

Polly Evans' Story Page for Boys and Girls

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Freedom for a Day

HERBERT and Louise were very, very tired of obeying their mother in all things. Therefore, one morning, shortly after breakfast, Herbert asked: "Mother, may we not behave just as we like for one day, without being told to do this and to do that?" His mother smiled. "Very well, my dear," said she; "and I think you will



"A THORN PIERCED HER FINGER"

find, after all, that mother knows best what is for your good." But Herbert and Louise hardly waited to hear the last words. They were already on their way to the garden. There Louise remained to pluck roses, while Herbert continued to walk the orchard. In gathering the fragrant roses, Louise disdained the use of garden shears. She could break the stems just as well with her fingers, she knew; and she wouldn't be disobeying mother, because mother had given permission for her to do exactly as she desired this day. A moment later, however, she learned the wisdom of mother's method, for a great thorn pierced her fingers and tore the flesh so that the blood flowed rapidly. She had not dried her tears before she heard a wall from the orchard. Herbert had ventured to climb a tree which

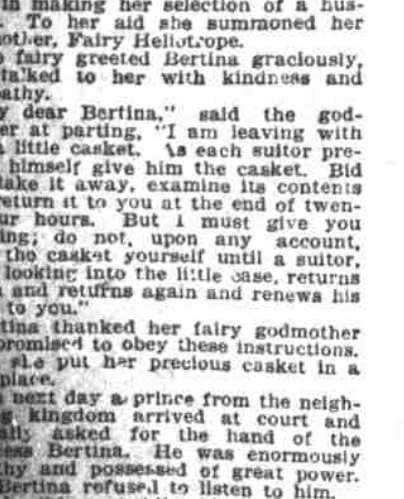


"ATE AS MANY AS HE COULD"

mother had pronounced unsafe. The fragile limb along which he had crawled had broken and he had fallen to the ground with a thud. Rubbing his bruises ruefully he directed his steps toward the kitchen, where, to forget his woes, he began to eat as many apples as he possibly could. At luncheon, instead of eating frugally of the food before him, Louise greedily devoured everything upon the table. Herbert had eaten no great number of apples that his appetite was entirely gone. When the meal was finished, the little girl went to enjoy a ride in her favorite

When the Princess Married.

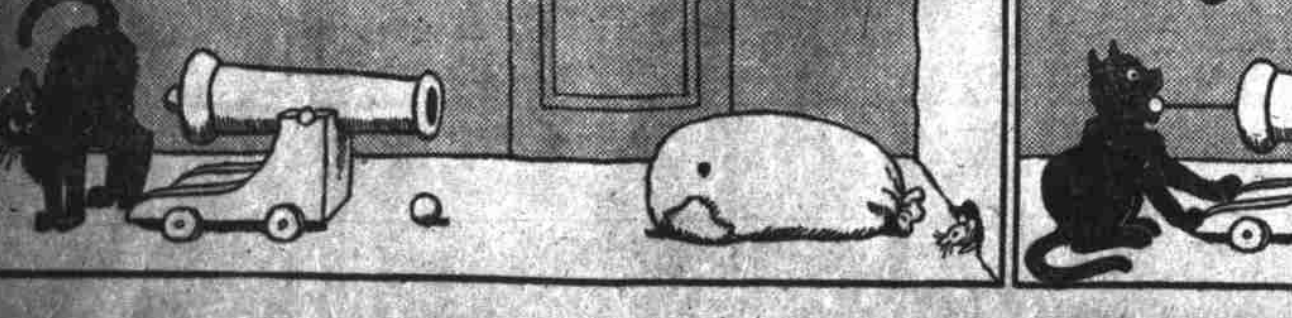
WHEN the beautiful Princess Bertina arrived at the age of 18 years her father, the imperious monarch, Philip XXI, deemed it advisable that she should marry. He, therefore, sent broadcast a proclamation inviting the attendance at court of noble suitors. Now the princess really loved no one. But she was a dutiful daughter and she was willing to be married if the king so desired. However, she longed for advice in making her selection of a husband. To her aid she summoned her godmother, Fairy Heliotrope.



EDFRED RETURNED

Bertina was becoming a-weary of the ordeal and afraid lest she have opportunity to accept no one, when the good prince Edfred came to see for her hand. No prince was more virtuous and handsome than he. And as Bertina looked upon the gallant prince kneeling before her, a great love for him grew in her heart. She sighed as she hand-

Pussy Goes A-Hunting—She Uses the Toy Cannon



THE RED SHOES



(Adapted from an old fairy tale which has long been a children's classic.)

ONCE upon a time there was a pretty little girl, who, because she was poor, had to go barefooted both in summer and winter. There lived in the same village a kind old shoemaker's wife, and she made a pair of little shoes out of a piece of red cloth and gave them to the little girl, whose name was Karen. Karen loved those shoes and was very proud of them and wore them for the first time on the day of her mother's funeral. As she was going along with the funeral a large carriage came by and in it sat an old lady. She looked at Karen and felt very sorry for her, and said to the clergyman: "If you will give me that little girl I will take care of her." And this the clergyman did. Karen believed it was because of her red shoes, but the old lady thought them hideous and had them burned. Karen was taught to read and to sew, and when people saw her they said she was pretty; but Karen really was more than pretty—she was very beautiful. One day the queen, with her daughter the princess, was going through the part of the country where Karen and the old lady lived, and all the people ran to see them. Little Karen ran, too. The princess was dressed in pure white silk and had on a beautiful pair of red morocco shoes. Karen, for she thought nothing could be so fine, Karen was old enough now to be confirmed. She got some new clothes and was also to have some new shoes. The old lady took her to a shop where were great glass cases full of red ones. Just like those which the princess had worn. The shoemaker said: "They were made for a count's daughter, but they did not fit her." Karen tried them on, and, as they fitted her, the old lady bought them; for, as she could not see well, she did not know they were red. Everybody looked at her feet all the way from the church door to the choir, and when the clergyman laid his hand on her head Karen thought only of her red shoes. In the afternoon the old lady heard from every one that Karen had worn the red shoes. "What a shocking thing to do," she said. "Karen will go to church in future in black shoes, even if they are old." On the next Sunday Karen looked first at the black shoes, then at the red ones, and then put on the red ones. In the door of the church stood an old, crippled soldier, with a large red beard, leaning on a crutch. He bowed down to the ground and wiped the dust off of her feet, and Karen put out her little foot. "Dear me, what pretty dancing shoes!" said the soldier. "Sit fast when you dance," said he, speaking to the shoes, and he slapped the soles with his hand. The old lady gave him some money,

Arthur's Easter Bunny



"WE HAD A MIGHTY TUSSEL"

ARTHUR wanted a bunny, oh, so much! He'd always wanted a bunny, you know. Every time he asked, father would say: "Wait until Eastertime, and then catch the bunny that brings your Easter eggs." But Arthur had tried three Easters now, and he hadn't caught Bunny. So he was beginning to believe that Bunny was 'most too sly to be caught. However, he made up his mind he'd try just this once, anyway. Easter morning found Arthur astray ere morning had hardly dawned. Softly he sped down the stairs. Yes, there were all the gifts Bunny had brought—little baskets containing chocolate hens and rabbits; funny little toys that opened and showed many tiny eggs within, and 'most everything a little boy could wish. But Bunny himself had disappeared. In spite of all the presents, Arthur was disappointed. "Do you know, Arthur," said father at the breakfast table, "I have an idea that perhaps Bunny hides his eggs among the grass and bushes outside, as well as in the house. If I were you, I'd look all the way to the barn, and maybe you'll find the Bunny hidden somewhere." In breathless excitement Arthur ran out to search the garden. True enough, he found nicely colored eggs in several of the bushes. They seemed to lead in a direct line straight for the barn. Altogether he had gathered eight eggs by the time he stealthily entered the barn. A moment's search—and then, what do you think he found? "Twas Bunny himself! And he was just as tame as any bunny could be; the nicest little bunny Arthur had ever seen. "I think he must have pitted you in your hunt," laughed father, "and so just waited for you to come up to him." Be that as it may, Bunny never ran away. He remained with his little master, and became almost as fond of Arthur as Arthur was of him.

Muezza, Famous Pussy



"PRINCESS BERTINA"

MUEZZA, famous pussy of the Arabian legend of Mohammed's favorite cat Muezza, Mohammed sat in deep meditation, while the cat reposed at ease on the broad extended sleeve of his coat. So affected was Mohammed by the warm, drowsy air of the afternoon that he entirely forgot his surroundings. Suddenly, when hours had passed, he bethought himself and was about to rise from his rug when he observed Muezza still sleeping. Then, in order not to disturb the slumber of his pet, Mohammed calmly cut off the sleeve of his garment and went upon his way. Father—It's only fair to tell you that I'm pleased with your economy this term. Your requests for money were too frequent last term. Son—Yes, father—I thought so, too; so this term I've had everything on tick.

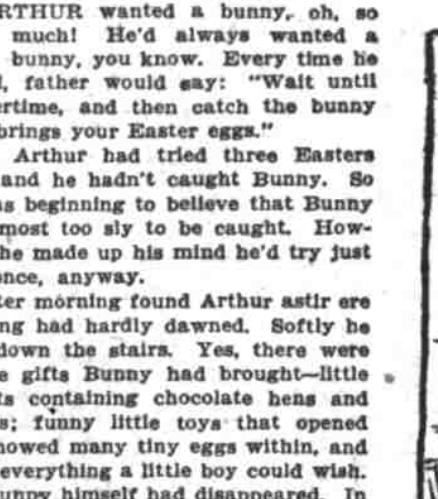
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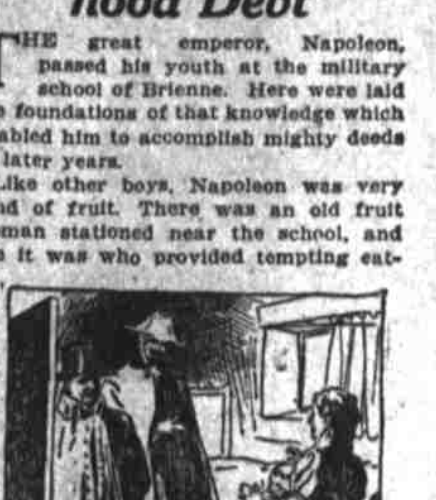
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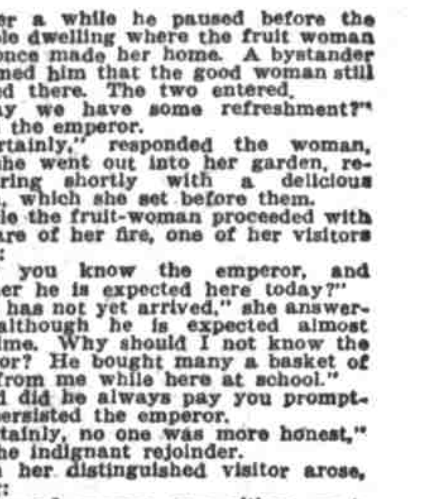
Napoleon's Boyhood Debt



"THEY ENTERED THE COTTAGE"

THE great emperor, Napoleon, passed his youth at the military school of Brienne. Here were laid the foundations of that knowledge which enabled him to accomplish mighty deeds in later years. Like other boys, Napoleon was very fond of fruit. There was an old fruit woman stationed near the school, and she it was who provided tempting eat-

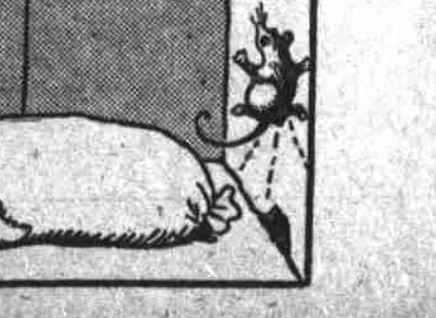
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ables for the future here. Should he have no money, it mattered not at all; for she knew he would always repay her just as soon as his next allowance arrived. It so happened that when he was ready to leave the school, he was still two crowns in her debt. He said to her, before making his departure: "My good woman, I fear I must go without paying what I owe you; but I shall not forget." The fruit woman replied: "Oh! do not permit that to disturb your peace of mind, my noble young man. May God preserve your health and make you happy!" Engaged in such arduous and exciting work as was the young soldier, he could hardly be blamed for allowing this trifling debt to slip his memory for the time. Napoleon became a general and conquered Italy. He then invaded Egypt. Returning by means of a sea swarming with ships of the enemy, he entered Paris and was named premier consul. Napoleon established peace in his country and was crowned emperor of France; still in fulfillment of his boyhood debt the old fruit woman had nothing but his promise: "I shall not forget." But such a promise was of little value than the sum of money involved. So it was that when, one day, Napoleon entered Brienne secretly and incognito, he remembered his promise, and hastily bethought himself to repair his neglect. What memories were recalled as, with a trusted officer in sole attendance, he traversed the streets he had trod so often when a boy! The incidents of his early youth came back to him vividly. After a while he paused before the humble dwelling where the fruit woman had once made her home. A bystander informed him that the good woman still resided there. "May we have some refreshment?" asked the emperor. "Certainly," responded the woman, and she went out into her garden, re-appearing shortly with a delicious melon, which she set before them. While the emperor and the two officers with the care of her fire, one of her visitors asked: "Do you know the emperor, and whether he is expected here today?" "He has not yet arrived," she answered, "although he is expected almost any time. He should be here today, emperor." He bought many a basket of fruit from me while here at school." "And did he always pay you promptly?" persisted the emperor. "Certainly, no one was more honest," was the indignant rejoinder. Then her distinguished visitor arose, saying: "My good woman, you either speak untruth, or you have a poor memory. As proof of this, you do not know the emperor. I may say that I am he; and to prove that the emperor did not always conscientiously pay his debts, I would recall to your mind those two crowns he owed you when he left school." At the same time the other visitor deposited on the table a gleaming heap of gold coins to the amount of 120 francs. And the honest woman, now recognizing the emperor, fell at his feet, almost overcome with joy at the meeting. Her little children clung to her, regarding the great man with astonishment, not knowing whether to laugh or weep. Napoleon ordered that the poor dwelling be torn down, and that another be erected in its place. "It is in this house," he said, "that I wish to lodge whenever I come to Brienne; and I wish it to bear my name." Before taking leave of the fruit woman he promised that he would take good care of her children. He kept his word, so that you may know the debt of his boyhood was paid honorably and in full.

Light Rays in Water



TWO COINS WILL APPEAR

AT THE bottom of an ordinary glass or tumbler, place a coin of any kind. Pour water in the glass to one-third of its capacity. Press a saucer firmly over the mouth of the glass, and carefully turn glass and saucer upside down. In this position you will be surprised to apparently see two coins resting on the surface of the saucer.

Couldn't Whistle it Back

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PHIL was taking his little sister Beatrice on a short trip by rail. As the train sped along, he said to her, warningly: "Be careful not to lose your hat, Beatrice." Then, snatching it from her head, on the sly, he exclaimed: "Beh! you've let it blow away. But never mind, I shall whistle it back for you." Thereupon he whistled, and immediately produced the hat. A short time afterward he was chagrined to hear Beatrice ask: "Won't you whistle my hat back again, Phil? I threw it out the window."

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