

Polly Evans' Story Page for Boys and Girls

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Why the Bubble Party Failed

WHEN Captain Mike Fitzpatrick of the "Pirates" had finished his talk with the boys, he said: "Nothing but the Pirates' bubble party was ever of any account, and now."

But when Bill Jones described the affair to Captain Jones, who commanded the "Robbers," the captain became interested in spite of himself, and was a good deal surprised that the time was "fit for only sasses." Bill was altogether neutral, being inclined to neither of the "bubbles." He had so been permitted at times to be an on-looker at the sports of both camps.

"You see," said he, "all the 'Pirates' got on the balloon that runs round the second story of Mike's house. Each fellow had a basin of water and a bubble pipe. And then he'd try to beat

measures of the 'Robbers' and come up with the purchase of the necessary apparatus for the party."

On the morning of the next day Joe went upon his highly important mission. "Me Jenkins," said he, with the most commending air he ever wore, "I want some bubble pipes, fact, a whole lot of 'em."

The stockbroker ruminated among cases and under counters. After some minutes' search he turned to the lad and said apologetically:

"I'm very sorry, Joseph. I haven't a single bubble pipe left. A crowd of boys from the other side of town came in yesterday and bought every pipe I had."

Joe stared aghast. Discouraged, he shuffled his way out of the store, only to see Mike Fitzpatrick grinning from the opposite side of the street. Joe did not hesitate. With a hop, skip and a jump he was across the street and battle was on.

But even Joe's victory did not tend to lessen the anger and disappointment of the "Robbers," when they learned that the "Pirates" had discovered in some manner that a bubble party was to be given by their rivals, and that they had therefore scaped together as much money as possible and bought all the soap bubble pipes at Jenkins—the only store that sold them.

Meantime, Captain Billy and his band are looking for that mean chap who talked about their plans to the "Pirates." When they find him—well, there'll be some fun.



"I WANT SOME PIPES"

the other fellow in makin' the largest and the prettiest and the funnest sort of combinations. Course, the bubbles would float all the way from the balcony to the ground, and when the sun struck them as they'd fall you'd see some of the grandest colors that ever was—just like rainbows and kaleidoscopes and things like them. Mike's big sister gave out prizes for the boys who did the best. Pete Maloney won a dandy baseball cap for blowin' the most bubbles in a minute. Say, why don't you 'Robbers' have a party like that?"

Captain Billy did not reply at once to Bill Jones' question. But he thought the matter over very carefully, and when the "Robbers" met in Jack Warner's hayloft that afternoon he broached the subject.

"Well, it looks like we might have some fun doin' something of that sort," observed Skinky, thoughtfully, "but we mustn't let the 'Pirates' hear about it, or they'll say we're copyin' after them."

When the matter was put to a vote it was decided to have a bubble party the following afternoon on Pete Hamilton's balcony, which was quite a distance from the ground.

Joe Stanton was entrusted with the small amount of savings held in the

treasure of the "Robbers" and come up with the purchase of the necessary apparatus for the party."

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A Leaf Cradle

HAVE you ever seen a leaf used to cradle a baby? When a mother in Brazil does her washing, she takes baby along with her to the river. Here grows a water lily with a leaf a yard wide and a yard long. All about this leaf there is a turned-up rim, which prevents baby from sliding off. And upon this soft, green bed baby is laid until mother finishes her work.

The lily is called the Victoria Regia, and it was named after Queen Victoria. Its lovely flower is the largest in the world.

Wanted It Exchanged.

An evening party was being held at Dr. Blank's house the other evening, when the servant ushered in two little boys carrying between them a heavy basket.

"What have you here, boys?" asked the surprised physician.

"Oh, please, doctor, Jimmy an' I have brought back the baby, and we want to know if you'll give us a puppy dog instead."

Another Use for It.

It was little Milly's first experience in church. So when the collection box was passed around she gravely shook her head and said:

"No, thank you, I'm going to buy candy with mine."

The Better Form.

Teacher—I should like to have some one in the class give a better form of the sentence, "John can ride the mule if he wants to."

Bright Pupil—John can ride the mule if the mule wants him to.

Across the Fields of Ice and Snow



"EACH TRAIN CONSISTED OF FOUR DOGS AND A LONG, NARROW SLED"

"DO YOU know, I'm growing sick and tired of this," grumbled Tom Blake. "Here I've been driving this confounded old delivery wagon for two years, and Skinton & Co. wholesale and retail grocers, seem to think I'll do it forever on the same mean wages. Just think of it—not a cent increase in wages for the past two years!"

"Well, I'm in the same boat, Tom, if that's any consolation to you," Bob Farrell replied. "I've been clerking for Skinton & Co., wholesale and retail grocers, for the same time, until now I no longer believe the old copy-book maxim that 'Faithfulness is Well Rewarded,' and so on."

"I tell you what, Bob," said Tom, suddenly, "let's go out of this slow chiro town. Neither of us has any folks living. It's certain we'll never grow rich here. Suppose we strike for the West?"

As a result of this conversation, Skinton & Co., grocers, lost two of their valued employees. During the following weeks, however, those two employees sincerely wished they were holding their former positions, even at the old wages. It did not take them long to exhaust their scant savings, and "trekking" it across country brought many hardships.

Indeed, they were a forlorn-looking pair when, having just ascended from the railroad yards, they stood longingly before a restaurant in Seattle.

They did not observe a well-dressed man of learned appearance near them until the gentleman stepped up to them with the remark:

"Like to be inside, boys, wouldn't you?"

"That we would," answered the lads, with a feeble laugh. To their astonishment, the gentleman replied:

"I should be pleased to have you for my guests."

Tom and Bob accepted the invitation with alacrity. Not until they had eaten their fill did the gentleman speak more than a few words. But when he saw their hunger was appeased, he said:

"You two look like strong, earnest boys, who really want work. Suppose

you're hunting for jobs, eh?"

To the boys' minds he replied, "I thought so. And therefore I propose that you enter my service for a time. My name is Dr. Selby. I want to study the habits of the Cree and Salisauk Indians, who live some distance to the north of here, and I need two strong boys of 17 or 18 years of age to act as my assistants. Will you come with me?"

It did not take long for Tom and Bob to arrive at a decision. In fact, they accepted immediately.

Nor was it long after this that they were installed in a hut far to the north,



"HURLED HIMSELF UPON THE BOY"

No white man lived nearer than 400 miles away. Here, with snow and ice stretching on all sides as far as the eyes could see, the doctor, the boys and the Eskimo helper made their headquarters.

The boys enjoyed their experience immensely. Upon the very first trip the travelers came to grief. They took four trains of dogs, each train consisting of four dogs driven in Indian style, attached to long, narrow sleds. One of the sleds containing provisions was upset, and

the goods, being insecurely fastened, tumbled down a steep gully, from which they could not be recovered. During the rest of the trip the party lived upon fat meat and tea. Strange to say, they thrived upon this diet.

Sometimes, when no shelter was at hand, they would build real snowhouses, and perhaps wake up on the following morning to find their "houses" covered to a good depth with snow.

One morning Tom had no sooner arisen than the Eskimo hurled himself upon the boy and commenced rubbing his nose vigorously with snow. Tom protested, and there was a real scrimmage until the lad was made to understand that his nose was frozen and the Eskimo was trying to effect a cure. This occurred when the thermometer registered 50 degrees below zero.

For the second trip Dr. Selby secured St. Bernard and Newfoundland dogs to draw the sledges, as he could not prevent the native dogs from stealing food supplies and continually fighting among themselves. The feet of the new dogs were not so hard. So the doctor sledged them, with a sort of thimble mitten, with which they were so well pleased that they would sometimes wake him during the night to replace their mittens.

At first the scientist found great hostility against him. But after awhile the Indians became great friends with him. Indeed, to such an extent were they friendly that the doctor occasionally would awake to find a group of Indians whooping about his bedside for assistance of some kind for they regarded the doctor as physician, surgeon, dentist and surveyor, all in one.

Tom and Bob were sorry when the trip was ended and they were once more back in Seattle. But this sorrow changed to the joy of anticipation when the doctor said to them:

"I now want you to come with me to South America, boys. I'm sure you'll find no end of adventure there."

"Would they go?" of course, but that's another story—one that Polly Evans hopes to tell you before long.

The Baker's Son

RAT-A-TAP! Rat-a-tap! Rat-a-tap! Sharply the great brass knocker battered upon the massive door giving entrance to the school.

It was a little boy who knocked a little boy in well-worn blouse and dress. The towhead was far below the level of the knocker, to reach which the boy stood on tiptoe and strained desperately upward.

In response to this vigorous summons these shortly appeared the schoolmaster, who looked kindly over his horn-rimmed spectacles at the little fellow standing upon the threshold.

"What is it you wish, my little man?" asked he.

"Please, sir," eagerly began the tow-headed youngster, "I came to know if you wouldn't let me study in your school. I'd try ever so hard, and I do so want to learn how to read big books and to write."

A tiny smile curved around the corners of the old man's mouth as he bent down from his stooped height. But as he laid his hand upon the boy's tousled locks he said quite gravely:

"I'm afraid you forgot to ask permission of your mother to come here, my boy."

"I didn't ask mother," murmured the boy, slowly. Then he quickly raised his head. "But I'm sure," said he, "that mother would give me leave to learn. Besides, though I'm not too little to study, I can do much at home."

"I fear you are too young even to enter school, so I think you'd best go back to mother and wait just a little while longer," gently replied the schoolmaster to the disappointed lad.

was again poring over his books. Then, when his nine brothers and sisters were sent away to bed, Antoine pleaded of his father:

"May I not stay a little while to read alone?"

"Alas! my boy," replied the father, sadly, "you know I am unable to provide you with light."

"How can I be sure I can see by the light of the moon, father," was the earnest response.

And so for a time the boy studied until he must needs go to bed in order to snatch a few hours of sleep before his father arose. For at 2 o'clock in the morning Antoine had to arise and assist his father in the bakery.

Here was a boy who really worked and found joy in it.

One warm day six or seven years afterward a company of young men were gathered together in the rooms of the School of Artillery of Châlons-sur-Marne.

Laplace, the renowned mathematician, was examining 180 candidates for entrance to his school as sub-lieutenants. The door opened, and to the great surprise of those within there entered a youth, slightly built and of small stature, who had the innocent face and the ill-fitting clothing of a peasant. It was Antoine, son of the baker of Nancy.

"What can we do for you?" the great scientist politely asked. "No doubt you have come to the wrong place."

"No, sir, I have come to take the examination," replied the lad.

Peals of laughter came from the



"THERE ARE SOME BREAD AND ROLLS TO BE DELIVERED IMMEDIATELY"

So, in this year of 1873, the little son of the baker of Nancy was turned away from the French schoolhouse, because he was only a baby 3 years old!

Twelve years later a boy was leaning upon a shelf in a bakeryshop in Nancy. Before him lay a well-kneaded volume from which he read with intense interest.

"Antoine, here are some bread and rolls which should be delivered immediately to our customers."

The lad started at the sound of his mother's voice. Then he promptly laid aside the book, raised it with one hand the basket in the other, and with the other gathered up several school books.

"I'll hurry, mother," said he, cheerfully, "and I'll surely have the work done by school time."

With lessons over and chores done for the day, Antoine whittled away the remaining hour of twilight with study. Work of any kind would have seemed impossible with nine very noisy brothers and sisters making commotion around one, but Antoine appeared unaware of the disturbance.

Hardly was supper eaten when he

young men assembled. But although Antoine flushed, he went forward steadily and took a seat.

Then it was that every one was astonished. As Laplace asked a question after question, the boy replied correctly and with the utmost readiness. In vain Laplace tried to find something Antoine could not answer. At last the great man rushed forward and embraced the boy, crying:

"You are the first to be promoted, my lad."

And those who had laughed but a few moments before, now crowded about the baker's son to express their admiration and to congratulate him.

Antoine, the baby who had knocked at the schoolhouse door, Antoine, the boy who had studied by the light of the moon with other light was done him; Antoine, the simple-looking country lad, who was promoted with highest honors to the School of Artillery, had started upon his career.

And the baker's son, Antoine Trounet, became one of the greatest figures in the first empire of France.

New Babies at the London Zoo



BABY CAMEL AND THE CARACAL CAT

"SO THIS is the new baby, is it?" asked Mrs. Wittering Sparrow.

Mrs. Caracal looked fondly upon the little cub nestling beside one. Then her eyes gleamed wickedly as she glanced at the sparrow.

"You're thinking what a fine meal I would make, aren't you?" calmly observed the sparrow. "But I'm going to tell you that if you wait until you catch me you'll go a long time without eating. In fact, your baby will be full grown before that time."

"And what a fine fellow he will be!" cried Mrs. Caracal, forgetting her spite against the sparrow. "I can just see him now, with his long, slender limbs, beautifully spotted ears, and a tail maybe an inch in length. I had been wishing you knew. In Persia, where I was captured, they called me B r a b b e, the word meaning 'spotted ears'."

And my cat then was much prettier than it is now. A delicate fawn color it was, with white underneath, just as pretty as baby's here.

"Oh, baby will soon be grown. Then I'll be able to hunt you, as my relatives and I hunted gazelles, hares and birds of all kinds in far-off India and Africa and Arabia. Why, I remember I was up as high as six feet in the air to catch little creatures like you."

"What a blood-thirsty animal you are!" Mr. Twittering Sparrow laughed good-humoredly, as he continued:

"By the way, there's a new baby in the Zoo. And the mother came from near your native land."

"Who is she?" asked Mrs. Caracal, indignantly.

"Mrs. Camel," the sparrow replied. "The baby is a white little thing that

looks as though it would be as vicious and stupid as its mother and that's saying a whole lot. Camels are the stupidest things that ever happened. The little camel has already been named Treelily. It has curious pads all over its chest and quads and knees, so that it may kneel with its discomfort."

Mrs. Camel is as proud as a peacock. She became the white camel. You know camels are white, black, brown and black. The black ones are much despised by the Arabians. When the baby's grown he'll be as much bigger than you are. Indeed, he ought to stand at least seven feet in height. And his mother is said he'll have a splendid hump, though the hump depends a good deal on the richness of the food. On the best of the hump shrinks and it grows disappear."

The old boy looked so much about her baby that it grew cold. He told her that when a baby is born in the desert it is swung in a net in the back of a full-grown camel. Then she began to brag about the value of her kind of camel, which is found in Africa, India, Persia and Arabia. She said that people utilize the milk of the camel and even the bones of the animals. But she is no better than the two-legged game. And they're all stupid, as I said before.

"But, good-bye, I'm off to chat with the elephant."

Mrs. Caracal followed the sparrow with her eyes as she cheerfully trotted low and away. And she told herself how much nicer her baby must be than the horrid little camel. Strange to say, Mrs. Camel was at that very moment thinking how much nicer her baby was than any other baby at the Zoo. But, as the picture shows, they're both very cunning.

Vain Miss Pussy

A VERY pretty little pussy cat she was, and one that Mrs. Tabby might well be proud of. So, with many good qualities and virtues, 'twas a great pity she should have been vain of her good looks.

And because of this vanity she sought Mr. Fox. That gentleman, you know, possessed a magnificent tail and brush, which Miss Pussy much envied.

In a handsome row dress, donned for the first time, Miss Pussy walked coquettishly down the road leading to Mr. Fox's hole.

"Good morning, Mr. Fox," said she when the wily fox came to the door in response to her knock.

Mr. Fox bowed very low as he said:

"Good morning, miss. This is, indeed, a pleasure."

"You are very kind, sir," Miss Pussy replied with a smile. "You are such a handsome fellow that I don't think to come and admire you. Especially do I enjoy looking at your splendid tail. Mr. Fox, how did you grow such a handsome tail?"

The fox chuckled grimly to himself. "What a flatterer she tries to be!" But he gravely answered:

"'Tis the easiest thing in the world, Miss Pussy. If you will come with me, I will show you the one correct method."

Thereupon Mr. Fox directed the pussycat to follow him across a nearby field, upon the farther edge of which stood a tree having a great hole in its trunk.

"Now, my dear young lady," instructed the beauty doctor, "you must place your tail in this hole and gently wave it to and fro."

Miss Pussy obeyed. In so doing she disturbed a swarm of bees which lived inside. Immediately they stung the tail in a hundred places.

"A-ouch—ouch—ouch!" she screamed in her pain.

Scarcely a moment had passed ere the tail was swollen to a size as great as that of Mr. Fox's brush. Though her eyes were dimmed with tears of anguish, Miss Pussy could not help exclaiming, indeed, of this wonderful ornament.

Nutting good-bye to Mr. Fox, Miss Pussy tripped lightly homeward to show Mrs. Tabby the splendid new tail.

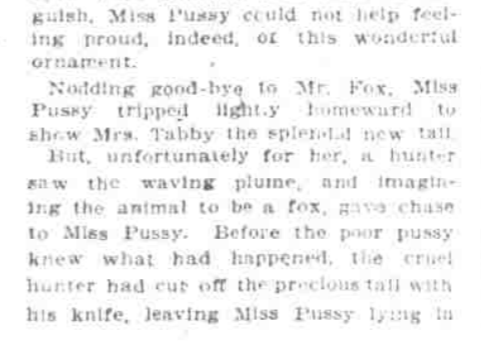
But, unfortunately for her, a hunter saw the waving plume, and imagining the animal to be a fox, gave chase to Miss Pussy. Before the poor pussycat knew what had happened, the cruel hunter had cut off the precious tail with his knife, leaving Miss Pussy lying in

scared in her pain.

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DISTURBED THE BEES

the hedge with a stump of a tail and her beautiful dress completely spoiled.

Sadly she crawled home, and to her own surprise told her story to Mrs. Tabby.

"A wretched quack was Mr. Hunter Tabby," she content with what you have, and not to be vain or envious of others' possessions."

This lesson Miss Pussy learned, so that she was a much nicer pussycat without her tail than she had been before. It was lost.

No Hurry.

A gentleman living in the North was riding through the mountains of West Virginia, when he came across a boy driving a herd of pigs.

"Where are you taking the pigs?" asked the man.

"Going to pasture 'em a bit," the lad replied.

"Why," said the man, "I should imagine it would be slow work fattening pigs on grass. Up where I live they get them up and feed them on corn. It saves a lot of time."

"Yes, but what's time to a haw?" was the crushing reply.

Defined.

The teacher was giving an explanation of carelessness punishable by law.

"If I went out in a boat," said she, "and the oar knew it was leaking, and I got drowned, what would that be?"

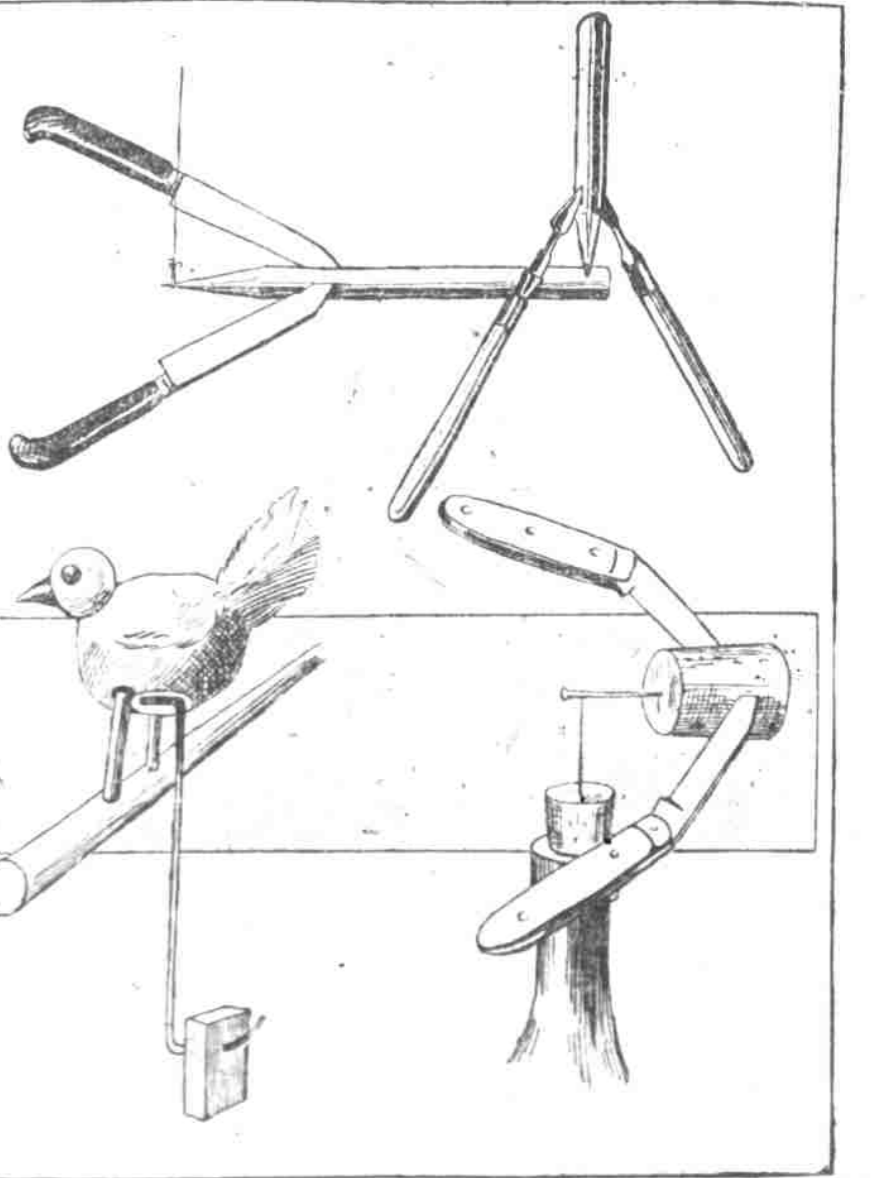
Instantly a hand shot up and there came the answer: "A holiday for us!"

Search Without Fruit.

Father-Willie, can you tell me what a "fruitless search" is?

Willie—Certainly, pa. It's when you're hunting for apples in the pantry and find only potatoes.

To find the Balancing Point



WHEN a combination is made of different articles—stuck together or poised in mid-air—it takes considerable skill to find the center of gravity, that balancing point where the objects used remain stationary.

Above are pictured several "tricks" which require little description. Yet, simple as they appear, you probably won't accomplish these balancing feats the first time you try—nor the second. The rod upon which the bird rests is placed at an angle. If balance is accurately preserved, the bird will wobble down the entire length of rod, bobbing from one still-like foot to another,