

## The Cunning Traders of Nickletoen

THE people of Nickletoen were famous for their great business enterprise. Every little while they used to come out with something new. One year they invented the cake that you eat and have, too, which was something the whole world had been looking for. They were too wise to sell these cakes, but rented them out instead, so that each cake assured them a steady income that would last as long as the cake did.

Scarcely had they supplied the public with these wonderful and useful cakes before they manufactured a patent goose bone that would foretell only pleasant weather, and they had to run all the Nickletoen factories overtime to fill the orders that came to them from everywhere.

All these things gave Nickletoen such a good reputation that everybody was eager to buy anything that was labeled "Made in Nickletoen," and certain lazy persons of low cunning, who lived in that city, determined to take advantage of it. So they got a ship and sailed to Pennville.

They had nothing at all aboard the vessel, but when they reached Pennville they went through the streets crying: "Come to our ship and see the latest Nickletoen invention!"

All the folk of Pennville seized their pocketbooks and hurried eagerly aboard the ship. The cunning men of Nickletoen stood on the deck and pointed to the bare planks. "Here's the very best invention that the genius of Nickletoen has ever produced," said they. "You see before you the finest kind of sterilized air, made by the best chemists and guaranteed far superior to the natural goods. This air will keep fresh till you want it. All that is needed is to slice a piece off with a sharp knife. In order to introduce this new line we offer it for this day only at the low price of \$25 for a year's supply!"

The people of Pennville brought baskets and boxes and trunks to the ship. The cunning men of Nickletoen shoved the air into the receptacles. When they sailed away, the ship was so loaded down with gold that the waves nearly washed the decks.

The next day one of the retired pirates of Pennville thought that he would look for treasure at the bottom of the sea. He took his basket of patented air and walked into the water. As soon as he got beyond his depth, he stuck his head into the basket and took a long breath; but instead of air, he got water which filled his lungs and nearly drowned him.

He barely managed to get back to



THE PEOPLE HURRIED EAGERLY TO THE SHIP.

shore, and he told the people that there was something wrong with the air. So all the rest tried theirs in different ways and none of them could make it work.

"We must be careful never to let the people of Nickletoen know about this," said the Mayor. "They would think that we are very stupid, and that would never do, because we are really very wise, as we all know. But these new-fangled inventions are mostly very hard to use."

The cunning men of Nickletoen were so greedy that they decided to cheat the people of Pennville once more. They arrived again, with their ship empty as before, and ran through the streets crying: "More new patents from Nickletoen!"

The people seized their pocketbooks and hurried to the ship and the merchants pointed to the bare planks and cried: "Look at these magnificent sterilized air, made in Nickletoen! Made in Nickletoen! All ready bored and need only be laid down anywhere to produce the finest water!"

"We would buy these splendid things"

said the Mayor. "for we can readily perceive the great advantage of them, if we could only see them."

"That, of course, is quite impossible," said the merchants. "for an artisan well, as you know, is only a hole, and you cannot see a hole."

"That is so," said the Mayor, scratching his head. "Well, I will try one, anyway."

When the Mayor bought one every body else hastened to be the same. After the merchants had sold one to every person in Pennville they got ready to sail away, but the Mayor said: "One moment. Do you guarantee these wells?"

"Certainly," said the cunning men, and explained just how they should be used.

"That is very fine," said the Mayor, "but to tell you the truth, we are somewhat awkward with these new inventions. We had very poor success with your splendid sterilized air, for instance. We will ask you to stay with us for a few days until we try the wells. Then you can show us where we are wrong, if they do not work."

Despite their objections, the cunning men of Nickletoen had to go with the people and they were led straight to the jail. "This is our finest public building," said the Mayor, "and as our houses are hardly elegant enough for such distinguished guests, we will leave you here. You can make yourselves at home, for we never put any prisoners in here. The place is too good for them."

The cunning men thought that they would run away as soon as the people of Pennville turned their backs, but the Mayor pulled out a great key and began to lock the place up.

"What are you doing?" cried the Nickletoen men. "Do you mean to keep us prisoners? If you do, you will have war with Nickletoen!"

"Gentlemen! gentlemen! How can you think that we would so insult you?" said the Mayor deeply shocked. "I am locking you up because a jail has to be locked up. Whoever heard of one being left open? But before we go, I will leave you provisions."

Immediately the hospitable people began to pass all kinds of good things through the barred windows: bread and cake and jam and chicken and veal and everything. But as they were turning away, one of the Nickletoen men said:

"You have not left us anything to drink. Do you wish us to die from thirst?"

"To be sure, to be sure," said the Mayor. "I nearly forgot. Here, take hold!"

With that he lifted his arms up as if he were handing something through the bars. But the Nickletoen men couldn't see anything so they asked:

"What is it?"

"Why, it's one of your artisan wells," said the Mayor. "I will gladly lend it to you and then you will have fresh water whenever you need it."

Then the people of Pennville hurried away to try their artisan wells. They tried and tried, but they did not get a drop of water. They tried again all the next day, but failed.

"We would better ask the merchants how to use them," said the Mayor. "No," said the Mayor. "They would laugh at us for being so stupid, and then the people of Pennville spent another day trying the different ways he suggested. But they got no water."

So they went to the jail, very much ashamed to ask the merchants. When they opened the jail door they found the merchants lying on the floor, nearly dead. "Water!" moaned they.

"Why? Did I leave you an artisan well?" said the Mayor, surprised. Then the swindlers confessed everything and gave back all the money they had obtained for the sterilized air and the wells. And the people of Pennville put up a tablet by the city gate, on which was written:

"Cheats and swindlers, beware! We are too wise for you."

It and cook it, but she would not touch it. "Don't you see that it is growing on the very spot where you threw down Death!" she gasped.

Moby called her a fool and cut the calloo himself, abusing her all the while. He cooked and ate it all, and went for a stroll. Before long he felt that the calloo had taken fire inside him. In mortal terror he called to his wife:

"I am burning! Bring me a bowl of water!"

But the woman had no love for her greedy husband, and she stood afar off and laughed as he screamed and slowly burned to death.

"Served him right," she muttered. "He will put an end to Death!"

But lo! when he returned, Death had disappeared. Next morning he saw a fat calloo (a kind of West Indian spinach) growing by his door. He called to his wife to pluck

## Good Sport Catching Cape Hens



THE GREEN hands aboard the East India trader *Bride* had listened with keen interest to the yarns of the elders about albatrosses, Cape hens and Cape pigeons, with which they expected to fall in when rounding the Cape of Good Hope, on their voyage to Madras. The boys were keyed up to the highest pitch by the romantic fiction, and before crossing the Line they all prepared their tackle for catching flocks of wild seabirds.

Queer, isn't it, how tarry old salts just love to impose on credulous sea sucklings. The breezes had been strong and fair and the seabirds were few. Such as they had seen contented themselves with following far astern in the wake of the ship and swooping down on any stray fragment that the cook threw overboard. This it was that the boys had not seen any of the seabirds at close quarters, and their curiosity had been keenly whetted.

The albatross, once seen, can never be mistaken. On the wing, it is superior to

the storm; in the water, it looks as humdrum as a barnyard goose. The Cape hen is about as big as an average sized turkey, and it is the most savage and most rapacious of seabirds. I never had an opportunity of learning its scientific name, but I am sure it deserves one. The name Cape hen is not expressive enough for a bird with the fighting qualities and greed of this feathered biped. A sailor, who fell overboard, had little trouble in scaring away an albatross, but was fiercely attacked and badly wounded by the Cape hen.

The Cape pigeon is a pretty little bird, with black spots. It is shaped more like a teal than a pigeon, has the webbed feet and bill of a duck, and is easily captured. The fresh northwestern died away and was succeeded by a flat calm, and the birds came along for a closer view. Only one albatross approached, but there were, perhaps, a dozen Cape hens and a swarm of Cape pigeons. They swam about the ship and seemed as tame as water fowl in the pond of a park.

Fishing lines and hooks were produced, the bait being scraps of salt beef or pork. There was no difficulty in catching the Cape pigeons, but the Cape hens were more wary. The solitary albatross also kept aloof.

Then the bright idea struck one boy to bait his hook with a fragment of a Cape pigeon. A Cape hen immediately swallowed the piece.

The Cape hen was too strong for John Campbell to hold, and he sang out for assistance. It took three boys to haul the creature aboard, so vigorous and aggressive was it.

It was knocked on the head with an iron belying pin and put out of misery. John Campbell was mightily proud of his capture, and he gave his mates who helped him a share of the feathers for their trouble, so everybody was satisfied.

The sport was stopped suddenly by a puff of wind, which called the watch to trim sail. The calm was over, and so was the sport, the albatross following the ship for several days afterward, finally to be shot by the skipper, who had promised his wife to take her home the skin of an albatross of his own killing.

After shooting the bird, he had a boat lowered to pick it up. He had no superstition about killing an albatross, and I never met a sailor who had. This, in spite of Coleridge and the "Ancient Mariner."

## Interesting Story of Patsy's Curious Cruise

HOW it rained! The very oldest inhabitant that ever inhabited any place could never have seen such a rain as poured down all in a rush after a morning of beautiful Spring sunshine.

The sheets of water were so thick Patsy couldn't see the houses across the street. At the end of half an hour it had settled into just an ordinary hard rain, and a little bit after that it stopped so that the children could go out and examine things.

The gutters were like mountain brooks, carrying lots of twigs and little branches of trees with the new green leaves on them. Patsy launched a board for a ship, and away it went so fast she could hardly follow it.

The greatest excitement, however, came from the Martins. "Patsy! Patsy!" cried Laura. "Come

an awful long time to get here. The tub's terrible tippy. I don't want to come yet."

And the more Mrs. Martin scolded and threatened and argued, the cooler and saucier Roland became.

"Roland, unless you come in within five minutes," she announced at last, "you'll have to stay there all dinner time."

"I'll eat apples and carrots," grinned Roland. At that moment the other tub came near enough for Patsy to get it by using a broom which was standing in the water near the steps.

"Look here," she cried, "I'll go after him, 'cause he disobeyed us too." Patsy poled herself along with the broom. At times she thought she would surely go in, and when she got near

Roland he tried to push her off with his paddle, but succeeded only in tipping over his own tub and falling into a foot or so of water.

He really couldn't have been much wetter than he was, but he yelled like an Apache Indian and waded over to the steps where Laura caught him by his dripping jacket and carried him to his mother.

Patsy got safe to harbor from her strange voyage, and went home to change her spattered clothes.

Roland was put to bed and the girls rather suspected that his father gave him the spanking his mother promised. At any rate, he never mentioned the matter again, and next day some men came and drained the cellar so that there were no more cruises in those seas.



over and see our cellar. It's got nearly a foot of water, and everything except the coal is floating around on top!"

Off skipped Patsy and Laura, and found the funniest-looking cellar any one ever saw.

Apples, potatoes and a cabbage were bobbing up and down, two water tubs, several scrubbing pads and clothes, various boards and boxes, to say nothing of an old straw hat of Roland's, which swam about, bottom side up, as neatly as if it were a twin-screw ocean cruiser.

A few moments later down came Roland. He was so charmed when he saw his straw hat boat that he almost fell into the water trying to catch it. Fortunately Laura got a good grip on his trousers, and he got wet only to his knees and elbows.

"You just come on upstairs!" said Laura, in her sternest voice, which wasn't so very stern. "You'll be drowned or spoil your clothes if you stay around here."

Patsy and she dragged the unwilling child back to the dining-room, and Laura locked the cellar door and gave the key to the cook.

Roland sat on the floor and kicked desolately, and Laura and Patsy went up to Laura's room to play paper dolls. Half an hour later Mrs. Martin called them downstairs.

"What's become of Roland?" she asked. "He was in the dining-room last I knew," replied Laura.

"Well, where do you suppose he's gone? I need him this minute."

Laura and Patsy both felt suspicious, and looked at each other. The cook had taken great fancy to Roland and spoiled him dreadfully.

"The girls went downstairs." "He might be on the cellar steps, looking at the water," suggested Laura, vaguely.

"Good gracious!" exclaimed Mrs. Martin; "he'll be in the water, if he's anywhere."

The girls followed slowly after her. Sure enough, the door was open, and when they all reached the lowest dry step they very faintly saw in the world met their eyes.

In the middle of the flooded cellar was a washtub, and in the washtub was Roland.

He had put a board across for a seat and was paddling himself about with another.

He had captured his straw hat and was wearing it. There wasn't a dry inch of clothing on him and he was smiling as if he had never been so happy in his life.

"Roland Martin!" cried his mother, horrified, "come here to me this moment!"

Roland turned and smiled cheerfully. "Ah, no, mumps," he said. "It took

"MARTHA'S just a regular stupid," said Lou to Maud Ellen. They had recited their arithmetic lesson perfectly, and were going home to play.

Martha still sat in her seat after all the rest had gone, peering away at "24 in 6, 24 makes how many integers and what fraction?"

"I get the number of times it goes in, but I don't get the remains right."

"Whatever is you doin' wif remains, honey?"

Martha looked up. Uncle Isaak, the colored janitor, had just come in. He and Martha were friends, for he often helped her on with her rubbers, and once he had brought her a big apple next day.

"It's my arithmetic, Uncle Isaak. The other girls get theirs so easy. But I can't do fractions. They won't go into my head. I can't tell the denominator from the nominator, and the left-overs never seem to come right."

"Well, now, Miss Marty. Ah, feed Ah, heber had no fractions in mah school!" But Ah kin tell yoh sumpin' dat'll be a comfort to yoh-ahs."

"Please do, Uncle Isaak."

"Well, dis mornin', now, Miss Marty, Mandy, she done made some slap-jacks for breakfasts, an' I say, 'Mandy, what's dat lassa pichah?' So Mandy, she gits dat 'lasses pichah, an' dey was some in all right; but, in col' weddin', Miss Marty, you knows dem 'lasses dey ain't run berry sly. So I tip the pichah obah, an' I wrubbin' dat 'lasses, he stant ob mighty slow, jes' crawlin' down de spout, lak a out an' out snail. An' I says, 'All right foh yoh, Mistah 'Lasses, Ah'm gwine wait foh yoh. Ah heber gits dat school swep.' Den dat 'lasses come creepin' erlong, an' mah 'lasses come erlong ahin' de fust 'lasses an'

push it, an' dat gob er 'lasses gits bigah an' bigah an' go a-creepin' fastah an' fastah, till all ob er suddin' it come rollin' out de pichah, big an' sweet an' plenty, an' it jes' natchally kiver mah slap-jack clean out sight."

"Now, Miss Marty, dat 'lasses come shew lak de kase in such good, thick 'lasses. Ef it had er been po' white trash it woulder come out so fast it jes' take yoh bref away, an' it woulder run all ober de plate, watery an' thin, an' 'thout no good rich sweetness to make yoh smack yoh lips."

"Yoh jes' remember dis, Honey. De good thick 'lasses neber runs fast, but after wile, w'en it gets a-goin' it comes bilin' and it gwine mak the worl' tasty foh folks. An' dat's how mahby it gwine be wif yoh fractions; when dey comes dey'll come fine an' plenty."

Martha raised a shining face. "Oh, Uncle Isaak, I believe I will. Thank you for helpin' me."

The old man hobbled off, picking up stray papers, and Martha sat to work anew. Wonder of wonders, the example came right, and, best of all, she understood how she did it, and the rest of the lesson was easy.

"I'll always remember about the molasses, Uncle Isaak," she said, as he held the door for her, and the old darky bowed her out with a wrinkle smile, and went back to his work.

**Johnny's Troubles.** Sometimes I wish and wish I could Just be a squirrel in the wood; And other times I wish that I Could be a cloud up in the sky. It's queer, I never wish to be Just a plain human boy like me.

I guess that's 'cause somehow a boy That's not that big him no joy; For then it's 'Johnny, go to bed!' And then it's 'Get up, sleepy head!' And then it's 'Run to school!' and then it's 'Johnny, go to bed!' again.

## The Story of the Strange Calloo of Death

LONG, long ago, there was a young, lusty, greedy and thieving black man named Moby who journeyed into a strange country.

On his way he passed many green pastures full of herds of cattle. Moby wondered who could be the happy owner of so much wealth.

"Who owns all those cattle?" he inquired of a man who was hurrying in the opposite direction.

"Death!" was the answer, and away ran the man.

Moby journeyed on, perplexed. "Who owns all these fields?" he next asked an old woman.

"Death," replied the old woman, trembling.

"Death!" said Moby. "It's strange that I never heard about him before."

"Take warning, then," said the old woman. "If you meet him and he once holds you, you may scream as much as you like, but nobody can help you."

Moby laughed and went down the road, meeting many persons. None of them could give him an exact description of Death.

"And do all these fat sheep and goats and fowls belong to Death?" Moby asked. "Yes."

"And do you mean to say that nobody ever steals them?"

Moby's thievish eyes glistened and rolled in amusement. What a fortune he could make in this strange country.

"A man must be clever indeed to steal from Death," was the reply.

"I'll see about that!" laughed Moby, and off he went. At last he came to a big iron gate on which was written:

"THE GATE OF DEATH."

"Hullo!" exclaimed Moby. "This must be the gate that leads to Brother Death's house. What a lot of horses and cows inside! I'll have to get in and steal some."

But the gate would not open, so Moby killed a sheep and greased the hinges of the gate with its fat. Then it flew open.

Moby rushed in and found himself face to face with a terrible being.

Good morning, Brother Death," he said, politely.

Death made no reply, so Moby coolly went to the house and began filling his pockets.

Raising his eyes, he found Death standing in front of him, exactly as before.

"You don't mind if I take a few things, do you, Brother Death?" he asked, with a sneer.

But Death again made no reply, so Moby kept up a one-sided conversation with his strange host.

"Thank you, Brother Death, thanks! You are really kind to say I can take any horse I want. I think I'll choose the black horse. Much obliged to you, sir! What's that you say? Take as many pigs as I can carry? That I will!"

He tied some of the fattest pigs together and threw them over the back of the black horse.

"Where's the saddle?" he muttered. "You tell me to go and fetch it from the coach-house? Well, I've heard of real life gentlemen before, but you're the first one I ever met."

He found the saddle and put it on the horse, and then bade Death good-bye. "Next time I come," he said, "I'll bring the children along, so that they can take their presents with them."

But even this piece of insolence could provoke no reply from Death, who simply followed Moby in a way that made him shiver.

The Gate of Death soon came in sight. "Open not!" thundered Death, and the sound of his terrible voice, now heard for the first time, made Moby tremble. "The Gate of Death opens only at my command, and he who passes through it must stay forever."

"Open, my good gate, open!" Moby entreated.

"From the time the world began I have stood here," moaned the gate, "and no body ever greased my hinges before you came."

And the gate swung open out of gratitude.

Moby galloped through, and immediately the gate shut with a clang. He laughed mockingly at Death, whom he imagined to be safely shut in behind the barrier. But to his horror he saw the shadow of his grim enemy seated on the horse behind him.

At last he passed a man on the road. "Friend!" he shouted, "take this man on my back!"

The man came forward, but halted suddenly at the sight of Death. "I can't do it," he said, shaking with terror. "You can't expect me to take up Death before my time."

Moby rode faster and faster, now and then stopping wayfarers and asking them to relieve him of his companion. But one and all refused in terror.

Moby at last shook him off at his own doorstep and fought him with the strength of desperation—fought and vanquished him! When he saw him lying prostrate on the ground, he rushed inside his hut for an axe, crying boastfully, "Now I will put an end to Death!"

But lo! when he returned, Death had disappeared. Next morning he saw a fat calloo (a kind of West Indian spinach) growing by his door. He called to his wife to pluck

along the narrow path, through the dense forest of fir trees, little feet in copper toed shoes, which glistened in the sun as they ran in quest of gold.

After reaching home, each one was given a large piece of bread, thickly spread with molasses. Oh, how much better that tasted than the finest of luncheons now!

Then the search began along the old rail fence which surrounded the home place and skirted the path which is now busy Larrabee street, with its clanging, noisy electric cars.

A small drowsy and pointed sticks did not prove the beat of miners' tools. The children soon grew tired, and then they all at once made up their minds that no gold had been buried there. While resting they ate the apples which they had brought with them, the seeds of which they planted in the corners of the apple fence. Some time afterward many apple trees were found growing there.

Years afterward when Gerlie has grown to be a tall, kind-faced lady, the gentleman she has married, has, she discovers, bought the property where the apple trees grew. Several of them have grown crooked and ungainly and in the course of improvements must be destroyed.

Gerlie beseeches her husband to spare one that bears yellow apples.

From stately windows she sometimes looks down and says: "Well, if there was no gold buried there under that beautiful tree it does seem as if there should have been."

From those same windows she looks upon another beautiful home which

stands upon the exact spot where once stood the schoolhouse, which, though made of logs, is still cherished in memory and causes her to long for one happy hour there again, where the bright-eyed little squirrels used to come and look in at the door, as if to ask where did all those noisy boys and girls come from?

JUNE McILLEN ORDWAY.

Black or white, 'tis all the same. Down from heaven our Savior came Over all on earth to reign. Black or white, 'tis all the same.

Upon hearing the verse the teacher's daughter flew into a great passion and said: "That's not so, black means niggers and white means us."

This hatred of the colored race was something quite new to the Western children. After a while they became more used to hearing the girl use such expressions, and were on quite friendly terms with her, when one day she informed them that her father, Dr. K., had just buried a big millpan full of gold pieces. She said it was some of their money that the "nasty Northerners didn't find." She told them it was buried between an old stump of a tree and a rail fence. Upon hearing this one of the little brothers whispered to Gerlie: "I bet it's in pa's orchard." That afternoon the small window in the log cabin seemed smaller than ever, and the long bench that reached around the room and ended at either side of the door seemed harder than usual, while lessons were poorly recited as this question was turned and turned over again in little heads: "If the doctor dropped any of that money and we found it, and it was on our pa's land, wouldn't it be right to keep it?"

Money was not often seen by these children, and it would have seemed a wonderful thing to have found so much as "two bits," as 25 cents was called at that time.

At last 10 o'clock came and school was dismissed. There went hurrying home



Although I have no snowy coat, Such as my Arctic brothers wear, Since I have learned to climb this pole, I surely am a Polar bear.

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