

Polly Evans' Story Page for Boys and Girls

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ONE PRINCE TO MANY

WHENEVER the king passed the royal nursery—and that, mind you, was but seldom—it was with garkening brows and a shake of the head. But no one ever would have suspected that the cause of the king's discomfiture was the pretty little baby boy who lay nestled in his royal cradle. Surely he was the quietest and best natured baby in the world. All day long he would hink solemnly at the high-valued ceiling above him, nor would ever a cry escape him.

No, it was not the behavior of the mite of a prince that displeased the king; it was the prince himself. For this was the seventh son, you must remember. And when a kingdom is as small as the kingdom of Canard was, or a king as poor as King Edouard was, it is no easy matter to fitly provide for six sons, let alone a seventh.



PRINCE GERALD

Really, the seventh baby hadn't the slightest excuse for being a boy. His should have known that a princess was wanted.

Not many years passed before Prince Gerald discovered that he had given offense because he was a boy. When a mere child he played contentedly by himself in the nursery, nor did the thought that he was shunned by all except a loving nurse disturb him in the least. As he grew into a handsome youth, however, the truth came home to him that there was no place for him in the management of the little kingdom. One of his brother princes assisted the king in watching over the affairs of the monarchy; another commanded the army; a third the navy; the fourth had control of the treasury; and so every other important position was filled. Indeed, Prince Gerald seemed to fit in nowhere, although, as a matter of fact, he was the brightest and most talented of all seven sons.

No one seemed to mind greatly when the prince announced his intention of leaving Canard to seek his fortunes elsewhere. On the contrary, many (among whom were the king and queen and six princes) seemed much relieved in mind. A great sadness and loneliness fell



HE SEARCHED IN THE BYWAYS

him when he observed in what little esteem he was held by the royal family. None in the whole kingdom mourned his departure, save the old nurse.

These were not pleasant memories to carry with him, so it is small wonder that Prince Gerald sighed deeply as he trudged toward the city which lay beyond his door. But even while so preoccupied in thought, the prince could not but soon observe the lack of inhabitants in the city through which he was passing. Yet, though not one person or animal had been seen, there was a strange air of bustle about him. Smoke was curling from chimneys; the hum of industry came to everything would seem as it were in a large city, but, once there again, he was upon a scene of desertion. Marvelling, he searched in all the public places and in the byways, in his endeavor to find a single living creature. There were all the evidences of people, without the people.

Wondering more and more, the

youth finally gained the outside of the city. Here he found, dwelling in a cave on the hillside, a very learned magician. Of him Prince Gerald inquired about this strange city.

"Know, then," replied the sage, "that I myself am the creator of this marvel. Several years ago I discovered a wonderful drink, no sooner did this pass the mouth of a person than that person became invisible. But persons thus rendered invisible to ordinary eyes were readily seen by one another. As this drink was of delightful flavor, before long every one in the city, even the animals, began to partake of it, until now it is used instead of water. The city is, indeed, teeming with the life of which you heard sound; it was merely invisible to you."

"Let me buy of the magic drink," asked the prince, eager for adventure.

"Nay," said the magician, "I sell to no one; but as thou art of a goodly cast of countenance, I'll give thee all thou desirest. Many others in the city know the secret, so that thou wilt have no trouble in obtaining it hereafter."

Prince Gerald found it to be as the magician had said. After drinking the wonderful liquid he returned to the city. Naturally, he was started at first to see clearly everything which before had been invisible. This he soon grew accustomed to, however, and even forgot that he himself was not visible except to those about him.

The city he found to be the capital of the kingdom of Mysto. Hastening to court, he presented himself to the king, by whom he was received most graciously. There was plenty of opportunity here for achievement. The king accepted the services of the prince and straightway set him at many difficult tasks. All of these did Prince Gerald accomplish in such a way as to greatly please the king. Indeed, the handsome youth rose so high in the king's esteem that within three years he was appointed prime minister to his majesty. Perhaps many of Gerald's great deeds were inspired by the winsome brown eyes of the beautiful princess of Mysto.

With her, had the prince fallen deeply in love, but he dared not ask her to marry him, who possessed no lands of his own or wealth except that which the king of Mysto had bestowed upon him.

One day Prince Gerald bethought himself that he would like to pay a visit to his father and mother. The king granting him permission, he again sought the magician, from whom he secured a liquid which would make him visible. Drinking this, the prince rode off in a magnificent coach of state, accompanied by a large escort of honor.

King Edouard was greatly impressed by the magnificence of his son's apparel and of his coach; also he observed the great respect shown by the retinue. So Prince Gerald received a cordial welcome from the king and queen, although his brothers were somewhat envious at his good fortune.

Thereupon the prince returned to the king of Mysto, and begged for the loan of the invisible army. This was immediately granted. Marching upon Edouard's enemy, the weird, invisible host

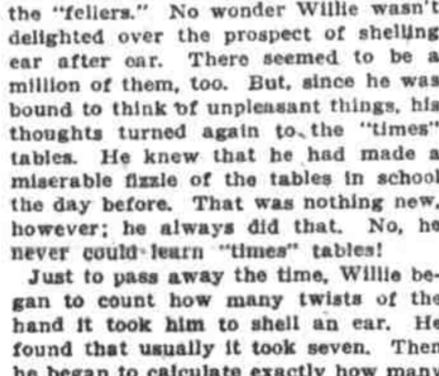
Boys and Girls of England Make Merit at Fancy Dress Ball



An Admiral



Pierrot



The Lord Mayor's Ball to Children



Her Great Grandmother



A Geisha

THE LORD MAYOR of London is a very important dignitary, indeed, so that when he gives a ball you may know that it is attended with all the magnificence possible. The fancy dress ball which he gives annually to the children is no exception to the rule.

This year's ball was held in January, when Sir John Bell (the present Lord Mayor) extended an invitation which more than 600 persons accepted. And of this number, at least half were children between the ages of 6 and 14.

The scene was a gay one. Glancing among the brilliant throng, one could see vikings, clowns, admirals, jesters,

costers, "great grandmothers," gelsias, fabrics, queens, Pierrots and Pierrettes, fishwives, cavaliers, soldiers and sailors; in fact, it would be difficult to find a costume which was not represented. A number were dressed in the costumes of their ancestors.

All kinds of entertainments were provided for these little people, including marionettes, musical clowns and a Punch and Judy show. You may be sure that every one had the happiest sort of a time.

Everywhere through the crowd walked the great Lord Mayor, shaking hands with his little guests and proving that he wasn't nearly as terrible as he looked.

On the second morning of his stay we were awakened by the shrieking and excited calling of many robins, and, wondering about the cause, we went to discover the cause. Presently we found that poor little Nicodemus was the innocent occasion of all the commotion. He sat on his perch by the window as contentedly as ever, but on the flagpole of the next house a large rooster, with his feathers fairly bristling with excitement, announced to all interested parties that there was a hawk on the neighborhood. For some minutes he would about the disturbing news, and then, apparently gathering all his force, would swoop toward that window as if bent on the destruction of the hawk, once even striking the window with sufficient force to throw other birds from their perches. He was then, however, joined in this performance, some using the gable of the next house for a perch when the flagpole was fully occupied. Occasionally the other birds would add their cry to the general uproar, and two orioles and one little red-eyed vireo came cautiously up on the roof and peered in the window to see what terrible monster this was about which the robins were telling such a harrowing tale. They went back to their family cares, however, only the robins kept up the disturbance; but from "early morn till dewy eve" they glared, abused and tried to poison upon Nicodemus, he noticed it, but made no attempt at retaliation; only as they swooped so violently upon him, he ducked his head and dodged, as if afraid of being struck. Not only Nicodemus, but people as well, who came to call upon him, would stand near the window, instinctively dodge as the robins flew toward the window, so fierce and determined was the onslaught.

For five days we kept the little hawk, and during that time the robins never ceased from their noisy complaining, until their clamor really came to be a nuisance to the neighborhood. Persons who were told of this strange and continuous performance could hardly believe it until they came to see, and it seemed the more remarkable, in that the room occupied by Nicodemus was in an out-of-the-way corner of the house, and how the robins ever discovered him, or how they announced it to other birds, is still a mystery.

Attached as we really became to our cute little visitor, we soon found we had a sleuth on our hands. We didn't want to cage him; neither, just then, when the woods were so full of birds, did we wish to set him free, lest he destroy some of them. Finally we took him to a nearby park, and there he remained through the summer, well cared for, and much admired by many visitors. Handsome, friendly, little Nicodemus will always be a very happy memory to us whose guests he was, as he will be likewise to all those who were so fortunate as to make his acquaintance.

The Storm-Tossed Sparrow Hawk

ONE very stormy day last June there was found on the sidewalk, apparently half dead, a poor little sparrow hawk, that seemed literally to have been driven from the sky by the force of the heavy rain, which fell in torrents. He was brought to me by a friend, who felt sure that the forlorn, bedraggled bird would find a welcome, as indeed he did. At first he was unable to stand, seemingly from weakness, but in a short time he perched on the arm of a chair and began to arrange his toilet, which was, of a truth, in desperate need of attention.

I had never seen a sparrow hawk before at close range, and, as he preened his feathers and the colors began to show as he became dry, I was amazed at their variety and unusualness. The top of his head dried first, and the rufous spot in the center of the steady blue struck me as a happy combination; and as his beautiful barred back, so rich in color, and his creamy breast, with its decoration of velvety black spots (to say nothing of the remarkable stately blue bands which the wing covers furnished), all gradually resumed their normal condition, I thought I had never seen a more handsome fellow.



"ATE FROM OUR FINGERS"

His eyes were luminous in their brightness, and his cute, little head revolved as if on a pivot.

He seemed quite at home, not at all afraid, and when I carried him to a small room upstairs, which, for the time being, I gave up to him completely, he seemed to appreciate the situation and proceeded to make the most of it. The proverbial expression, "as wild as a hawk," failed to fit this specimen, for he ate from our fingers quite trustingly from the very first; sat serenely on an improvised perch we made for him; looked calmly out of the window, as if much interested in what he saw, but never once flew at the window or made any attempt to escape, as wild birds brought indoors generally do. He seemed attracted by anything shiny, and a small pair of scissors and a thin piece of wood, which he brought from a nearby table, and play with them, much as a kitten might, sometimes actually rolling over on his side and occupied occasionally in a spirit of absolute playfulness; and if either of them fell to the floor, he promptly went after it and brought it back. At last he took up his perch on the top of the highest picture in the room, and there he stayed till morning. He would greet every one who opened the door of his room with his funny little note of "killy-killy-killy," and he had nearly sixty years of age, a few of which he was with us. We named him Nicodemus, and it seemed as if he really got to know his new title.

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Well Supported.
School Director—Little boy, who supported the world on his shoulders?
Pupils—Atlas, sir.
School Director—But who supported Atlas?
Little Boy—The book that says, sir; but I suppose it was his wife.
Unanswerable Argument.
One of the lady teachers of a class of boys asked a lad to name some of the beauties of education, and when much embarrassed when there came the response, "Fifty school teachers."

How Willie Learned His "Times" Tables

THERE was certainly nothing more tiresome than shelling corn—unless, perhaps, it was learning "times" tables.

So Willie muttered to himself as he sat on an upturned bushel basket in the corner, dexterously loosening the golden grains from the cobs.

Worst of all, this happened to be Saturday morning, when, ordinarily, he would have been enjoying himself with the "fellows." No wonder Willie wasn't delighted over the prospect of shelling ear after ear. There seemed to be a million of them, too. But, since he was bound to think of unpleasant things, his thoughts turned again to the "times" tables. He knew that he had made a miserable fizzle of the tables in school the day before. That was nothing new, however; he always did that. No, he never could learn "times" tables!

Just leave it to me, sire. I shall rid you of your enemy."

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After a while he succeeded in shelling most of the ears with six twists. He found, too, that he could do four ears in twenty-four twists, and five ears in just thirty. This pastime of counting began to grow quite fascinating, and Willie tried one combination after the other. Faster and faster flew his fingers, so eager was he to obtain the different results.

Why, George would be only too glad to be ill in order to pay a visit to Uncle Ben. But it was of no use—He couldn't look sick no matter how hard he tried.

A week later found Harry living with Uncle Ben in the great house built in the midst of the woods of Maine. While the boy was treated with every conceivable kindness, his uncle insisted that he spend most of his time in active exercise.

Harry at first felt it a great hardship to remain away from his beloved books. But, after a while, he grew accustomed to being out of doors in all kinds of weather, and even began to take pleasure in his rambles.

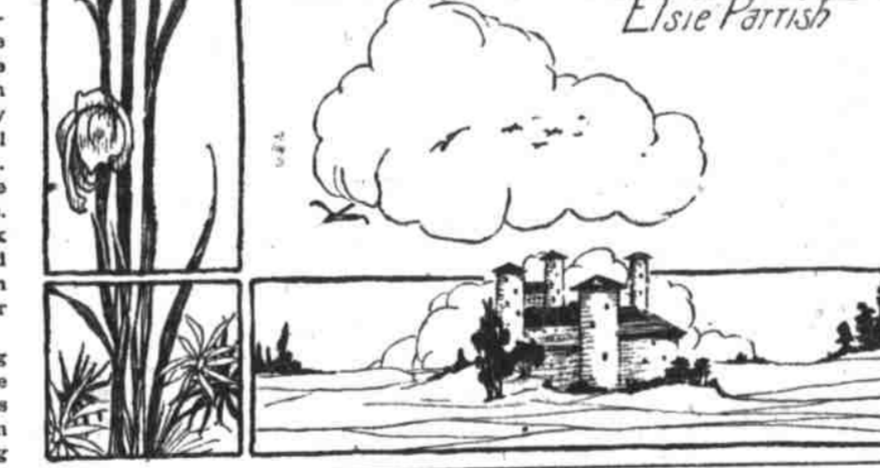
One thing that interested him immensely was the deer park. From one side of the mansion there ran a great inclosure, where only a few of the giant trees had been felled. And here were

GROWTH OF A THOUGHT

A Beautiful Thought in a garden grew
And stretched to the sun, and drank the dew;
It grew until it stood so tall,
It scarce was hid by the garden wall!

New fragrance, one morning, the garden filled
Till over the wall its sweetness spilled
For, the Beautiful Thought, all its petals freed,
Had budded and bloomed to a Beautiful Deed.

Elsie Parrish



eight mice could take away thirty-twos in the same time. He doubled the number of mice, and tried again. Willie looked around with a start, to discover that he had shelled the very last ear, and that his task was completed. Nor did he realize at that time that it was the "times" tables that enabled him to finish so quickly, and that he had been zealously practicing those

WHERE THE HUNTER BECAME THE HUNTED

BEN has written that he will be glad to have Harry at any time," said Mr. Fairfax to his wife, "and, inasmuch as the lad is growing worse in health each day, I think the sooner he makes the trip the better."

George looked indignant when he saw with what address Harry received this announcement. Here was a chap who could have the time of his life, and away from all books, yet who didn't show the slightest appreciation of his opportunity; while his only wanted half a chance to get away on such a vacation—and couldn't get it. Some folks never do know when they're in luck! Why, George would be only too glad to be ill in order to pay a visit to Uncle Ben. But it was of no use—He couldn't look sick no matter how hard he tried.

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HARRY FINALLY BECOMES FRIENDS WITH THE DEER

any number of what Uncle Ben was pleased to call his "tame" deer. But, although they would come readily at his uncle's call, Harry hadn't found them tame. Indeed, he had difficulty in even catching sight of them at times. All his overtures toward friendship seemed to be viewed with suspicion by the deer, who appeared to regard him as an enemy. Finally the lad became weary of friendly endeavors. So thereafter he played he was Indian, and trapper, and hunter, and what not, and indulged in many an exciting chase of deer, whenever one was so injudicious as to show itself.

It so happened that a certain deer hunt in which the boy was engaged one afternoon had for him a most unexpected ending. The boy caught sight of a magnificent buck with the greatest of care he crept around in back of the animal, and, for a wonder, his approach was unobserved until he was hardly a few feet away. Then a most astonishing thing occurred. Instead of the deer becoming frightened at the mad whoops of the doughty hunter, it savagely turned and made for him. Harry didn't stop long to ponder; he made a beeline for a tree near by, up which he "climbed" with all possible speed. There he remained for the space of several hours, while the buck pawed the ground underneath, snorting wrath and defiance. At last one of them heard the halloo of the youth and came to the rescue.

Uncle Ben laughed and laughed when he heard how the "hunter" had been hunted. Indeed, Harry had to laugh, too. But this was after the adventure was all over; he hadn't even felt like smiling when the buck was in pursuit of him.

I may add that it was not long after this that the deer became quite friendly, and would come to Harry to be fed. But he never went "deer hunting" again. He didn't know but what a vengeful buck might still be lying somewhere in wait for him.