

For EVERY BOY and GIRL

THE KNIGHTS of ROMANCE

By ISABEL ECCLESTONE-MACKAY



The Clock

He stands in a corner from morning till night,
A patient old thing with no feet,
His face is as solemn and round as a moon
And, oh, so exceedingly neat.
From breakfast to supper,
Right on through the day,
"Tick-tock, tick-tock, I am only the clock,
Tick-tock, tick-tock," he'll say.

His hands are quite tidy; they grow on his face;
When I grow to be big I shall know
Why one is so long and the other so short
And one he moves fast, and one slow.
From breakfast to supper,
Right on through the day,
"Tick-tock, tick-tock, I am only the clock,
Tick-tock, tick-tock," he'll say.

At night when I'm sleeping, he keeps wide awake
To see what the little mice do;
He watches the brownie creep in through the blind,
His little red shoes wet with dew.
From night-time to daytime,
Right on through the day,
"Tick-tock, tick-tock, I am only the clock,
Tick-tock, tick-tock," he'll say.

And when it comes morning I wish he would tell,
I ask him, but never a trace
Of the wonderful things which he saw in the night
Does he show in his sober old face.
From breakfast to supper,
Right on through the day,
"Tick-tock, tick-tock, I am only the clock,
Tick-tock, tick-tock," he'll say.

Alonzo and the Milkman

By FRANCES A. SCHNEIDER.

One day Alonzo went to walk,
Just as the sun was rising,
And met a milkman, who remarked,
"You're really most surprising!"

"Perhaps you're not the early bird,
Out catching worms," said he;
"But if you are, go back to bed,
And let the poor worms be."

"I'm country bred," Alonzo said,
"And being wise and witty,
I rise at five; perhaps you'll guess
My home's near Boston City."

"If you are bread," the milkman said,
"And rise at such an hour,
Pray tell me, when you're in the east,
Are you a little flower?"

HEN Andra and I found out that we really had to go on a visit to Aunt Belinda, we submitted to the inevitable. "The inevitable" is something that Aunt Eva gets Uncle Charles to say—you've got to do, and when you submit to it it means that you can't think of any way of getting out of doing it. This does not happen to us very often, but sometimes it does.

We live at Toronto and Aunt Belinda lives at Leith. At least Leith is her post-office, and that is partly why we do not like the idea of going—it must be very curious to live at a place that isn't a place at all, but just a post-office. Aunt Belinda lives there in the old house where grandpa's father lived when he first came to Canada. She says it is historic and she likes its being historic so much that she says she would feel "out of drawing" anywhere else. Andra and I looked up "out of drawing" in the Encyclopedia, but couldn't find it. So we asked Uncle Charles, who said that, in simpler words it meant that Aunt Belinda couldn't "fit in" anywhere else. This seems simpler but it's not very simple, either, because though Aunt Belinda is very tall, she is not big around, and there are heaps of places in Toronto where she would fit in quite nicely. Uncle Charles said it wasn't her body but her mind. He explained that she had an "historic mind." That is another reason why we didn't want to go. But we both felt that trying to get out of it was useless.

"It's the hand of Fate," said Andra, gloomily. "Since our runaway plan ended in a fiasco—"

"A what?" I asked politely. Usually I don't bother about Andra's words, for she doesn't like explaining, but I felt cross myself. "A fiasco," said Andra, "is a fire-cracker that won't go off."

"That's a squib," I said, triumphant. Andra looked at me as if she was thinking hard, and then she said, "Fiasco is French for squib."

I haven't started French yet and I told Andra I did not think it nice to talk in that language when I was present; but she only said: "Don't be present, then," as snappy as possible.

All this is a kind of "introducer" to let you see how hard it is, most of the time, to reason with a girl. Uncle Charles says that Andra is the "eternal feminine," whatever that means. But the real thing I am going to tell about began to happen when the time came for us to make up our minds how we could get the most fun out of the journey to Aunt Belinda's.

"Have you anything in your mind?" asked Andra. She always asks me if I have anything in my mind, but it doesn't mean anything. It is just politeness. The kind of things I have in my mind do not seem to suit Andra; she prefers to use her own mind as a rule. You will see what I mean when I tell you that she did not wait for me to answer, but went right on to ask me about the bump on the back of my head. She came over and felt it.

"It's a good size yet," she said. "Is it very sore?" I got the bump the last time I fell down stairs, but that was two days ago, so I said it didn't hurt as long as I didn't sleep on it.

"Doesn't that hurt?" asked Andra, giving it a good punch. "No, it doesn't," I said. "But you needn't do it again."

"Well, that's one good idea gone!" she said, disappointedly. "If your bump was hurting badly I thought we might play pilgrims. Pilgrims are people who go to shrines, and pools, and things, to get cured. Old Mike O'Neil did. Don't you remember, he had a bone in his leg. He said it was 'most excruciating.' But we can't play pilgrims if your bump's better, unless—unless you would care to bump it again!"

I said it might be just as well to think of something else.

"Have you anything in your mind?" asked she, and then, just as I was going to tell her what I had in my mind, she went right on.

"The only other plan I thought of was for us to be knights-errant. Knights-errant were people who didn't have any regular work to do, so they just mounted their steeds and rode all over the place, helping people who had wrongs and were too busy to attend to them."

"What did they get out of it?" I asked. I can't help thinking of these things.

Andra looked at me in a way I wished she wouldn't. "I hope you are not going to be like your Uncle Thomas," was all she said. My Uncle Thomas made lots of money, but nevertheless is not considered a credit to the family. I didn't want to be like my Uncle Thomas, but I didn't like the knight-errant idea either, so I said:

"We haven't any steeds, so we can't do it."

"Neither did they have railway trains," said Andra. "If they had they wouldn't have used steeds. It's just the same thing, only different. Anybody can make silly objections like that. Are you going to be in the play or not?"

I said I was, for I knew if I didn't Andra would be a knight-errant without me and Andra is very thoughtful. Of course, Andra being the older makes her kind of bossy, but, after all, I'm a boy and a boy is a

squeeze through, the train was beginning to move and Andra was coming back through the car-door.

Her hat was crooked, and the ribbon that ties her hair behind had come untied; and she had something that wriggled and tried to jump out of her arms. When she came near enough I saw that it was a cute little blue dog—a puppy with long ears and thick, long hair hanging all over its eyes so you could just see little twinkles through.

"It's the miserable little girl's dog," said Andra, as she sat down to get her breath. "It's what she was crying for. Her father wasn't going to let her take it, but just as I was looking out of the window he put it down. He was busy talking to another man, so I just grabbed it up and—here it is!"

Now, as I have said before, Andra is thoughtless at times, and in spite of myself I couldn't help thinking that this was one of the times. I thought that perhaps the man might not like it, but little things like this never seem to worry Andra.

"Isn't it a dear?" said she. "Look at its beauty eyes. When it lies down you can't tell which is head. Won't the miserable little girl be pleased! Let's go and give it to her."

The train was going pretty fast by this time, but we managed to get to the other end of the car, where the

little girl was, without accident. She was still crying, and one handkerchief was spread out on the window-sill to dry. I began to feel that, after all, Andra had done a noble thing.

"Don't cry," said Andra, sitting down beside her. "Here is your dog, my dear."

Andra always talks as if she were about fifty years old. The miserable little girl gave a jump and looked up. At first when she saw the dog she began to look happy and made a grab for it—then, quite suddenly, she started to cry harder than ever.

"Oh—oh," she sobbed. "It isn't my dog. Go 'way—I want my own dog. I want my Togo!"

I looked at Andra. It is never my way to say, "I told you so." It is a mean thing to say; besides it makes Andra madder than anything I know. I just looked at her. Looks say a lot if you know how. But I will say this for Andra, if she is a girl she's got grit.

"Stop crying!" she said, and the miserable little girl stopped. Andra took her handkerchief from her and spread it on the window-sill beside the other.

"Now," she said, "look at this dog."

The little girl looked. "Isn't it your dog?"

"No."

"Weren't you crying for a dog?"

"Yes—yes," the little girl began to blubber harder. "Wait a minute!" said Andra, firmly. "Was the dog you were crying for anything like this dog?"

"Oh, yes. But I want my own dog. I don't want your horrid dog!" The little girl slapped the puppy away and began to cry all over again. I could have shaken her with a will. She didn't deserve to have a dog!

Andra turned to me. She looked sympathetic, but reproachful.

"Well, you have done it this time," she said. "Now what would you think of that?"

I knew it was no use saying anything, so I picked up the dog and we went back to our seat.

"It is a most remarkable thing," said Andra after a minute. "I don't see how you ever made such a silly mistake."

I said I didn't see either.

I suppose I am partly to blame—in a way," she went on in the mild tone of a martyr, "for I saw the little girl and her father and her horrid dog just as we were getting on the car. But it was not until you drew my attention to her that I remembered our vow about people in distress. And then I saw the same man and the same dog, but I suppose," here she sighed deeply, "I suppose the dog was different."

We both looked at the dog and he certainly did look different. But he was a nice dog.

"I wonder if he can do any tricks?" asked Andra, but before we could find out the conductor came along the aisle with the brakeman after him. He saw the dog at once.

"No dogs allowed in the passenger coaches," he said, as cross as possible. "Here, Jim, take this pup into the baggage-car."

Andra took the dog in her arms. She saw that the conductor meant what he said and that it was no use arguing, so she just looked as if she didn't see him at all and gave the dog into the brakeman's arms.

"Please be careful of him, Jim," she said. Every one around laughed and the brakeman grinned, and instead of saying, "Yes, miss," as John does at home, he winked and said, "Sure." Then he took the dog away.

"Where are you two going?" asked the conductor in a very loud and impatient manner.

Andra did not answer, but handed him our tickets as if he were the dummy in front of a clothing-store. I don't know how she does it; I can't. Anyhow the conductor did not like it.

"The charge for the dog is twenty-five cents," the conductor snapped.

"Give the man a quarter, Jack," said Andra in a tone Aunt Eva uses when the cook gives notice. Of course I had to fork out. What else could I do? And it was the only change I had, too! Anyhow, it made the conductor boiling mad, so I didn't care very much.

But worse was to come. Things often seem to save the worst till the last; and anyhow it happened that way, this time.

Andra had just opened Susan's nice lunch at a station where the train stopped for dinner, when the conductor came in again with another man. The other man did not seem cross like the conductor, but he had a worried look. They both came straight up to where we were sitting. Andra had just set out the cream-puffs. There were four.

"There they are, officer," said the conductor. "Impossible!" exclaimed the worried-looking man. "I guess not," said the conductor, and he put his hands on Andra's shoulders. Somehow I just got hot all in a minute, and I struck his hand off with all my might.

"Leave the lady alone!" I said. The conductor turned red with rage, but the other man said quickly:

"There is some mistake here, I think." He sat down on the opposite seat. Andra looked at him as Aunt Eva would look if the butler had sat down at the table; then, when she saw that he wasn't like the conductor, she stopped doing it at once.

The man bowed to her.

"With your permission," he said, gravely. Andra smiled at him. The conductor was wild by this time.

"You'd better look sharp," he said; "I can't wait here forever. These are the kids that had the dog."

And then, suddenly, I partly guessed what had happened. I got cold all over. The other man did not appear to notice the conductor, he just began to talk to Andra.

"There was a dog," he said, "picked up at the last stop. A thoroughbred Skye—Ormond. The owner is a Mr. Cyril Murray. It seems that you children have a Skye with you. Of course you can account for him."

"Do you mean that you would like to hear how we got him?" asked Andra, graciously. "My brother will explain." She began to eat one of the cream-puffs.

Now what was I to do? Of course I just had to. By the time I had finished she was eating the second cream-puff.

The worried-looking man seemed more worried than ever.

"Remarkable!" he murmured. "Not at all," I said as grandly as I could, for I felt I had to protect Andra.

"Oh, yes it was, Jack," said Andra, in the sweetest tone, looking up from her cream-puff. "It was the strangest thing! I don't see how you ever came to be so silly."

The nice man coughed and the conductor said something I didn't catch.

"I don't know just what to do," said the nice man, looking worried again.

"You don't believe that yarn, surely?" said the conductor, sharply.

Andra picked up the third puff. There was only one left. I thought that even if we were going to be arrested I might as well make sure of that, but just as I stretched out my hand to take it, the nice man turned to me and said:

"What is your name, my boy?"

"Musgrave," I said. "Mr. John Harrington Musgrave and Miss Alexandra Musgrave. I am sorry I haven't my cards with me."

Andra was mean enough to laugh. The conductor and the nice man looked at each other and then at us.

"Are you—?" began the nice man and then he paused.

"Yes, we are," said Andra, calmly.

"For a minute I didn't know what she meant, and then it suddenly struck me that they probably knew Uncle Charles."

"We sometimes get in a scrape," explained Andra to the nice man, "but we don't steal dogs. Our uncle, the Hon. Charles Musgrave, doesn't approve of it."

The conductor made a remark he shouldn't have. The nice man smiled.

"Well, well," he said, "perhaps we had better let it go at that. But I suppose you will allow me to restore the lost Ormond to his distracted owner, will you not, Miss Musgrave?"

Andra looked after them and her eyes were all twinkly as they were when she just enjoys something; then she said:

"Did you see the conductor's face, Jack?"

"Why?"

"Oh, nothing. Only Uncle Charles is a director of this railroad."

"Well?" I said.

"Well—stupid!"

I didn't see exactly what she meant, for Uncle Charles doesn't take the least interest in conductors, but I was too relieved to want to argue. It seemed to me that we were well out of a rather awkward scrape, and there was a certain thing that I wished it would not have been mean to say. It's all very well to be reckless when you have a brother along to help you out, but supposing Andra had been alone!

"Have a sandwich, Jack?" said Andra.

"Give me a cream-puff to start on," said I, for I was beginning to be hungry. I glanced down at the luncheon that Andra had spread out on the suitcase. Then I looked at Andra. It was a dreadful look.

"Oh, Jack," she said; "I am so sorry. But I was so excited and nervous I ate them all and never thought."

Now what do you think of that!



"DON'T CRY," SAID ANDRA, SITTING DOWN BESIDE HER. "HERE IS YOUR DOG, MY DEAR."

THE LOST TOP



I lost my top; oh, what a pity!
But now its fate I know:
I'm sure 'twas swallowed
by my kitty,
Cause when I listen, so,
And put my ear down
close to her,
I hear it humming—
"Whir, whir, whir!"
C.F.L.