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A Story for Boys.

A CERTAIN young mastiff being near dog's estate, his master judged best to trim and shorten his ears.— This the mastiff thought hard, and complained accordingly. But as he grew older and met dogs of various tempers, he was often obliged to fight for himself and his rights: then his short ears gave great advantage, for they furnished no hold for his enemies' teeth, while the long-eared dogs, whom he had formerly envied, came from the fray torn and suffering. "Aha!" said the mastiff, "my master knew better than I what was good for me."—Old Fable.

"But why mustn't I?" said Towser. Towser was not a dog, as you might suppose, but the nickname of a boy.— Exactly why his schoolfellows should have chosen this nickname for Tom Kane I don't know; perhaps because his brown, short-nosed face was a little like a dog's—perhaps because he was bold and resolute, a good fighter, and tough in defence of his rights and opinions. I hardly think it was this last reason, however. Boys are not much given to analyzing character, and are apt to judge things and people by a happy-go-lucky instinct, which sometimes leads them right and sometimes wrong. But whatever the reason may have been, Towser was Tom's school-name, and stuck to him through life. Even his wife called him so—when he grew up and had a wife—and the last time I saw him, his little girl was stroking his hair and saying, "Papa Towser," in imitation of her mother. Towser isn't a pretty name, but it sounded pretty from baby May's lips, and I never heard that Tom objected to the title, either as man or boy.

But to return to the time when he was a boy.

"Why mustn't I?" he said again. "All the fellows are going except me, and I'd like to, ever so much."

"It isn't a question of like," answered his father, rather grimly. "It's a question of can and can't. All the other boys have rich fathers; or, if not rich, they are not poor like me. It's well enough that their sons should go off on camping parties. Twenty-five dollars here and twenty there isn't much to any of 'em, but it's a great deal for you. And what's more, Tom, there's this: that if they'd take you for nothing, it isn't a good thing for you, any way you fix it. I pay for your schooling, and I paid for those boxing lessons, and may be, another year, I'll manage the subscription to the boat, for I want you to grow up strong and ready with your fist, and your mind, and all parts of you. You'll have to fight your way, my boy, and I want you to turn out true grit when the tussle comes. But when it's a case of camping out a week, or extra holidays, or spending money for circuses and minstrels and such trash, I shut down. You'll be all the better off in the end without this fun and idling, and getting your head full of the idea of always having 'a good time.' Work's what you're meant for, and if you don't thank me now for bringing you up tough, you will when you're a man, with may be a boy of your own."

Mr. Kane was a silent, gruff, long-headed man, who never wasted words, and this, the longest speech he had ever been known to make, impressed Towser not a little. He did say to himself, in a grumbling tone, "Pretty hard, I think, to be cut off so at every turn," but he said it softly, and only once, and before long his face cleared, and taking his hat, he went to tell the boys that he couldn't join the camping party.

"Well, I say it's a confounded shame!" declared Tom White.

"I call your pa real mean," joined in Archie Berkley.

"You'd better not call him anything of the kind while I'm around," said Towser, with an angry look in his eyes, and Archie shrank and said no more. Tom was vexed and sore enough at heart, but he wasn't going to let any boy speak disrespectfully of his father.

"I say, though," whispered Harry Blake, getting his arm around Tom's neck, and leading him away from the others, "I'm real disappointed, old fellow. Couldn't it be managed? I'd lend you half the money."

Harry's mother was a widow, well off, and very indulgent, and he had more pocket-money at command than any one else in the school.

Towser shook his head. "No use," he said. "Father don't want me to go, for more reasons than the money. He says I've got to work hard all my life, and I'd better not get into the way of having good times; it'd soften me, and I'd not do so well by-and-by."

"How horrid!" cried Harry with a shudder. "I'm glad mother doesn't talk that way."

"Harry Blake was fair and slender, with auburn hair, which waved naturally, and a delicate throat as white as a girl's."

Tom looked at him with a sort of rough, pitying tenderness.

"I'm glad, too," he said. "You'd die if you had to rough it much, Harry. I'm tougher, you see. It won't hurt me."

A sturdy satisfaction came with these words that almost made up for the disappointment about the camping out.

Still, it was pretty hard to see the boys start without him. Ten days later they returned. The mosquitoes were very thick, they said, and they hadn't caught so many fish as they expected. Joe Bryce had hurt his hand with a gun-lock, and Harry Blake was half sick with a cold. Still, they had had a pretty good time on the whole. Mr. Kane listened to this report with a dry twinkle in his eyes.

"Two hundred dollars gone in giving twenty young fellows a 'pretty good' time," he said. "Well, all the fools aren't dead yet. You stick to what you're about, Towser, my boy."

And Towser did stick, not only then, but again and again as time went on, and first this scheme and then that was started for the amusement of the boys. Now it was an excursion to Boston; next the formation of an amateur rifle company; after that a voyage to the fishing-banks. Every few months something was proposed, which fired Towser's imagination, and made him want to join, but always his father held firm, and he had no share in the frolics. It seemed hard enough, but Mr. Kane was kind as well as strict; he treated his son as if he were already a man, and argued with him from a man's point of view; so, in spite of an occasional outburst or grumble, Towser did not rebel, and his life and ideas gradually moulded themselves to his father's wish.

At sixteen, while most of the other boys were fitting for college, Towser left school and went into the great Perrin Iron Works, to learn the business of machine-making. He began at the foot of the ladder; but, being quick-witted and steady, with a natural aptitude for mechanics, he climbed rapidly, and by the time he was twenty was promoted to a foremanship. Harry Blake came home from college soon after, having graduated with the dignity of a "second dispute," as a quizzical friend remarked, and settled at home, to "read law," he said, but in reality to practice the flute, make water-color sketches, and waste a good deal of time in desultory pursuits of various kinds. He was a sweet-tempered, gentlemanly fellow, not strong in health, and not at all fond of study; and Tom, who overtopped him by a head, and with one muscular arm could manage him like a child, felt for him the tender deference which strength often pays to weakness. It was almost as if Harry had been a girl; but Tom never thought of it in that light.

So matters went on until Towser was twenty-one and beginning to hope for another rise in position, when suddenly a great black cloud swooped down on

the Perrin Iron Works. I don't mean a real cloud, but a cloud of trouble. All the country felt its dark influence.— Banks stopped payment, merchants failed, stocks lost their value, no one knew what or whom to trust, and the wheels of industry everywhere were at a standstill. Among the rest the Perrin Company was forced to suspend work and discharge its hands. Tom was a trusted fellow, and so much in the confidence of his employers as to know for some time beforehand of the change that was coming. He staid to the end, to help wind up books and put matters in order, and he and Mr. Perrin were the last persons to walk out of the big door.

"Good-by, Tom," said Mr. Perrin, as he turned the key in the heavy lock, and stopped a moment to shake hands. "You've done well by us, and if things are ever so that we can take another start, we'll do well by you in turn."

They shook hands, and Tom walked away, with a month's wages in his pocket and no particular idea what to do next. Was he down-hearted? Not at all. There was something somewhere that he could do; that he was sure of; and although he looked grave, he whistled cheerily enough as he marched along.

Suddenly turning a corner, he ran upon Harry Blake, walking in a listless, dejected way, which at once caught his attention.

"Halloo—what's up?" inquired Tom. "Haven't you heard?" replied Harry, in a melancholy voice. "The Tiverton Bank has gone to smash, with most of our money in it."

"Your money!" "My mother's. It's the same thing exactly."

"Was it much? Is the bank gone for good?"

"Sure smash, they say, and seven-eighths of all we had."

Tom gave a whistle of dismay.

"Well, Harry, what next?" he demanded. "Have you thought of anything to do?"

"No. What can I do?" Harry's voice sounded hopeless enough.

What could Harry do? Tom, who had never wasted a night's sleep over his own future, lay awake more than once debating this question. Hard times were hard times to him, as well as to everybody else, but he had a little money laid by; his habits were simple, and to pinch for a while cost him small suffering; besides, he could turn his hand to almost anything—but poor Harry. One plan after another suggested itself and was proposed, but each in turn proved a failure. Harry lacked bodily strength for one position, for another he had not the requisite training, still another was unsuited to his taste, and a fourth sounded so "ungenteel," that his mother would not listen to it. It would break her heart, she said. Tom himself got a temporary place in a locomotive-shop, which fitted him over the crisis, and enabled him to lend a helping hand, not to Harry only, but to one or two other old comrades whose families had lost everything and were in extremity. But these small aids were not enough. Permanent situations were what were needed. At last Harry obtained a clerkship in a drug-store. He disliked it, and his mother hated it, but nothing better offered, and it is to his credit that he did the work well and diligently, and only relieved his mind by private grumbings to Towser in the evenings.

"I'll tell you what," said Tom one night, after patiently listening to one of these lamentations, "you boys used to think my father strict with me when we were at school together, but I've come to the conclusion that he was a wise man. Where should I be now if I'd grown up soft and easily hurt, like you? Giving knocks and taking knocks—that's what a business man's life is, and it's a good thing to be toughened for it. I used to feel hard to my father about it, too, sometimes, but I thank him heartily now"—and he held out his brown, strong hand, and looked at it curiously and affectionately. Well he might. Those hands were keys to pick Fortune's locks with—only I'm afraid Towser's mind was hardly up to such a notion.

"You're right," said Harry, after thinking a little, "and your father was right. You're true grit, Towser—up to

any work that comes along, and sure to succeed, while I'm as easily knocked down as a girl. I only wish I'd had a wise father and been raised tough, like you."

Harry has repeated this wish a good many times in the years that have passed since then. Life has gone hard by with him, and business has always been distasteful, but he has kept on steadily, and his position has improved, thanks to Tom's advice and help. Tom himself is a rich man now. He was long since taken in as a partner by the Perrin Company, which re-opened its works the year after the panic, and is doing an immense business. He makes a sharp and energetic manager, but his open-handedness and open-heartedness grow with his growth, and prosperly only furnishes wider opportunity for a wise kindness to those who are less fortunate. His own good fortune he always ascribes to his father's energetic training, and Mr. Kane, who is an elderly man now, likes to nod his head and reply: "I told you so, my boy; I told you so. A habit of honest work is the best luck and the best fortune a man can have."

A Curious Animal.

On the farm of W. D. Green, on the road leading from the village of Florida to Glenmore Lake, not far from Newton, N. J. is a cave inhabited by a nondescript animal, somewhat partaking of the human form. Some time ago this animal was seen by two men named Armstrong and Sullivan, who were at work in a field near the cave. It so much resembled a human being that Armstrong, who was eating his lunch, asked it to take a piece of bread, whereupon it gritted its teeth and fled to the cave, remaining in sight only a few seconds. Several persons have endeavored to entrap it, but without success. All who have seen it describe it as being covered with long, shaggy hair.

A few days ago Ira Seybolt, a well-known hunter, chanced to pass the cave and saw the animal lying at length upon a stone wall and shot at it, when, with a cry of mingled rage and pain, it leaped from the wall and fled into the cave. Mr. Green, on whose farm the cave is located, now has a quantity of hair, about eight inches long, which was cut from the body of the creature by Seybolt's shot. The creature walks half upright and prowls considerably at night, making unearthly noises. There are a variety of conjectures as to what the "thing" is. There is not a man in the entire section who could be induced to enter the cave under any consideration. The entrance to the cave is small, but it is said to have a large interior. Many people believe that the creature who inhabits this cave is a wild man and a watch is being kept over the mouth of the "den" to see what manner of creature it is. The affair has created much excitement and considerable nervousness in this section, and the developments are anxiously awaited. People will not travel the road near where the cave is located, and Mr. Green could not sell his otherwise valuable farm for a cent an acre at the present time on account of the superstition prevailing among the country people.

The Story of a Tame Walrus.

The Spanish bark, Odullo, from Liverpool, now lying at Welch, Dithlet & Co.'s wharf, says the Victoria (British Columbia) Colonist, has on board a tame walrus or sea-lion. This animal was captured by Captain DeAbortiz, thirteen years ago while cruising in Behring straits. It was then a "pup," was trained by him, and has been his constant companion on all his voyages ever since. He is called "Senor," and answers to his name or to a blast from a silver whistle blown by his master; but if blown by any one else he pays not the slightest attention to the call. He eats bread and meat, and enjoys tea and tobacco. He is as passionately fond of beer as an old toper, and on many occasions has become genteelly "tight" from imbibing too heavily. When caught he weighed 19 pounds, but he now turns the scale at 41½ pounds, has two enormous tusks, measures 6 feet 3 inches at the girth, and is 8 feet 4 inches long. As the captain good-naturedly remarked, as he showed the brute to a few visitors, he is becoming "one big noo-

sance." In bright weather he sleeps in the sun on deck. During heavy blows he resorts to a kennel, but when the weather is calm he leaps overboard and sports about the ship for hours, catching and eating fish. When tired of swimming he is hauled on board in a great iron basket. On one occasion, at the Cape of Good Hope a great shark tackled "Senor," laying hold of one of his paws and biting off two of his toes. "Senor" dove, and coming up under his enemy's belly, ripped him up with one thrust of his great tusks, and devoured him with savage cries of delight and satisfaction. He is very fond of the captain, and when the latter has been absent from the ship a day or two, he manifests his uneasiness by a thundering noise not unlike the sounds that might be emitted by two or three scores of dogs barking in chorus. "Senor" is perfectly docile, allows himself to be patted on the head, and is very susceptible to kindness.

Afraid of the "busting" Comet.

The Richmond (Va.) State, says: Much excitement prevails among many of the colored people in and about Richmond over the appearance and disappearance of the comet, of which they have just commenced to trace a series of disasters the first being the illness of the Rev. John Jasper, then the shooting of President Garfield, and the last the sudden death yesterday of Patrick Moody, the well known colored driver for Mr. Robert W. Oliver of the Westham Tobacco Works. The ignorant and superstitious ones of the race, while a trifle uneasy at the first appearance of the comet, have only in the past day or two seen the woeful effects of its coming, and now large numbers of the factory hands are "gitting religion."

"Yas, 'o' Gord," said an excited individual, with a face full of terror, last night, "de comick's tail is up," and he then proceeded to show that when "de comick's tail is up" it foretells calamity and death, and in support of his assertion recapitulated the disasters which had followed the advent of the comet.— The fearful outlook was more threatening now, he said, because the "comick is busted," his idea being that the strange lighting up of the heavens a few evenings ago since was owing to the smashing up of the heavenly visitor.— Several benighted colored tramps who have been taken up at night on the streets have exhibited lunacy over the comet, the "busting" of which they expect will soon set the world on fire.

Circumstantial Evidence.

A lawyer in Central New York gives the following account of one of his first cases:

"My client sued a neighbor for the alleged killing of a favorite dog. The proof consisted in the mysterious disappearance of the animal, and the possession of a dog's skin by the defendant, which, after considerable argument, was brought into court in evidence. It was marked in a singular manner, and was positively identified, with many tears, by the plaintiff's wife and daughter as the undoubted integument of the deceased Bose. In summing up to the jury, I was in the midst of a highly colored picture of the virtues of the deceased, and of the love of the children for their four-footed friend, when I was interrupted by a slight disturbance in the crowd near the door of the little school house which served as court house. Looking around, I saw my client's youngest son, a tow-headed urchin of twelve, coming forward with a dog whose skin was the exact counterpart of the one put in evidence. The dog wagged his tail with goodnatured composure, and the boy cried, in his childish treble, 'Pa, Bose has come home.' I gathered up my law-books and retreated, and I have never had perfect confidence in circumstantial evidence since."

A Warning.

"Young man, I say to you, looking back to the fire where I lay scorching, looking back at the past, and standing as I do now under the arch of the bow, one end of which rests in darkness, and the other on the sunny slopes of Paradise, I say to you, Beware! Touch not the accursed thing! and may God forbid that you should ever suffer as I have suffered, or be called to fight as I have fought for body and for soul."—John B. Gough.