

CHILDREN'S COLUMN

The Difference.
When Jessie was a little girl,
From six to eleven, say,
She used to wait impatiently
For every holiday.

Her birthdays, too, they came so slow—
It was so long between—
That when she was but ten, she thought
She might have been sixteen.

But now that she is thirty odd,
And none has come to woo,
Her birthdays are so close, she thinks,
That one in three might do.

Pens and Ink.
The first ink used by the ancients was probably some sort of soot or lampblack rendered fluid with gum water. An ink of this sort is less flowing than our modern ink, and not so well adapted to rapid writing, but it had the great advantage of being a solid body of an unalterable color. This advantage appears in manuscripts dug up at Herculaneum, which, although buried to a perfect charcoal and buried for nearly 18 centuries, are still legible. The ink remains as if embossed upon the surface, and appears blacker than the burned paper.

The reed, which was the first pen in use, was a sort of bullrush, growing in many parts of the east. These reeds were cut in the manner of a quill, and are still used by natives who write the Arabic character. Nations who have adopted the Chinese character use a camel's hair pencil, which is held perpendicularly in the hand. This would seem little adapted for rapid writing, yet the Chinese write their complicated characters by means of these implements with a rapidity seldom equaled by European writers.

The quill appears to have been first in use about the year 600. The word "penna," meaning a quill, is not found in any work older than that period. Previous to that we find usually the word "calamus," a reed. The quill has an advantage over the reed in being finer and more durable, the same quill often serving for weeks or even months. Some ancient writer used the same pen for 40 years, and then, losing it by accident, bewailed his loss bitterly. It is said that the translator Pliny completed that work with a single pen, and celebrated his achievement in this verse:

With one sole pen I wrote this book,
Made of a gray goose quill;
A pen it was when I took;
A pen I leave it still.—Brooklyn Eagle.

Bravery of a Mother Grouse.

When first I came to the territory of Washington the desire to explore the mountains to the west of my home near Valley grew upon me, and at the first opportunity, taking ponies and blankets, and accompanied by my eldest son, a lad of 17, I set out on a four days' trip into the new wilderness. The summit of the range was reached on the second day, at a point entirely out of the line of travel of either Indians or whites, and when almost at the summit, just as we were passing a clump of bushes, on June 6, 1884, we ran into a brood of little ruffed grouse.

My boy was riding in front a couple of rods in advance, and the first move of the mother bird seemed to be to hustle her babies away from his horse's feet, and just as he rode past she rose in the air and flew directly toward me. I pulled up my pony instantly, and as I sat still she flew straight for my head, rising just above it as she came, and suddenly the boy cried out, "She is going to alight on your head."

It was true and to the day of my death I shall regret that the unexpected sound of the fluttering of her wings as she settled towards my head for an instant started me from my composure, and the temptation to glance upward was momentarily irresistible, and, in consequence, my slightly tilting hat brim frightened her while just in the act of setting her feet upon my head, and swerving lightly to her left, she swung round and settled on the rump of the tired pony under me. The pony stood perfectly still, and slowly—very slowly—I turned my head and looked at her. Beginning in a very low tone and gradually raising my voice, I talked to her and to my boy about her for a minute or two before she fluttered away in search of her babies.

Telling her what a graceful little beauty she was, and how we had no thought of hurting either her or her babies, I cajoled her into listening for quite a time, and though I am well persuaded that she had never before seen either man or horse, I contended that it was courage—pure and simple—which prompted her to fly in the face of so formidable an apparition in defense of her little ones.—Correspondent Forest and Stream.

Raindrop's Own Story.

We are all little raindrops frolicking up in a cloud. I never knew how we got there until my mother told me. Of course, there isn't anything else to say about it, except that we were drawn up in vapor to this cloud. But I can tell you what happened to me after that, and make it a good long story too.

As I say, we were all frolicking around, and pretty soon we heard a great crash, and we were all falling to the ground, even mother after me. We saw our old home, the cloud leaving us.

We came down in this way all night, and in the morning we landed in some mud (my mother and I). We soon soaked into the dirt and slept soundly till spring. Then we came bubbling up out of the ground and cheerfully

down a little stream, kissing flowers and giving drinks to poor, thirsty grass. Many weeks passed in this way, until at last we entered a large river, all filthy with sticks and gravel and tin cans and iron hoops.

I ventured to ask my mother what place this was, and she answered: "This is the Illinois river, my child; do you think it is dirty?" I told her I thought it was indeed, and that I hoped we would soon be out of it. Just then we whirled around a corner and my wish was granted; we were in the Mississippi, and, though it wasn't any cleaner than the other, I was proud to be in such a grand river. Just now we happened to be in a "boat road," as I called it, and we were being whirled around and thrown up in foam, but what cared I so long as we were in the grand Mississippi?

It took us days and months before we were out of the grand river, I seeing many things that I never would have dreamed of up in the clouds. Once we were thrown up onto the deck of a ship, and were swept off by a man with ribbons on his hat, which my mother said was a sailor.

At last we were emptied into the Gulf of Mexico. Here I thought I should die with the waves. They ruled everything, and tossed mother and myself around carelessly. At last we were in a rougher place; the waves were awful there. They tossed us up against the ships cabin holes and back again. My mother said it was the Atlantic ocean.

Just as she said this, to our great joy we were taken from the awful Atlantic ocean up into our own old cloud, and we found all our old friends back again before us.—Donald S. McKay, (age 9), in New York Mail and Express.

The Homesick Toys.

Were you ever homesick or lonesome? If so, then you know how little Hans felt. Little Hans is the Dutch doll who lives in the Brown nursery. And he was so homesick and lonesome one day last autumn that he felt as if he would have to cry out aloud presently if he wasn't a talking doll.

The Swiss music box was lonesome and homesick too. All day long—it was a rainy day and they couldn't get out doors—the children had been making the music box play very loudly—and, "Home Sweet Home," of all airs. You may think it, but it's really very trying to play "Home, Sweet Home" when you're over a thousand miles away from home and there's a big, tossing, storming ocean rolling between you and the place you were born in. The music box played so dolefully at last that the children grew tired of it. Besides, it had stopped raining and they had rushed out into the garden to run up and down the sidewalk and play racing.

Then the Dutch doll felt he could bear it no longer. He couldn't cry aloud, although he longed and tried to, because he wasn't a talking doll, but wooden tears stood in the corner of his eyes, and would have rolled down his cheeks only that they were wooden.

The round, shining glass eye of the music box looked over in his direction suddenly, and although the eye was misty with tears, too—for the music box also felt that it was dreadful to be so lonely and sorrowful—it could see that the Dutch doll felt wretched. "Cheer up, Dutchy, cheer up!" it called softly.

Now, there's nothing in the world so good for troubles as to try to help someone else, as we all know, and the very minute the music box had spoken it felt better.

The Dutch doll started and stopped crying.

"I'll try to. I am trying," he made answer, "but," and here the wooden tears began to tremble again, "I do feel so lonely and miserable."

"I know," said the music box quietly, and there was a shake in its voice that hadn't been put there intentionally, "but we might as well make the best of matters I suppose. Just think! If we were at home we'd be quite commonplace and of little value, but here—why, they won't let the children play with you, only holidays, because you're a curiosity and mustn't get spoiled or shabby. And they only let them do as they like with me when they're sick or it's bad weather and they're shut up in-doors."

"I wish they did play with me often," signed the Dutch doll. "It wouldn't be so lonely to be played with as to be stood up here on the mantie."

"Let's wish they will come in to take us in to see poor sick little Barbara," said the music box bravely.

And a few minutes later the wish was made true.

The nurse carried them into the sick room presently, and little Barbara almost cried she was so glad to see and hear them. And truly, they did their very best to please her.

Wooden Hans stood up so stiffly and then fell over in such a funny way, as often as she put him on his feet on the pillow or counterpane, that she laughed quiet merrily. And when she was tired, and snuggled down to rest, with the Dutch doll lovingly cuddled in her arms, the music box played its one tune, "Home, Sweet Home," so sweetly that the gentle music lulled the sick child to sleep.

And when the nurse carried the Dutch doll and the music box back to the nursery, by and by, neither of them felt homesick or lonesome. And—but you can think out what the experience taught them just as well as I can. Try it the next time you feel sad and lonesome and see.—Chicago Record-Herald.

Hobbies.

Men who ride hobbies would not be nearly so objectionable if they did not want all the road to themselves.—Town and Country.



To Wash a Print Dress.

The washing of a print dress well is not nearly such a simple matter as might be supposed, and it is of considerable importance that it should be done well, for, although it is not expensive material to buy in the first place, still its making and details cost as much as if it were, and nothing is uglier than a print dress with half the color washed out of it. The water should not be too hot, and into it must neither soda nor any washing or soap powder be put. A lather must be made up for flannels, and but little soap used on the dress, and it should only remain in the water long enough to bring out the dirt. Next it must be rinsed in cold water slightly salted, and to which a little vinegar has been added. The former fixes the colors, and the latter brightens them. Next, wring tightly and dry quickly, but not in the sun, or the colors will fade, and if dried slowly they will run. Wearing of print dresses should not let them get too dirty before washing or the color has to be sacrificed to cleanliness.

A Cheap Sitting Room.

"We are furnishing our sitting room on the go-without-system plan," said a careful young housekeeper. "This is better than any hire or purchase system yet invented."

"The sitting room is the room between our small drawing room and the still smaller kitchen, and it must be used as both dining room and our workshop. The centre of the floor is covered with a square of linoleum, and there is a deep border of staining round the rest of the floor. The stain is of a rich mahogany color. It is effective, serviceable and cheap. Here is the recipe: One pint of the cheapest varnish, about a nickel's worth of burnt sienna, and about a nickel's worth of brown umber. Mix the sienna and the umber in the varnish until a good mahogany shade is obtained and paint evenly with a rather large brush.

"We got two good boxes from the grocer's, 30 inches long, 20 inches wide and 16 inches deep.

"Jack screwed these two boxes together lengthways and hinged on strong lids.

"Then I made two mattresses to fit the top.

"First I made what might be called a 'model mattress' about six inches long, four inches wide and two inches deep. This is of strong ticking stuffed with flock and 'buttoned' in quite a professional way. After stuffing the ticking I sewed it in places through and through with a darning needle and strong thread.

"The miniature mattress was then covered with a remnant of pink brocade, the edges bound with narrow pink ribbon, and little tufts of thick floss silk at regular intervals, as on a real mattress. Here I had a charming and novel pincushion, that is also very useful.

"It will hold hat pins as well as small pins.

"After making the 'model mattress' I found it an easy matter to do the same work on a large scale. I find that the real secret in making a good mattress is in the buttoning. I stuffed a ticking made to fit the top of the boxes with 'flocks' and put my sofa mattress on the floor, leveled it as though making a bed, and sewed through and through each place where the buttons go with a packing needle and fine twine, taking care to finish off the stitches securely.

"The valance is of terra cotta serge, double width, and has a tape run through the top, which is caught on small tacks at intervals and fastened round two small nails at each end of the couch.

"The top cover is a width of the serge edged all round with ball fringe and shaped at the corners to fit the mattress."—Washington Star.



Potato Turnover—Mix one pint of seasoned hot mashed potatoes with one egg; add just sufficient flour to enable you to roll it out about half an inch thick. Cut with a biscuit cutter, sprinkle with chopped parsley, fold one-half over the other and saute a rich brown in hot butter.

Fig Cake—Cream half a cup of butter; add gradually one cup of sugar, two beaten eggs, half a cup of milk, one and a half cups of flour, half a cup of cornstarch, two and a half level teaspoonfuls of baking powder, and a pinch of salt; bake in two greased jelly cake pans, and put together with fig filling.

Lettuce and chives salad—Wash each leaf separately in cold water, drain and pile in order; tie in a wet napkin and keep in a cold place; lay largest leaves around the salad bowl, smallest in the centre; scatter over it one tablespoonful of fine minced chives and at the table dress with French dressing.

Egg biscuit—Sift two cupfuls of flour, two teaspoonfuls of baking powder, half teaspoon of salt and one teaspoonful of sugar into a bowl; rub in one tablespoonful of butter and well mixed; add one beaten egg and half a cup of milk; the dough should be quite soft; toss on a floured board; roll out, cut into rounds and bake on a floured pan 15 minutes in a quiet oven.

HEALTH AND ALL ITS BLESSINGS

Health will come with all its blessings to those who know the way, and it is mainly a question of right-living, with all the term implies, but the efforts which strengthen the system, the games which refresh and the foods which nourish are important, each in a way, while it is also advantageous to have knowledge of the best methods of promoting freedom from unsanitary conditions. To assist nature, when nature needs assistance, it is all important that the medicinal agents used should be of the best quality and of known value, and the one remedy which acts most beneficially and pleasantly, as a laxative, is—Syrup of Figs—manufactured by the California Fig Syrup Co.

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