POMIUK'S RING.

By Ralph Graham Taber.

IT IS only a slight gold band with a tiny opal setting, a child's ring; for you or I could not push it below the joint of the little finger. For the matter of that, neither can its small owner now; but that makes no difference to Pomiuk; it is the dearest thing on earth to him.

Some of you who visited the world's fair at Chicago and strayed into the Eskimo village, at the northwest corner of Jackson park, my recollect a little fellow who always wore a smiling face, and whose small, turned-up nose was sometimes in need of a handkerchief. You must remember his comical dances, that brought him in showers of nickels from the spectators; though he did not dance for very long, for he had a fall in the grounds one day that made of him a cripple. But this was not Pomiuk's only means of conjuring the small change out of the visitors' pockets. None there could better crack one of the long whips, and with it send small coins spinning, and he was quite as expert at throwing a harpoon; but his greatest source of income was not through skill or chance at all. It was the irresistible way he had of winning all hearts about him, and by this he held the combinations to a good many well-filled purses.

Do not, however, let Pomiuk's love for nickels, dimes and quarters lower him in your estimation. He knew very little about their real value; in fact, he knew very little about that until long after the world's fair opened; but they were bright and pretty things, and Pomiuk loved to play with them and to hear their merry jingle; for Pomiuk, spite of his gentle ways and ever smiling countenance, was a veritable savage, and a close study of him might easily have led one to entertain a lesser regard for the enlightenments of civilization.

But I started to tell you about his ring, and I must not wander from the subject.

His first day upon a civilized shore was marked by an event for Pomiuk that made it ever memorable. It was the 13th day of October, the year before the big show was held, that Pomiuk landed at Boston with 56 other Eskimos; and it happened that among those who came down to the wharf to see the curious cargo brought by the schooner Evalina there was a theatrical manager. Whether it was out of the kindness of his heart or to advertise his performance is not material; but, no matter what his motive, the fact remains that he gave these simple visitors to America the freedom of his playhouse; and that evening nearly a score of them, under a proper escort, attended in a body and occupied the boxes.

The play was merely a big burlesque, and they could not understand a word of it. They were dazed by the lights and the crowded house and the orchestra and the ballet. The stage, with its hidden workings, was a marvel past understanding; but the songs were pretty, the costumes bright, and the dancing—ah, the dancing!

Pomiuk had thought that he could dance; but never in all his most fanciful dreams had he pictured such wonderful dancing. From the first to the last his gaze fastened upon the dainty leader of the ballet. She was a mere child but, nevertheless, the most skillful dancer that ever graced an American theater, and all Boston was talking of her and loudly voicing her praises. When her dancing was ended and she left the stage, Pomiuk's smile departed, and he sank back again into the seat from which her fascinations had drawn him.

The interpreter asked him if he liked it, and Pomiuk's little black eyes lighted up and his little tongue reeled off long Eskimo words at the rate of 200 a minute. The manager was standing by his chair, and he noted the child's animation.

"What does he say?" he asked.

"He says," replied the interpreter, "that since he has come aboard the ship, people have been telling him about God and Heaven and angels, and that, if he were good he would go there when he died; but he says they must have made a mistake for he doesn't believe that he is dead, yet he certainly is in Heaven."

"There are very few angels here, I fear," remarked the manager, sadly. Not that the manager needed an "angel," for he was playing to crowded houses.

Pomiuk now wanted to know what the manager had been saying, and when he learned the manager's remark, he replied, with prompt decision: "There is surely one angel—that little one. Oh, how I would like to speak to her."

No sooner was Pomiuk's wish made known than the manager called an usher, and in a very few minutes the little girl and her mother entered the box. The little girl had, of course, changed her attire, and Pomiuk hardly recognized her at first, but when he did so his joy knew no bounds. He promptly threw his arms round her neck, and not only rubbed noses, Eskimo fashion, but gave her cheek a resounding smack, which might have been heard all over the house had not the orchestra been playing.

The little girl took it good-naturedly, and then began for both of them a half hour or so of such novel pleasure and amusement as neither had ever enjoyed before. In a very few minutes they managed to dispense with the services of an interpreter; and presently they retired to the back of the box, where the little girl danced a few measures for him, and then prevailed upon him to dance for her. It took her but a moment to master his odd steps, and when she joined in them she won the last fraction of Pomiuk's heart, if she hadn't it all before that.

At last the mother said they must go, as it was long past the little girl's bedtime; and their parting brings me to my story.

The little girl took a ring from her finger and fitted it to one of Pomiuk's. "Keep that," she said, "so I will know you when I see you again; perhaps it will be in Heaven."

Pomiuk looked at the little token, and his eyes suddenly filled with tears. Alas! he had nothing to give in return.

"Never mind," said the little girl, putting her arm round him; "I shall never forget you. I shall not need a reminder."

All through the hot, weary months at Chicago Pomiuk treasured the little keepsake and thought about the donor, and wondered when he would meet her again, and longed for her with such longing as only the heart of a child can hold.

When the great fair was over, and Pomiuk with his people—Kangegatsuk, his uncle, and Tuklavina, the latter's wife, and Kamialuit and Sikeepa, his cousins—returned to their home in the frozen north, which, from the needs of their nomadic life, is from Nachvock to Ungava, Pomiuk gave his uncle his hoard of quarters, nickels and dimes. These, with his uncle's savings, were promptly converted into fishing nets, guns, ammunition, clothing, a cook stove and cooking utensils, tobacco, flour and molasses, and last, but not least in their estimation, the clock and a maltese kitten. But with one thing Pomiuk would not part for aught this side of Heaven—the little gold band that he had already outgrown, with its tiny opal setting.

Kangegatsuk fell among thieves by the way, and when, after many vicissitudes, they managed to reach their northern home, there were but few of their purchases left, save the stove, the clock and the kitten.

Nor had things gone well in Labrador during their 30 months of absence. The fishing had been a failure, the seals had been scarce, and had it not been for the deer, that principal source of supply in winter, probably none of Kangegatsuk's band would have been left to welcome them.

It was a sad home coming. Two of the 13 who had gone to the fair had been buried by the wayside. Kangegatsuk's father was dead, and his aged mother also died a few days after their return. Then, ere the snow was solid enough to build their winter igloos, a sickness fell among them. Kangegatsuk's father had been the medicine man; there was no other to take his place, and nearly half the tribe succumbed to this dread visitation. Those whose lives were spared were of little use that winter, and with but two or three well souls to hunt and trap and fish and serve the needs of a score of ill ones, it proved a terrible season.

Toward the latter end of February, when the cold was at its greatest, the powder and meat gave out at once. It was not a great way to the company's post, but they had no fur to trade there. Fur to trade must be properly dressed. What little the half-tended traps had caught had been hurriedly skinned and frozen up. There had been no well hands to dress it.

"But you still have your ring," said Kangegatsuk. "Take that, it has much value, and bring us powder and meat from the post. Don't hang your head. I would take it from you and go myself were I able. I—"

"But wait!" interrupted Pomiuk. "Why should they not give us powder and meat?. They do so to others further south, and even to those at the westward. We can pay them in furs in the spring. They have often offered to trust us."

"And be like the mission Eskimo—like the poor slaves we know and have seen to the south? Not I!" said Kangegatsuk. "Never yet have I been in debt. It is the first rule of our tribe. Would you have me, the chief, the first to break it? No. Do as I bid you, and go at once. I speak as your chief, not your uncle."

Refusal was out of the question. Pomiuk bit his lip till it bled; but he limped out of the igloo, called the team of dogs together, and painfully harnessed them to the sledge.

It was night, but that did not matter. The sky was ablaze with northern lights that flamed like candles of gigantic power; for they clothed all the snow-clad mountains with a weird, ghostly light that was not like the sun's nor the moon's, nor the stars', but a light that one could see by as well as if the sun had risen.

It was cold, too. Our common thermometers would have failed to show how cold it was; but that did not matter, either. The Eskimo are used to the cold. There is a silly notion that they like to half frozen, that they enjoy numb hands and feet and frost-bitten noses. The truth is, they suffer from cold quite as much as we do, but they are more able to bear it. That is to say, others would perish, perhaps, where they are able to sustain life. The same may be said of hunger. They are used to that, too; and they do not complain even when they are starving. They will find food, of course, if they can. If they cannot, why then, what matter? All must go some time, some way. One way may be as good as another. I wish the world held more such simple, good-natured philosophers.

Pomiuk took with him his uncle's harpoon, his knife, which was long and keen, and a carpenter's ax that they had brought and had managed to retain among them. In addition to these he took an old boot. It was made of sealskin and had been oiled often. It was good to chew on when hungry. Then he squatted down on the seat of the sledge, and wrapped a bearskin round him, and shouted "Whit! whit!" to the leader.

For a mile he headed toward the company's post; then he called out, sharply: "Rara! rara!" and the team obediently turned to the left and started out toward the ocean.

At dawn they had traveled 30 miles, and the edge of the ice was before them.

Here Pomiuk stopped, built a snow house, and taking his dogs in as bedfellows, that they might warm both themselves and him, he chewed a bit of the sealskin boot and went sound asleep. Just one hour he slept and woke refreshed, gave each dog a piece of the boot an inch square, reharnessed them to the komatik and started again on his journey. It would have puzzled you, however, to tell where the lad was going. A league to the southwest, then "Rara! rara!" and a league to the southeast followed; "Auk! auk!" and a league to the southwest again, tacking back and forth like a sailboat beating to windward; and that was just what he was doing, for the breeze was blowing in his face and he steeled himself to its biting. If his young body was stunted and crippled, Pomiuk's heart was big and strong; but it nearly gave up hoping when midday came without a sign and the afternoon began to go and nothing had come of his hunting. Again they stopped to warm themselves and to chew a bit of the sealskin. He was making a mile to the southward each tack, and he thought: "I am not disobeying the command; I am traveling toward the post." But he did no take care to figure out how long it would take him to reach there.

Nightfall, and still nothing. The boot must last them another day. What was left was carefully portioned, the dogs were unharnessed for the night and the snowhouse was building. Pomiuk paid no more attention to the dogs, till there came a low growl from the leader. Then he looked round quickly. Far off in the dusk, he could not say how far, something white was moving, and the dogs were bounding toward it. Grasping his harpoon and handax, he joyfully hobbled after them. The half-famished dogs would not let it escape. There was no need to hurry. But, though they attacked it valiantly, they could not succeed without him; and it was well that he made haste. When he reached them, one of his very best dogs, the fiercest one, the bully of the team, fell back with his head crushed from a blow that Namuk, the bear, had given him.

Urging the dogs to do their best, he approached the huge creature as near as he dared, and sought to reach its throat with the harpoon; but when the right moment came he thrust too low. The weapon struck under the collar bone and, though he had given it all his strength and its head was completely buried, the bear brushed the handle aside as if it had been a wisp of straw and, with a roar, made toward him.

Pomiuk might have fared illy then, had it not been for his faithful dogs. They attacked the monster from all sides at once. The smell of its blood made them frantic, and seemed to double and treble their strength. It was well; for their crippled master, in trying to elude the enraged beast, had slipped on a small broken hummock of ice and the creature was nearly on him.

It was not a time to think, but to act. Pomiuk's instinct guided him. Instinct is strong in the savage, and in spite of his taste of civilized life he was yet a child of nature. He lay quite still where he had fallen, lay still as death till the fighting bear stood over his prostrate body. Then he drew his knife and struck quickly, once, twice; and the second time, leaving his knife in the wound, sprang nimbly to one side, hand ax in hand; but the latter was not needed. Loaded down by the wolfish dogs the great bear tottered and fell to the ice, and the bloody battle was over.

Pomiuk's first care was to beat off the dogs and feed them his victim's entrails. Next he set about skinning the carcass. It was heavy work for a mere lad, in the dark and cold of an arctic night, but at last it was accomplished; the meat was hacked into sections that he could lift, the komatik was brought, and all was stowed as it should be; then the snowhouse was completed and, with full stomachs, they all turned in and slept soundly till the morning.

With such refreshment it did not take long next day to reach the company's post. There the skin was traded for powder, and bullets, and tobacco, and flour, and molasses, and tea, which summary comprises all of the Eskimo's desires.

With his komatik loaded with such good things he returned to the igloos by nightfall, where the people greeted him joyously and could scarcely believe their good fortune.

"And the ring?" said Kangegatsuk.

Pomiuk showed it proudly. "It was the ring brought Nanuk," he said. "She will know me by that when we meet again"—there was a choking in Pomiuk's voice and his lips quivered—"when I meet her again in her Heaven."
—N. Y. Independent.

"Got 'Em Again."

The clergyman of a parish in the west of England was noted for his pomposity and fondness for the cup that inebriates. On one occasion, meeting two schoolboys who were passing without the expected salute, he stopped them and inquired if they knew who he was. "Yes," replied one of the boys, "you are the vicar." Then, turning to his companion, the boy exclaimed: "He's got 'em again, and don't know who he are!"—Spare Moments.

Must Not Exercise in the Morning.

Early morning exercise is denounced nowadays by the majority of hygienic teachers. At that time, they say, vitality is at its lowest ebb, and needs the stimulation of food. — Chicago Times-Herald.

THE FEMININE OBSERVER.

The soldier boy doll has quite driven the popular Brownie to the wall.

The secret of true happiness is to have what we want when we want it.

To have persons thoroughly at your mercy get them to permit you to shampoo their heads.

Friendship costs a good deal more than the two-cent stamps on letters between the separated.

At the time of life when a woman is popularly supposed to wear bonnets she generally selects the biggest sort of a hat.

It always happens that the articles which are scarcest in the household are always the ones the neighbors wish to borrow.

The person who never has to fabricate for herself is generally the one picked out by all her friends to help them out of scrapes.

Goldenrod and geraniums make a very Spanish color combination, but a very cheerful one, nevertheless, these autumn days.

To some of us life is so full of disappointment and suffering that the bright times are regarded as really suspicious circumstances.

It is a pleasant thought to the woman who has no new autumn frocks that there is some chance yet of her wearing out her old summer ones.

The species of tyranny to which a patient is subjected by a trained nurse brings her fully in touch with the ballad imploring a return to childhood just for the night.—Boston Herald.

WOMAN'S WORLD.

A French writer attributes the grace of Spanish women to the fact that many of them are taught fencing.

Mrs. Magdalene Thorsesen, the stepmother of Mrs. Ibsen, says that the author's wife is passionately fond of literature, and has exerted a great influence over him.

The czar has appointed the dowager empress of Russia honorary colonel of the Pereyaslav regiment of dragoons, of which Emperor Alexander III. was colonel in chief.

There was lately graduated from Grafton hall, an Episcopalian girls' school in Fond du Lac, Wis., Miss Lois Minnie Cornelius, an Oneida Indian, who is a direct descendant of a long line of chiefs, her grandfather having been the celebrated Skenandore.

It is estimated that there are nearly 5,000,000 self-supporting women in the United States. Almost every branch of work known has been taken up by members of the gentler sex, and the trades and professions show the workers to have acquired skill and ability in the practice of their various callings.

On one occasion when Mrs. Gladstone gave a dance the guests were surprised to notice as the evening went on that the masculine—or, at all events, the bachelor—portion of the community was conspicuous by its absence. "Oh, dear!" exclaimed Mrs. Gladstone, "I quite forgot to send out the men's invitations; they are all in a bag under the sofa."

POLITENESS OF THE MEXICANS

"My lady, I am at your feet," is the prescribed form of salutation in Mexico from a gentleman who meets a lady, whereas if two gentlemen meet they say: "I kiss your hand."

A Mexican will never permit a lady to descend the stairs alone; he takes her by the hand or offers his arm and only takes leave of her at the street door.

Often in their rambles through Mexico strangers lose their way, and if they have a slight knowledge of Spanish an appeal to a native is certain to bring courteous relief.

The Mexican lover calls his sweetheart "the very eyes of me" and if she rejects him he is likely to say: "Since there is no help I bow before you, kiss your feet and depart."

Even the poor laborers rarely address one another without some terms of endearment. "Como estas, mi alma?" ("How are you, my soul?") is a common form of address.

An American young lady was once talking with an old Mexican gentleman and she laughingly said something about having some literary work to do. It was good to see the old fellow's impressive manner as he exclaimed: "Work! Miss, such lips as yours should never mention work. You should be a queen and wear pearls as beautiful as those incased in your lovely mouth!"

NOT GREAT TO EVERYBODY.

It is comical that Joseph Jefferson should announce at a dinner in honor of Tolstoi his entire ignorance of the writer and his works.

The New York memorial meeting to Robert Louis Stevenson was addressed by men who had evidently read him but little. Not one of them referred to him as a critic and essayist.

When Tree, the English actor, was dined in New York the chairman described him as about to act in America for the first time, the fact being that Tree had played a long engagement in New York the year before.

A dinner in New York to Anthony Hope discovered a most amazing variety of ignorance as to his work. One last speaker frankly admitted the utter blank to his mind that the guest was and so "how can I make a speech about him?"

In the course of the speeches made at a dinner given to Conan Doyle, much fun arose from the references to Mr. Doyle's detective stories. At last one of the heads of departments with Mr. Doyle's publishers said to his neighbor at the table: "Where is that fellow sitting they are all talking about?" "Mr. Doyle? Why, over there." "Oh, no; I mean the other fellow—Sherlock

HEZEKIAH'S GREAT PASSOVER

Sunday School Lesson in the International Lesson Series for November 6, 1898—2 Chronicles 30:1-13.

[Based upon Peloubet's Select Notes.]

GOLDEN TEXT.—Yield yourselves unto the Lord, and enter into His sanctuary.—2 Chron. 30:8.

THE SECTION includes Chaps. 29-31, together with the parallel passages, 2 Kings 18:1-10, and Isa., Chap. 38.

TIME.—The early part of Hezekiah's reign, which extended from 726-697, or, according to Kent, 715-686. There are some difficulties in the chronology.

THE LESSON.

We now return to the regular narrative in Chronicles, after our view of the times from Isaiah's point of view. Israel at the time of this lesson was under King Hosea, and it was just before the final invasion of Assyria, which in three years ended in the destruction of the northern kingdom. Assyria was then the most powerful kingdom of the world, under Shalmaneser IV. The kingdom of Judah had begun to deteriorate in the latter part of the reign of the great and prosperous Uzziah, great-grandfather of Hezekiah, but it grew rapidly worse during the 16 years of his father Ahaz, who has the reputation of being the worst of all the princes of the house of David, and who left the kingdom both morally and politically in a most debased and humiliating position.

I. Cleansing the Temple.—Beginning New Year's day of the first year of his reign (2 Chron. 29:3-9, 17). The closed doors were again thrown open. Repairs were made. The accumulated filth of years was carried out and cast into the Kidron valley. The altars were renewed, the lamps trimmed and lighted, and the whole service set in motion. Solemn renewal of the original covenant which God made with their fathers in the wilderness (Ex. 24:3-8) occur, 29:10, and religious worship with its various offerings and the music of orchestra and choir was reorganized, 29:11-36.

II. Invitations Sent Far and Wide.—Vs. 1-12. 1. "And Hezekiah sent to all Israel and Judah:" Possibly Hezekiah had hope of uniting the kingdoms into one strong and glorious kingdom like that of David. The movement was noble, earnest and hopeful.

2. "For the king had taken counsel:" He was wise in making plans, and in getting so many to join with him in the work. "Keep the passover in the second month:" This was allowable "in case of absence on a journey, or temporary defilement (Num. 9:10-11).

6. "So the posts went with the letters from the king and his princes throughout all Israel and Judah, and according to the commandment of the king, saying, Ye children of Israel, turn again unto the Lord God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, and he will return to the remnant of you, that are escaped out of the hand of the kings of Assyria."

III. Two Ways of Treating the Invitation. (1) V. 10. "But they laughed them to scorn, and mocked them." They threw away their only hope. They had no appreciation of their own danger, nor of the possible good that was offered to them. Within three years after the rejection of this invitation Shalmaneser had begun his great siege of Samaria, which ended within three years in the final captivity of the Israelites, and the destruction of the northern kingdom.

(2) 11. "Nevertheless, divers . . . humbled themselves, and came:" It was humiliating to leave their own country, to find righteousness and safety in another. They doubtless had to suffer indignities and scorn from their neighbors.

IV. Great Religious Meetings.—V. 13. The next month a great passover feast was held for 14 days, with an immense number of sacrifices, and with great gladness, so that "since the time of Solomon there was not the like in Jerusalem."

V. Religious Instruction.—"Hezekiah spake comfortably unto all the Levites that taught the good knowledge of the Lord" (30:22). Examples of what was probably done are found (2 Chron. 34:30, 31) under Josiah and in Neh. 8:1-12.

VI. Religious Activity Against Sin.—The Destruction of Idols (2 Chron. 31:1; 2 Kings 18:4). Immediately after the great Passover described above, the people, in their enthusiasm, went through the country destroying idols and idolatry in every form, breaking the images in pieces, cutting down the groves and symbolical pillars, destroying the high places and their altars.

VII. Renewal of the Regular Support of Public Worship.—2 Chron. 31:3-6. King Hezekiah set the people the example in giving a portion of his wealth for the support of the priests and the temple sacrifices, and then commanded the people to do the same, and they brought in abundance of the first fruits.

VIII. Results.—(1) There was an improvement in morals as well as religion; they kept the Commandments; they were generous; they had great joy in God's service. "He did that which was good, and right, and truth, before the Lord his God . . . with all his heart (2 Chron. 31:20, 21). (2) The enemies of Judah were conquered (2 Kings 18:6, 7), the Philistines driven out of the country, and the yoke of Assyria thrown off. (3) There was great outward prosperity. "Hezekiah had exceeding much riches and honor."

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

It is our duty to carry the invitation to every person possible. We must expect that some will reject the invitation with scorn, but there will always be some who accept.

One of the surest marks of a true revival is the desire to destroy all evil, cast out all idols, both from the heart and from society.

Instruction in religion is necessary to give the greatest permanence and usefulness to religious and moral im-