

FIFTY YEARS ON.

"When you have turned a hundred and I am fifty-five—"
So spoke without a warning the plumpest girl alive—
"I wonder, oh, I wonder how both of us will be,
With Helen fifty-seven and baby fifty-three."
The sum was done precisely; each item was correct;
The grisly shade of Cocker had nothing to object;
"And yet I could not praise her, or sanction a display
Which tossed about the fifties in this collected way.
But still the maiden pressed me, and so I made reply:
"I'll tell you what I think, dear, about your by-and-by:

Your figure will be ampler, and, like a buzzing hive,
Your boys and girls will tease you when you are fifty-five.
"Your hair will not be brown, dear; you'll wear a decent cap;
Maybe you'll have a grandchild a-crowning on your lap;
And through the winter evenings the easiest of chairs
Will give you greater comfort than romping on the stairs.
"And sometimes, too, I fancy, when all the world is snow,
You'll smile as you remember the days of long ago;
And every now and then, dear, you'll spare a thought for me,
When Helen's fifty-seven and baby's fifty-three."
—R. C. Lehman, in Punch.

How Linus Got the Place

By ELIZABETH ROBBINS.

Linus was looking over the Bickford News, while his mother fried the griddle-cake for supper. He had to hold it up high, because his two-year-old sister Ruthie was leaning against his knee and kept clutching at it.

"Oh, mother!" Linus suddenly exclaimed, "listen to this: 'Wanted,' a boy of fifteen or sixteen to work in my store Saturdays, and before and after school on other days. Applicants will be seen on Saturday next, between 8 and 9 a. m., at the store, J. B. Gregg."

"That is just what you have been wishing for, isn't it?" said his mother.

"If I can only get it!" Linus answered. "Just think! he'll surely pay as much as a dollar a week, and maybe a dollar and a half. Why, I could do an awful lot with that."

"It would be a great help, certainly," his mother said.

"Let me see—day after to-morrow, I must be on hand at eight, sharp. Guess I'll aim for a quarter of. I wonder who else will be there."

He found out at school, the next morning, who intended to go. There were Jimmie Bruce, and Fred Gillespie, and Eben Sterne, and Casper Jordan, who were quite anxious for the situation, and nearly a dozen others who were not as eager, but still were going to apply for it. They were all talking together in a group about how they would spend the money if they should get the chance to earn it.

"Hello, Linus!" cried Jimmie. "Are you going to get that place at Gregg's grocery store?"

"Ho!" said Casper. "It isn't likely he's even heard of it, 'way out there at the jumping off place."

"Yes, I have. Before you heard of it here in town, maybe," Linus retorted.

"Going to try for it?"

"Shouldn't wonder if I did."

"Ho! there's no danger of your getting it," said Casper, looking him over. "They don't want fellows that wear patches on their cloths, in stores nowadays."

"They want a fellow to live in the same county, too, I guess," laughed Eben.

"Really, now, Linus, you don't stand any chance at all," said Fred seriously. "It's no use your trying. Why, it's between two and three miles to where you live; you wouldn't get here till 'twas time for school to begin."

"I think I'll try just the same, if you don't mind," said Linus dryly.

brought the snowshoes from the garret. They both decided that something might be done, and they spent an hour working over them. Then Linus went out into the storm and experimented, and after a little practice he found that he could get over the snow quite easily on the mended snowshoes. "Now I'm all right," he said, and went to bed with a light heart.

At 3 o'clock in the morning Linus was awakened by his mother calling him. Her teeth chattered and her voice was faint, and Linus knew at once that she was having a chill. He sprang out of bed and slipped into his clothes, then fetched comforters, and built a fire to heat water for the hot-water bottle and for hot drinks, and after a while his mother began to feel better, though she was very weak.

"I'm afraid you will have to give up going to the village," she said sorrowfully. "I could get along nicely if I were alone, but I am not able to take care of Ruthie."

Linus thought hard for a minute. "It wouldn't hurt Ruthie to be out in the storm a little while, would it?" he asked.

"I don't know as it would," his mother answered. "She is used to being out in all weathers, and is perfectly healthy."

"Then I've got a plan. I'll just carry her on my back as far as Mrs. Fuller's, and leave her there. It's only about a quarter of a mile, and the Fullers have often offered to take her."

"I must get the place at Mr. Gregg's if it's a possible thing," he thought. "If mother is going to have these sick spells every little while, we shall need the money—we shall need it awfully."

So Linus brought in several big armfuls of wood, and made his mother some toast, and put the things she was likely to want where she could get them easily. Then he awoke Ruthie, dressed and fed her, and wrapped her up well.

At the last moment he could not find his mittens. "I left them on the stand; I know I did," he said. "Ruthie, have you had 'em?"

Ruthie nodded.

"What did you do with them?"

"Don't know what Ruthie did with 'em," she answered soberly.

"Try to think."

"Ruthie can't think." And that was all he could get out of her.

"I'll have to go without mittens then," he said. "Guess my hands will be frozen before I get there."

He swept off the doorstep and stood on it, and when he had put on the snowshoes he stooped down and she clasped him around the neck. Then he straightened up and clasped his hands behind him to keep her from slipping off.

He had to go very carefully, for if he should fall there was no knowing how long it would take him to get on his feet again.

you came all the way from there this morning?"

"Yes, sir."

"And bare-handed! Don't your hands ache?"

Linus' hands did ache so that it seemed as if he should cry if he tried to speak, and he nodded.

Mr. Gregg hurried into the back room and returned almost instantly with a basin of cold water.

"There! put your hands in that," he said. "Your ears look a little frosted, too," and he dashed out of the door for a handful of snow, which he rubbed on Linus' ears with great energy. Then he went and opened the draught in the stove, and put on more coal.

Linus had always had the idea that Mr. Gregg was a cold, unsympathetic man who cared for nothing but money; now he suddenly changed his mind.

After awhile the pain began to go away, and Linus felt as if he could talk again. Mr. Gregg asked him a good many questions, and finally got out of him all the story of his coming.

"But you can't take a trip like this every day," said Mr. Gregg.

"There won't be likely to be any more days as bad as this," Linus answered.

"Well, perhaps not. But it's a long way to come, in the best of weather. Then he asked how much rent Linus' mother had to pay.

Linus told him, adding that it was low because very few people were willing to live in such a lonely place.

Mr. Gregg looked thoughtful for several minutes.

"Now look here!" he said at last. "I, too, have a house that is hard to let, and those I do let it to generally manage to cheat me out of a good part of the rent. It's in the oil of this store, so you can know it's a healthy location. I'll let your mother have it for the same that she's paying now. And I'll allow you two dollars and a half a week, though I wasn't intending to pay quite so much. How is that?"

"But—do you mean I'm going to have the situation?" stammered Linus.

"Going to have it? Why, of course you are. Haven't you worked hard enough for it?"

"But there were a lot of the boys going to apply for it. You haven't seen them yet?"

Mr. Gregg gave a peculiar smile. "I'm not likely to see them to-day, I reckon. The storm will keep them at home. And you suit me; I should have hired you anyway."

"I'll come," said Linus, and he started toward the door. "You said Monday."

"Hold on!" commanded Mr. Gregg. "I think I've got a pair of snowshoes somewhere. I make it a point to keep a little of 'most everything in my store."

After a short search he found them, and then he brought a pair of mittens. "You can use the shoes till the track is broken out; it won't hurt 'em," he said.



For the Younger Children...

MY RED SHOES.

When I put on my black shoes I'm just a common girl,
And like to play with Jimmie,
With my hair all out of curl.

But, when I wear my red shoes,
I feel so very grand—
As if I were a lady
With a knight to kiss my hand.

I feel like saying "pardon"
Instead of just "excuse,"
And curtsying 'stead of bowing,
When I wear my new red shoes.

I think of trains and papers,
And "many a gallant hand"—
Of course it's very foolish,
But perhaps you understand!

—Louise McCloy Horn, in Little Folks.

HOW BIRDS OF PREY HUNT.

The eye of the bird of prey is probably the most perfect organ of sight that exists, says a writer in the World To-day.

Most marvelous of all is the sight which enables the owl to strike the mouse in the darkness or to pursue and capture the bat which we can scarcely see even in the early twilight.

The talons of some of the larger birds of prey are extremely strong. The feet of the osprey make a splendid fish trap, one from which no fish can escape when once caught.

The great, curved talons of the eagle are most effective, and are certainly stronger than those of all other birds. When they once close on an object, the clutch is so tight that it can scarcely be loosened unless the bird's leg be severed. The strong claws are not only used in catching food, but are used also in carrying nesting material.

If, instead of killing its prey, a species of bird is accustomed to feed on carrion, this change is clearly reflected in the weaker muscles of the feet, and in the shorter and duller claws.

Many people have thought that buzzards have an unusual sense of smell that guides them over miles of territory in search of food, but many years ago it was proved that sight is the principal factor in guiding the bird of prey.

Audubon made careful experiments with a black vulture. The dry, stuffed skin of a deer which he placed out in the field soon attracted a vulture. Although there was no smell of flesh, and nothing eatable about it, the bird lit and began tugging at the dry skin. Later, when the same bird circled over the field it espied a small snake, not thicker than a man's finger, and pounced upon it.

In another case the decaying carcass of a hog was covered with brush so that it was invisible. It remained undiscovered by the vultures that frequently passed over the place by accident, although the stench was very strong.

The sparrow hawk is perhaps the best known of our birds of prey, as it ranges through the entire country. Contrary to what the name might signify, this bird lives almost exclusively on insects, except where such food is difficult to obtain.

Upon the treeless plains and hills throughout the West it is a common sight to see these little falcons beating along over the waste, frequently swooping upward in flight and coming to a dead stop, as they hang suspended in the air with rapid wing beats looking for prey. In localities where grasshoppers are abundant, these hawks will congregate and gorge themselves continually.

During the winter, about the San Francisco Bay region where the English sparrows are plentiful, the sparrow hawk sometimes comes into the towns and captures a sparrow from a flock. The red-tailed hawk is often called chicken hawk, but he does not deserve the name. Many of the hawks carry undeserved reputations.

In regions and in seasons, when animal and insect food is scarce, this hawk will catch chickens and game birds, but it lives mostly on mice and shrews as well as frogs, snakes, lizards and insects of various kinds. In a prairie and hilly country, almost its entire food is squirrels, gophers, meadow mice and rabbits.

The osprey is one of our noblest birds of prey. He hunts about over the rivers and lakes, living almost entirely on fish.

As a family, the owls are among the most beneficial of all birds, from the economic standpoint of the agriculturist. With few exceptions, the owls are nocturnal. Their eyes and ears are remarkably developed and are keenest in the early hours of the night and morning.

Many harmful rodents are most active in their search for food during the night, and the owls are the natural check for this multitude. The hawk hunts by day and the owl by night, and the work of one supplements that of the other.

THE MESMERIZED RING.

Attach a massive gold ring to a silk thread about twelve inches long and fasten the other end around the joint nearest the nail of your right forefinger. Allow the ring to hang about half an inch above the surface of the table, on which you rest your elbow to steady your hand. Hold your finger horizontally, with the thumb thrown back as far as possible from the rest of the hand. If there be nothing on the table the ring will soon become stationary. Place some silver coin, three half dol-



lars will do, immediately below the ring and it will begin to oscillate and from you. Bring your thumb in contact with your forefinger and the oscillations will become transverse to their former swing. This may also be affected by letting a girl take hold of your disengaged hand. When the transverse motion is fairly established let a boy take hold of the girl's disengaged hand and the ring will change back to its former course. Instead of silver you can suspend the ring over your left forefinger with similar results.—Washington Star.

GRADES OF BUTTER.

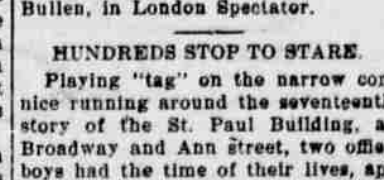
There are many grades of butter on the market, and it may be safely stated that hundreds of farmers' wives do not know how to make good butter. Each one has some methodical manner of performing the work, learning nothing and increasing the cost of labor, only to put on the market an article to be sold at a low price because buyers will not take it as long as they can get something better.

MILKING.

Cows that are imperfectly milked, from whatever cause, either carelessness or imperfect milking from the fault of the milker, or from the difficult task by reason of the anatomical construction of the udder, are converted into worthless animals. The milk that remains in the udder from imperfect milking is that which is held by the small pouches or milk vesicles high up in the bag, and will form a curd that will excite inflammation and destroy the secreting function of its mucous lining, or cause the adhesive and complete closure of the cavity or pouch.—W. R. Gilbert.

FLOOD-GATE.

To make a flood-gate which is not always washing away make out of 1x4 inch stuff any length that is



handiest and four feet high brace it well and drive posts in the bottom of the creek and chain them at the bottom to these posts then drive two or three to lean them up against and when the drift strikes it, it will knock it down and go over it; then when the water goes down all you have to do is go and lift it back up.—B. J. Meland, Elm Springs, Ark.

PROVIDE GREEN FOOD.

If your birds must be yarded at this time of year, see that plenty of green food is supplied. It aids in keeping fowls in a thrifty condition and consequently more and better eggs are secured. Also, an abundance of greens goes a long way toward cutting down the grain feed bill.

TURKEY TALK.

Turkey hens make better mothers for poult than do chicken hens because chicken mothers do not usually teach the youngsters to roam and forage as they should.

Economizing by giving the hen more eggs than she can properly cover is a most excellent kind of false economy. It don't pay.

Keep a close look out for vermin on both old hen and young. Poults cannot thrive and develop properly when afflicted with these pests.

Farm Topics

FOR THE FARM REPAIR SHOP.
Strips of wet rawhide are very convenient to repair broken woodwork, tools or chairs.—American Cultivator.

NAME HELPS SALES.
Give the farm a name and stencil it upon all the packages sent out. Such a plan is a good business policy and will help sell the produce.—Boston Cultivator.

CHICKEN EATING HOGS.
To effectually break hogs of the habit of eating chickens, thoroughly saturate, or rather sprinkle a dead chicken with cayenne pepper or chilli pepper and let them eat it. If this does not help it, nothing will help, unless you cut off their tails just behind their ears.—Paul Kautz

CARROTS FOR STOCK.
The value of carrots will be made manifest to any person who has never used them in winter if they will procure a few bushels and feed them to horses and cows. These animals will leave all other foods for the carrots. They need not be cooked, but should be sliced, with a little salt sprinkled over them.—Agricultural Epitomist.

TO KEEP FLIES OFF.
Take a cup of clean lard and mix enough pine tar with it to be a good brush; then take a small brush and give your horses a good rubbing with the brush, using the tar and brush. The flies will not bother the animal while the odor of tar remains on the legs or other exposed parts of the animal. This is reliable.—M. A. Morehead.

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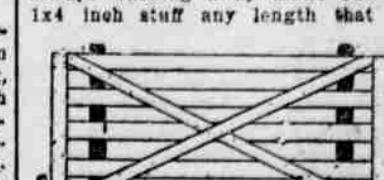
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Keep young turkeys warm and dry the first few weeks. Wet and dampness are very fatal to young turks.