



His Question.
Sixty questions make an hour,
One for every minute;
And Neddy tries, with all his might,
To get more questions in.

Sixty questions make an hour,
And as for a reply
The wisest sage would stand aghast
At Neddy's searching "Why?"

Sixty questions make an hour,
And childhood's hours are brief;
So Neddy has no time to waste,
No pauses for relief.

Sixty questions make an hour,
Presto! why, where is Ned?
Alas! he's gone, and in his place
A Question Point instead!

—The Churchman.

Uncle Sam's Midnight Land Deal.
One of the best bargains ever made by Uncle Sam was that of the purchase of Alaska from Russia in 1867. The czar had been most friendly toward our country during the civil war, and when Uncle Sam offered to buy his immense possessions in northwestern America he gave the matter favorable consideration. He had planted forts and trading posts in many parts of this territory and had got to calling it the "outpost of St. Petersburg," but he knew that Uncle Sam was growing into one of the foremost rulers of the earth and he wished to keep his good will. Then, too, Alaska would be difficult to defend in war time and the czar had always made a point of keeping his domains joined closely, annexing only such territory as lay directly upon his borders. So, after he had thought it over, he offered to sell for \$10,000,000. True to his dickering instinct, Uncle Sam held out for \$5,000,000. "Split the difference," proposed the czar, "say seven and a half." "Seven millions," insisted Uncle Sam. "Done," decided the czar, as lightly as though it had been a pair of old shoes. The Russian Fur company, however, wanted \$200,000 of its interest in the territory and Uncle Sam agreed to pay it. Nothing remained but the signing of the treaty, and this was done at midnight on March 29, 1867, at Washington.

Uncle Sam's secretary, Mr. Seward, was playing whist in his parlor that night when the czar's representative, Minister Stoekel, was ushered in. "I have a dispatch, Mr. Seward, from my government by cable. The czar gives his consent to the cession. Tomorrow, if you like, we will sign the treaty." Mr. Seward laid down his cards. "Why wait until tomorrow, Mr. Stoekel? Let us make the treaty tonight."

"But you have no clerks and my secretaries are scattered about town."

"Never mind that," replied Mr. Seward. "If you can muster your secretaries before midnight you will find me awaiting you at the department of state."

And so at midnight light was streaming from the windows of the department of state and the place was busy with writers, secretaries and engrossers. At 4 o'clock in the morning the treaty was finished—engrossed, signed, sealed and ready for sending to the president and the senate. And the next day the senate ratified the transaction and the immense country of Alaska, with its hidden gold, passed within the limits of the United States for the price of two warships.

Why Did She Do It?
"No, I'll never speak to Marie again; never, never!"

"Why, my Whirlwind, what is it now?"

"Oh, Aunt Clara, you are so patient and forgiving that, of course, you will see no wrong!"

"Well, tell me all about it, my little Whirlwind, and I promise not to be hard on you."

"Yes, and Aunt Clara will so smooth out all the wrinkles that before daylight tomorrow you'll be waking me up with your singing, so that you may be in time to make it up with Marie."

This last speech was from Ned, who sat on a stool by the big fireplace, and had put down his book as "Whirlwind" burst into the room. She tossed her head impatiently at him for an answer, and began her tale of woe to her listening and ever patient young aunt.

When she had finished, Aunt Clara answered never a word. A light gleamed in her dark eyes, and she sighed. After a little while she spoke, softly and gently, but not at all about Whirlwind or Marie; only as if she were looking back over the years. And, indeed, she was.

"Shall I tell you a story, my dear?"

Ned dropped his book again, and Whirlwind was all attention.

"This is a true story of a friend of mine. When we hear 'true stories,' they are generally told because they show some noble trait of character, or some thrilling episode, or a spirit of bravery, or something of that kind. Yet more often, in our frat' human lives, it is not the moment of nobleness that leaves lasting good, but our very weaknesses, photographed on the sensitive plate of our imagination, that stare at us again and again, until we could not, in very shame, act so again.

"This little incident happened many years ago to a child, who is now a woman, and although she never again saw the other prominent character in the episode, the vision of that one quick, impulsive wrong action rises

again and again before her, and its memory can never be effaced.

"She was not a bad little girl, nor was she a 'goody-goody' one, just an ordinary little girl. She was playing, one summer evening, on the sidewalk with her little friends of the neighborhood. They had exhausted themselves, all except little Letty, and she, brimful of mischief, and action, and impatience, was waiting to resume the play.

"Suddenly, along the street came a strange sight to these boys and girls, whose ages ranged from five to eight. It was a child of the streets, a little newsgirl, in a torn frock, and with tumbled hair, and dirty hands and face. She had evidently wandered from her own neighborhood, and she seemed very much out of place among these children of careful parents.

"The little ones, one and all, drew together on a stoop, gazing in shyness and curiosity at the stranger, who might have been a gypsy, if one had judged by her semi-wild appearance. When she reached the group, she paused, and there was a moment of silence. The twilight had deepened into dark by this time, and the gleam of the street lamps, which were not electric then, shone dimly upon them all.

"I work for my living!" suddenly and proudly spoke up the little waif; and perhaps a feeling of childish shame fell upon them, for no one answered.

"See what I have!" continued the little voice, and there was a sound of clinking coins as she slipped her hand into her ragged dress, and drew it out again, extending the open palm for them to see. Eagerly they scrambled forward to look, and then it was that Letty did what she was never able to explain, even to this day, grown woman though she is.

"It all happened in a moment, in less time than it can be told; and while they were all scrambling to see, Letty stepped forward with them, and striking the extended hand from beneath, she knocked it upwards, sending the coins flying over the sidewalk and into the gutter. Even before the words "for shame!" were uttered by the children, Letty's heart was stricken with remorse.

"Well, of course, the waif cried, and they all stooped to gather up the coins, all that is, except Letty, whose foolish pride forbade her to acknowledge her fault. She was a very little girl, of course, and I know that she was not an unkind one, just as you know that Marie is not unkind in her heart, even though she is impulsive and hasty, like our Whirlwind; but though that is true, and she will never see or know the waif that worked so hard beyond her years, yet Letty has her remorse for that action, and will never forget it. It was the beginning of her trying to think for others.

"Now, Whirlwind, I have told you this little story only because it is not always our noble actions that stamp our characters, and so, I am sure that you will waken Ned early with your singing, and will find that Marie, too, has regretted the harsh words spoken between you."

Aunt Clara, always the most cheerful person in the household, was silently looking into the fire with a half-dreamy smile on her face. Ned and Whirlwind left her thus, and as they shut the door, Whirlwind said:

"Would you have believed it, Ned, if any one else had told us?"

"No, and if I didn't know that she could not pretend, even to a name, I'd say it couldn't be!"

And meanwhile their Aunt Clara Letitia, or Letty, as she was even yet sometimes called, was thinking:

"Why did I do it? Who can analyze the child mind and tell?"—Virginia Horton.

Fencing.
That times are changed is a fact that every man over forty is sure to announce with emphasis. But the change is sometimes greater in appearance than in reality, as in a case reported by the Epworth Herald.

"How's this?" said the farmer, who was reading a letter from his son in college. "Come here, Betsey, Harold Howard Augustus writes that he wants money to pay his fencing bill. What on earth does the boy mean?"

"I s'pose it's the college pastur' or somethin', Matthew. There's so many pomeketty things the poor boys at college have to do."

"Ho! he! It's lessons in fencing he wants to pay for. Waal, now, that beats all. I've been fencing for forty years, and I never had to go to college to learn how."

"But times are changed, Matthew. Fences ain't made as they was when we climbed 'em in Root Hollow."

"I expect that's so," said the old man, thoughtfully. "He don't say whether it's a rail fence or a wire one, but I reckon he'll learn both ways. I never thought a boy of mine would have to go to college to learn fencing. Times are changed."

A Graduate of West Point.
Arthur Sherburne Hardy, our new minister to Switzerland, is a graduate of West Point. He served in the Third artillery, traveled much, studied in France, was professor of civil engineering and mathematics at Iowa college and Dartmouth and wrote several successful novels and text-books.

Green crocidolite, or "cats eye," is found in New Mexico.

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MRS. KATE AUSTIN, 40 Jenny Lind Ave., Somerville, Mass., says:
I had a pain in my side for seventeen years. I also suffered with terrible backache and headache; such an awful headache, and I had not a bit of appetite. I cried with pain from womb trouble, and was as pale as a ghost. I was terribly nervous. I could not sleep for a long time, and had rheumatism in my shoulder and arm. I suffered everything; nobody but God knows how I suffered. I weighed 128 pounds. A friend recommended Dr. Greene's Nervura blood and nerve remedy, and I commenced to take it. I was so weak and run down that the first bottle did not do me much good, but I kept on, and the second bottle did me good and I began to gain. After taking the Nervura I never had a pain in my side, nor any headache, and I sleep well and have a good appetite. I don't believe there is any medicine in the world so good as Dr. Greene's Nervura. It did me good right off and I have had no return of my womb trouble. I had leucorrhoea, but since taking Nervura that has disappeared. I feel strong, and last summer was able to do the work for fourteen in a family, and I weigh 163 pounds. I was so weak before, nobody knows how I worked, but I had to work for my children. I sent two bottles of Nervura to my brother in Nova Scotia, and it did him lots of good. I recommend Dr. Greene's Nervura to every one.

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