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THE JUNEBUG.
Thou stupid blockhead, blundering in my face!
Is not the great world wide enough, but thou must quit the dusky night where thou'rt at home
To dabble at my lamp, and burn thy wings;
To blind thy goggle eyes with too much light,
And bang thy doltish head 'gainst everything?
Thou meddling fool! thou'rt ever out of place.
No meeting's free from thy disturbing buzz;
No child too timid for thy scaring hum;
No lady's nerves too strung, nor hair too fine.
For thee to tangle is with scratchy claws—
There, in my ink again!
And now, with pondering look and drabbed feet,
Thou scrabbles rude lines across an unstained page.
And yet, poor thing! thou dost not mean it so;
The light attracts thee, and thou too wouldst know.
How like we are! This dazzling room to thee—
Why that's the sunlit world and we poor men
Do bang our heads 'gainst every wall of it,
And wonder why they ache. Our blundering feet
Tread rough-shod over nerves that twinge in pain;
We meddle daily with the mysteries,
To frighten timid souls with buzzing talk
Of laws of unknown things, and life, and death;
We burn our souls in many a garish lamp;
And many a page lies stained with thoughts more rude
Than beetles' legs could draw, and less intelligent.
And yet, from out the gloom of our first night,
The primal twilight of our ignorance,
'Twas shining of a light that called us in.
Pardon, fellow-blunderer! Mine's the fault,
Impatient of the things I do myself,
The fashion only altered. Blunderers both!
The one with open book and bruised heart,
The other with his broken wings and feet,
There, I'll blow out the light; it troubles thee;
And here's a bit of wool to dry thee on.
Rest thee a moment till thy dazed head clears;
Then (there's the window open) go in peace—
And may the gentle God, who made us both,
When next I blunder in His mighty face,
Do so with me.
—William J. Long, in Outlook.

Fate of Madison Jenks
He Was a Pampered Cat, and Had a \$900 Annuity.

SOME of the wealthiest cats in the world live in Harlem," said the theological student, who was talking about experiences with cats. "I mean exactly what I say. There are cats here which have money in the bank, which live in luxury on their incomes. For there are scores of rich maiden ladies in Harlem who make cats their favorite companions, and when they die they leave the felines legacies, and fat ones, too. Guardians are appointed for the animals, and thus they lead a life of feline ease until the fires of the ninth life are extinguished.

"When my friend Dalton's elderly maiden aunt died, some time ago, she left a legacy of \$600 a year to her pet Maltese cat, Madison Jenks, a name bestowed on the animal in memory of a lover who died many years ago, and directed in her will that Dalton should be its guardian. As long as the cat lived he was to provide it with every care and dainty, and when it died the \$600 a year was to go to Dalton, to be used as he pleased. To make sure that Madison Jenks obtained all the care and cut luxuries she wished him to have, Dalton's aunt specified in her will a long list of things to be purchased every week, and directed that the bills should be sent regularly to the executor of her estate to be audited. The executor was also to visit the cat once a month to assure himself that Dalton was not neglectful.

"Well, Dalton took the cat to his home in Manhattan avenue and was highly pleased to have direct charge of Madison Jenks and the \$600 a year, for he calculated that an annual expenditure of \$50 would cover the cat's requirements, thus leaving \$550 a year for his own and his children's numerous needs. But when he went to the executor at the end of the first quarter to draw his first installment of the \$600 Dalton found, to his amazement and chagrin, that under the provisions of his aunt's will he had had to spend two-thirds of the money due, leaving only a beggarly \$50 for himself. He returned home chewing cloves and steeped in thought.

"Mrs. Dalton was equally amazed and chagrined and joined Dalton in his lamentations. It seemed impossible to evade the heavy expenditures for Madison Jenks. The executor, who taught in a Sunday school and was a conscientious man, insisted that every specification in Dalton's aunt's will which related to Madison Jenks should be fulfilled to the letter.

"'And so,' sighed Mrs. Dalton, gloomily, 'we must continue to pay \$400 out of the \$600 every year until that impudent cat dies.'

"'Until he dies!'

"Dalton kissed her. Then he danced. He would have stood on his head, but the children had assembled to take part in the family gloom and such an upending of the parental anatomy he deemed ruinous to parental authority, so 'Funny it never occurred to me before,' he said.

"'What never occurred to you before?' asked Mrs. Dalton, astonished by his actions.

"'That Madison Jenks had been looking mighty feeble of late and is liable to drop off almost any day,' returned Dalton, scanning the chandlerer in a meditative fashion.

"Mrs. Dalton scanned the carpet patterns. She was a good woman, and her mind and heart did not bend easily to a suggestion of crime; but \$400 a year

for a bloated, lazy, good-for-nothing cat when the children needed—

"'Rough on rats wouldn't do, would it?' she ventured, still eyeing the patterns.

"'No,' answered Dalton. 'That pestiferous lynx-eyed executor would insist on an autopsy, and have the courts set aside the legacy on the grounds of malfeasance in office, contributory negligence, or some other of his legal quibbles.'

"'Disappearance is also out of the question, too, I suppose?' continued Mrs. Dalton, managing to raise her eyes from the piano legs.

"'Quite,' returned Dalton with decision. 'Madison Jenks must meet with a fatal accident. He sleeps in the hired girl's room, doesn't he?'

"'Yes,' said Mrs. Dalton, wondering, 'but what has that got to do with Madison Jenks' ill-health or sudden demise?'

"'Nothing much,' Dalton replied, 'only this is the hired girl's night off, I believe?'

"'It is,' returned Mrs. Dalton, still perplexed.

"'Very well,' continued Dalton, 'let her stay away all night!'

"'She always does,' Mrs. Dalton answered, but he said the interview was at an end for the time being, so she went about her household duties.

"It was half-past ten when Mrs. Dalton sniffed the air vigorously and suspiciously. Her hair was in curl-papers and Dalton had already turned in.

"'Don't you smell gas?' she inquired anxiously.

"'My dear,' retorted Dalton from his pillow, 'your overactive imagination will be your undoing.'

"'Nevertheless, she visited the children's rooms, the parlor, the dining-room, and the library before she was satisfied that it might have been a trick of her imagination or lack of olfactory discrimination.

"'Early the next morning she was roused from a sound slumber by a loud rattle at her chamber door. The hired girl stood without, sobbing hysterically and trembling violently.

"'It's about Madison Jenks,' she gurgled, wildly. 'I didn't know I went out last night and left the gas on, indeed, I didn't, Mrs. Dalton; indeed, and double-deed, I didn't.'

"Mrs. Dalton followed the hired girl to the latter's room. The odor of escaping gas which saluted her nostrils nearly overpowered her, and she was forced to gasp for breath. The hired girl rushed in and threw open the window. Mrs. Dalton entered as soon as she deemed it safe. There on his ill-kept pallet lay Madison Jenks, stark and stiff in the eternal sleep.

"'Never mind, Katie,' she said, kindly, to the distracted girl. 'Accidents will happen. The escaped gas will not be deducted from your wages, so don't worry.'

"'But Madison Jenks—what will Mr. Dalton sobbed the hired girl.

"'Of course, I'm very, very sorry that Madison Jenks is dead, Katie,' said Dalton, when beseeched by Mrs. Dalton to soothe the perturbed girl, 'for I loved him, as did we all. Mr. Briefs, the executor, will probably come home with me to dinner, and then you must tell him how it happened. Here's a dollar to buy perfume for your room.'

"Dalton wore a black necktie and a grave expression when he presented himself at the office of the executor that morning. 'You have called at an most opportune moment,' began the executor, as soon as Dalton entered, 'for I have important news for you. We have discovered another will of your aunt, which subsequent to the one probated by seven months. In this one, which I shall have recorded at once, \$900 a year is allowed for the maintenance of your lamented aunt's cat, although the provisions are slightly different from those incorporated into the probated instrument. You are to have charge of Madison Jenks until his demise, in which event, if you clearly prove that death was due exclusively to natural causes, the legacy is yours. But should the cat's death be due to accident or design, then the money goes to the Society for Supplying Spyglasses to Shipwrecked Sailors. Besides, it is set forth that I must inspect the cat once every two weeks instead of once a month, as before. Permit me to congratulate you on this addition to your income.'

"That afternoon a man in a black necktie was scouring the length and breadth of Harlem with a basket on his arms. For hours he rushed in and out of those establishments which keep small animals for sale and excitedly demanded a Maltese cat—a replica of Madison Jenks.

"'The cat must be medium-sized, very much bloated and lazy,' explained Dalton to the youthful saleswoman who approached him in the last animal shop he visited.

"'I've got exactly what you want,' said she, indicating a sleeping feline in the show window. Dalton examined it, and a smile of ecstatic joy overspread his countenance. It was Madison Jenks all over again—bloated, lazy and utterly worthless. The cat was a bargain, said the saleswoman—\$3.98. Dalton told her to keep the change and he bolted for home.

"'Whatever you do, Katie,' said he to the hired girl, 'do not turn the gas on Madison Jenks the second, and never forget the name. You may forget, however, that there ever was a Madison Jenks the first, and be sure you mention not the fact of his sudden taking off.'

"'It was a narrow escape,' he told his wife that night. 'I'm glad you said nothing about that cat's death to the children.' And the peace of mind of the adult inmates thus restored, the Dalton household settled down to its usual repose and vocations. Madison Jenks' successor took kindly to its new environment, as well it might, for never was a feline so pampered or watched with such anxious care.

"The executor will be up Saturday," said Dalton to Mrs. Dalton, one

Wednesday evening, as he returned from the office.

"'Well, I hope Madison Jenks II. will be on hand,' returned she. 'I haven't seen him all afternoon, although I am sure he is about the house.'

"'But on Thursday the cat was still missing. Dalton nearly had a fit when the delinquency was reported to him at night, and a prolonged search was made. It came to naught.

"'The cat is somewhere about the house, I know,' insisted Mrs. Dalton. 'There is no possible way by which he could run off, and I'm sure he doesn't want to, after the treatment he has been getting. However, the children and I will look again in the morning. I expect he is hiding in the garret, for there are lots of mice up there.'

"Friday night the Dalton atmosphere was decidedly squally. Madison Jenks was still invisible. Saturday morning dawned and the storm of doubt and consternation had not abated. Dalton sat down to breakfast with a sinking heart. But his faithful wife revived his spirits. She brought out the basket, Dalton took the hint.

"'I'll try again,' muttered Dalton, between his clenched teeth. A shout of joy arrested him as he started away with the basket on his arm.

"'Papa! Papa!' called one of the children from the cellar. 'We've found Madison Jenks hiding in a nest behind the coal.'

"Dalton waited to hear no more. He kicked the basket into the street and fled rejoicing to his office. He called 'round at the executor's place after business hours and escorted him home to view the cat and take dinner. Dinner came first, and then the executor remarked courteously that, as a mere matter of form, of course, he would like to inspect Madison Jenks. Dalton told one of the children to fetch the cat in.

"'Why, we can't get him up from the cellar, papa,' exclaimed one of the youngsters. 'He's still hiding in the nest he made.'

"'Don't disturb the little ones,' pleaded the executor, 'we can run down and look at him where he is, if you don't mind.'

"'Preceded by the children Dalton and the executor descended to the cellar. One of the juveniles more adventuresome than the others scaled the coal pile and made for Madison Jenks' nest.

"'Pull him out, Oliver,' charged Dalton. There was a short scuffle, a tremendous spitting, yowling and clawing, but the victorious boy landed Madison Jenks all right and held the cat up to view by the scruff of the neck.

"'Do you want these other ones, too?' asked the boy.

"'Do I want what?' gasped Dalton.

"'Madison Jenks' kittens!' shouted the boy, as he threw the squirming cat to the ground and scooped from the nest in the coal a half-dozen mewling, spluttering, blind little felines, the progeny of the mis-identified Madison Jenks. 'We were waiting to surprise you,' concluded the discoverer, proudly.

"'Well,' said Dalton that night, as Mrs. Dalton endeavored to subdue the inflammation of her eyes with rose-water, 'of course I hate to lose the money, but darn a cat, anyway!'

"'And the \$900 a year, what became of it?' asked the others.

"'You'll have to ask the Society for Supplying Spyglasses to Shipwrecked Sailors,' returned the theological student, passing his cup for the third helping.—N. Y. Sun.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.
Lesson in the International Series for January 14, 1900.—The Child Jesus—Luke 2:41-50.

GOLDEN TEXT.—And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.—Luke 1:52.

THE LESSON TEXT.
41. Now His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover.
42. And when He was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast.
43. And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and His mother knew not of it.
44. But they, supposing Him to have been in the company, went a day's journey; and they sought Him among their kinsfolk and acquaintances.
45. And when they found Him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking Him.
46. And it came to pass, that after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions.
47. And all that heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers.
48. And when they saw Him, they were amazed; and His mother said unto Him, Son, why hast Thou thus dealt with us? Behold, Thy father and I have sought Thee sorrowing.
49. And He said unto them: How is it that ye sought Me? What ye not that I must be about My Father's business?
NOTES AND SUGGESTIONS.
The Circumcision.—This lesson shows us Jesus as a Jewish boy. Thus we begin with circumcision, which was administered on the eighth day after birth, according to the law given in Gen. 17:9-14. Often the friends of a family gathered at the circumcision of a child, and a feast was held (Luke 1:58, 59). Of course, no such feast was possible when a child was born away from home.
The Presentation.—The presentation in the temple was, in Jesus' case a twofold ceremony. It had to do with the purification of His mother (Lev. 12) and with His own redemption as His mother's firstborn (Ex. 13:2, 12, 13; Num. 18:15, 16). Redemption required only the payment of the money to a priest, but the child was generally taken to the temple when the parents were near enough to go. Purification could be made at any time after the days of separation, but required the presence of the mother at the temple. The rabbinic traditions lengthened the period of separation prescribed in the law to 41 days after the birth of a boy and 81 after the birth of a girl. Simeon and Anna, whose prophetic words gave Mary food for thought, represented a considerable number of people who spent their life in the temple courts, attending all the sacrifices and passing their time in prayer.
The Magi.—The magi were representatives of a class somewhat widely spread through the east and were successors to the learning of the priests of Chaldea. Their interest in the king of the Jews probably came from Jewish rather than heathen sources. Very many theories about the star which guided them have been published, the most probable being that of Kepler, who observed a conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn in connection with which a brilliant temporary star, which may have been a comet, appeared. This conjunction occurred also about two years before the birth of Jesus.
The Return.—The return to Nazareth was decided upon for the reason that Jesus' parents could not feel secure in a village only six miles from Jerusalem, where children of Jesus' age would be few. Nazareth was an obscure and out-of-the-way place, in the hills which lie on the south side of the plain of Esdraelon. It was from this village that Jesus went, as all boys went, at the age of 12 years to his first passover. His remaining behind to listen to and share in the discussions of the rabbis shows His interest in the theory as well as the practice of religion; and His surprise that His parents should have wasted any time looking for Him anywhere else indicates His growing consciousness of the divine nature within Him.
Infancy to Manhood.—Generally this period may be described as that of Jesus' true and full human development—physical, intellectual and spiritual—of outward submission to man and inward submission to God, with the attendant results of "wisdom," "favor" and "grace." Necessary, therefore, as this period was, if the Christ was to be true man, it cannot be said that it was lost, even so far as His work as Saviour was concerned.—Ederheim.
Special Studies.—When a Jewish boy was three years old he was given the tasselled garment directed by the law (Num. 15:38-41; Deut. 22:12). At five he usually began to learn portions of the law under his mother's direction. These were passages written on scrolls, such as the shema or creed of Deut. 6:4, the Hallel psalms (Ps. 114, 118, 136). When the boy was 13 years old he wore, for the first time, the phylacteries, which the Jew always put on at the recital of the daily prayers. In the well-known and most ancient "Maxims of the Fathers" (Pirke Avoth) we read that at the age of ten a boy was to commence the study of the Mishna (a compilation of traditional interpretations of the law); at 18 he was to be instructed in the Gemara (a vast collection of interpretations of the Mishna, the Mishna and Gemara together making up the Talmud).—Canon Spence in Pulpit Com.
PRACTICAL.
God watches over every child with a love far surpassing that of earthly parents.
Every child should be so taught as to realize that God is his heavenly Father.
Every child should be "about his Father's business," so that his whole life may be devoted to Him.
There's no pleasure in living, if you're to be corked up forever, and only dribble your mind out by the sly, like a leaky barrel.—George Eliot.

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