the woods, only an old cow appeared upon the scene, in response.

Makes Her Escape.
A thought of her dreadful situation would be for her father and mother and brothers not to know what had become of her, if only for a single night, and of how lonely and cold and frightened she would be during the long hours before morning, caused her again to endeavor to pull herself out. This time her knees struck the smooth wall of the hole, while the soles of her feet touched the opposite wall. This position proved more restful, and, better still, with its aid, Gertrude managed to scramble out after three feet.

Twenty minutes later, gertrude glanced curiously at a little girl, mud-splashed and with garments dripping wet, who made her way along Jefferson street. Gertrude could have taken the girl, even had she been willing to enter it, looking the way she did, for the reason that she had lost her fare.

"Could you see the pool before you stepped into it?" asked her brother Tom, when she was describing her experience to him.

"No, I couldn't; and that's what puzzled me; it looked just like the solid ground. I went to go out there again tomorrow and see what kind of a place it is."

"I'll go with you," Tom answered.

"This is the place, I think," she remarked, when, the following afternoon, they were taking the walk together. A watering trough, at the foot of a low hill, marked the spot. Tom and Gertrude followed the board fence until they came to the spot where Gertrude remembered having crawled under three feet.

Trilliums that, in her fright, she had unconsciously dropped, strewn the ground. The pool proved to be a good-sized spring. Its board covering had been so overgrown with weeds as to be indistinguishable from the ground, and it was so rotten that it had given way like paper beneath Gertrude's weight. Ragged edges showed where she had fallen through.

"We must find out how deep it is," she said, bringing a long stick which Tom thrust into the spring. A shorter stick would have done as well, for the water did not extend more than three feet.

"Do you think I could have gotten out?" she asked.

"Oh, yes," he replied.

"Well, anyhow, I'm glad I didn't go clear in; and I'll never dare to go after wild flowers alone again."

Gertrude meant what she said, for, from that day to this she hasn't indulged in a single solitary ramble.

CHICAGO CHILDREN'S GAMES.

Roller-Skating and Skipping-Rope Popular Spring Pastimes.

The streets of the city in the neighborhood of the public schools are almost impassable at the hours of noon and morning recreation. These bright, happy days of Spring, says the Chicago Chronicle, for the time of hop-scotch and marbles and roller skates and hoops have rolled around again, and jumping rope parties claim precedence on the sidewalk. These are the things that make the city residents realize in biblical paraphrase that Spring is nigh. They are as emphatic an evidence of hot weather as the unfurled shoe string of a woman's low footgear. They testify to the coming of the joyous season of fair weather, for the child is the most reliable of barometers.

Roller-skating seems to be the most exercised fun in the child world at present. The stone pavements are fairly covered with the swift and undulating racers and artful dodging becomes a matter of instinct to the grown-up pedestrian. Next to roller-skating comes the jumping rope in importance, with marbles a close third and hop-scotch a bad fourth. But any game of outdoor life is a favorite pastime with the children in these outdoor times for active limbs and healthy minds keep pace with the vigor and abandon of Spring.

Girl's Essay on Boys.
At a recent school examination for girls this composition was handed in by a girl of 12, says the New York Ledger Monthly:

"The boy is not an animal, yet they can be heard to a considerable distance. When a boy rollers he opens his big mouth like frogs, but girls hold their tongues till they are spoken to, and then they answer respectable and tell just how it was. A boy thinks himself clever because he can hear."

Beheadings.
1. I am a vessel, behead me and I am a bird.
2. I am to listen, behead me and I am the name of a vessel mentioned in the Bible.
3. I am to tear, behead me and I am a conclusion.
4. I am a piece of furniture, behead me and I am a capable.
5. I am a covering for the head, behead me and I am something you cannot do without.
6. I am finished, behead me and I am a number.
7. I am a color, behead me and I am a girl's name.
8. I am something to wear, behead me and I am a tool.
9. I am made to go to and fro, behead me and I am part of a bird.

Ingenious Yankee Clock.
Joseph Jensen, a clockmaker, of Richfield, Utah, has just completed an interesting clock, which, besides striking the hours, halves and quarters, and showing the phases of the moon, tells what time it is in every city in the world.

This is done by means of a globe which revolves within a transparent glass case. On this globe is marked a line representing 12 o'clock noon, and as the globe revolves this line is always directly over that part of the world where it is noon at that time.

There are other lines representing different hours, and in this way it is a very simple matter to get the exact time at any given place.

Puzzle.
I am a word of sixteen letters.
My 1, 3, 4, 5 is a plague.
My 12, 13 is an animal.
My 8, 9, 10, 11 is a finger.
My 2, 3, 4, 5 is to stop.
My 13, 14, 4, 5 is an examination.
My 15, 5 is to place.
My 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 is a flow of the ocean.
My whole is a clever juggler.

Questioning Fred.
Little Fred was fond of chat, he questioned day and night.
"Where the stars their twinkles got," "Where the moon its light."
Long he'd sit quite lost in thought while posies he'd propound.
Nor did his facetious any rest till answers they had found.

Even when he went to bed he prattled ere he slept.
And coaxed the fairies to reveal where they hid their dream-book kept.
The elves replied in merry glee, and laughingly they told
Wild tales unheard and never known upon the page of old.

Problems none he'd conjure up, implicit faith he'd bear.
His mother knew "most everything," that was his usual plea.
The question once arose "How, where and whence came we?"
He listened, mused awhile, yet could not seem to see.

"And are we made of dust and dirt?" at last he had to ask;
"Yes, dear," replied his mother, and a smile she had to make.
Quite mystified, he pondered, how could that ever be?
And then again continued "old boys spin tops on me?"
—Philadelphia Inquirer.

Braving the Frost King.

Plucky Boy Jack's Perilous Journey to the Far North in Quest of an Ice Chain.

There was once a little boy, whose name was Jack. He treated everybody kindly. One day, as he was thinking how he might comfort a little lame boy, he was surprised to hear some one speak to him. He turned around and saw a beautiful little fairy, who was no larger than one's finger.

"Jack," said the fairy, "I want you to do something for me."

"Well," said he, after he had overcome his astonishment, "how did you come here?"

"I came," said the fairy, "on that ray of sunshine through the window."

"And what do you wish me to do?" asked Jack.

"I want you to go to the Ice King, in the far, far North, to get me a tiny chain of ice, and I promise you that you will have to take a quick or the Ice King will freeze you to death. Many boys have tried to get it for me."

The Fairy Departs.
Then the fairy told where, in the Ice King's palace, the chain she wanted was to be found, and when Jack sought to question her further, she was gone, none could be found anywhere. But he at once began to make himself ready to start on his journey. He decided to take some matches along, because he thought he might need them.

After many days, Jack at last reached the palace of the Ice King. He knocked boldly at the door. It was opened at once by a funny little man, who said: "If you wish to see the Ice King, you must first show me your matches."

But Jack simply said: "Will you please show me the Ice King?"

The funny little man looked surprised to see such a brave little boy, and he led him to the Ice King. The King roared with laughter when he saw Jack.

Jack told him he wanted to see your palace on an errand for a good little fairy."

Then the King replied: "What is your errand, my little fellow?"

Jack Explains His Errand.
"My errand," Jack answered, "is to get a certain small chain of ice."

The King said to one of his subjects: "Take this boy and give him a room in one of my guest chambers."

The subject obeyed the order of the King, and soon Jack was in the cold guest chamber. When he was left alone he began to wonder how he should get the ice chain. He thought of a plan, however, and began his work. The first thing he did was to light a match and look around him. He went to the door and found it locked. But how do you think it was fastened? I will tell you. The frost had frozen the door tightly and thus locked it.

Jack lighted a bunch of matches, held them up to the door, melted the ice and soon got out into the hall.

Then he started in the direction the fairy had told him to find the chain. He went down the hall, and at the end he came to a beautiful arch, which was made of clear blocks of ice. Through this he passed into a room, opened a secret door in the wall and went to the door and found the chain in a casket of ice crystals.

Escapes With the Chain.
Now that he had the chain, the next thing was to escape without being seen or heard. The palace was supported by pillars of ice, and down one of these Jack slipped. In the course of a few days he reached his own home, and there found the fairy awaiting him. Then he gave her the chain. Now I will tell you of his reward. It was this:

Whenever he wished anything, it would come true.

When the Ice King awoke the next morning, he found Jack gone, and also the chain, which he prized so much. He flew into a furious rage, but it was useless, because Jack was beyond his reach.

The children readers of The Sunday Oregonian may wonder what use the fairy had for the chain. Well, I will tell you. She had no particular use for it; she was just testing Jack's courage. What use Jack made of the reward she gave him I may tell you some day, but you all know, children, that it is a dangerous thing to have everything you may wish for come true.

FLORENCE B. SAWYER.