

# FOR EVERY BOY AND GIRL

## JOHNNY'S MISTAKE.

By Henry Wallace Phillips.

**J**OHNNY TAPPERTON sat under the shade of the apple-tree studying his grammar. Ah, no, ho! I wrong Johnny. If he had been studying his grammar he would have known more about it; for he was a bright boy, was John. As it was, he had the grammar in his hand, and occasionally his eye fell on the book, but his mind was full of bitter regret at being obliged to stay there, when everything pointed to a fishing excursion.

"It's just nonsense, that's what it is!" cried Johnny, as he slapped the grammar on the ground. "I don't want to talk any better than I do now! Everybody understands what I say. When I say 'It's me,' they know just as well who I mean as if I said 'It's I'—better, when you come to that, for if I said 'It's I,' they would not believe it was me at all. Now, there's Uncle Fred; he writes books, so he ought to know what he's talking about—and he says that originality is the great thing. There you are! That's what I want. I don't want to talk English, or United States, or French—I want to talk plain John Tapperton. That would be original. Huh! they don't want a boy to show any sense of his own. Every time I try to speak in class, Miss Derwent says: 'Now, I don't wish for any argument, Johnny; there it is in the book, and if you learn it that way it will be perfectly satisfactory to me. You needn't take the trouble to improve it,—when, if she'd just listen to me, I could show her where the book is wrong in a minute. Well, I suppose I've got to get that lesson, so here goes.'"

He sighed deeply, and opened the grammar, reading: "The objective case is governed by—" Johnny stopped there.

"Because those things are not in my regular line at all."

"Well, but can't you get them for me?"

"Oh, I suppose I could; but I'm not interested in those things, and they do not fall in the line of my duties. I, sir, am the Genius of Language."

Johnny's face changed in a manner wonderful to behold.

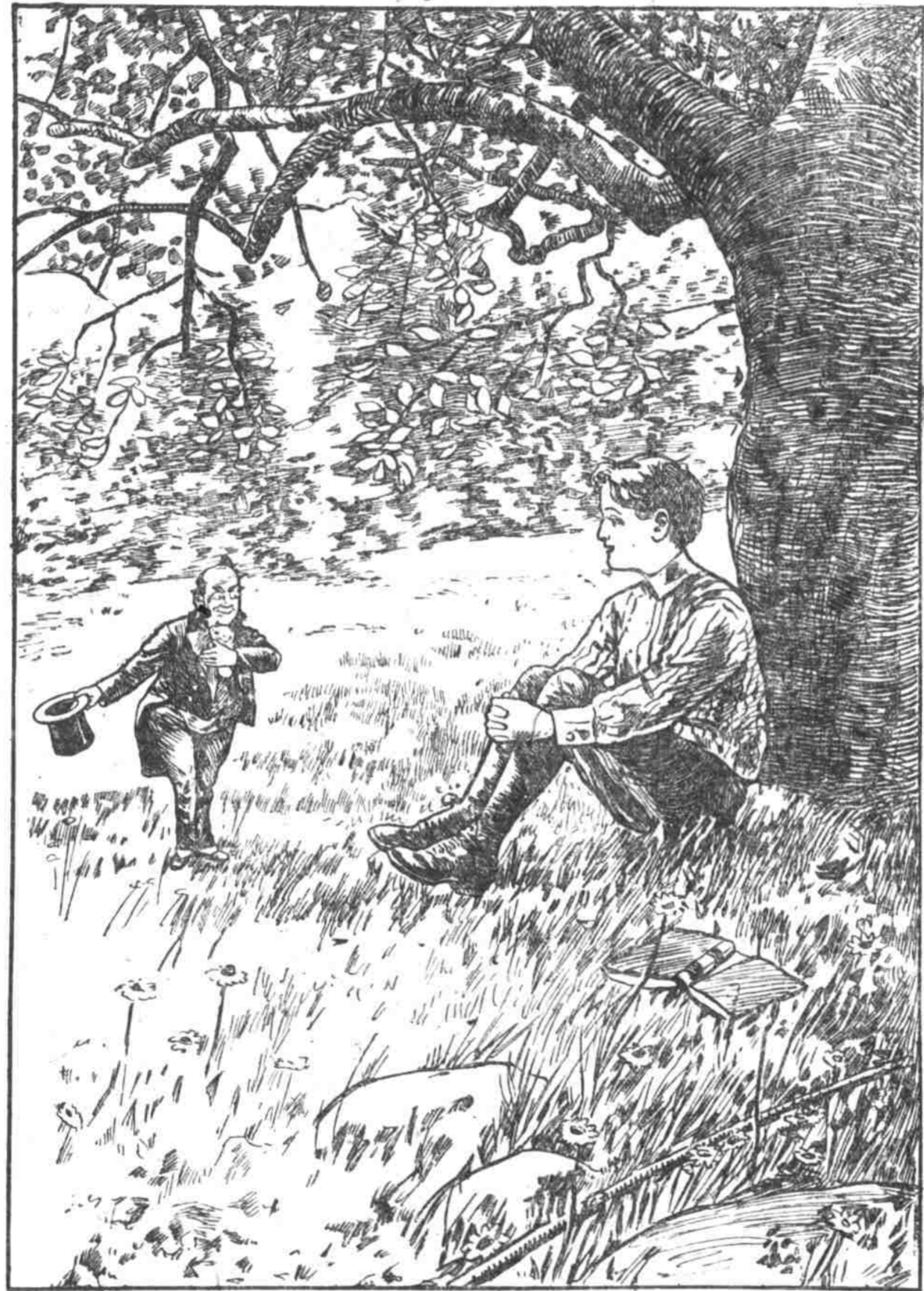
"If that is n't just my luck!" he groaned. "I can always get slathers of the things I don't want! Well, sir," he continued, speaking to the Genius, "don't let me keep you from anything you've got to do. I don't care for your goods—there's too much language around as it is."

"My dear young friend, that would be impossible! There cannot be too much language. Every word represents an idea, and to say that there could be too many ideas is ridiculous."

"Well, I don't know about that; I seem to have too many ideas," answered Johnny. "They only get me into trouble; so you needn't wait."

"Pooh! Nonsense!" exclaimed the old gentleman. "I must wait. You have summoned me, and I must do my duty. I shall have to attend you from day to day until you have an appreciation of the beauties of language."

"What!" screamed Johnny. "Do you mean to say that you are going to tag around after me all the time?"



A LITTLE OLD GENTLEMAN POPPED OUT OF THE GROUN BEFORE HIM.

## How Mr. Drake Went to Court.

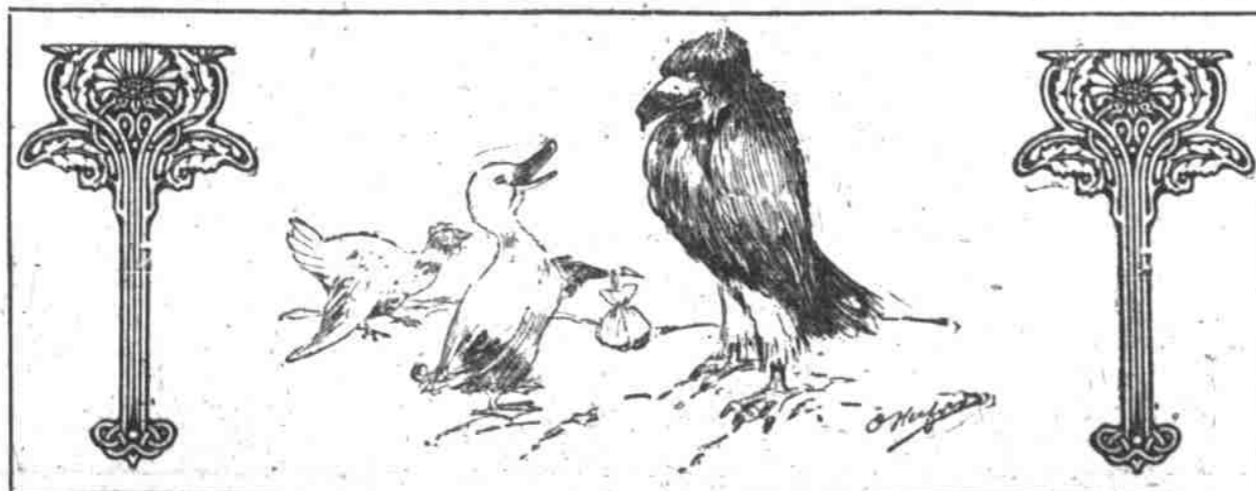
(A Negro "Mammy's" Bedtime Story)

BY EMMA M. BACUS.

**M**R. DRAKE was always pokin' 'bout in de puddles an' gullies, an' he fin' lots ob money; an', as he had nowhar to spend it, he save it up, 'ca'se he no use for it in de farm-yard; an' he go roun' an' talk 'bout it, so de rest ob de fowls dey soon come to all know 'bout his money, an' some way before long Mr. Buzzard he

Now, in de olden time de Eagle an' de Buzzard dey bof look jes' erlike, but de Eagle was de King ob de birds, 'ca'se he was de braves' an' stronges' ob all de whole tribe.

One day, when Mrs. Hen was walkin' roun' de barn-yard, she see er shadder oberhade, an' she squeak out, "Oh, Mr. Drake, dar de King Eagle!" She don't know no better; an' Mr. Drake he think it de King, sho. So when Mr. Buzzard comes sailin' down, Mrs.



MR. BUZZARD BORROWS MR. DRAKE'S SAVINGS

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"I do not mean to say—I did say," returned the Genius. "It's past tense now."

"I wish you'd passed hence along with it!" sighed Johnny.

The old gentleman took off his spectacles and rubbed them with his handkerchief; then he put them on and looked earnestly at Johnny. "That's not a bad joke for a boy," said he.

"Huh! there you are again—for a boy," said Johnny. "I'm sick of those words. If it is n't a bad joke for a boy, it is n't a bad joke for anybody. I ain't going to stand that 'boy' business forever."

The Genius made an awful face, and shuddered as if he had taken a dose of quinine. "Don't say 'ain't'—to oblige me, please don't say it," he begged.

Johnny looked at him in wonder. It seemed like a great fuss over a trifle. Then a thought came to him that set his heart beating. "He said he could get them for me," Johnny said to himself, "and I believe I can make him." He continued aloud: "What's the matter with 'ain't'? It did n't ought to be such a poor word."

The old gentleman staggered back, gasping for breath. "Oh, mercy!" he cried.

"I hope there ain't—I mean, is n't—nothing the matter with you?" inquired Johnny, politely. "I was just going to say that I used to could make out without saying 'ain't,' but lately—very lately—it seems to get hung into everything I'm a-goin' to say."

The effect of this awful speech on the old gentleman was greater than Johnny had even hoped. He turned pale and trembled; he had to take hold of a bush to support himself. "Oh, my young friend, this is terrible!" he moaned. "I simply cannot stand it! Such language! My dear child, if you will only desist, I shall see about those trifles for which you asked at first, but let me entreat you to adopt some manner of speaking which is n't quite so underbred!"

Now here, of course, is where Johnny should have stopped. He had his heart's desires in his reach; the bicycle, the million dollars, the shot-gun, the dog, and all the rest of the things were his for the asking. But his great fault was not to know when to stop. He was carried away with the success of his plan, and the feeling of power it gave him, so he said:

"Why, I don't believe I've got no way of speaking which ain't no underbredder."

The old gentleman gave a feeble bleat, and dropped to the ground with a sound like a large apple falling. His little high hat rolled away over the grass.

Hen scrape her foot an' drag her wing, an' so do Mr. Drake an' all de rest; an' Mr. Drake he bow low, an' he say, "Good mawnin', King Eagle." Mr. Buzzard feel mighty proud when he see dey take him for King Eagle, so he glare he eye, an' walk like he got on top-boots, an' try to hol' he bill up an' look grand, twell Mr. Drake feel very 'umble.

Den Mr. Buzzard say, "I hyar yo' got some money;



MR. MOCKING-BIRD RESCUES THE DRAKE.

don't yo' want to lend it to me at intrust? I'll pay yo' good intrust." Mr. Drake he say, "Yas; I'll be proud to blige yo'." An' he straps up he money, an' bring it to Mr. Buzzard, an' he say, "Hyar 's de money, King, an' I don't want no intrust; it am a great honor to lend yo' money." But Mr. Buzzard he 'sist that he goin' to pay intrust; an' he roll he eye, an' hold up he hade, an' fly erway up in de sky twell dey see nffin' but er black speck.

Mr. Drake feel proud an' set up. But er long time go by, an' he don't get no intrust of no money or no word frum de King. An' he git oneasy, an' he say he gwine to de co't an' ax for he money. But he wait erwhile longer twell he patience all gone, den he start off on de long journey to de co't; an' on de way he pass er pore Mockin'-bird wid he foots fasten to er lime-tree, an' Mockin'-bird say, "Oh, Mr. Drake, my foots is stuck fast, an' I can't git erway!" Mr. Drake feel very sorry for him, an' he say, "I'll help yo'"; an' he go an' fetch some water in he bill, an' soak de Mockin'-bird's foots twell he git loose; an' Mockin'-bird promise Mr. Drake "if he eber had a chance ter do him a good turn, he will remember."

Den Mr. Drake journey on, an' torkely he come to de seashore, an' dar was de co't on er big rock, an' King Eagle on de throne, an' all his orsifers, Hawks, Peacocks an' uder birds, settin' down in front ob him. Mr. Drake he walk straight up to King Eagle, an' he say, "Quack, quack, quack! I want my money back!"

De King he greatly 'sprise, an' he say, "What yo' mean, sar, makin' all dat racket an' sturbin' de co't?"

Mr. Drake he tell him he done take he money an' promised him intrust, an' den neber send no word; an' he say, "Quack, quack, quack! I want my money back!"

Den say de King "De bird am crazy; I neber see him, nor berry-money ob him"; an' he tell Mr. Peacock ter "take dat troublesome rascal off in de woods ten miles erway, an' gib him er good 'beatin', an' let him go."

Den Mr. Peacock an' 'nother orsifer walks Mr. Drake erway, one on each side, an' when dey gets 'bout er mile erway in de woods, Mr. Mockin'-bird he sees he old friend in such trouble, an' studies 'bout

Johnny stood stupefied for a second at this result. Then he ran to the old gentleman. "Pshaw!" he said. "He's only fainted." But when he came to look at his victim closely, there was no concealing the truth. The Genius was undergoing some mysterious change. "Can't I get you a drink of water?" asked Johnny, frightened at the other's appearance.

"Let me alone, young man," answered the Genius, in a sad, weak, voice. "Leave me to my troubles—it is too late for succor. I am a cleft infinitive, a verb without a subject!"

These remarks were all grammar to Johnny, but the tone convinced him that the old gentleman took a serious view of the situation, so he said encouragingly, "Oh, I hope the case is n't so bad as that!" Still, while he tried, to be brave about it, his heart swelled with disappointment. The old gentleman was vanishing, and with him would go all hopes of bicycles, millions of dollars, and the rest of it. It was a bitter, bitter disappointment. As usual, he first cast around for someone else to lay the blame upon, but not with success. It was Johnny's fault,—every bit of it,—and for once in his life he admitted the truth. "Huh! he been altogether too smart this time," he whispered to himself. Meanwhile the Genius was repeating Johnny's words.

"The case!" he murmured. "Circumstances alter cases! A moment ago," he continued, tapping himself on the chest with one pudgy finger, "I could proudly and grammatically say that this corporeal entity was mine; now all my feeble strength can compass is to shout, without regard for truth, grammar, rhetoric, or the rights of man—to shout, I say: 'It's ME—E-E-E-EA—OWOOO!'"

At this startling and unexpected ending, which seemed to roar in his ears with a stunning clamor, the boy sprang up, knocking a furry something fully twenty feet away in one frightened, vigorous sweep of his arm.

"Why!" he cried, in complete astonishment, the stately old gentleman of the moment before blending confusedly with a very real and offending black cat, which stood staring at him from a distance. "Huh! was it you, Captain, old boy? Well, you nearly scared the life out of me!" Then he thought recent events over soberly. "It was only a dream," he said to himself; "but there's no doubt about it—I was too smart. I'll turn over a new leaf tomorrow; but just now I think I'll go fishing."

how he gwine help him. Den soon Mr. Peacock hyar er voice in de air oberhade, shoutin', "Rain, rain, rain!"

But was Mr. Mockin'-bird, but Mr. Peacock don't know dat; an' dey say "We got ter be gittin' home, 'fore de rain; we might jes' as well let Mr. Drake go, an' hurry back"; 'ca'se Mr. Peacock ain't gwine git he feeders wet nohow, if he kin help it. So dey tuck Mr. Drake loose, an' run off in great haste.

Pore Mr. Drake feel very much insulted by he treatment at co't, an' he think it 'ca'se he sech er plain, ugly bird, an' all de co't orsifers so fine; an' de don't want ter go back no mo'; but he want he money powerful. So he clean up he clo'es, an' take he way back to co't, an' walk in as befo', an' say, "Quack, quack, quack! I want my money back!"

An' de King he mo' mad dan eber; an' he say, "I got ter git rid ob dis crazy bird some way"; an' he call Mr. Fox, an' tell him to "take Mr. Drake off to de woods an' eat him up." So Mr. Fox he pick up Mr. Drake, an' run off to de woods.

An' Mr. Drake think he rime hab come.

But when Mr. Mockin'-bird see he ol' friend in such danger, he feel he bonid ter help him; an' presen'tly a bird drap like he date ridge in de path in front ob Mr. Fox.

Mr. Fox say, "Hyar 's er good mouthful"; so he try to holl on ter Mr. Drake wid he foot while he eat de bird. But when he fin' himself loose, Mr. Drake run erway, an' Mr. Mockin'-bird fly up on de tree. Den Mr. Fox hyar er noise like er man callin' er dog, an' he think de hunters comin', an' he run off home fas' as he kin go.

Den pore ol' Mr. Drake feel so 'umble an' lost heart, an' he tell Mr. Mockin'-bird all de troubles. An' Mr. Mockin'-bird tell him, tak' courage; he knows dan some mistake, 'ca'se de King am honor'ble. An' so dey journey back to co't once mo'; an' Mr. Mockin'-bird set up on de tree to fin' out what de matter.

Pore ol' Mr. Drake he walk up to de King, brave, an' he say up promp', "Quack, quack, quack! I want my money back!" De King was mos' 'stracted an' he 'bout to hab Mr. Drake killed on de spot, when Mr. Mockin'-bird he see Mr. Buzzard workin' in de mud down back ob de co't an' he say, "Oh, Mr. King, dar de feller dat pass off fo' yo' Majesty, an' borry de money!" An' de King was powerful angry, an' he call up Mr. Buzzard frum he work, an' mak' him pay Mr. Drake he money. Den he order all de feeders stripped frum Mr. Buzzard's neck, an' sand rubbed in he eye. So Mr. Buzzard neber try to be taken for King Eagle since dat day.

Mr. Drake say, "Thank yo'" to Mr. Mockin'-bird, an' he journey back home, feelin' very proud, an' sayin', "Quack, quack, quack! I got my money back!"

