

PAGE FOR BOYS AND GIRLS



NEW YEAR'S AT TAR FLAT

Aunt Susan Gathers the Country-side for Feast and Dance, and Good Cheer Reigns Supreme.

"Bringing homeward in the early dusk of a wintry Oregon day were two boys, Clinton and Chester Bascom, and their sister, Mary. It was a typical December day, in the western part of the state. The rain came down in a cold, drizzling mist, and had converted the country road into a sea of mud and water. Dunk had fallen, and the children were on their way home from the little, cheerless cabin in which they did duty as a schoolhouse. It was located several miles from the farms of the 20 families who had settled in Tar Flat.

"It's a blame shame, anyway," grumbled Clinton, the eldest, "that we can't have any celebration here like ma says they do back East. We never have no George Washington Birthday, nor Fourth of July, or Thanksgiving, nor nothing."

"Pa said all such things was the commonest nonsense; there wasn't any sense wastin' valuable time. He said Christmas was the foolishhest of all, and he wouldn't 'low his family to get so extravagant. I wonder if Pa ever was a boy," dolefully remarked Chester.

"I've thought of just the very thing," exclaimed Mary. "Let's ask him if we can't celebrate New Year's in his big new barn and invite a lot of people to come and have a dinner."

"That's just the way," he wouldn't let us," answered the boys.

Aunt Susan.

"You, Chester and Clinton and Mary, come right in here at once and get warm," called a voice from the doorway of a small farmhouse by the roadside.

"Ter, we will, Aunt Susan," yelled both boys at once, and soon all three were stamping and scraping the mud from their feet on Aunt Susan's front steps.

"When they were seated by the fire in the cozy kitchen, she set several apple turnovers, and a plate of hot doughnuts on the table for them. Aunt Susan was the staunch friend of all the boys and girls of that section. She was their counselor and advisor, and it was to her that the Bascom children mentioned their project for the New Year. She listened to their excited explanation, and then said:

"That's a fine plan, children, and I'll go around and get the farmers to help us. We'll decorate the barn and have a big supper, with games and a dance afterwards. It's high time this place was wretched out of the dead level that it's been layin' in ever since the first settlers came. Sometimes I feel as if we was all molderin'."

"But you'll have to ask Pa; he'd say 'No.' If we asked," said Mary. "And, besides," she added, "he's going to put the stalls, partitions and bins in the new barn, and then we couldn't have it."

"You leave Pa to me; I'll manage him all right," laughed Aunt Susan. "Now you must start or it will be dark before you get home."

After they had gone, their pockets full of warm doughnuts, she sat down and thought over the peculiar conditions which existed in the community. The farmers lived a sordid, colorless existence on their homesteads. No social event, no church life, no gathering of any kind ever broke the monotony of their lives. There was constant quarreling and bickering. Suffered families were not on speaking terms. These, especially, she determined to bring together.

Aunt Susan Plans.

"Now," mused Aunt Susan, "they are very prosperous, but their lives are barren of anything but money gittin'. Next week I'll drive all over this neighborhood and stir 'em up and make 'em contribute to the supper. Maybe I can work a change here. I don't believe there's a dozen books or papers in this country, and I'll see what can be done about that, too."

Aunt Susan, the sister of Farmer Bascom, had come from the East 20 years before. Four years later, her husband and three children were stricken with a fever which soon carried them off. But she had an indomitable will, and in spite of her affliction, courageously set to work on the claim her husband had taken up and was now one of the most prosperous landowners in Tar Flat.

The following week Aunt Susan, true to her word, to the children, set out on her mission of stirring up the apathetic farmers. A great snowstorm had taken the place of the rain, and she first drove in her sled over to the home of her brother, and read the riot act to him.

"Susan, what air you fillin' the heads of these youngsters with sich 'tarnal nonsense fer? Here's Clinton and Chester and Mary, all talkin' of celebratin' my barn on New Year's and havin' every chick and child ter come. Of all the foolishhest things!" exploded the owner of the new barn.

"They ain't nothin' foolish about it, Jim Bascom! The children here need it. Time this place waked up. It's been sleepin' too long," replied Aunt Susan, with much spirit.

"Well, go ahead with yer flaxins, an' I'll help," he said, at last.

From there Aunt Susan drove all over the country, for miles around, calling on everybody and asking them all to do their share toward the proposed celebration. She took care that no one was slighted.

Aunt Susan Sees 'Em Up.

People were amazed at the plan. Such a thing was unheard of in that community, where, as some boldly told Aunt Susan, everyone minded their own business. But the determined woman would not take no for an answer.

"The children of this place air goin' to have a celebration this time, if I have ter cook every morsel myself, and serve it out in my backyard in the snow," she muttered, as she boldly knocked at Grandfather Smith's door. Grandfather Smith was a crabbed, cranky, old fellow, and lived alone. He had disowned his only daughter because she married against his will.

"Why, what on earth air ye talkin' about?" he exclaimed, crustily, when she told him the plan. "No, I'm dead set agin it. I've lived in Oregon ever since Mount Hood was a hole in the ground, and I ain't goin' to be moved out 'en my way."

When the door finally closed on Aunt Susan, the old man his not only agreed to come, but had promised to bring 12 roast chickens and several turkeys.

So it was settled, and by the time Aunt Sue had finished her rounds, everybody was filled with the spirit of the celebration.

of these youngsters with sich 'tarnal nonsense fer? Here's Clinton and Chester and Mary, all talkin' of celebratin' my barn on New Year's and havin' every chick and child ter come. Of all the foolishhest things!" exploded the owner of the new barn.

"They ain't nothin' foolish about it, Jim Bascom! The children here need it. Time this place waked up. It's been sleepin' too long," replied Aunt Susan, with much spirit.

"Well, go ahead with yer flaxins, an' I'll help," he said, at last.

From there Aunt Susan drove all over the country, for miles around, calling on everybody and asking them all to do their share toward the proposed celebration. She took care that no one was slighted.

Aunt Susan Sees 'Em Up.

People were amazed at the plan. Such a thing was unheard of in that community, where, as some boldly told Aunt Susan, everyone minded their own business. But the determined woman would not take no for an answer.

"The children of this place air goin' to have a celebration this time, if I have ter cook every morsel myself, and serve it out in my backyard in the snow," she muttered, as she boldly knocked at Grandfather Smith's door. Grandfather Smith was a crabbed, cranky, old fellow, and lived alone. He had disowned his only daughter because she married against his will.

"Why, what on earth air ye talkin' about?" he exclaimed, crustily, when she told him the plan. "No, I'm dead set agin it. I've lived in Oregon ever since Mount Hood was a hole in the ground, and I ain't goin' to be moved out 'en my way."

When the door finally closed on Aunt Susan, the old man his not only agreed to come, but had promised to bring 12 roast chickens and several turkeys.

So it was settled, and by the time Aunt Sue had finished her rounds, everybody was filled with the spirit of the celebration.

of these youngsters with sich 'tarnal nonsense fer? Here's Clinton and Chester and Mary, all talkin' of celebratin' my barn on New Year's and havin' every chick and child ter come. Of all the foolishhest things!" exploded the owner of the new barn.

"They ain't nothin' foolish about it, Jim Bascom! The children here need it. Time this place waked up. It's been sleepin' too long," replied Aunt Susan, with much spirit.

"Well, go ahead with yer flaxins, an' I'll help," he said, at last.

From there Aunt Susan drove all over the country, for miles around, calling on everybody and asking them all to do their share toward the proposed celebration. She took care that no one was slighted.

Aunt Susan Sees 'Em Up.

People were amazed at the plan. Such a thing was unheard of in that community, where, as some boldly told Aunt Susan, everyone minded their own business. But the determined woman would not take no for an answer.

"The children of this place air goin' to have a celebration this time, if I have ter cook every morsel myself, and serve it out in my backyard in the snow," she muttered, as she boldly knocked at Grandfather Smith's door. Grandfather Smith was a crabbed, cranky, old fellow, and lived alone. He had disowned his only daughter because she married against his will.

"Why, what on earth air ye talkin' about?" he exclaimed, crustily, when she told him the plan. "No, I'm dead set agin it. I've lived in Oregon ever since Mount Hood was a hole in the ground, and I ain't goin' to be moved out 'en my way."

When the door finally closed on Aunt Susan, the old man his not only agreed to come, but had promised to bring 12 roast chickens and several turkeys.

So it was settled, and by the time Aunt Sue had finished her rounds, everybody was filled with the spirit of the celebration.

of these youngsters with sich 'tarnal nonsense fer? Here's Clinton and Chester and Mary, all talkin' of celebratin' my barn on New Year's and havin' every chick and child ter come. Of all the foolishhest things!" exploded the owner of the new barn.

"They ain't nothin' foolish about it, Jim Bascom! The children here need it. Time this place waked up. It's been sleepin' too long," replied Aunt Susan, with much spirit.

"Well, go ahead with yer flaxins, an' I'll help," he said, at last.

From there Aunt Susan drove all over the country, for miles around, calling on everybody and asking them all to do their share toward the proposed celebration. She took care that no one was slighted.

Aunt Susan Sees 'Em Up.

People were amazed at the plan. Such a thing was unheard of in that community, where, as some boldly told Aunt Susan, everyone minded their own business. But the determined woman would not take no for an answer.

"The children of this place air goin' to have a celebration this time, if I have ter cook every morsel myself, and serve it out in my backyard in the snow," she muttered, as she boldly knocked at Grandfather Smith's door. Grandfather Smith was a crabbed, cranky, old fellow, and lived alone. He had disowned his only daughter because she married against his will.

"Why, what on earth air ye talkin' about?" he exclaimed, crustily, when she told him the plan. "No, I'm dead set agin it. I've lived in Oregon ever since Mount Hood was a hole in the ground, and I ain't goin' to be moved out 'en my way."

When the door finally closed on Aunt Susan, the old man his not only agreed to come, but had promised to bring 12 roast chickens and several turkeys.

So it was settled, and by the time Aunt Sue had finished her rounds, everybody was filled with the spirit of the celebration.

of these youngsters with sich 'tarnal nonsense fer? Here's Clinton and Chester and Mary, all talkin' of celebratin' my barn on New Year's and havin' every chick and child ter come. Of all the foolishhest things!" exploded the owner of the new barn.

"They ain't nothin' foolish about it, Jim Bascom! The children here need it. Time this place waked up. It's been sleepin' too long," replied Aunt Susan, with much spirit.

"Well, go ahead with yer flaxins, an' I'll help," he said, at last.

From there Aunt Susan drove all over the country, for miles around, calling on everybody and asking them all to do their share toward the proposed celebration. She took care that no one was slighted.

Aunt Susan Sees 'Em Up.

People were amazed at the plan. Such a thing was unheard of in that community, where, as some boldly told Aunt Susan, everyone minded their own business. But the determined woman would not take no for an answer.

"The children of this place air goin' to have a celebration this time, if I have ter cook every morsel myself, and serve it out in my backyard in the snow," she muttered, as she boldly knocked at Grandfather Smith's door. Grandfather Smith was a crabbed, cranky, old fellow, and lived alone. He had disowned his only daughter because she married against his will.

"Why, what on earth air ye talkin' about?" he exclaimed, crustily, when she told him the plan. "No, I'm dead set agin it. I've lived in Oregon ever since Mount Hood was a hole in the ground, and I ain't goin' to be moved out 'en my way."

When the door finally closed on Aunt Susan, the old man his not only agreed to come, but had promised to bring 12 roast chickens and several turkeys.

So it was settled, and by the time Aunt Sue had finished her rounds, everybody was filled with the spirit of the celebration.

of these youngsters with sich 'tarnal nonsense fer? Here's Clinton and Chester and Mary, all talkin' of celebratin' my barn on New Year's and havin' every chick and child ter come. Of all the foolishhest things!" exploded the owner of the new barn.

"They ain't nothin' foolish about it, Jim Bascom! The children here need it. Time this place waked up. It's been sleepin' too long," replied Aunt Susan, with much spirit.

"Well, go ahead with yer flaxins, an' I'll help," he said, at last.

From there Aunt Susan drove all over the country, for miles around, calling on everybody and asking them all to do their share toward the proposed celebration. She took care that no one was slighted.

Aunt Susan Sees 'Em Up.

People were amazed at the plan. Such a thing was unheard of in that community, where, as some boldly told Aunt Susan, everyone minded their own business. But the determined woman would not take no for an answer.

"The children of this place air goin' to have a celebration this time, if I have ter cook every morsel myself, and serve it out in my backyard in the snow," she muttered, as she boldly knocked at Grandfather Smith's door. Grandfather Smith was a crabbed, cranky, old fellow, and lived alone. He had disowned his only daughter because she married against his will.

"Why, what on earth air ye talkin' about?" he exclaimed, crustily, when she told him the plan. "No, I'm dead set agin it. I've lived in Oregon ever since Mount Hood was a hole in the ground, and I ain't goin' to be moved out 'en my way."

When the door finally closed on Aunt Susan, the old man his not only agreed to come, but had promised to bring 12 roast chickens and several turkeys.

the guests began to pour into Farmer Bascom's yard. They came in sleds, wagons and on horseback, through the snowstorm which had set in, and the farmhouse was soon filled to overflowing with the merriest crowd that had ever gathered in Tar Flat. Old and young joined in the gaiety, and in the general good cheer which prevailed, jealousies and quarrels melted away and ancient feuds were forgotten. Grandfather Smith was even seen to embrace his daughter and kiss his two little grandsons whom he had never met before.

Then the guests went over to the barn, which had been arranged as a banquet hall. Here, with merry laughter and much good humor, they gathered at the inviting tables, the children at the largest.

After a somewhat long-winded blessing by Deacon Jones the feast began. Such bantering, such a rollicking spirit had never before been witnessed in that neighborhood. As fast as the platters of turkey, chicken and other good things disappeared, they were replenished, and Aunt Susan seemed everywhere at the same time. She contrived to get separated families reunited; neighbors who had not spoken for years clasped hands in friendly greeting.

A Jolly Time.

Then the tables were moved aside and the barn floor cleared for a frolic. Blind-man's buff, "pussy-wants-a-corner," and "frog-in-the-meadow" were played, and Gray hair and golden curls participated, and Grandfather Smith was the guest of the day.

"Let's have a dance!" shouted Clinton, in the midst of an exciting game of tag.

"All right," was the unanimous reply, and the old country fiddler was brought forward to furnish the music. Mary ran into the house and brought out an old cracked accordion, and Aunt Susan, laughing and protesting, was made to take her place beside the fiddler. With the addition of a few sharp, played by

the guests began to pour into Farmer Bascom's yard. They came in sleds, wagons and on horseback, through the snowstorm which had set in, and the farmhouse was soon filled to overflowing with the merriest crowd that had ever gathered in Tar Flat. Old and young joined in the gaiety, and in the general good cheer which prevailed, jealousies and quarrels melted away and ancient feuds were forgotten. Grandfather Smith was even seen to embrace his daughter and kiss his two little grandsons whom he had never met before.

Then the guests went over to the barn, which had been arranged as a banquet hall. Here, with merry laughter and much good humor, they gathered at the inviting tables, the children at the largest.

After a somewhat long-winded blessing by Deacon Jones the feast began. Such bantering, such a rollicking spirit had never before been witnessed in that neighborhood. As fast as the platters of turkey, chicken and other good things disappeared, they were replenished, and Aunt Susan seemed everywhere at the same time. She contrived to get separated families reunited; neighbors who had not spoken for years clasped hands in friendly greeting.

A Jolly Time.

Then the tables were moved aside and the barn floor cleared for a frolic. Blind-man's buff, "pussy-wants-a-corner," and "frog-in-the-meadow" were played, and Gray hair and golden curls participated, and Grandfather Smith was the guest of the day.

"Let's have a dance!" shouted Clinton, in the midst of an exciting game of tag.

"All right," was the unanimous reply, and the old country fiddler was brought forward to furnish the music. Mary ran into the house and brought out an old cracked accordion, and Aunt Susan, laughing and protesting, was made to take her place beside the fiddler. With the addition of a few sharp, played by

the guests began to pour into Farmer Bascom's yard. They came in sleds, wagons and on horseback, through the snowstorm which had set in, and the farmhouse was soon filled to overflowing with the merriest crowd that had ever gathered in Tar Flat. Old and young joined in the gaiety, and in the general good cheer which prevailed, jealousies and quarrels melted away and ancient feuds were forgotten. Grandfather Smith was even seen to embrace his daughter and kiss his two little grandsons whom he had never met before.

Then the guests went over to the barn, which had been arranged as a banquet hall. Here, with merry laughter and much good humor, they gathered at the inviting tables, the children at the largest.

After a somewhat long-winded blessing by Deacon Jones the feast began. Such bantering, such a rollicking spirit had never before been witnessed in that neighborhood. As fast as the platters of turkey, chicken and other good things disappeared, they were replenished, and Aunt Susan seemed everywhere at the same time. She contrived to get separated families reunited; neighbors who had not spoken for years clasped hands in friendly greeting.

A Jolly Time.

Then the tables were moved aside and the barn floor cleared for a frolic. Blind-man's buff, "pussy-wants-a-corner," and "frog-in-the-meadow" were played, and Gray hair and golden curls participated, and Grandfather Smith was the guest of the day.

"Let's have a dance!" shouted Clinton, in the midst of an exciting game of tag.

"All right," was the unanimous reply, and the old country fiddler was brought forward to furnish the music. Mary ran into the house and brought out an old cracked accordion, and Aunt Susan, laughing and protesting, was made to take her place beside the fiddler. With the addition of a few sharp, played by

the guests began to pour into Farmer Bascom's yard. They came in sleds, wagons and on horseback, through the snowstorm which had set in, and the farmhouse was soon filled to overflowing with the merriest crowd that had ever gathered in Tar Flat. Old and young joined in the gaiety, and in the general good cheer which prevailed, jealousies and quarrels melted away and ancient feuds were forgotten. Grandfather Smith was even seen to embrace his daughter and kiss his two little grandsons whom he had never met before.

Then the guests went over to the barn, which had been arranged as a banquet hall. Here, with merry laughter and much good humor, they gathered at the inviting tables, the children at the largest.

After a somewhat long-winded blessing by Deacon Jones the feast began. Such bantering, such a rollicking spirit had never before been witnessed in that neighborhood. As fast as the platters of turkey, chicken and other good things disappeared, they were replenished, and Aunt Susan seemed everywhere at the same time. She contrived to get separated families reunited; neighbors who had not spoken for years clasped hands in friendly greeting.

A Jolly Time.

Then the tables were moved aside and the barn floor cleared for a frolic. Blind-man's buff, "pussy-wants-a-corner," and "frog-in-the-meadow" were played, and Gray hair and golden curls participated, and Grandfather Smith was the guest of the day.

"Let's have a dance!" shouted Clinton, in the midst of an exciting game of tag.

"All right," was the unanimous reply, and the old country fiddler was brought forward to furnish the music. Mary ran into the house and brought out an old cracked accordion, and Aunt Susan, laughing and protesting, was made to take her place beside the fiddler. With the addition of a few sharp, played by

the guests began to pour into Farmer Bascom's yard. They came in sleds, wagons and on horseback, through the snowstorm which had set in, and the farmhouse was soon filled to overflowing with the merriest crowd that had ever gathered in Tar Flat. Old and young joined in the gaiety, and in the general good cheer which prevailed, jealousies and quarrels melted away and ancient feuds were forgotten. Grandfather Smith was even seen to embrace his daughter and kiss his two little grandsons whom he had never met before.

Then the guests went over to the barn, which had been arranged as a banquet hall. Here, with merry laughter and much good humor, they gathered at the inviting tables, the children at the largest.

After a somewhat long-winded blessing by Deacon Jones the feast began. Such bantering, such a rollicking spirit had never before been witnessed in that neighborhood. As fast as the platters of turkey, chicken and other good things disappeared, they were replenished, and Aunt Susan seemed everywhere at the same time. She contrived to get separated families reunited; neighbors who had not spoken for years clasped hands in friendly greeting.

A Jolly Time.

Then the tables were moved aside and the barn floor cleared for a frolic. Blind-man's buff, "pussy-wants-a-corner," and "frog-in-the-meadow" were played, and Gray hair and golden curls participated, and Grandfather Smith was the guest of the day.

"Let's have a dance!" shouted Clinton, in the midst of an exciting game of tag.

"All right," was the unanimous reply, and the old country fiddler was brought forward to furnish the music. Mary ran into the house and brought out an old cracked accordion, and Aunt Susan, laughing and protesting, was made to take her place beside the fiddler. With the addition of a few sharp, played by

the guests began to pour into Farmer Bascom's yard. They came in sleds, wagons and on horseback, through the snowstorm which had set in, and the farmhouse was soon filled to overflowing with the merriest crowd that had ever gathered in Tar Flat. Old and young joined in the gaiety, and in the general good cheer which prevailed, jealousies and quarrels melted away and ancient feuds were forgotten. Grandfather Smith was even seen to embrace his daughter and kiss his two little grandsons whom he had never met before.

Then the guests went over to the barn, which had been arranged as a banquet hall. Here, with merry laughter and much good humor, they gathered at the inviting tables, the children at the largest.

After a somewhat long-winded blessing by Deacon Jones the feast began. Such bantering, such a rollicking spirit had never before been witnessed in that neighborhood. As fast as the platters of turkey, chicken and other good things disappeared, they were replenished, and Aunt Susan seemed everywhere at the same time. She contrived to get separated families reunited; neighbors who had not spoken for years clasped hands in friendly greeting.

A Jolly Time.

Then the tables were moved aside and the barn floor cleared for a frolic. Blind-man's buff, "pussy-wants-a-corner," and "frog-in-the-meadow" were played, and Gray hair and golden curls participated, and Grandfather Smith was the guest of the day.

"Let's have a dance!" shouted Clinton, in the midst of an exciting game of tag.

"All right," was the unanimous reply, and the old country fiddler was brought forward to furnish the music. Mary ran into the house and brought out an old cracked accordion, and Aunt Susan, laughing and protesting, was made to take her place beside the fiddler. With the addition of a few sharp, played by

the guests began to pour into Farmer Bascom's yard. They came in sleds, wagons and on horseback, through the snowstorm which had set in, and the farmhouse was soon filled to overflowing with the merriest crowd that had ever gathered in Tar Flat. Old and young joined in the gaiety, and in the general good cheer which prevailed, jealousies and quarrels melted away and ancient feuds were forgotten. Grandfather Smith was even seen to embrace his daughter and kiss his two little grandsons whom he had never met before.

Then the guests went over to the barn, which had been arranged as a banquet hall. Here, with merry laughter and much good humor, they gathered at the inviting tables, the children at the largest.

After a somewhat long-winded blessing by Deacon Jones the feast began. Such bantering, such a rollicking spirit had never before been witnessed in that neighborhood. As fast as the platters of turkey, chicken and other good things disappeared, they were replenished, and Aunt Susan seemed everywhere at the same time. She contrived to get separated families reunited; neighbors who had not spoken for years clasped hands in friendly greeting.

A Jolly Time.

Then the tables were moved aside and the barn floor cleared for a frolic. Blind-man's buff, "pussy-wants-a-corner," and "frog-in-the-meadow" were played, and Gray hair and golden curls participated, and Grandfather Smith was the guest of the day.

"Let's have a dance!" shouted Clinton, in the midst of an exciting game of tag.

"All right," was the unanimous reply, and the old country fiddler was brought forward to furnish the music. Mary ran into the house and brought out an old cracked accordion, and Aunt Susan, laughing and protesting, was made to take her place beside the fiddler. With the addition of a few sharp, played by



LITTLE 1901.

BRAVE BEN GIVES BATTLE

Rescues Son of His Master From Mad Dog, Yielding Up His Own Life on Altar of Devotion.

This is to be the story of a hero. We have all been much interested in heroes for the past year or two, and I hope you will not be disappointed when you learn that here that I am going to tell you about was a dog.

He was an immense fellow, with a shaggy coat, and intelligent brown eyes, and nearly as strong as a lion. When I looked at his broad back and huge limbs I was always reminded of how his brethren were sent out over the mountains to succor those lost in the storms, for he was a St. Bernard, and that was the way he came to be called Ben.

From his earliest infancy, Ben showed a remarkable degree of intelligence. When he was only a great, shaggy puppy, he was often left to take care of the baby of the family, and you would have laughed at the way he would maneuver to keep her from crawling out on the porch.

He would first stretch his cumbersome limbs across the doorway, and when Baby, who was not at all afraid, would attempt to climb over, he would slowly raise to his feet, letting her slide softly on the floor; and then, when she started to crawl under, he would again lie down, usually managing to entangle her dress or feet in such a manner that for a while she was kept occupied.

Of course, Baby would soon become very much exasperated and slap and kick with all her might, but Ben never minded. Ben patiently, not so much as growling, although he would not accept a slap from anyone else without protest.

We all loved Ben. At least, so it seems to me now, and that is the way I think it should be with our heroes—their death at the post of duty should surely wipe out any minor faults they may have possessed.

Ben's Puppyhood.

Ben was raised under severe training; we were not allowed to pet or play with him very much, as it was feared it would make him careless about his duties. So, with carrying the dinner pails to the men in the fields, bringing up the cows from the pasture, and keeping away tramps, the days of Ben's puppyhood soon passed away and he attained the dignity of full-grown doghood.

It was a sultry afternoon in August, and Ben, tired from a long tramp to the fields, was lying stretched at full length upon the porch. Just beyond the porch ran a fence and then a long stretch of dusty road, along which, as afternoon merged into early evening, there was an almost constant line of teams passing, on their way home from the village.

Many dogs trotted past, most of them passing to look through the fence and say something to Ben; some of them, filled with pride by conquests in the village, urging him to come out in the road. When, however, their braggadocio was met by indifferent silence, they trotted on, fully convinced that their manner was very terror-inspiring, and that he was afraid. The truth of the matter was, Ben had been trained to never leave the yard unless told, and this hero of mine respected his early training.

Beyond the fence, close to the road, Joe, the eldest boy of the family, his spitting wood and throwing it over the fence. A passing dog had been so offensively in all his remarks that Ben decided to seek a more secluded spot for his nap, and arose and stretched himself. Uncle Dan, coming out of the house, walked to the fence and stood talking to Joe.

Just then a dog came running around the bend of the road. I have heard Uncle Dan tell many times how his eyes were suddenly attracted by the approaching dog; he was a monstrous fellow, his