

Polly Evans' Story Page for Boys and Girls

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The "PIRATES" DESERVED IT

YES, the "Pirates" surely did deserve it. Fact is, they deserve about everything they get—and we see they get plenty—because they're the meanest set of fellows I ever saw.

You see, it wasn't more 'n a week before this happened that they poured a lot of grease 'n things on a circus tent we'd put up. They sneaked into Joe Stanton's back yard at night, when all of us were in bed. That's the kind of chaps the "Pirates" are! But we got even, all-righty, all-righty.

Skinny began things by telling Bill Jones what a dandy canoe the "Bloody Robbers"—that's us—had hidden on Brewster's island. None of us would let Bill join the "Robbers," 'cause he can't keep a secret worth shucks, and Skinny knew first thing he'd do would be to let those "Pirates" know all about the boat.

So that very afternoon Mike Flannigan

over to the island. 'Course, they didn't find any canoe, as there wasn't any to find. But a fine swimming-hole is just off the island, so to forget the disappointment all of them plunged into the water, just like Skinny thought they would.

Then Billy Mumford, who's our captain, sent Bill Kane and Jack Warner swimming cautious-like across to the island. They reached the bank, sneaked up to where the clothes lay scattered about, and, before the "Pirates" knew what had happened, Bill and Jack had chucked all the clothes in the punt and were poing away for a day's life.

You can bet your life we howled, especially when the punt got 'way up the creek. But that wasn't all. We'd brought along a whole lot of old dresses that the fellows got from their sisters. Those we left on the bank, and the "Pirates" had to put them on, 'cause

Kioto's Pilgrimage



"THE gods are calling me," said Kuroki, suddenly, just as he had said it many times before.

Now Kioto loved his old grandfather too much, and he was, besides, too obedient, to show the least sorrow at this announcement. But in his own heart he told himself how lonely it would be without his kind grandfather, and with no one in the house but the stupid nurse. For Kioto's father and mother had died, and the boy lived only with his grandfather, that is, except when Kuroki called upon to make frequent pilgrimages to the temples. Upon these occasions the old gentleman always dressed himself in his oldest garments, although he possessed considerable wealth, and humbly traded to Nara. It was not a long journey, and soon he would find himself among imposing shrines and temples. Here he would bend himself in adoration for the space of many hours, and then, with lightness of spirit, return to his home.

Kioto had often wished he could go with his grandfather. And today his longing to penetrate the mysterious temples was greater than ever before.

"It must be that the gods are calling me, too," thought he. "Not for a

moment did he suppose that it might be the evil one tempting him.

The more Kioto reflected upon this summons from the gods, the stronger assurance he felt that it must be obeyed.

"I shall take Tashiki with me," said he to himself, "and he will tell me what to do." Tashiki was a doll more than 200 years old. It had belonged to Kioto's ancestors, therefore he had had deep veneration for it. When Kuroki then took his staff

and plodded along the dusty road leading to Nara, Kioto was not far behind. He was sure his grandfather would not permit him to make such a journey, so he said naught about his intention. Successfully he had avoided the nurse, and now he was following Kuroki.

By noon the two pilgrims—old and young—were passing through Nara's streets. Kioto marvelled exceedingly at the number of magnificent temples. He lessened the space between himself

and his grandfather, in order that the old man should not pass from sight.

Presently Kuroki climbed the steps that gave entrance to the greatest of these temples. Kioto stole silently through the doorway. His grandfather could not see. His grand father could not see. The boy had slight fear of being detected, but he took every precaution. As he entered, the inside of the temple filled him with wonder. Still more astonished was he, however, when he saw the colossal image of Buddha. Before this famous image Kuroki placed his offerings.

The lad, watching from a safe retreat, muttered to Tashiki:

"The great god will be angry, Tashiki, if I have no gift for him. What shall I do?"

Tashiki remained as stolid and unblinking as before, but Kioto continued, as though in reply to the doll:

"I agree with you, Tashiki, when you say the all-powerful Buddha would care little for my simple toys or whatever else I have. You are my only precious possession."

Then the boy made a great resolve—no less a one than to part with his beloved Tashiki. At the very thought he paled and his voice trembled as he whispered into the doll's ear:

"My own Tashiki, I have naught to offer but you. The god demands that which I hold dearest. I must give you up. You will understand."

And, as Kuroki arose to leave the temple, the little boy very softly and reverently laid his treasure at the foot of the giant idol.

"O great god, Buddha, accept this, my offering," he prayed. Then he hurried forth in pursuit of Kuroki. Lonely, indeed, he felt without Tashiki and the advice he imagined the doll could give him. But he consoled himself, murmuring:

"I could not but give him up, and the gods are good and more kindly upon me now that Tashiki is gone."

Still keeping his grandfather in sight, Kioto came to the noted temple of Kasuga, which the old man entered. The boy paused a while to examine the beautiful hanging lamps adorning the portico. Then he, too, slipped into the temple. New wonders he saw here. So small was he that he stood unperceived among the worshippers and looked upon the Kasuga as a delicious dance in which the costumes and gestures of the dancers are the same as those used twelve centuries ago.

And so the lad followed his grandfather from shrine to shrine, until the old man at last turned his steps homeward.

So tired was he, and hungry as well, that Kioto could hardly keep his feet. But the thought that he had successfully made his first pilgrimage cheered him and helped him bear the fatigue.

No sooner did Kuroki arrive at his home than the nurse ran to meet him, crying excitedly:

"Master, your grandson is missing. We have searched for him every where, but he is not to be found."

At this moment, however, a little figure crossed the path in front of them. They stood before their little Kioto, weary and travel-worn.

"You did wrong not to speak to me at first, Kioto," reproached the old gentleman, after the lad had told about his travels.

"Yes, grandfather, but I was sure the gods were calling me—just as the great god Buddha called upon me to give up Tashiki," pleaded Kioto.

"You left Tashiki at the temple?" queried the man, with a start of surprise.

Kioto nodded. "The god demanded Tashiki," he said, simply. Then turning to his grandfather, the little fellow earnestly asked:

"Did you think, grandfather, that the gods appreciate most of all those gifts which are really sacrifices?"

"For a long time the old man was silent. His reverie ended, he smiled sadly, and replied:

"My child, you rebuke me. You have undoubtedly pleased the gods more in your one pilgrimage than I have in my scores of pilgrimages. My gifts, even the most generous of them, have never been sacrifices, for I missed them not."

"I am old, my boy. Hereafter I shall make no more journeys to Nara. But I shall reflect upon the lesson you have taught me, and it may be I shall yet be able to do good in a way that will win me greater favor with the gods than all my pilgrimages."

And as Kioto heard his grandfather speak thus solemnly, the hope came to him that although he had lost the companionship and advice of Tashiki perhaps the good god Buddha might favor him with counsel and comfort.

Sarah's Pet, the Sea Serpent

"I JUST wonder how they are made," murmured little Sarah, she was referring to the many wonderful fireworks she had seen the evening before at a nice garden party. She did so wish she knew how so many splendid balls of fire and such pretty designs could be put in a little cylinder with a stick attached to it. But this wasn't all Sarah wondered about—she was always "just wondering." People wondered how she could possibly wonder so much.

About the only thing that Sarah had not wondered was a sea-serpent. And probably this was the only reason the sea serpent paid her a visit. Because he was tired—oh, yes, quite tired—of people who wondered whether there were such creatures as sea serpents. Of course, there were sea serpents. Wasn't he one?

"How do you do, little girl?" said the serpent, with exceeding politeness, as he squirmed and wriggled his way to where the little maiden stood on the beach. Sarah would have been afraid, and she would surely have run away, had she not been too busy wondering where such a strange monster COULD have come from.

"I hope you are glad to see me," continued the serpent, winking his eyes joyfully, and seeming not to notice that Sarah made no reply. Neither did Sarah respond to this question. You must not think her impolite, however. She was so busy wondering whether there was another living being in the



"GREATEST OF FRIENDS"

world so ugly as the serpent that she really forgot to answer.

But it was not long before Sarah and the serpent were the greatest of friends. The horrible scaly fellow was so good-natured that he even permitted Sarah to tie her bonnet on his head, after which she stood still for "most fifteen minutes, wondering whether any other sea-serpent ever wore a bonnet."

Many times thereafter the serpent came to talk with Sarah. She said nothing about him to either father or mother, 'cause she was sure they wouldn't believe it. Besides, she wanted to keep this a secret of her very own. She never wondered whether a secret was nice to keep. She knew THAT, as well as she knew that candy and cake and ice cream were among the most toothsome eatable things.

One afternoon, when Sarah and her pet had talked of everything, from stars to little fishes, the sea serpent asked:

"Would you not like to take me where you live, so that I may see some of the wonderful things you tell about?"

"Why, certainly," returned Sarah. "How could we manage it?"

Without another word, the serpent proceeded to swallow his tail, and then more and more of himself, until he was nothing more than a hard, little ball. Sarah put him in her hand bucket, and tripped toward home.

Sad to relate, however, she carelessly left the bucket in the kitchen while she went to call mother, and Nora threw the ugly piece of wood, as she called it, into the fire.

The little girl returned just in time to see the serpent uncoiling himself in a wonderful hurry, and a shower of sparks. But before he could accomplish this he was burnt up.

"Now I know," muttered Sarah, sadly. "how the pinheads were first made. But I do wish I could have known it without having my deary, darling old serpent burnt to ashes."

In the World of Curiosities

PLANTS closely resemble so many things that one is not greatly surprised to hear that some of them look very much like birds. But there is one plant the flowers of which



are so like white doves in appearance that a person cannot tell the difference though standing only a short distance away from the plant. In the picture you see this curious orchid.

Sure Thing.
Sustie—Do your next-door neighbors take a morning paper?
Freddie—Yes; if they get up before we do.

Most Important Baby in Russia

WHILE it is unlikely any Russian mother would admit any baby more important than her own, the baby who has the highest position in Russia is the son and heir of the czar, who, if ever he gains the throne, will bear the title of Alexis II.

Alexis was born on August 12, 1901. He has four sisters to play with, and so many toys that he probably doesn't know how many he does own. His first toys were a set of brightly painted, funny little figures, that fitted one into another. Among his favorite playthings are a jointed serpent, that wriggles along in a fearsome manner; a little cart drawn by horses, and a miniature train and railway station. Besides these, he has electrical toys, steam toys, all sorts of mechanical toys and toys that talk from hidden photographs. Then, too, the royal baby possesses magnificent clothes and jeweled canes. The gems that



sparkle on these would more than fill the cradle in which Alexis formerly lay. Many little boys long to be soldiers. The little czarvitch is already colonel of a Finnish regiment, of a Lithuanian regiment, of a Siberian regiment, of the Artillery of Guard regiment, of two dragon regiments and of the corps of aides of the czar's body. Both the czar and the czarvitch are in the possession of the territory of the late Prince Blismarck. The Emperor's Express has signed her transport an eagle staff, with which the famous Treaty of Paris was signed in 1801.

Novelty in Curios

COLLECTORS of famous pens and penholders are few, but of late some big prices have been paid for specimens. Among those that have changed hands at high prices is the pen with which Nelson wrote his last letter on the morning of the battle of Trafalgar. It fetched \$200. Pitt's pen, with which he wrote his letter to George III, asking to be relieved of his post as prime minister, was sold at \$200, and a penholder with which Walter Scott wrote most of his novels was bought for \$50. Among other famous pens that have been preserved are the one with which the peace of Frankfurt was signed in 1801, and the last act of the Berlin Congress was signed in 1878. Both these are in the possession of the family of the late Prince Blismarck. The Emperor's Express has signed her transport an eagle staff, with which the famous Treaty of Paris was signed in 1801.

BETTY GIVES THE ANCESTOR PARTY



"WHISPERED IN HER EAR"

(CONTINUED FROM LAST SUNDAY)
YOU remember how Betty sent out her invitations to the Ancestor Party by burning the missives in the cardle flame, then with what suspense she waited for something to happen.

Nor had she long to wait. For the very next minute there floated in through the window a charming lady in a costume of Queen Elizabeth's time, while right at her heels came a gallant cavalier. Alighting upon the floor of the attic, the cavalier bowed and the lady curtsied, as calmly as though their mode of entrance was an everyday occurrence. Betty never marvelled as to what her ancestors did. And now she wouldn't have had time, anyway, inasmuch as the pirate uncle—with several "greats" before an "uncle"—began down upon them from the window, and after him a sweet-faced old Paritan lady.

There were ever so many other ancestors to whom Betty had sent invitations. But, somehow, no more appeared. Therefore, after waiting for a time, Betty suggested that the company already assembled take places around the old tea table she had brought out from a corner of the attic and carefully dusted. Then Betty conscientiously attended upon her guests' wants. You wouldn't think these shadows would care to eat or drink very much, but the pirate consumed such a quantity of biscuit and drank so much tea that Betty feared greatly that after a while she would be unable to replenish the supply of biscuit or to make more tea. She was spared further worry, however. The cavalier arose, and with a stately bow, announced:

"If it please the company, I shall recite a few of my excellent verses."

"What a modest man thou art!"

growled the pirate, scowling at the cavalier. The wicked sailor man then paid no heed to the cavalier's words, but gulped down the last two biscuits in one swallow. After he had accomplished this feat, to the amazement of the women, he proceeded to smile upon the cavalier's lady.

"Scary rogue!" cried the cavalier at this juncture, as much offended that the pirate should draw attention from his verses as that he should be guilty of winking at the lady in such rude fashion. "Odds blood! It is thy blood or mine!" exclaimed the pirate, springing savagely from his chair.

"It will be thine!" returned the cavalier. Immediately they floated out through the window, and the cavalier's lady, in fear lest her husband come to grief, followed after.

The Paritan lady, noticing the look of horror on Betty's face, whispered soothingly in the little girl's ear:

"Be not alarmed. Shades can meet with no hurt."

Then she added:

"I do not wish to entice, my dear, but think you not that the pirate ancestor is not altogether to be desired at such a company? He may mean right enough, but it seemeth a rough sort of fellow."

"I shall never invite him again, grandmother," Betty tearfully assured her. "And next time we have—"

"But just at this moment there came a knock at the attic door. In a flash the Paritan ancestor disappeared and Betty



THEY SAT AROUND THE OLD TEA TABLE

was confronted by her cousin, Roderick, who had run over to pay a visit.

"Who has been drinking tea?" asked Roderick.

"Why, my an—, I mean I have," replied Betty, in confusion. She couldn't

tell Roderick about the ancestors. He would surely not understand. Betty was beginning herself to doubt whether SHE would ever understand, those queer shade people.

Quite Prepared.

Freddy—No, you don't catch me shamming illness to stay home from school and get all dosed up with castor oil and such stuff.

Johnny—Oh, I'm all right on that. We're homeopaths at our house.

Was Invented.

Robby—"Everything that King Midas touched turned to gold." What do you think of that?

Billy—I've often heard it, but I have always thought that the story was invented by his advertisers.

Homesick.

Tommy—Mamma, when a boy is away from home and wants to get back awful bad—that is being homesick, ain't it?

Mamma—Yes, dear.

Tommy—Well, when he's sick of staying at home and wants to go skating, what do you call it?

assembling his fellow-gnomes together, they rolled. Not long was it before the pixie was provided with a magnificent balloon.

"Now I SHALL ascend to the heavens and become the most powerful among the storm-gnells!" cried he, thrusting out his chest and waving his arms in the air.

Thereupon, without even pausing to thank the good creatures who had built

the balloon, he leaped into the wicker-work car and loosened the drag rope.

Up the balloon soared. The higher it rose the greater became the glee of the pixie. Then he beheld above him two black clouds. Peering at them closely, he espied two storm gnell, each on the edge of his respective thunder cloud and gazing at each other with intense hatred. In their hands they held long

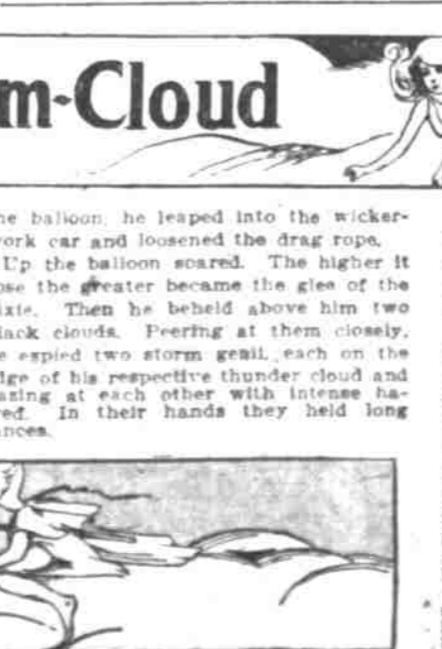
lances.

Suddenly, at the gnell's commands, the clouds dashed madly toward each other. The wicked storm gnell couched their lances in preparation for terrible strife.

For the first time the pixie realized his own danger. Now he observed with alarm that the balloon was rising directly between the two clouds. But before he had time for further thought the lances of the gnell pierced his balloon on either side. A moment, then the balloon collapsed and the pixie found himself falling, falling, until he knew no more. In fact, the pixie was no more, because the terrific force of his fall had killed him.

And with the exception of a few sympathetic fairies, there was none to lament the horrible fate of this too ambitious pixie.

THEY SAT AROUND THE OLD TEA TABLE



The Pixie Who Would Ride upon a Storm-Cloud

NO PIXIE had any business to be riding around on storm clouds. This was just the matter with this little elf, he was too ambitious. Many said many a time he watched the wind each other on their black, lowering cloud chargers. Then, again, great companies of them would battle together, amid lightning flash and turbulent thunder. The pixie was impressed, as well he might be, but there was no reason why he should fancy himself ill-used because HE had to confine his pranks to the earth, where he pestered the gnomes unceasingly and teased the good fairies until they almost lost patience.

But the pixie WAS chastised, and every storm he witnessed made him feel

still more bitter at his fate.

"I will ascend the heavens!" screamed he, one day, as he peeped out from the sheltering branches of a giant oak and watched the storm gnell fighting.

So the pixie beaught the wisest among the gnomes to lend aid. This the gnomes gladly promised to do. Inasmuch as all the gnomes and goblins and fairies and nymphs would gladly welcome a departure of this mischievous elf. As-

