

Four-Leaved Clover.

Once, when simplest flowers of earth
Seemed to be of heavenly birth;
When each month was like the May
And all life a holiday,
Through the fields we used to go,
Wandering gayly to and fro,
Seeking here and searching there—
Searching tireless everywhere,
Hill and vale and meadow over,
Just to find a four-leaved clover.

What triumphant shouts would rise
When we saw the fairy prize!
Saw the precious, dainty thing
Which, as we believed, could bring
Wondrous luck and boundless joy
To the favored girl or boy
Who, in ecstasy of pleasure,
First espied the magic treasure!

Now, with steps more sad and slow,
Through the autumn fields we go,
And our hearts less quickly beat
To that music strange and sweet
Which the dreaming poet hears
Echoing ever, far or near.
Yet 'tis not, oh, happy chance
Lures our meditative glance
To some green and dainty cover
Where upspring a four-leaved clover.
Straight a thrill of glad surprise
Warms the heart and lights the eyes,
And we, halt in earnest, say:
"This will be a lucky day."

Ah! the simple joys and true
That our dreaming childhood knew!
Let us cling, through good and ill,
To their precious memories still!
Like soft winds, from distant bowers,
Wafting scent of sweetest flowers,
Float they round the darker ways
All must tread in later days.
Time, that steals full many a charm
From our lives, can do small harm
If he leaves undimmed and bright
Childhood's faith and pure delight
In the lowly things that lie
Everywhere beneath the sky.

—Enelina Sherman Smith.

UNCLE JEAN'S STORY.

Louis Berthold, with his hoe upon his shoulder, walked slowly down the path toward the potato-field. His Uncle Jean, who was sitting among the hoppers, smoking, called to him as he passed:

"Where art thou going, Louis?"
The boy stopped and resting his hoe upon the ground leaned upon it.

"To the potatoes," he replied; "but I don't want to."

"Don't thou?" said his uncle.
Louis looked at him mournfully.

"But my mother said I must."
"That is another matter. Do you know, Louis, what once happened to me when my mother said I must?"

"No, Uncle Jean," he replied.
"I know very little of what happened to you, and I often think, when I grow up and become a soldier, that when I come home again I will tell the boys of all that happened to me."

"But I have never been a soldier," said his uncle.
"No; but you are a sailor, and you have been in many battles. You must often think of them, but you never talk of them."

"His Uncle Jean looked at him gravely.
"It is not fair, is it? There is Gustave Ballow—his grandfather has many a tale of his old battles, and thou—thou hast a glum and silent old uncle, who never prates of days gone by. Well, if thou wilt finish thy work and come back I'll tell thee of this time when my mother laid her order on me."

Louis shouldered his hoe again, and marched off. He did not hurry because of his uncle's promise; but he probably worked more steady. He did not stop to watch the robins; and the rabbit that ran leaping over the field was not chased by him. He thought of the story, and loped it would be a good one, full of gunpowder and blazing ships; but he was not sure. His uncle was the disappointment of his life—that was the truth; and as Louis said it to himself, he dug his hoe into the ground and cut a potato in two. When he was a little chap, he was forever hearing of his Uncle Jean, who had fought so bravely, and who, it was said, was thanked by the queen herself. The farmers all around the country would ask his father, "What of Jean?" and out on the green in the evening, when the young folks danced and the old folks sat and talked, there was many a tale told of what Jean Berthold had done—how he had gone to sea as a boy of all work, and how he had made a captain, and had had a medal given him for his bravery. He had fought desperate battles; he had been a prisoner; there was no end of the glorious things told of him; and Louis often used to wish that it was he, instead of his younger brother who was named after him, for his brother cared nothing about heroes.

But one day Louis saw from an old stone fence where he sat watching the crows, noting how, as they flew, the wife carried the barrels, that there was a commotion of some sort at home, so he at once got down and ran to see what it meant.

In the great kitchen, surrounded by the whole family, weeping and laughing, stood a very fat man with blue eyes, a rosy, laughing face, and dressed much as the men in the town were.

This was his Uncle Jean! Louis was so surprised that he could not look glad. He had often fancied this coming home, but in his visions his uncle was tall and fierce. He had a long black beard, and he wore a sword and scarlet-and-gold clothes, and walked like a soldier and not like a duck. Whether this was a good picture of a French sailor or not, Louis never stopped to ask himself, but he knew that it was the way a hero ought to look.

Of one thing he was certain—a hero was never fat. Then, as time passed on, his disappointment deepened, for this uncle of his never talked of his deeds, and seemed to take more interest in home affairs and farm talk than in scenes of glory.

When Louis finished his work, he tood and looked at it. It was very good work. There was no saying more common in the Berthold family than, "Do it now and do your best," and Louis had caught the spirit of it. So then he took up the hoe, put it in the barn, and started for the hop vines to find his uncle.

"Hast thou finished?" said he.
"All finished," said Louis, sitting down on the grass, "and I do hope, Uncle Jean, that thy story is of war and of brave men."

"It certainly is of war; how brave were the men thou must decide. So, to begin: It was a dozen years ago, nearly twenty, when I had just come ashore from a long cruise, and was in the greatest hurry to go home and see my mother, that, just as I was fairly ready to go, the captain of the *Deliverance* fell sick, and I was ordered to take his place and be ready to sail at once. I did not like it. It was a compliment, but I would rather have gone home—you see I had been away for years. 'Thou dost not waste thy sword over thy head,' said Count Hohenstack, who was my friend. 'I keep it for fighting, not waving,' said I, but in truth I had no heart for waving. As for the *Deliverance*, she was a good little frigate of twenty-eight guns, and had as a comrade, and under my orders, the *Isabelle*, with twenty-four guns, and my old messmate, Gaspar Brissac, for captain. What we had to do was to take a fleet of twenty merchantmen to Genoa. It was dangerous service, for we were at war with England, and her ships were lively enough if there was the prospect of a prize afloat. 'We had to hurry our preparations, as the captain's illness had put things back, and one day when I was at the inn, seeing people, I was told one wanted to see me and wouldn't come in. When I went out, long after dark, sat my dear little mother, and near by was old 'Gray Jacques,' harnessed to the cart, with Jules driving. How glad I was to see her! She had come, she said, to see me before I sailed. At once I told everybody that wanted me to come that night, and I took my mother off to the ship and showed it to her. Ah, how she pleased her to see me captain of it! Then, as she stood on deck, looking at the busy rushing to and fro as the vessels were loaded, and as she tried to understand just which belonged to my convoy, she turned and said: 'Jean, art thou afraid?' 'No, mother, I mean to do my best. I did not ask for it, and if the wrong man was chosen the fault is not mine.' 'Well, well,' said she, 'remember this—and thy mother it is who says it—think of Jean Berthold last.' 'This nodded his head, the story was of the right kind.

"The next day, at noon, we sailed. It was all very good for a time, but off the coast of Spain we met the Englishmen—two ships. One carried forty-eight, the other forty-four guns. It was great odds, Louis! My surgeon stood by me at the moment. 'There's no use in it,' he said. 'No use in what?' In making a show of fight? We'll have to surrender at last. This was a nice way to talk to a superior officer, wasn't it? 'And give up the merchantmen?' said I. 'Of course. They will necessarily be captured, and we have to think of ourselves sometimes.' 'Not first,' said I; 'I didn't come out for that. So I just ordered my colors, and told him if he opened his mouth to the men that way he would never doctor any one again; and then we went into action. It was lively work, Louis, and enough, as the cabin-boy says, to make a shark laugh, to see how desperately our guns fired. We had so few in comparison with the enemy that we had to do double work. Fortunately we had plenty of ammunition. There was but one thing to do—to keep both Englishmen engaged and let the merchantmen get off. If we had let one of them flee our fleet would have been lost, so we kept at it. When the merchantmen were out of sight, when our decks were slippery with blood and our masts gone, we surrendered, but it was to the second mate of one of the vessels, for the officers were all dead. There was but a handful of us left, and we were hurried on board the enemy, as our ship was sinking fast. As for me, I had a ball in my leg, and Brissac a cut on his shoulder."

"What became of the surgeon?" asked Louis.
His uncle smiled. "When I sent him below he went to the hold; he couldn't get any further down than he did, and here the cook found him and routed him out to attend the wounded. I put a man over him to make him dress a wound, and never saw him afterward."

Louis nodded his head and drew closer to his uncle.
"We," continued the old sailor, "were taken to Portsmouth, and when we reached the shore we were ironed!"

"Think of it, Louis, we Frenchmen, taken in battle, fighting like tigers and fighting well, put in irons! Ah, it makes my blood boil when I remember it! I could not walk to the prison, and we were not on parole, so we were put into a cart, and the people crowded around us, hooting and scolding. I told Brissac to fancy it applause, and then the louder they screamed the better he would like it. He shook his head. 'As for me, I was disgusted. As for me, I was furious! Never would I so treat a prisoner of war! They put us in a sort of an inn, up in the upper room, where the windows were tightly barred and a guard paced the hall.

"For some days an English doctor came to see us and dressed our wounds, but we had no confidence in him; but one day the guard passed in a little fellow and said, 'There, go work for thy bread.' He was a Frenchman—a surgeon; and now he came and often talked of our escape, for upon it we were resolved. The surgeon had more liberty than we, as he went from room to room, accompanied by a guard, but he never left the house. Had I been in his place I would soon have been free, but he could not see that it was possible. Then, one day, he came to us in great joy, for he had secured a file, and that he gave to us. It made our way clear, for if once the windows were open to us we felt sure of escaping, and now, every day, we talked and planned, and we called the file 'a wound,' and France 'a cure,' and the guards 'objections,' fearing we would be overheard. The file was poor, but little by little the bars were sundered until they were held together by almost a thread, and our progress was concealed by bread crumbs rubbed in soot.

"When the surgeon found that he would have company in escaping, he was cheered, and thought of new ways of help. There was a Swiss who brought cheese to the soldiers. He had been in Paris; he was not unfriendly, and he wanted money. Of this we gave him nearly all we had, and promised much more. Of course, if we accepted, we would have to go to sea, but how? No Englishman would have sold his boat, and the Swiss would have dared to buy; he was known to be poor, and he was no sailor nor fisherman. So the days went on, the bars were sundered almost through, but yet we were prisoners. One day, however, in a little tavern where the Swiss used to go, there sat a Norwegian, who owned a sloop. He drank and he drank, and he went to sleep with his head on the table. To him the Swiss went, and shook him. 'Arouse,' said he, 'you must go to your boat,' and so he took him by the arm and led him to his own room, put him to bed, took away his clothes and locked the door. Then he came swiftly to the surgeon and told him to prepare. 'That night we would be off! Then he bought bread, cheese and water, and put on the shallop, and took her in the twilight up a little creek.

"And we! We cried in each other's arms when the surgeon told us that liberty was so close at hand. France and liberty! Never in battle had our hearts beat so fiercely! And yet I—I was uneasy. I had a sense of what my part was to be, but I could not think of it; and I talked and talked to Brissac of what our plans would be. The surgeon was sure he could escape, for he was no longer closely watched; and at midnight a stone was to be thrown against our window by the Swiss; and then we were to break the bars, and, upon ropes made of our bedclothes, we were to descend. It was near midnight when, as we sat and watched the minutes slowly creeping by, that I took my courage in my hands, and I told Brissac he would have to go alone! 'I don't like to-day, Louis, to think of what he said, and how he begged. I could not persuade him that I could not walk to the boat. Even if I could not, he said, there would be three of them, and they would carry me. He could help me out of the window, and the others could receive me at the ground; then he would follow; and, between them, they could get me easily to the boat. I reminded him of my size—that I was not a slim young fellow like him, but heavy and almost helpless. He would listen to nothing. The worst of it was, for me especially, that all he said was true, and that it could have been managed just as he said, if it had not been for the fact of the danger of detection. I could have slid down the rope, and, with their help, I could have got to the boat, if we were unmolested; but if we should have chanced to meet any one, my presence would have been fatal to the whole party. I could not run. I would at once be known; and Brissac, I knew, whatever the others would do, would never desert me, and the end would be that we would be shot. To this the faithful fellow answered that the night was dark, the moon late, and the road led out of town; so the chances were that we would meet no one. We kept up this discussion, sometimes sadly, sometimes with heat and sharp words until after a stone struck the window; and even after Brissac had the rope ready, and had embraced me, he urged me to go. 'No!' said I, finally. 'If you are in France, you can work for my release. If I go, we may all be lost; and if you stay, as you still threaten, of what use will it be? We shall come to feel that God gave us an opportunity and we refused it. Go, when our break is made, and tell my mother that I still remember not or think of Jean Berthold first.'

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"There couldn't be," cried Louis, standing up in front of his uncle, and looking at him with flashing eyes.
"Uncle Jean, I think you are the greatest man alive."

"I am one of the biggest," said his uncle, with a smile, looking down at himself, "and if I sit about at home and tell stories I shall be larger yet!"—*Christian Union.*

and so he took him by the arm and led him to his own room, put him to bed, took away his clothes and locked the door. Then he came swiftly to the surgeon and told him to prepare. "That night we would be off! Then he bought bread, cheese and water, and put on the shallop, and took her in the twilight up a little creek.

"And we! We cried in each other's arms when the surgeon told us that liberty was so close at hand. France and liberty! Never in battle had our hearts beat so fiercely! And yet I—I was uneasy. I had a sense of what my part was to be, but I could not think of it; and I talked and talked to Brissac of what our plans would be. The surgeon was sure he could escape, for he was no longer closely watched; and at midnight a stone was to be thrown against our window by the Swiss; and then we were to break the bars, and, upon ropes made of our bedclothes, we were to descend. It was near midnight when, as we sat and watched the minutes slowly creeping by, that I took my courage in my hands, and I told Brissac he would have to go alone! "I don't like to-day, Louis, to think of what he said, and how he begged. I could not persuade him that I could not walk to the boat. Even if I could not, he said, there would be three of them, and they would carry me. He could help me out of the window, and the others could receive me at the ground; then he would follow; and, between them, they could get me easily to the boat. I reminded him of my size—that I was not a slim young fellow like him, but heavy and almost helpless. He would listen to nothing. The worst of it was, for me especially, that all he said was true, and that it could have been managed just as he said, if it had not been for the fact of the danger of detection. I could have slid down the rope, and, with their help, I could have got to the boat, if we were unmolested; but if we should have chanced to meet any one, my presence would have been fatal to the whole party. I could not run. I would at once be known; and Brissac, I knew, whatever the others would do, would never desert me, and the end would be that we would be shot. To this the faithful fellow answered that the night was dark, the moon late, and the road led out of town; so the chances were that we would meet no one. We kept up this discussion, sometimes sadly, sometimes with heat and sharp words until after a stone struck the window; and even after Brissac had the rope ready, and had embraced me, he urged me to go. "No!" said I, finally. "If you are in France, you can work for my release. If I go, we may all be lost; and if you stay, as you still threaten, of what use will it be? We shall come to feel that God gave us an opportunity and we refused it. Go, when our break is made, and tell my mother that I still remember not or think of Jean Berthold first."

"Well, he went. We both wept; but he went. Then I crept to my bed; I was alone. The guard passed the door. "If he should come in," I thought, "even yet they could be overtaken" and, in English, I call out, "Brissac, my lad, give me the water; I die with thirst!" and then I upset a chair. The guard paused, and I heard him laugh, and he went on. In the morning I threw up the bed-clothes on Brissac's bed and when our break was made, the guard said: "That lazy fellow, is he not up yet?" It was noon before it was discovered, for I sang and talked, and it was thought we were both within. The surgeon was first missed."

"Wasn't that a great fuss made?" asked Louis, excitedly.
"Indeed there was; the drums were beat, the guards put under arms, the country scoured by horsemen, but, as I repeated again and again, that Brissac was a good walker, they did not set sail to look for him. The Swiss was never thought of until, when I was released, I sent the Norwegian money for his shallop."

"Then you did get off?" said Louis.
"Of course I did," replied his uncle, laughing; "how else thinkest thou I would be here?"

"And how?" asked Louis.
"My king sent for me," said Jean Berthold, proudly; "the merchantmen had told wonderful tales of what we did to save them, and it was thought we were all lost; so when Brissac reached St. Malo—and it took them forty-eight hours—the people rose and would have smothered him with kindness. They took him in triumph through the streets, and he broke from them and told them I was in prison yet. I don't know what he said, but he talked, and the queen heard it, and she sent for him, and he got the king paid for my release."

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TIMELY TOPICS.

Among the laws passed last winter by the New York Legislature was one permitting historical societies to acquire and hold the site of any battle or fort, that is notable in the history of the country, for the purpose of erecting monuments or inclosing interesting remains. The limit of occupation is six acres. The property is to be free from taxation and free to visitors. The land cannot be used for any business purposes, except, perhaps, peddling peanuts and lemonade at anniversary celebrations.

At the close of last year there were 81,841 miles of railroad in operation in the United States, with a population of about 38,000,000. The number of miles of road in operation in Europe was about 94,000, for a population of something over 300,000,000. The United States thus has a mile of railroad to about 464 inhabitants, and Europe one mile to about 3,623 inhabitants; or, in other words, every inhabitant of the United States has about seven times as much railroad as every European.

Courting in the Azores, if one credit the correspondence of the Philadelphia Times, is done at long range. Passing a house the correspondent saw a young man standing in the middle of the road talking to a young lady who was leaning over the railing of the balcony. When he saw he was noticed he walked away, but presently returned and resumed his conversation. On inquiry the correspondent learned that they always begin that way, and that the young man is never admitted to the house until about to engage the young lady, and then he sees her only in the presence of other members of the family.

A congress for the improvement of the condition of the blind has been held in Berlin. Foremost among the questions was that of the printed or written character to be used by the blind, and the congress decided that the system of raised points, first introduced by Louis Braille in 1834, should be adopted in Germany without modification. Another important decision was that the practice of uniting the blind and deaf in the same institution was highly objectionable. The congress also recorded the fact that in the experience of German institutions rope-making is one of the best trades there practiced by the blind.

The funeral of Herbig, a Socialist master turner, was the scene of a great Socialist demonstration at Dresden. Several thousand sympathizers followed the body to the grave, but the police took advantage of an old Saxon law against the public exhibition of republican emblems to forbid the wearing of political ensignia. No funeral oration was permitted, and when a woman stepped forward and spoke a few words an order was given to arrest her, the execution of which was, however, rendered impossible by the closing in of the crowd. Several wreaths were thrown on the coffin, but not before the police had insisted on the removal of the red silk ribbons with which they were tied.

A man has gone moon-blind in Boston. He