

FREE GIFT OF SHARP'S KREEMY

The Schoolgirl

1½^D



"I'm cut off," she called in shaky tones, "Is there anyway up the cliff?"

JUST OURSELVES.

THE EDITOR CHATS WITH HER READERS.

MY DEAR GIRLS,—

Have you room in your hearts for another friend, and can you find space for a fresh interest? Because, if so,—and you can easily squeeze both in, can't you, now?—then I want you to lend me your serious attention just for a few minutes.

There's no one at hand to introduce us, so I'll have to do it myself.

Who am I? A woman devoted to girls and all their concerns, who numbers many amongst her personal friends, and who has not forgotten her own schooldays. I have the honour to be editor of this new weekly paper, *THE SCHOOLGIRL*, which is making its bow to the public this week, and hope to enrol you, each one, as a regular reader.

All sorts of visitors come to your house almost daily to call on your parents. Some are old, some are young, most of them are really nice, and you jump for joy when you see them. They are generally merry and bright, like Uncle Jack, for instance, who always has some funny tale to tell, so that you laugh all the time he's in the house, or sweet-voiced Aunt Lucy, perhaps, whose bag is invariably bulging with sweets or chocolates, and whose heart is full of love and affection for her nieces.

Well, these are welcome visitors, and I want you to look upon me and *THE SCHOOLGIRL* in much the same way. Take it home with you every week, and you will find lots to interest, instruct and amuse.

POPULAR FEATURES.

Don't imagine that I shall put all my best goods in the first number, as the shopkeepers do at Christmas when dressing their windows. I have a whole lot of attractions up my sleeve. The best known and most popular of writers are to contribute the jolliest of serials, series of adventure, long complete rollicking tales, and short stories of the kind which schoolgirls always read with eagerness and love to discuss with each other.

We shall have simple fashions, hints on needlework, how to make little gifts and articles for yourselves and your friends, and the most tempting of cookery articles. I really feel as if I should like to leave my desk after reading the recipes and go straight to the kitchen and start making candies, cakes, etc.

A VARIETY OF COMPETITIONS.

There will be fairy tales for the younger girls, fascinating painting competitions, and all sorts

of other competitions, which you will want to enter for and to win the money and other attractive prizes which will be offered week by week, as well as other gifts—like Sharp's Kreamy Toffee, which I'm sure you have all enjoyed already.

Then there is Uncle Jack's Menagerie, described in most astounding coloured pictures.

SPORTS AND GAMES.

In summer we shall have articles on outdoor sports of every kind, for although I don't hold with the idea that a girl should attempt everything that her brother does, because her muscular frame is not equal to his, still, I'm a firm believer in games for girls. The more you are out in the sunshine and the open air, the more you exercise your limbs and muscles, the stronger and better equipped physically will you be to fight the battle of life when you leave school and go out into the world to earn a living.

Besides, in the give and take of the hockey match or cricket field you learn "to play up, play up, and play the game." You exert yourself in the interests of your team or side, and so gain some idea of rendering service to others, which is one of the first and foremost virtues in a true woman's character.

A PAGE OF YOUR VERY OWN.

I'll be much pleased to hear from any of you, whether you have a question to ask or not,

for by this means I shall get to know you personally, realize what your tastes in fiction and weekly papers are, and provide just those features which you like best.

In fact, I'll set aside a readers' page and invite you to send in original contributions for it—either suggestions for discussions on school or home affairs, original verses, short articles, jokes, storyettes, and drawings, and I shall award prizes for all paragraphs, etc., published.

Now then, girls, here's your chance. Let me see what you can do this very week.

With all good wishes, Believe me,
Your Sincere Friend and Helper,
THE EDITOR.

P.S.—It wouldn't be a woman's letter without a P.S., would it? Address all letters—and I trust there will be very many—the more the merrier—to—

The Editor,

THE SCHOOLGIRL,

11, Gough Square, E.C. 4.



Our Long Complete Tale

Saved From the Sea

or THE GIRL IN RED

By Christine Chaundler

CHAPTER I.

An Adventurous Pair.

"It's no good—she won't let us. She says the water's sure to be too cold, and she's not going to allow any sea bathing until next term."

A chorus of disappointed groans arose from the occupants of the Fifth Form sitting-room as Freda Gresham, head girl and senior prefect of St. Agatha's School for Girls opened the door and made the above announcement. And Jean Randell, who, although she had not as yet attained to the dignity of Sixth Form, was the best swimmer in the school and vice-captain of the senior swimming team, cried impetuously:—

"But, Freda, did you point out to her that the thermometer's been seventy-nine in the shade for a week, and that often we've bathed in the summer term when it hasn't been more than sixty?"

"Sixty! I'm sure that on some of the days we've been made to bathe, it hasn't been anywhere near sixty!" said Phyllis Deane, another keen member of the swimming team, and Jean Randell's bosom friend in the Fifth.

"More like zero," commented Edith Green.

"Besides, everybody knows that the time of the year is nothing to go by in England. Even if it is only April, it may be the warmest weather we shall get this year. Did you point that out to Miss Duncan, Freda?" asked Clarice Furnival.

"Do go and ask her again, Freda," urged Jean.

"Ask her yourself, if you want to do any more asking," laughed Freda. "But it won't be any use. She's quite made up her mind about it—and you know as well as I do that when the Head makes up her mind about a thing, wild horses won't make her change it."

And Freda withdrew from the Fifth Form sitting-room and made her way to the Fourth, to announce there the results of her mission to the headmistress before returning to the prefects' sitting-room.

St. Agatha's was at the seaside, and in the summer term the delights of sea bathing were added to other summer joys. Sometimes, if the weather was still fine and warm, the bathing was continued for the first few weeks of the autumn session. But, hitherto, nobody, as far back as anyone could remember, had ever dreamt of the possibility of bathing during the spring term. But this year, the weather had been exceptionally mild, until now, within a fortnight of breaking-up day, it had turned so fine and warm that even sea bathing did not seem quite out of the question. And when, after some days, the heat still con-

tinued, the keenest swimmers amongst the girls had persuaded Freda Gresham to go to the headmistress and ask if some of the seniors, at any rate, might not take advantage of the fine weather and bathe in the sea.

But Miss Duncan was not impressed by the abnormal height of the thermometer, and had returned an unqualified refusal to the head girl's petition.

"What rot it is—not letting us go on a hot day like this," said Edith Green discontentedly, when Freda had disappeared.

"As if it could possibly hurt us—even if the water is a bit cold," grumbled Phyllis.

"It's a shame! It's probably the only decent weather we shall get this year," lamented Ruth Manton.

"It would have been top-hole bathing to-day," said Jean gloomily.

"Oh, well, it's no good talking about it. If Dunkie's said 'No,' there's no more to be said," sighed Clarice.

"Come on, the dinner-bell will go directly. We'd better go and get tidy for dinner," said Jean resignedly, slipping down from the sitting-room table, on the edge of which she had been perched. Putting her hand on Phyllis Deane's arm, she led her off to the small bedroom in the south corridor, which the two friends shared together.

A splendid view of the sea could be obtained from the window of Room Fifteen, and Jean groaned as she caught sight of it when she entered the bedroom.

"Doesn't it look lovely! Miss Duncan's a perfect pig not to let us bathe," she said.

The sea certainly did look very inviting. It lay stretched out beyond the edge of the cliff, blue and silvery and shining in the bright sunshine that really was extraordinarily hot for the time of the year. Hardly a ripple disturbed the smooth surface of the water, and there was only a faint white line to show where the waves broke on the yellow sands. Phyllis threw the window wider open, and leaning out gazed at the water meditatively.

"It does look rather ripping," she agreed. Then she asked an abrupt question.

"What time does the sun rise to-morrow morning?" she said.

Jean looked at her friend in some surprise.

"I don't know—oh, about half-past five, I think. What in the world do you want to know for?"

"Oh—just an idea I had," remarked Phyllis.

"What idea? What are you up to? Do tell me?" begged Jean curiously. Phyllis' ideas, as Jean knew from past experience, usually meant that she was up to something.

"Well"—Phyllis' tone was still meditative—"I was thinking—why shouldn't you and I get up early to-morrow morning, and go and bathe in the sea before breakfast?"

"Phyl!" Jean gasped at the audacity of this idea. "After Miss Duncan's said No?"

"She hasn't said No to that," remarked Phyllis, still with an air of calm aloofness. "What she said No to was when Freda asked if the senior school might go bathing this afternoon. Nobody's ever asked her if two members of the swimming team might go for a private bathe before breakfast to-morrow morning."

"But, Phyl, it would mean the most awful row if we were caught," remonstrated Jean.

"I know," agreed Phyllis. "Question is—need we be caught?"

"Well, of course, half-past five is awfully early. Even the maids don't get up till six," said Jean weakening.

"No, and, anyway, the maids don't matter. They're an awfully decent lot this term, and wouldn't give us away. If we let ourselves out by the side door, we could slip down through the shrubbery without any risk of being seen from the windows. And we could be back by the time the dressing-bell goes at seven o'clock. Seems to me, if we are ordinarily careful, the chances of our being caught are about nil—and it would be topping to have a swim in the sea."

"It would be gorgeous," said Jean, her eyes sparkling with excitement at the thought. "I've got my bathing-dress here with me, too."

"So have I," said Phyllis.

"Shall we go, then?" asked Jean.

"Yes, if you're game," replied Phyllis.

"I'm game enough," said Jean. "But how are we going to make sure of waking up in time?"

"Oh, I shall wake up all right," said Phyllis confidently. "I nearly always do wake up just as it's getting light. I usually turn over and go to sleep again, but it won't be very difficult to rouse myself quite up for once. We'll draw up the blinds before we go to bed to-night—then I'll be sure to wake."

"We shan't need to get up so very early," said Jean, consulting a small pocket almanack. "Let's see—to-morrow's Saturday, April the eighth, isn't it? The sun rises at five-twenty-three. If we get up just about five o'clock, we ought to be down on the beach in time to see the sun rise over the sea."

"Yes—if it's a day like this, it ought to be rather jolly," Phyllis said approvingly. "We might wait until the sun is quite up before we go into the sea. We shan't want to be in too long, for I expect the water will be rather cold, as it's still so early in the year. If we went in about a quarter to six and stayed in for about half an hour, we could get dressed and up to the school again well before seven, and be back in our bedroom before the getting-up bell rings."

"What shall we do with our wet bathing-dresses, though?" Jean asked.

"Wrap them up in paper and hide them at the bottom of our lockers," Phyllis said promptly.

"Matron will never find them there, and they'll be dry long before we want to pack them at the end of term. Tell you one thing, though—we shall have to wear bathing-caps. If we don't, we shall never get our hair dry before the breakfast-bell goes. I've got one with me, fortunately—have you?"

"Yes, I've got one," answered Jean. "I hardly ever wear it, but I expect we had better put them on to-morrow."

"There's the dinner-bell," said Phyllis, and in the hurry of getting downstairs in time to take their places at the dinner-table, the two friends dropped their absorbing topic of conversation for the time being.

The scheme did not go out of their minds, however, and when at last they were alone that night in the small bedroom that they shared—most of the girls in the senior school at St. Agatha's slept two or three in a bedroom, instead of in the big dormitories, which held some twenty or thirty girls apiece, as the juniors did—they once more discussed their arrangements and laid their final plans. Phyllis had begged a whole armful of old newspapers from a friendly maid, to wrap their wet things up in, she explained to Jean. And she had also contrived to pocket several handfuls of plain biscuits.

"I bagged them at supper as we went out," she said. "We shall want something to eat before we go into the water."

"I do hope we shall wake up in good time," said Jean as she pulled the window blinds up to their farthest extent, in order that the morning light might come into the room and arouse them.

"You needn't worry about that—I'm certain sure to wake up," said Phyllis as she got into bed.

THEIR MORNING BATHE.

She was as good as her word. Early the next morning, Jean was awakened by someone shaking her gently, and she opened her eyes with a start to see Phyllis' laughing face bending over her.

"Wake up; it's just on five," the girl said. "And it's going to be a simply glorious morning. The sky's as clear as clear—once the sun's up it will be a lovely day."

Jean jumped out of bed at once and scrambled into a few under-garments, and the gym tunic and knickers, which she and Phyllis had decided overnight would be the most suitable wear for their journey down to the beach. They both put on gym shoes which they had, with much forethought, brought up to their bedroom from the boot-lobby the previous evening. Then, with their towels and bathing-caps and dresses wrapped up in neat paper parcels under their arms, they stole softly from their bedroom, and tip-toed down the stairs and through the corridors until they reached the side door through which they had determined to make their exit.

The door was bolted, top and bottom, but the bolts worked smoothly from frequent use, and Phyllis drew them back and succeeded in opening the door without making any undue noise. Then they closed the door behind them, hurried across the small open-space that separated them from the shrubbery, and then, safely sheltered by the bushes, made their way quietly down to the garden gate. This also was bolted from the inside. But it was an easy matter to draw the

bolts, and in a few moments more the pair found themselves outside the school premises.

"All right so far," said Phyllis in a tone of satisfaction, as they set off at a good pace along the road that led them to the cliff and the sea. "We'll get down to the beach and find some rocks to sit on and eat our biscuits while we watch the sun rise. Then, at a quarter to six, we'll undress and take our dip in the sea. I am looking forward to it, just!"

"So am I," said Jean. "I'm simply longing to be in the water again."

A few minutes later the two were down on the beach, sitting side by side upon a conveniently low rock, munching biscuits and watching the sun rise out of the sea. It certainly was a glorious sight. "Almost worth getting up for, just to see it," Phyllis remarked condescendingly. Then, finding a secluded corner behind some tall rocks just below the cliff, they undressed, and slipping into their bathing-dresses, ran across the smooth sand to the sea.

"O-o-er! I say, it's rather chilly, isn't it?" said Jean, as she emerged from her first plunge.

"Well, of course. It's awfully early yet—only just six o'clock," said Phyllis. "It's all Dunkie's fault for being so pig-headed about it. If we were allowed to bathe at the proper time it would be all right."

"Dunkie didn't insist upon our bathing before breakfast," said Jean with a shiver. "I'm not sure she wasn't right after all. The water really is rather cold."

"If you mean you aren't enjoying it——" began Phyllis, with some warmth. But Jean sent a shower of water over her before she could complete her sentence; which provocative action called, of course, for instant retaliation, and by the time the little scrimmage was over Phyllis' slight attack of huffiness had vanished.

"Don't be an ass," said Jean, with a laugh. "Of course I'm enjoying it. Only it is a bit cold, and we shan't be able to stay in a very long time. Come on, let's have a race out to that line of rocks over there. Are you ready? One—two—three—Go!"

For another ten minutes or so the two girls stayed in the water, then they swam towards the shore again, both of them, if the truth must be told, beginning to feel rather chilly.

"Hallo! There's somebody else going for a swim," remarked Jean, as she and Phyllis found themselves touching bottom and began to wade the remaining distance to the beach. A girl of about their own age, or slightly older, clad in a bathing-dress of vivid scarlet hue, had just run down the sands from the cliff and plunged into the water. "I wonder who she is?"

"One of the visitors from the hotel, I expect," Phyllis said, as she stood for a moment, shading her eyes from the sun, watching the scarlet-clad swimmer disporting herself in the waves. "I wonder at a girl of that age being allowed to come out and bathe alone."

"Perhaps she isn't allowed. She may

have come out on the q.t., as we have," suggested Jean. "Come on, Phyl, let's come and get dried. I'm beastly cold; I'll be glad of a good rub down."

"So shall I," admitted Phyllis, and the two hurried back to their sheltered corner beneath the cliff, and, stripping off their wet bathing-dresses rubbed themselves down vigorously with the towels they had brought.

The operation soon warmed them, and then they dressed themselves quickly in their gym tunics again.

"What's the time?" asked Jean, as she stooped to tie up the laces of her shoes.

Phyllis consulted a wrist watch which she brought out from the pocket of her tunic.

"Quarter past six exactly. Plenty of time to get up to the school and be back in our bedroom before the getting-up bell goes. My word, won't the others be wild when they hear what a topping swim we've been having!"

"Do you think we'd better tell any of the others?" asked Jean doubtfully.

"Why, of course. None of them would split. I suppose we'd better not let the prefects know, or any of the other forms. But there'd be no harm in telling the rest of the Fifth. They'd be perfectly safe. They'll be all mad to go and do it themselves."

"That's just it," said Jean, "they'd all want to go and do it. And some of them would try it on, and they'd go and get caught, and then the whole business will come out."

"I never thought of that," said Phyllis, consideringly. "I suppose we'd better not tell anybody, then?"

"It would be safest not to, I'm sure. There'd



"Don't be an ass," said Jean with a laugh.
"Of course I'm enjoying it."

be an awful row with Dunkie if it ever did get known. And as we're the ringleaders, the row would be worse for us than for anybody else. No, Phyl, old thing, let's keep it to ourselves for the present. Next term, perhaps, we might take the others into our confidence. It will be a thing of the past by then, and won't matter so much."

"All right; I'm agreeable. Let's keep it to ourselves, if you think it safest. I'm sure I don't want to get into a row. Are you ready, Jean? If you are, I think we'd better be getting back."

"I'm ready," said Jean, who was down on her knees on the beach, rolling her bathing-dress and towel up into a parcel. And, rising to her feet, she followed her friend up the steep path that led to the top of the cliff.

"I say, we cut it rather fine with the tide," remarked Jean, as the two paused for a moment to rest when they reached the top. "Look how fast it's coming in. It will be right up to the foot of the cliffs directly. We couldn't have got down on to the beach at all if we'd been very much later."

"Oh, well, it doesn't matter. We're out of the way in plenty of time," said Phyllis easily. Then she suddenly held up her head in a listening attitude.

"Hark! What's that?" she said.

"What's what?" asked Jean.

"I thought I heard somebody calling. There! There it is again! Don't you hear it? It sounds like somebody calling for help."

Jean, who was still sitting on the ground, gave a sudden gasp and sprang to her feet.

"The girl in red!" she cried, and shading her eyes from the glare of the sun, she gazed out to sea. For a moment she could see nothing, then Phyllis gave a sharp exclamation.

"Jean, I believe she's round in Smuggler's Bay. She went round there to undress, I'm almost sure, for I saw her coming from behind the point when she went into the sea. If she went back there again to dress after she'd finished her swim, she'll be cut off by the tide by this time, for there's absolutely no way up the cliff from Smuggler's Bay."

RESCUED FROM DROWNING.

Jean did not waste much breath in talking.

"Come on," she said briefly, and she set out at top speed towards the part of the cliff that overhung the little shut-in cove, which was known locally as Smuggler's Bay.

Phyllis' surmise was right, as the two girls found when they reached the spot.

The strange girl had come in under the cliff to dress, and was now quite cut off by the rising tide. She was standing at the foot of the cliff in an attitude of despair, and she raised a white, frightened face when Jean hailed her from above.

"I can't get out, I'm cut off," she called in shaky tones in reply to Jean's shout. "Is there—is there any way up this cliff?"

"No, you'll have to swim for it," Jean called back. "If you just swim round the next point you'll find a path you can climb up by. Buck up—the sea's coming in rather fast."

"I—I can't swim very well," cried the girl.

"I—I'm afraid I can't swim round the point. Do you think you could get somebody to come with a boat?"

Jean and Phyllis looked at each other. "Is there time for that?" asked Phyllis. Jean gave

a shake of her head, as she saw how very quickly the tide was coming in.

"No," she said. "We must swim round and bring her in ourselves." And she leant over the cliff and waved an encouraging hand to the girl below.

"It's all right, we're coming round to help you. Hold on till we come, we shan't be long," she called. Then she rose to her feet and began to run back to the place where she and Phyllis had mounted the cliff a short while before.

"We'll have to go in as we are," she said, as she reached the spot and began to scramble down. "We haven't time to change into bathing things again."

"No," said Phyllis, "but we might just bring our bathing caps along, don't you think? It's going to mean such a ghastly row if we go home with our hair all wet."

"I'm afraid it's pretty certain to mean a row in any case," remarked Jean grimly. "Still, you may as well bring the bathing caps along."

They hurried down the cliff in breathless haste and plunged into the sea, pausing only to put on their caps and kick off their shoes.

It was none too easy, swimming fully dressed round the point with the tide rising so quickly. But they rounded it at last and reached the foot of the cliffs in Smuggler's Bay. The girl, leaning white-faced against a rock, greeted them with a quivering smile.

"It's—it's jolly decent of you to come round for me," she said in a voice that she was evidently trying hard to keep steady. "But, but I'm afraid I can't swim back again with you. I can only go a few strokes, and I got cramp when I was in just now, the water was so cold. I really oughtn't to have come bathing alone, I suppose. But the beach looked so safe, and I had no idea the tide came in so fast."

"It comes in rather quickly here always," Jean said. "But come on into the water, we'll get you round the point all right."

"Oh, I can't," said the girl desperately. "I can never swim all that way. I shall be drowned if I try to do it. I'm sure I shall."

"You'll be drowned if you stay here," said Jean brusquely. And after some further persuasion, the girl was induced to step into the water again. Then, with Jean and Phyllis on either side of her, she began to strike out feebly in the direction of the point.

She was quite correct in her statement that she could not swim very well. Jean and Phyllis marvelled that such an inexperienced swimmer should have dared to venture into the water without a companion. She would certainly have been drowned if she had attempted the journey back alone. As it was, the lives of all three of them were in considerable danger, and had not Jean and Phyllis been unusually good swimmers for their age, they could never have accomplished the journey. But they both swam well, and both of them had plenty of pluck, and by dint of dogged perseverance, they succeeded in bringing themselves and their companion safe to land at last.

The girl was almost exhausted by the time they got her on to the shingle at the foot of the cliff, and she sank down in a little limp heap on the ground. But the sea was still coming in, and Jean and Phyllis urged her up again and on,

until at last, by almost superhuman efforts, they got her to the top of the cliff. There they all three collapsed on the turf, and for a few moments no one spoke.

Jean was the first to revive a little. She sat upright and looked at the stranger. The girl was lying back, looking dreadfully exhausted, and Jean gave a little exclamation of concern.

A SPEEDY RECOVERY.

"I say, what are we going to do with you now?" she said.

The girl lifted herself up and smiled back at her pluckily enough.

"If you wouldn't mind just helping me home," she suggested. "I'm stopping at the Metropole with my mother for the week-end. It's awfully silly of me to be so done up, but I shall be all right once I get back to the hotel."

"We'll see you there," Jean said, and although both she and Phyllis felt many an inward quail at the way time was flying, neither of them said a word to make the stranger feel uncomfortable.

They hurried her along between them as quickly as they could, feeling very relieved to see the colour gradually coming back to the girl's white face as they led her along. It was really fright as much as fatigue that had caused her partial collapse. She was rapidly recovering now, and able to take note of the condition of her rescuers.

"You are wet!" she said in concern as she surveyed their dripping figures. "You'll have to come into the Metropole and get your things dried."

"Oh, no, we can't do that!" said Jean in alarm. "We've got to get home as quickly as we can once we've seen you safely to your hotel."

"Indeed, I can't let you do that!" remonstrated the girl. "You must come in—really you must. Mother will want to thank you for what you've done. Of course I can't let you go away dripping wet. What would your people say if I did? And after saving my life too!"

"Oh, rot!" said Jean, growing uncomfortably red. "It wasn't anything—anybody would have done it. It was just luck we happened to be there."

"Yes, of course—it was only luck," put in Phyllis. "You haven't got anything to thank us for." She took a surreptitious look at her watch as she spoke. She had left it behind on the cliff when she and Jean took their second swim in the sea, and had retrieved it and the towels and bathing dresses before they had set out for the hotel. The hands of the watch pointed to seven o'clock. The getting-up bell must just be ringing at St. Agatha's. Phyllis thought. It would take her and Jean all their time to get back to school and change ready for breakfast at a quarter to eight, even supposing they were lucky enough to regain the shelter of their bedroom without encountering a mistress or a prefect. She and Jean both breathed heartfelt sighs of relief when at length they reached the steps of the Hotel Metropole.

"You'll be all right now, won't you?" said Jean. "You won't mind now if we leave you. We're frightfully late. We must get back at once."

"Oh, no, you can't go yet. You must come in and see my mother," cried the girl in dismay, making a detaining clutch at Jean's arm. But Jean detached herself from the stranger's clasp with a gesture that was almost rude in its abruptness, while Phyllis thrust the red bathing-dress

which she had been carrying into the girl's hands, saying hurriedly:—

"We're awfully sorry, but really we must go." And before the girl could say anything more, her two rescuers were tearing off at top speed down the road.

"Ten past seven!" gasped Phyllis as they rushed along. Jean could only grunt inarticulately in reply. She hadn't any breath to spare for talking, for it wasn't any too easy running in wet clothes, hampered, moreover, by bathing-dresses and towels which they had had as yet no time to wring out properly. One or two early-risers stared curiously after the dripping, flying figures, but there were not many people about, and they reached the school at last without meeting anybody who mattered.

CHAPTER II.

The Rescued Girl Again.

"Now for it," groaned Jean as they hurried through the shrubbery and gained the side-door. "Bet you anything you like we run bang into matron."

But they didn't—marvellous to relate. Matron had an awkward habit of turning up whenever she was least wanted. The side-door was closed, just as they had left it, and they opened it noiselessly, and shut and bolted it again from the inside, in the hope that nobody had discovered as yet that it had ever been unbolted. There was no one in the lower corridors, they encountered nobody upon the stairs, and they gained the safety of their bedroom at last without a glimpse of even the smallest junior. A large can of hot water stood outside the door of Room Fifteen, and Jean picked it up and carried it inside, while Phyllis shut the door upon them with a deep breath of relief.

"All right so far," she remarked.

"How long have we got?" asked Jean, beginning to strip off her wet clothes.

Phyllis consulted the watch again.

"Quarter of an hour—it's just half-past seven," she said.

"With any luck, we'll do it, then," said Jean, as she tore open her drawers and began to hunt feverishly through them for dry underclothes.

HASTY TOILETS.

The occupants of Room Fifteen were both used to dressing in a hurry. In less than ten minutes they had discarded their wet garments, performed a hasty toilet, and were neatly arrayed in the navy-blue frocks with the white silk collars, which were the regulation morning wear at St. Agatha's. Another two minutes sufficed to roll up the wet clothes with the towels and bathing dresses into tight bundles, and hide them at the bottom of the wooden lockers which stood at the foot of each bed.

"What the dickens we're going to do next gym class if our tunics aren't dry, I haven't the least idea," remarked Jean.

"They'll be dry all right by next gym class," said Phyllis reassuringly. "To-day's only Saturday, and we don't have another one till Tuesday. We'll be able to get them dried all right by then."

"I'm not so sure—they're rolled up awfully tight. Rolled-up things take a fearfully long time to dry. And they'll be most frightfully crumpled."

"We'll have to hang them out on our towel-horses at night-time," said Phyllis. "They'll dry

then. I daresay they won't look so bad either. Gym dresses stand an awful lot of crumpling. It's rather a lucky thing, though, that there's only a second eleven match this afternoon, and that neither of us are playing hockey. We'd be in a bit of a hole if we were—for we couldn't possibly wear our tunics this afternoon."

"It's a merciful thing, too, that we took our bathing-caps with us when we heard that girl calling," remarked Jean, as other and more important details of her toilet being accomplished, she prepared to devote the few moments that remained before the breakfast-bell would ring to brushing out her hair.

"Wasn't it, just!" said Phyllis. "If we'd had to go in that second time with our hair all loose, we should never have got it dry in time for us to appear at breakfast. We really have been rather lucky, Jean."

"Humph, yes—I suppose we have," said Jean doubtfully. "But we aren't quite out of the wood yet, you know. If it happens to be matron's day for poking round our room, she's just as likely as not to land upon our wet clothes. They're not like a bathing-dress which one can roll up small and pack away in paper—my locker's half full of dripping clothes."

"So's mine," said Phyllis. "Still, we've come through safely so far—we may get out of it all right."

"There's that girl, too," went on Jean, disregarding her friend's cheerful assurances. "She was horribly grateful, and made no end of a fuss about our going in and letting her mother thank us. Suppose she manages to track us to St. Agatha's?"

"I don't see how she can do that," said Phyllis. "There wasn't a thing about us to show which school we belonged to, and there are dozens of schools in the town, you know. Besides, I don't think it occurred to her that we came from a school. She talked about our people—don't you remember—just as though she thought we lived in the place? I don't think we said anything that could put her on our track. She's only stopping at the hotel for the week-end, she said. So there's every chance that she may go away without discovering who her gallant rescuers were."

Then she gave a rueful laugh.

"I say, Jean, do you realize it? We really are sort of heroines! If we'd rescued that girl in broad daylight, with other people looking on, we'd have had our names in the papers, and been presented with medals and things for saving life."

"It's to be hoped that we don't get our names in the papers under the circumstances," said Jean grimly. "If we do, we shall jolly well get them into Dunkie's bad books, too—that's one thing very certain!"

"I'm afraid it is," said Phyllis, with a regretful sigh. "It's jolly rough luck, though. I've always longed to play that rescue stunt, and have people cheering me and pointing me out as the Girl Who Saved Another's Life. And now we've done it—and we can't say a word about it or claim any of the glory and renown. Rotten luck, I call it, to have things happen in such a provoking way!"

"It's the way those kinds of things always do turn out except in books," commented Jean. And then the sound of the breakfast-bell cut short the conversation.

The two friends had no further opportunity of talking about their exploit during the morning. Saturday was a half-holiday at St. Agatha's, and there were no morning classes. But there was a couple of hours' preparation for the senior school to be put in, and then an hour had to be passed in the sewing-room, going through the week's laundry with matron, and patching and darning and sewing on buttons and tapes, and making such other repairs to torn linen as might be necessary. There was no chance of conducting a private conversation, without the risk of its being overheard by dozens of other ears. But though they could not talk of it, neither Jean nor Phyllis was able to keep her thoughts from the morning's adventure. To tell the truth, the consciences of both were beginning to prick them uncomfortably, and every time a door opened their hearts jumped up into their mouths, for fear lest it should herald an irate matron, descending upon them full of anger, demanding to know the reason of lockers half-full of wet clothes; or a message from Miss Duncan summoning them to meet face to face the girl whom they had saved from the sea.

AN UNLUCKY ENCOUNTER.

But the morning passed away and dinner-time came, and the headmistress of St. Agatha's put in her usual midday appearance at the high table in the dining-hall, and said grace and smiled benignly upon her girls, and passed out at the conclusion of the meal without a single reference to sea-bathing, or people who rescued strange girls from the sea. Matron stopped Jean for a moment in the passage to tell her that there was a parcel for her in the office, if she cared to come and sign for it and fetch it by and by, and never breathed a word of wet clothes or misused bedroom lockers. And the two friends presently found themselves walking up to the playing-field to watch the second eleven hockey match, with their secret still their own.

"I really do believe we're going to escape," said Jean. "Matron won't go round our rooms now again until Monday, and I should think that girl has given us up as a bad job by this time."

"I should think so, too," agreed Phyllis. Then she gave a sudden jump, as she heard a call from the rear.

"I say, Jean, there's Miss Headley calling you—what do you suppose she wants?"

Jean gave a scared glance towards the Fifth Form's mistress, who, dressed in her outdoor things, was hurrying after them, calling her by name. She turned, as in duty bound, to meet her; but her heart was thumping wildly as Miss Headley drew near.

"Yes, Miss Headley—did you want me?" she asked apprehensively, as the mistress came up.

"Yes. I'm going into the town, and I wondered whether you'd like to come with me. I'm going to choose some prints to hang on the classroom walls, and I've got permission to take two of my girls, I know you're rather keen on pictures, Jean, so I thought you'd do for one. And Phyllis can come, too, if she cares to."

"Oh, I'd love to!" cried Phyllis enthusiastically. A shopping expedition into town was a treat at any time—in company with Miss Headley, who was adored by her whole form, it would be an almost unbelievably delightful joy.

"That's all right then. Hurry up and get your hats on. You're neither of you playing hockey, are you?"

"No, neither of us," said Jean. "It's a second eleven match this afternoon, and Phyllis and I were only going up to watch it. But we'd both much rather come with you."

"Heaps rather," breathed Phyllis, with fervour. "It will be a rotten match to watch, for you can't expect anybody to play hockey well in this heat. But even if it was going to be most frightfully thrilling, we'd rather come shopping with you."

Miss Headley smiled at her enthusiasm.

"Off you go, then," she said. "I'll wait for you round by the front door. Be quick, for I've got lots of things to do, and it's rather late already."

Jean and Phyllis did not make her very much later. They tore back to their bedroom and

"Yes, let's go along Sutherland Avenue," chimed in Phyllis. "It's a shorter way to the shops."

"Shorter? I don't think it is," said the mistress in surprise, for she had been sure that her pupils would choose the far more attractive walk along the cliff. "Of the two, I should say the cliff path was much the quicker."

"Oh, but we go along the cliff path so often," said Phyllis hastily. "Do let's go down Sutherland Avenue for a change?"

"We'll go that way if you like," said the mistress good-naturedly; and, greatly to her charges' relief, she turned off into a road which would lead them into the avenue, instead of continuing along the path that would presently bring them out upon the cliff.

The two girls, thus reminded of the morning's



"Phyl, the girl in red," Jean breathed

changed into their best coats and hats in record time; then, armed with gloves and purses—just in case Miss Headley should permit them to do any private shopping—they hurried round to the front door.

They found Miss Headley standing there, drawing on her gloves.

"Good children," said the mistress approvingly. "You've been very quick. We'll go first to Baxter's, I think, and choose the prints—then I'll do the rest of my shopping afterwards. Which way shall we go? Along the cliff path?"

Jean and Phyllis exchanged startled glances. The walk along the cliff led them by the Metropole Hotel—it would never do to risk an encounter with the girl they had rescued. So, although at any other time, both would have voted unhesitatingly for the cliff path, Jean said quickly:—

"No, please, Miss Headley—may we go along Sutherland Avenue?"

adventure, glanced about them rather apprehensively as they walked along. But there was no sign of the girl from the Metropole, and they reached the print shop at length without any untoward happening. They had an opportunity for a little quiet conversation as they followed Miss Headley to the right department, and Jean lowered her voice and said in uneasy tones:—

"I forgot about that bothering girl when Miss Headley asked us to come shopping with her. Whatever shall we do if we run across her while we're out?"

"Oh, I don't expect we shall run across her," Phyllis said. "She's only a visitor, you know, and visitors nearly always spend all their time down by the sea. As long as we can keep Miss Headley away from the front, I don't expect there's any danger."

"All the same, I rather wish we hadn't come," said Jean, with a worried frown. "We'd have

been much safer up on the hockey-field than down here in the town."

"Well, we couldn't help it. Miss Headley would have thought it awfully queer of us to have refused her invitation. Buck up, Jean, she's looking round for us. Don't let her see us whispering together, or she'll twig there's something up. She thought it rather mysterious when we didn't want to come by the cliff path." And Phyllis hurried her companion across the shop to the counter by which Miss Headley was standing.

In the interest of helping to choose the pictures, Jean forgot her qualms. But when the pictures had been chosen, and had been set aside to be packed and sent up to the school, something happened which brought her fears back again with redoubled force. Miss Headley was standing at the pay-desk, waiting for her bill to be receipted, and Jean and Phyllis were examining some frames on a counter near the entrance to the shop, when suddenly the swing doors were pushed open, and a lady, beautifully dressed in grey, came in, followed by a girl in a red velour costume, with a red tam-o'-shanter upon her head, at sight of whom Jean gave an audible gasp.

She put out her hand and clutched Phyllis' arm as the girl passed by them, fortunately without recognizing them.

"Phyl! The girl in red!" she breathed in agonized tones, and in a moment Phyllis grasped the situation.

"Come outside—quick! She hasn't seen us yet," she said in a whisper, and catching her friend's hand, she dragged her through the doors.

"Phew! What an escape!" she said as they found themselves outside; but even as she spoke, she tightened her grip of Jean's hand.

"Quick! They're coming out again!" she gasped, and with frantic energy, she dragged Jean round a corner and up a side street.

"Come into this shop and buy something, and let them get past," she said, and Jean obediently followed her into the shop she indicated, which happened to be a newspaper and tobacconist's.

"I say, though, whatever can we buy here?" asked Jean, in some consternation, as she gazed around. "They only seem to have tobacco and newspapers, and you know we aren't allowed to buy papers or magazines."

"Oh, ask for pens and pencils or notepaper, or something like that," said Phyllis. "I expect they keep those."

"But Miss Headley will think it so funny of us to go buying pens and pencils when we can have as many as we want for nothing up at the school," objected Jean.

"Ask for an ink-eraser," suggested Phyllis, with sudden inspiration. "We can't get those up at the school."

The tobacconist was not at all certain that he had any ink-erasers, but after some searching, he produced one of doubtful quality, which Jean clutched at eagerly.

"That will do," she said. "How much is it? Fourpence-three-farthings? Here's a sixpence then. It doesn't matter about the change—we're in rather a hurry." And pocketing the eraser, she and Phyllis rushed back to Baxter's, to find an annoyed and rather irate Miss Headley waiting for them by the door.

"Where have you been?" she demanded as

they came up. "Have you been buying something?"

"Only an ink-eraser, Miss Headley," said Jean apologetically, very relieved to see that there was no sign of the girl in red. She pulled her purchase out of her pocket, and exhibited it for the mistress' benefit.

"You had no business to buy anything without first asking if you might," said Miss Headley severely. "Are you quite sure that was all you bought?"

"Quite sure, Miss Headley," said Jean, flushing uncomfortably; and Phyllis added a quick:—

"Honour bright, Miss Headley, it was the only thing."

"Well, mind you don't buy anything else unless you ask my permission," said the mistress. Then she added, her annoyance passing:—

"Come along now, or I shall never get through my list. I want to go to Longley's next to match some silk for Miss Eastman." And the three set off at a brisk pace down the street.

The two girls stuck dutifully to Miss Headley's heels for the rest of the afternoon. They helped her match her silks, carried her parcels, and made themselves so useful that the mistress quite relented towards them at last, and appeared to forget their strange behaviour in rushing off to buy ink-erasers without asking permission. When the last purchase was completed, she looked at her wrist-watch considerably.

"Quarter past four. We shall never get back to St. Agatha's now in time for tea. Come along, we'll go to Pritchard's and sample his cream buns." And she carried the two delighted girls into the most select tea-shop in the seaside town.

The cream buns were delicious, so was the tea, with heaps of sugar and cream, and the daintily-cut bread and butter, and the fancy cakes and the vanilla ices which Miss Headley indulgently ordered for her guests when the more solid part of the meal was over. The girls would have enjoyed it all very much had it not been for their ever-present fear of the girl in red. As it was, they kept one eye on their plates and one on the door, in terror lest the girl and her mother should elect to come and take their tea at Pritchard's. And, as though their very fear brought her, just when they were half-way through their ices, the door of the tea-shop opened to admit the girl in red.

Jean and Phyllis caught sight of her simultaneously, and with dismayed eyes they watched the progress of the two across the shop. They were looking about in search of a table, and Phyllis and Jean looked round, too, in an agony of apprehension until they should learn where the newcomers intended to sit. So far as they could see, there were only two tables vacant, one in a distant corner, partially concealed by some tall palms, and one close beside them. To their horror, the girl and her mother appeared to be coming in their direction, and, acting upon the impulse of the moment, Jean suddenly stretched out her hand and tilted up one of the chairs at the empty table, making it appear as though the table was engaged. Phyllis, quick to grasp the idea, sprang from her seat and tilted up the second chair also, much to the scandalized astonishment of Miss Headley.

"Girls!" she exclaimed in horror, "whatever are you doing?"

(Continued on page 11.)

UNCLE JACK'S MENAGERIE



1.—When Uncle Jack and his celebrated menagerie travelled up to London to see the pantomime, "Jack and the Beanstalk," there was great excitement all along the line. At every station great crowds of children, with their mothers and fathers, all dressed in their best clothes, were waiting to cheer them.



2.—At each station the children shouted with joy as they recognized first one and then another of the animals. Tommy Giraffe was to the fore, as usual, and he kept poking his long neck out of the window until poor Uncle Jack became quite worried in case he should get his head knocked clean off.



3.—Teddy Bear was always at hand when danger threatened, and, with the aid of Jacko Monkey, pulled Tommy back into the carriage every time the train dashed into a tunnel. At last the merry party reached London in safety. I wish you could have heard the cheer when the long train steamed into the station.

(Continued on page 28.)



The Chicks' Cosy Corner

The Parrot That Could Not Talk.

By
ELIZABETH MARC.

On Sophie's birthday she always went to the Zoo, and directly she got there she ran straight to the Parrot House.

Sophie loved the parrots because of their beautiful feathers, and because of the noise they made. And because some of them could say "Hallo!" or "Good morning." Sophie liked to spend whole mornings with the parrots, giving them little bits of cake and coaxing them to say "Pretty Poll!" or "Hallo!"

But on Sophie's seventh birthday everything went wrong. When she arrived at the Parrot House there was a boy there giving the parrots bananas, and he was making them all talk. But when Sophie came up and spoke to them, not a bird would say a word. They just cocked their heads on one side and rubbed their beaks along the perch. And they did not want any cake.

Sophie spent a long time trying to get them to talk. At last she left the big parrots in the middle, and found a little grey parrot in the corner.

The little grey parrot took some cake and it made a noise in its throat. Sophie hoped it said "Good morning."

Just then Auntie Jane came up. Auntie Jane waits outside the Parrot House as a rule.

"Why, Sophie," she said, "can't you make them talk this morning? They are all talking to that little boy."

Sophie winked away a tear.

"This little parrot talks to me, anyhow," she said. "He said 'Good morning.'"

But just at that moment a keeper was passing, and he said, over his shoulder:—

"That bird can't talk."

Poor Sophie! Her eyes filled with tears. Now Auntie Jane would think she told stories. Besides, you know, she was not quite sure the parrot had said "Good morning."

Auntie Jane said she could not stay in the Parrot House another minute. The noise was so dreadful. She went to wait outside, and directly she had gone—what do you think happened?

The grey parrot winked an eye at Sophie, and said quite clearly:—

"He said I can't talk."

Sophie jumped.

"Oh, can you?" she said.

"Of course," said the parrot. "We can all talk, only we are forbidden to."

"Oh—why?" asked Sophie.

"Open my cage door and you shall find out," said the parrot.

Sophie looked round. The keeper had gone.

Everybody had gone. She was quite alone in the Parrot House. She quickly undid the door of the cage and the parrot stepped out.

"Now hop on my back," commanded the parrot.

"But——" began Sophie. She was going to say that she was much too big, but, to her astonishment, she found that she had suddenly grown tiny—tiny. No bigger than a thimble.

"Be quick!" said the parrot. "It's magic."

Sophie took hold of the parrot's wing feathers and pulled herself up. The parrot looked round, ruffled up the feathers between his shoulders, and pushed Sophie down among them with his beak.

"Hold tight!" he said, and rose and sailed over the heads of the people outside the Parrot House.

They seemed to shoot through the air. The grey feathers stood up around Sophie and made a wind screen, otherwise she would have been blown away. She nestled under the warm down and looked back, over the tail of the parrot, at the strange lands they flew over.

In less time than it takes to tell, they reached beautiful warm countries, quite different from anything Sophie had ever seen.

"These are the bird countries," called the parrot.

I cannot describe here all the beautiful bird lands Sophie saw—the pure white swans' land and that of the many-hued kingfishers, and jays. She loved them all, and was just admiring a beautiful silvery-grey land, the home of the ring dove. Then the parrot began to plane down, and there, below, was such a country that Sophie had never even imagined. It was so bright and so many-coloured, and—oh, the noise!

"This is the home of the parrots," screamed Sophie's guide. He had to scream. "Now, can't parrots talk?"

They could indeed. And they all talked together.

"But why don't you talk in the Zoo?" shouted Sophie.

"Come and see the queen. She'll tell you," shrieked the parrot.

He whisked Sophie off to a great white palace, surrounded by white trees and beautiful white fountains. You see, the queen was white.

When they got inside the palace everything was absolutely quiet. That was magic.

The beautiful snow-white queen was perched on an ivory throne, carved like a tree.

The grey parrot bowed his head to the ground and spread his great wings flat on the floor.

"Your Majesty," he said, "this young lady craves audience."

(Continued on page 27.)

SAVED FROM THE SEA.

(Continued from page 8.)

"I'm sorry, Miss Headley. I—we didn't want those people to come and sit near us," blurted out Jean, in deep confusion, but overjoyed, nevertheless, to see that the girl and her mother had changed their course without perceiving them, and were now making their way towards the table in the distant corner behind the palms.

"Why not, pray?" demanded Miss Headley—a question which Jean found it somewhat difficult to answer. In her embarrassment she upset her ice-plate on the floor, and in making a blundering effort to retrieve it, succeeded in creating an unmeditated diversion by tripping up a waitress and bringing an avalanche of buns and scones about her head.

"Jean!" exclaimed Miss Headley, in mortified accents. And poor Jean, red to the ears, stumbled to her feet with profuse apologies and began to pick up the scattered scones, while Miss Headley endeavoured to pacify the angry waitress. None of the party felt inclined to linger in the restaurant after this accident, and as soon as their bill had been paid Miss Headley led the way outside the shop.

"I—I'm awfully sorry, Miss Headley," stammered Jean, and she looked so really contrite and miserable that the mistress's wrath evaporated at once.

"Never mind," she said cheerfully. "It's no good crying over spilt milk—or spilt buns, either. Nothing was broken, after all, so there wasn't much harm done. Now we'd better be quick and get back to school."

The walk back to school was not a very happy one, in spite of Miss Headley's magnanimous behaviour. Both girls felt that they had behaved very badly, and that their conduct must seem very rude and extraordinary in their form mistress's eyes. Jean, in especial, felt very miserable at the thought of the exhibition she had made of herself in the tea-shop over the buns and waitress episode.

"M i s s

Headley will never ask us to go shopping with her again," she said disconsolately, when they parted company from the Fifth Form mistress at the school door. "I daren't imagine what she must be thinking about us; and it's all the fault of that wretched girl in red."

"She's keen on red, isn't she?" commented Phyllis. "Red bathing-dress, red costume, red tammy. Well, it's an easy colour to see coming, that's one good thing. We shall have to keep our eyes open everywhere we go and dodge that figure in red."

JEAN'S PRECIPITATE FLIGHT.

"She said she was only down for the week-end, didn't she?" said Jean. "Thank heaven, there's not much more of it left. Do you think she'll be in church to-morrow morning?"

"Oh, I shouldn't think so," said Phyllis. "She's a week-end visitor, and week-end visitors hardly ever go to church. No, I really don't think she'll be in church to-morrow."

But she was, all the same. St. Agatha's girls occupied seats in the chancel of the old-fashioned church they attended, and Jean and Phyllis, by virtue of their seniority, were two of the favoured ones to sit in the front row. The congregation was singing the first psalm when two late-comers were conducted up the aisle by a dignified churchwarden, who showed them into the front pew of the seats in the chancel, directly opposite to the pews occupied by St. Agatha's. Jean, who was singing lustily, did not notice them until Phyllis



Jean tripped up the waitress and brought an avalanche of buns about her head.

who was standing next to her, gave a sudden gasp and stopped singing. Looking up, Jean saw her chum staring across the chancel with a look of frozen horror upon her face. As she followed the direction of Phyllis' gaze, Jean stopped singing and gasped too. For there, kneeling down in the pew directly opposite, so placed that she could hardly fail to recognize them when she stood up, was that ubiquitous girl in red!

Phyllis was the first to regain her scattered senses. She clutched Jean's arm and whispered to her hurriedly:—

"Jean, I'm going out. I'm going to pretend I'm ill. You must come with me and help me. Buck up; there isn't a moment to be lost. She'll see us directly she stands up." And, pushing by the girls who were between her and the end of the pew, Phyllis made a bolt for the chancel door, at a pace that was hardly consistent with the role of a person overtaken with faintness.

Jean bolted after her, and Miss Headley, who was sitting in the back pew, put down her prayer book and, extricating herself as quickly as possible, hurried after Jean. The pompous churchwarden, arrested by the movement as he was returning to his seat in the body of the church, turned back again and made his way, too, towards the chancel door. Jean caught a glimpse of them hurrying after her as she reached the steps, and she dashed outside and seized Phyllis by the arm.

"They're coming after us. Scoot for all you're worth, or they'll see at once you're only shamming, and make us come back," she gasped.

Phyllis needed no further warning. She flew down the churchyard in frantic haste, closely followed by Jean, and they made such good pace that they both gained the churchyard gate before either Miss Headley or the churchwarden had got outside the chancel door. Even then they did not pause, but, regardless of what the inhabitants of the very select seaside town might think at seeing two of St. Agatha's girls racing at top speed through the streets on a Sunday, they tore along until they had put several corners between themselves and any possible pursuers. Then at last they drew up and gazed at each other, panting.

"Well," said Jean, emphatically, as soon as she could speak, "that's the last time in my life I'm ever going to rescue anybody from drowning."

"So it is in mine," said Phyllis, with determination. "They always say it's bad luck to save a person from drowning."

"It's certainly brought us bad luck," said Jean gloomily. "We're absolutely done for ourselves with Miss Headley now. What on earth are we going to say to her? We shall get into a frantic row for bolting out of church like that."

"Don't you think it might wash if I said I felt ill?" asked Phyllis. "I really did feel awfully queer for a minute when I saw that girl."

"You didn't look it, then," Jean said. "You looked in the very best of health." And, indeed, Phyllis' rosy, sunburnt countenance would hardly have succeeded in persuading the most credulous person that she felt at all ill.

"Well, then, I'll just have to say that I couldn't stick church a moment longer and let them think me mad. And you can say you thought I must be faint, and came out after me."

"But I didn't," expostulated Jean. "And, anyway, that won't explain our rushing off home

like this. Miss Headley's sure to tell Miss Duncan about it, and Miss Duncan will be frightfully ratty. She'll think we did it just to skip church, whatever we say."

"Oh, well, she'll have to think it, then," replied Phyllis recklessly. "Anyhow, it's better she should think that than know that we went bathing when she'd expressly told us not to."

"Y—yes, I suppose it is," said Jean doubtfully. But it was a poor consolation all the same. And the two girls wended their way back to the school in a very depressed frame of mind, and going to their sitting-room, waited with gloomy foreboding for the return of the church party.

In due course an orderly crocodile wound its way through the school gates, and the girls composing it dispersed to their various lobbies and dormitories to take off their outdoor things and prepare themselves for dinner. Phyllis and Jean were besieged with curious questions as to the reason of their abrupt exit from church. But they returned evasive answers, and were relieved when the dinner bell rang, and they were able to get away from their inquisitive companions. On their way into the dining hall they were waylaid by Miss Headley.

FOUND OUT.

"Phyllis, what was the matter with you when you went out of church this morning?" the mistress inquired sharply. "I went out after you, but you were nowhere to be seen."

"I—I—felt rather—rather funny, Miss Headley," stammered Phyllis in confusion.

"I don't think you could have felt very bad, or you could not have rushed away so quickly," said Miss Headley, with severity. "And, Jean, why did you go out? Did you feel queer, too?"

"N—no, Miss Headley. I—I just went out after Phyllis," Jean said lamely.

"It was not your place to go out after Phyllis," commented the mistress with a disapproving frown. "And, anyway, neither of you had any business to rush off home like that—you must have known that somebody would come out after you to see what was the matter. No, girls, I'm afraid those feeble excuses will not wash. I saw you whispering together during the service, and I am afraid it was an arranged plan to escape from church. I feel obliged to report you to Miss Duncan. I consider that you both behaved very badly, and I should not be doing my duty if I passed your conduct by."

And Miss Headley passed on into the dining hall, and took her seat at the high table beside the Head.

From their places in the body of the hall the two culprits could see their form mistress talking gravely to Miss Duncan. "She's telling her," said Phyllis with a groan, and neither of them was surprised when, at the end of dinner, after she had said grace, the headmistress paused for a moment before descending from the dais upon which the high table stood, to say in her quiet, but distinct tones:—

"I wish Jean Randell and Phyllis Deane to come to me in my study at three o'clock."

"Oh, goodness, we're in for it," murmured Phyllis, as she and Jean stood up with the other girls and waited for the mistresses to follow the Head out of the dining hall.

At five minutes to three the two made their way sorrowfully to the headmistress' room. Miss Duncan's study was half-way up the centre staircase, and as they stood on the little landing outside the door, waiting for the clock to strike, the culprits had an excellent view of the entrance hall and the front door. The front door bell rang just as they took up their positions, and a neat maid appeared instantly and crossed the hall to open the door. There was a few moments' parley, then the maid held the door wide open to admit two visitors, one an elderly lady dressed in grey, the other—the girl in red!

Jean and Phyllis watched in spellbound silence as the visitors were conducted across the hall and shown into the drawing-room. The maid closed the drawing-room door and, running up the stairs, knocked at Miss Duncan's study. She went half into the room and said something which the two girls waiting outside did not hear. Then she came out, went downstairs again, and opened the drawing-room door.

"Miss Duncan will be with you in a few minutes," the girls heard her say.

A SEVERE LECTURE.

The clock began to strike the hour of doom as she disappeared towards the servants' quarters once more, and Jean turned towards her companion in misfortune with a look of grim resolution on her face.

"Phyl," she said. "It's no good fighting against fate. Whether they've tracked us here, or whether they're only ordinary visitors, I don't know and I don't care. I'm going to make a clean breast of it to Miss Duncan, and if she expels me—well,

I'll just have to be expelled—that's all. I can't face the prospect of being haunted by that girl in red all the days of my life."

"All right, old thing," said Phyllis with a rueful grimace. "I'm with you. It's no good fighting against our luck any longer. We may as well be hanged for a sheep while we're about it. Come on in and let's get it over. She can't eat us, after all."

"No, but she can get next door to doing it," said Jean with a wan smile, as she knocked at the Head's door.

She could—and did. Only the knowledge that there were visitors waiting in the drawing-room—so Phyllis declared afterwards—prevented that interview with the Head from lasting until tea-time. As it was, the two were dismissed after some fifteen minutes, but the headmistress managed to say a good many scathing things in the short time at her disposal.

"I am disgusted with you—utterly disgusted," Miss Duncan said when she had extracted the story of the early morning swim and the various untoward happenings that had followed in town and church. "I thought I could trust my girls, but you have made me feel at the moment as though I shall never be able to do so again. If you were making a free

confession, I might perhaps be able to look upon the matter more leniently. But, according to your own account, you are not doing so—you are merely telling me the truth now because this girl whom you say you helped"—neither girl had told the full extent of that help—"is now in my drawing-room, and you are afraid that I should learn the truth from her. Your behaviour in church this morning was bad enough, but your explanation of it makes it a hundred times worse. What your punishment will be, I cannot tell you now. I shall have to talk it over with your form mistress before I decide. Meanwhile, you are both of you to go to your bedroom, and stay there until supper-time."

And two very crestfallen and miserable Fifth Formers crept off silently to Room Fifteen.

"Do you think she'll expel us?" asked Phyllis forlornly as the two reached the shelter of their room. But Jean shook her head.

"No, I don't think she'll do that," she said. "She'd have told us at once if it was going to be that—she wouldn't keep us in suspense. But I expect it means something pretty rotten. Never mind, though, I'm glad she knows all about it. After all she was right—it was too cold for bathing—and it was beastly mean of us to have sneaked out like that and gone. Supposing we'd got cramp like that girl? We might quite easily have been drowned."

"Yes," said Phyllis soberly, "it would have been rather horrible." She gave a little shudder. "I'm not sure I'm not rather glad the Head knows everything. I feel better now than I did while we were waiting to go to her, anyway. I hope she'll buck up, though, and tell us what our punishment's to be. It's beastly being kept in suspense."

"I expect she'll let us know some time to-day," said Jean.

And then the two settled down to endure their imprisonment with what resignation they could muster.

But, after all, they did not have to wait in their room until their sentence had expired. Some twenty minutes later there came a quick step outside in the corridor, and the next moment their door opened and the headmistress came into their room. The two prisoners started to their feet in some trepidation, but Miss Duncan came up to them quickly and put a hand on each of their shoulders.

"My dear children!" she said, in quite a different tone to the one they had last heard her use. "My dear children! You never told me the whole story of your bathing adventure. I have just been hearing about your courageous action. Why didn't you tell me you had saved the girl's life?"

"We—we didn't like to, Miss Duncan," stammered Jean. "It—it seemed like asking you to make excuses for us—just because we'd the luck to do something brave."

Miss Duncan smiled down at her quite kindly. "I see. Then it was conscience that made you

THE DEAREST THINGS.
 When God makes a lovely thing,
 The fairest and completest,
 He makes it little, don't you know?
 For little things are sweetest.
 Little birds and little flowers,
 Little diamonds, little pearls;
 But the dearest things on earth
 Are the little boys and girls.

own up after all—not just the fear that you were going to be found out?”

“No, I’m afraid it wasn’t quite,” said Jean honestly. “We hadn’t meant to tell you about the bathing part until we were waiting outside the door and saw that girl come in. We thought it was Fate. We’d been running into her all the time—it seemed as though we just couldn’t get away from her. When I saw her walking across the hall, I made up my mind I couldn’t go on any longer, and that I’d tell you the truth whether that girl had come to tell you about us or not. And Phyllis felt the same.”

“Yes, I did,” said Phyllis. “We both felt we’d rather be expelled than go on being haunted by that girl in red for the rest of our lives.”

Miss Duncan laughed.

THE HEAD’S FORGIVENESS.

“Then it was partly guilty consciences? Well, never mind. You’ve not behaved so badly as I thought you had. I’m very pleased you didn’t try to escape your deserts by trading on the bravery of the deed you had performed. When you said that you had ‘helped’ a girl in the water, I thought you meant you had been teaching her to swim, or something of that sort. Of course, you’ve both acted very wrongly, and I shall have to give you a pretty severe punishment, I’m afraid. But you won’t be expelled. You needn’t worry yourselves about that. And for to-day, at least, we will say no more about the affair. Now make yourselves tidy, and come down with me to the drawing-room. I want to introduce you properly to the girl in red.”

“Please, Miss Duncan, may I ask a question?” said Jean diffidently, as the two girls followed the headmistress down the stairs. “Please, have they

found us—that girl and her mother—or are they just ordinary visitors?”

“They’re ordinary visitors,” said Miss Duncan, turning round with a smile as she reached the foot of the stairs. “The girl’s mother is a very old friend of mine, and being down here for the week-end, she brought her daughter to call upon me. They happened to mention Marie’s narrow escape from drowning yesterday morning, and said how sorry they were not to be able to find the two girls who had saved her. Then, of course, I began to put two and two together, and I can’t tell you how glad I was to find that you had not tried to evade consequences by trading on the fact that you had saved this girl’s life.”

But the consequences, after all, though they followed inevitably, were not so very bad. To be debarred from playing any games for the rest of the term was certainly a serious deprivation. But, then, the rest of the term only consisted of two weeks. And five hundred lines apiece was a fairly severe punishment—but nothing to what being expelled would have been. While giving up their bedroom, and going to bed at eight o’clock in a dormitory with the juniors, though very humiliating, was a cross that could be borne with fortitude if one set oneself to it—as Jean and Phyllis did.

And, as a compensation, there was the delightful acquaintance that ensued with Marie and her mother, who were both so grateful that it seemed as though they could never do enough for the two girls who had saved Marie’s life.

So, after all, things weren’t so bad that they might not have been worse. And, anyway, as Phyllis said philosophically, it was better than being haunted for the rest of their lives by the Girl in Red.

THE END.

THE SNOWDROPS.

“Where are the snowdrops?” said the sun;

“Dead,” said the frost,
“Buried and lost—
Every one!”

“A foolish answer,” said the sun,

“They did not die;
Asleep they lie—
Every one.”

“And I will awake them—I—the sun,

Into the light,
All clad in white—
Every one.”

ROBIN REDBREAST.

Pretty little Robin with your red breast,
Do you come from the East, do you come from
the West?
Do you come from the deep bank hedge where
you build your nest?

Poor little Robin Redbreast! The snow is on the
ground,
He hops about and looks for meat, but no meat’s
to be found.

What can we do for Robin, he looks so cold and
chill?

Who will go and put some crumbs outside on the
window sill?



BRER RABBIT'S ORCHESTRA.

Conducted by Furry Tail.

SIMPLE FASHIONS FOR SCHOOLGIRLS

By KATHLEEN.

It isn't every school-girl who is capable of making her own frocks, but there's no reason why she shouldn't if she persuades her mother or some grown-up friend to do the

would be extremely effective, and the bands could either be hem-stitched on for a few pence a yard or faggoted by hand.

The frock would require two and a-half to two and three-quarter yards of forty-inch material, according to age of wearer.

of a needle from another. Many schoolgirls have little leisure for such tasks as blouse or dressmaking, but anyone, I imagine, would covet this dainty and useful little apron, which

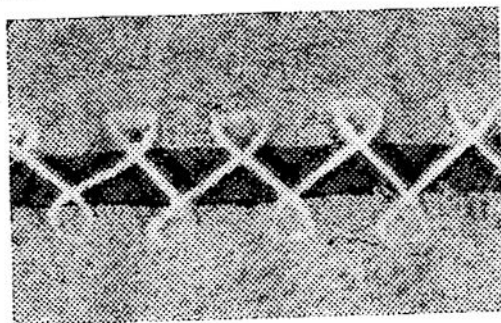
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FAGGOT STITCH.

Faggot stitch, which is merely another name for the old-fashioned herringbone stitch, is very popular at present, and appears on quite a number of blouses and frocks, on account of its lightness and laciness. The georgette bands on the pretty frock illustrated on this page could be attached by this means.

I find the simplest way for flimsy materials, anyhow, is to tack the edges of both on a strip of stiff brown paper and work from left to right, as shown herewith.

Another method of joining ninon or silk is to run a thread like a bar at regular intervals between the edges, and whip it

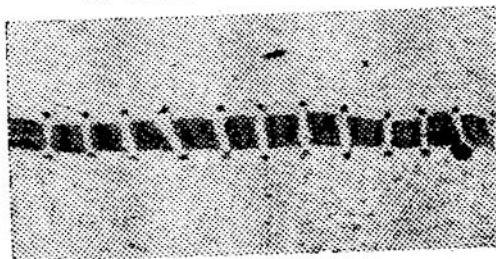


two or three times, slipping the needle and thread at the back of the work and repeating the stitch.

Still a third notion, if you are in a hurry, is to crochet 2 chain and 1 treble right along one edge of the material and overcast the other border on to the crochet. This is very effective as a veining for camisoles and blouses, etc.

* * * * *

A SIMPLE VEINING.



A PRETTY APRON.

The majority of girls love their needle from the time they started to make clothes for their family of dolls, and learned the fascination of stitchery and needlework, although I have known a few women who boasted that they didn't know one end

a clever young artist has sketched for us. Her own one, which I asked her to copy, was of bottle-green casement cloth, which wears and washes well. She had embroidered it in a variety of fancy stitches in jazz colourings, which simply means all sorts of shades and colours jumbled together without regard to artistic effect, and not content with that, had appliquéd motifs in colours to match on the bib and the corners of the skirt. It was really most effective, and just the very thing to wear when one was doing a little dusting or cooking to help mother, or when attempting one of our painting competitions.

cutting out, since everything is carried out on the simplest lines possible at the present time.

A CHARMING FROCK FOR ALL OCCASIONS.

The artist has sketched for us this very charming and useful dress, which could be made to serve on a variety of occasions, according to the material chosen. In ivory silk or crepe de chine it would be ideal for a confirmation dress, and in coloured silk, colienne or any fancy material would be admirable for semi-evening, spring or summer wear.

If destined for the latter, the bands should be of a contrasting shade of georgette or of creamy net. A saxe-blue frock with touches of bluish pink



Coffee and Candy Making

Delicious Dainties any Girl can Turn Out.

By GRACE WATSON

I know, whenever your eye lightens on the above title, you will say, "Oh, I must read this, for I'd love to make toffee, if only I had a proper recipe!" Well, here are a few old favourites, which anyone can make successfully, if a few simple rules are attended to. Making toffee is an ideal ploy for spring evenings or a wet Saturday afternoon—and in this fine cold weather, it will not take long to set, and one's patience won't be tried too much, ere mother says, "You may taste your own handiwork."

Home-made toffees and candies are much cheaper than the shop ones, provided they turn out successfully; but should mother see her precious sugar being wasted, then she won't allow you to experiment often! To avoid a catastrophe, read the directions below very carefully, and then your efforts will be a certain success—and the family will all say, "Please make some more."

BUTTER-SCOTCH.

First let us make some butter-scotch. Take a flat tin, and grease well with margarine. Have in readiness a good strong saucepan, and measure into it two ounces of margarine and one teacupful of water. When the margarine melts, add one pound of granulated sugar, half a pound of syrup, and one teaspoonful of vanilla essence. Boil exactly twenty minutes, and do not stir. Test a drop in cold water, and if it will form into a ball in the water, then pour the toffee at once into the prepared tin. When cold, but not hard, mark into squares.

Treacle toffee can be made in exactly the same way, simply by substituting treacle for syrup.

NUT TOFFEE.

Another good toffee is made from two pounds of granulated sugar, half a pint of water, some monkey nuts (chopped roughly). Boil the sugar and water twenty minutes, test same as butter-scotch. Add some nuts and pour into prepared tin.

GINGER CANDY.

Prepare the tin as above. Place two pounds of moist brown sugar into saucepan, and add one dessertspoonful of ground ginger. Pour on one teacupful of water. Stir over a gentle heat till the grains of sugar are dissolved. This is the great secret of having nice soft creamy candy, free from grit! Bring to the boil, and boil ten minutes. Remove saucepan from fire and stir vigorously till mixture is like porridge. Pour at once into tin, and mark before the candy is quite hard.

The point to remember in making this sweetmeat is, do not stir till the mixture will hardly come out of the pan. If you do, half will be wasted, and the remainder will be very rough in appearance. Only continue stirring till you feel the mixture is becoming creamy, then your candy will have a smooth surface, cut up much

more neatly and, best of all, it will taste delicious! Now, if you can make that recipe correctly, you can make any variety of candies, simply by changing the flavouring.

COCONUT CANDY.

Add a quarter of a pound of desiccated coco-nut to the two pounds of sugar. The coco-nut should not be added till the saucepan is removed from the fire. If liked, half of the candy only can be poured into the tin, and a drop of cochineal added to the remainder—and that gives a very nice pink and white variety. A melt-in-the-mouth candy can be made by putting in, along with the sugar and water, the grated rind and juice of an orange.

VANILLA AND WALNUT CANDY.

A very delicious candy, but certainly a little more expensive, can be made from two pounds of granulated sugar, a sixpenny tin of condensed milk, one ounce of margarine, one teacupful of water, one small teaspoonful of cream of tartar, and a few drops of essence of vanilla. Put the water, sugar and cream of tartar in saucepan. The cream of tartar helps to make the candy more creamy. Dissolve slowly, then add the Nestlé's milk and margarine. Boil gently for twenty minutes. Remove from fire, add flavouring and stir till creamy. Pour into greased tin. A few chopped walnuts may be added to this, if liked.

PEPPERMINT ICE.

Then, perhaps mother does not want you to dirty any pans, or to use the stove, after it has been newly cleaned—so here is a simple sweetmeat, which requires no boiling. Take two pounds of icing sugar, one jar of cream, or a small tin Carnation milk, one teaspoonful of oil of peppermint. Sieve the sugar into a basin, add sufficient cream to make a stiff paste. Flavour. When well bound together, turn on to sugared board, and cut into rounds. Set aside to harden. These sweets will not keep longer than a week—but I don't suppose they would be allowed to, in most households—they are too good!

TURKISH DELIGHT.

This is a great favourite with most girls, and is very easy to make. Soak one and a-half ounces of Cox's gelatine in one breakfastcupful of water for twelve hours, then add another breakfastcupful of water and two pounds of granulated sugar. Boil fifteen minutes, stirring well. Take from the fire, and add quickly one teaspoonful citric acid, and one dessertspoonful of lemon essence to flavour. A drop of cochineal to colour is a great improvement. Pour at once into a tin which has been rinsed out with cold water, or pour into two deep plates (wetted). Set in a cool place till mixture is cold and firm. Cut into neat squares, using a knife constantly dipped into boiling water, and toss in icing sugar.



THAT WILD IRISH GIRL.

OUR SPLENDID SERIAL

By M. C. RAMSAY.

CHAPTER I.

An Exile From Erin.

"SHURE, Aunt Doreen, and it's the pity it is to stop you when you are fairly into your stride," cried Norah O'Neal. "But there's Patsy O'Donnell at long last, and it's just dying I am to show him Doreen's new pups. And if once Mike gets him into the workshop there will be no dragging him away till after dark. And there Mike, the young varmint, is!"

For while her aunt, Lady Ashford, had been lecturing her on the proper way for a well-brought-up girl of nearly fifteen to behave, Norah had been keeping watch at the window for the appearance of her boy chum, Patsy O'Donnell, a neighbouring young squire. Norah had never missed girl chums. She was as happy as the day was long with "Patsy and the boys."

She gave as little thought to proper behaviour as to her own looks. Yet one could have searched Ireland from end to end and not have found a more winsome, lovable, or bonnie lass. It was old Nurse Biddy's loving care which made her great mass of black curls glisten like the raven's wing; but it was Norah's own true, loving heart which made the big, dark blue eyes of her shine like stars. And it was the free-and-easy outdoor life that her aunt decried which gave her the "cheeks like the roses" and the skin as soft and smooth as a babe's.

For lucky Norah never tanned or freckled—thanks, perhaps, to the fact that morning, noon, and night for the better part of the year she wore the old panama hat which her father had brought her from his one continental trip, some half-dozen years before. The boys declared she even slept in it. Her "real panama" was certainly the sartorial pride of Norah's life.

To-day the slim, lithe figure was clothed in a homespun brown skirt which could stand any amount of rough usage and "didn't show the dirt," and an old cotton shirt blouse, once as blue as her eyes, now almost white.

Norah leant over the wide open window. Her clear, musical voice was ringing out in the call:—

"Patsy! Wait, Patsy! Don't be after going with Mike just yet. I'm needing you very specially, boy."

The tall, handsome Irish lad, who was crossing the rough sward dignified by the name of lawn, turned and looked up to the window. His eyes, shining with pleasure, were well-nigh as clear and bright as Norah's own.

"Faith, and that's good hearing, mavourneen," he returned. "For shure the last word ye had for me was that ye would never let the pretty eyes of ye look on me again."

"Shure, that was half a hundred years ago, Patsy, darlint. A lot can happen between Monday and Wednesday. Stand clear, boy; I'm going to jump."

Before her horrified aunt could find breath to protest, Norah had taken a flying leap over the window-sill, straight into Patsy's arms. For that young gentleman had paid no heed to the command to stand aside.

But when the two kissed each other, in token of peace restored, Lady Ashford's wrath found voice. Her eyes were blazing as she whirled round upon the girl's father, who sat at his paper-strewed writing-table, not at all upset by the turn of affairs.

"After that, Denis O'Neal," she stormed, "you will surely acknowledge that I am right in saying that your girl is being ruined. I was never so insulted in my life."

"Shure, Doreen, the colleen meant it for no insult," answered her brother soothingly. "It's just the way of her to turn a deaf ear to lectures and sermons, just as ye did yourself at her age, mavourneen."

My lady turned a deaf ear to that soft impeachment.

"And to think of the brazenness of her, to kiss that rapscaillon of an O'Donnell before my very eyes."

Bally O'Neal laughed outright.

"Before your face or behind your back, girl, dear, where's the harm in a kiss between a boy and girl who have known each other all their lives?"

My lady deigned no answer. The squire warmed to his theme.

"Faith, come to think on't, Norah is more like a sister to Patsy than any of his own sisters are. Empty-fly-aways, the pair of them, with no thought of anything but pleasuring and dress. If that's the kind of young lady you want to make of my little Norah, Doreen, shure, I'm after having none of it, my girl."

"There's a wide difference between a life given up solely to the pleasures of Society and that of a girl taking her proper place in the county as

mistress of her father's home, as Norah should be doing in a few years' time," said Lady Ashford, more quietly. "But what chance has she of ever doing that while you let her run wild with her brothers and the O'Donnell boy?"

She paused, as the father made no answer.

"I don't deny that she has charm as she is," her ladyship resumed, "and I know she is happy now. But the day will come, Denis, when it will be the bitter blame she'll put on you for bringing her up to know less than any peasant's daughter."

"Oh, come!" the squire protested at last.

"That's what it amounts to, Denis," his sister insisted. "Why, I've never seen her with a needle in her hand, unless to sew a bandage on an animal's injured foot or something like that. And her mother's lace and embroidery were the pride of the convent where we were both educated."

Her voice shook a little now.

"If her mother had been spared, think you she would have been the tomboy that she is? You're wronging the girl, Denis O'Neal, and the day is coming when you'll see it with no words of mine. She'll tell you, and she won't—she never does—weigh her words."

O'Neal of Bally-o-Neal got to his feet and walked over to the window. His face was working piteously. He knew there was truth in his sister's words, but he simply could not think of the old place without Norah. With unconscious cruelty Lady Ashford ran on:—

"There's the O'Donnell girls laughing at her ignorance before her face and behind her back, for Patsy has owned it to me himself. But that lack of manners isn't the blame of their first-class English school; and it's no reason why Miss O'Neal of Bally-o-Neal should be behind.

"You used to have some pride in you, Denis, but it seems to have gone completely. I suppose they'll be saying it's because you haven't the money. If that's the hinder, boy, dear——"

The squire flushed, and with simple dignity stayed the offer on her lips.

"The money can be found, Doreen, as it has been found for the lads. If I have failed in my duty, it's because I didn't realize till this moment that she was growing up! She has learned enough, by fits and starts, not to be humiliated, go where she likes. I know nothing of English schools, so I'll leave it all to you, Doreen, but don't say school to me or Norah till it is all arranged."

Lady Ashford was too highly pleased at having gained her point to take exception to any condition. She knew that once his word was passed, there would be no drawing back, however much the father heart might regret!

So Norah went on her happy, light-hearted way, while Lady Ashford wrote and received lengthy letters, arranging all the details of the girl's exile. Then there came a day when the squire called his little lass into his own den, put his arm around her, and held her close.

"Mavourneen," he said, and his very accent was a caress, "we've come to a hard bit of the way. You're growing-up, and your old dad never realized it, nor thought that the time had come to send you away to learn the things your mother would have taught you, if God had spared her to us. We've found a governess no good. The boys have seen to that. So it has got to be school, Norah, my own, and your kind aunt, for sure, has chosen the

pick of the bunch for you. You've been crazy to go over to England, and——"

Norah had grown rigid and pale beneath the tan. But now she put out her hand and gripped the arm which held her so firmly.

"Daddy, you don't mean it," she said in a strange, muffled tone. "I wanted to go to England for a holiday, and it didn't matter if it never fitted in. But school! For what would you send me to school? To grow like Patsy's sisters, to feel shame of the Irish name and blood of me, and to be after wanting a rich English husband? And how could I live, daddy, dear, away from Bally-o-Neal? Shure, it's all a mistake, and we'll tell Aunt Doreen not to trouble herself any more!"

"Shure, it's to have you grow like the angel mother of you, my darling, to teach you how to fill her place that I've made up my mind to it," said the squire brokenly. "And it's all settled that you cross with Aunt Doreen on Monday. She'll take you to London first, and see about frocks, and show you the sights and all the rest, and then go to the school with you, just to see you settled. And it's the good time you'll be having with all the nice girls, and——"

"I won't—I won't!" sobbed Norah. "I don't want girls! I've no use for girls! I just want you and Patsy and the boys! I don't want to become a fashionable young lady. But if I've got to go"—as her father's ominous silence struck a cold chill to her heart—"it's the wild, wicked girl I'll prove myself, so that the English teachers will be glad to send me back!"

"You won't be doing that, mavourneen, putting the black shame on your aunt and me," her father assured her. "And though we don't want you to grow up like Patsy's sisters, it isn't seemly that we should give them the chance to put the shame on him by teasing him about your ignorance, for he owned as much to your aunt himself."

"Patsy didn't! Patsy couldn't! Patsy wouldn't! Patsy thinks I am all right as I am!" stormed Norah.

But to her amazement, though her brothers protested noisily, Patsy acknowledged that it was right for her to go. And thus he cut her to the very quick.

Indeed, in the last hour, no one really satisfied her but old Bidy.

"If it's bad they are to you, acushla, it's not for staying you'll be!" was her farewell advice. "Your old Bidy will always be here, waiting. And if the squire should be for sending you back, it's Bidy who'll stand by you, mavourneen, for, faith, it's no school you're needing to make ye perfect in old Bidy's eyes!"

Perhaps the squire echoed the final words in his heart even while he rebuked them.

"Shure, you mustn't be putting silly nonsense into the colleen's head, Bidy, woman," he told her. "We're none of us perfect, woman, dear. Come along, mavourneen. Barny's getting impatient, and we've little enough time to catch the train!"

So Norah tore herself from Bidy's arms, kissed all the servants and her brothers once again, and sprang to her seat in the jaunting car—to be borne swiftly to the station by Barny, the pride of the stables, as if even he did not care that the young mistress would soon be a heartbroken exile from Erin and home!

CHAPTER II. Her New Surroundings.

To Norah's great surprise, she enjoyed every minute of the journey, while her week's stay in London was simply crowded with pleasure. After all, she had a true girl's love for pretty things, though it had never been gratified to any extent, and the outfit her aunt provided had all the beauty of that exquisite simplicity which proclaims to the understanding a refined taste with no need to consider the cost.

When Norah first saw herself in her "best" costume, she cried aloud in her joy.

"Shure, Aunt Doreen, I never dreamed that blue serge could look like that. I detested it! That's why I wanted the reddishy-purplish thing you waved away as if it would bite! Faith, with my hair brushed till it shines like silk, and tied back with those two great bows, I look quite the young lady already, and I believe, if Patsy were here, he'd be afraid to kiss me. Perhaps," musingly, "'twould be just as well. We never think much of the thing we get too cheap!"

Lady Ashford smiled, a trifle wistfully. After all, she felt a little sad at the thought that the wild Irish girl had begun to change into sedateness so soon!

But she need not have feared. Clothes might help Norah to look the new part, but the smiling Irish eyes of her, the happy Irish heart would soon betray her, to say nothing whatever of her speech. When they duly reached the fashionable ladies' school on the outskirts of a Midland town, Norah soon upset the formality of their reception.

"We are delighted to welcome your niece, Lady Ashford, and I am sure she will be an acquisition to Cherryfield House," the principal said in polite fashion; Lady Ashford bowed her acknowledgment of the compliment; but Norah laughed heartily, showing every one of her beautiful white teeth.

"Faith, Miss Meredith, you speak too fast," she cried. "It's the worry I'll be to you entoirely, for I don't know any Society manners, and any education I have I've just picked it up as I've gone along. I didn't want to come here at all, and I vowed I'd make you glad to send me home again. Shure, now I'm here, and see from the smiling eyes of ye that ye aren't half so stiff and standoffish as ye pretend, I'm going to promise to try, and ye couldn't ask for more than that, mavourneen, could ye, now?"

Lady Ashford fairly gasped, and looked around as if she wished the floor would open and swallow her up. But Miss Meredith's carefully-restrained sense of humour warred with her stern ideas of discipline, and prevailed. She could foresee much trouble with this latest addition to her highly select list of pupils, and half wished she had not stretched a point to take in Lady Ashford's niece, though it was mid-term, and the school full. But she could also foresee a new spice in life, an end to the somewhat dreary monotony of it all. So

she decided to meet Norah on her own ground, and laughed brightly as she made reply:—

"My dear Norah, if you do your best, I can ask for nothing more. I know you will find it a little difficult to settle down into our regular ways, and to remember that a mistress must not be addressed in the free and easy fashion of girl to girl. But we certainly won't be hard on you till you learn the rules and customs of the school. And I think your brother Patsy—"

"Shure, now, Miss Meredith, Patsy isn't a brother, but just the best boy pal any girl could have," broke in Norah. "Faith, none of our own boys think I need any education at all. Mike would rather have had the money for a motor-bike, and Denis for the new stables we'll never be able to build."



"Stand clear, boy. I'm going to jump."

Here Lady Ashford interrupted sharply:—

"Norah, Miss Meredith isn't at all interested in your family affairs, and to talk of them in that way is what no well-brought-up girl would do."

"Shure, Aunt Doreen, I'll try to remember," she whispered. "And must I try to hide that we're so poor that I never had a tailor-made costume in my life before? It's going to be harder for me than I dreamed here, and I'm for thinking I had better go right back home now before I make any more mistakes."

Obeying some uncontrollable impulse, Miss Meredith bent and kissed the quivering lips.

"My dear," she said gently, "just be your own, sweet, natural self, and we shall have very little fault to find." And from that moment Norah's passionate devotion belonged to the headmistress who had never before unbent in such a way.

Miss Meredith was her calm, dignified self, however, when she took the Irish girl to the big dining hall where the school was at tea.

"This is our new pupil, Norah O'Neal, girls," she said. "And as she has never been at school, or even in England before, I hope you will all do your best to make her feel at home. She will share your study, Margaret Verney, and sleep in Dormitory B."

Margaret Verney, short, fat, solemn, with big, innocent babylike blue eyes, rose, and Norah's heart sank. There wouldn't be much fun in rooming with a model of deportment such as Margaret Verney seemed to be. But when the introduction was duly effected, and place was made for Norah at Margaret's table, she was speedily reassured.

"Now, this is what I call scrumptious," giggled Margaret, digging her elbow into Norah's side. "We're crowded out, you know, and I've had to take a tiny room never meant for a study at all, and it has been most awfully lonesome. We usually hunt in couples, unlike the high and mighty Sixth Formers. They've studies like palaces all to themselves. When I knew we were to squeeze in a new girl, I was fearfully afraid she would be a goody-goody, but I saw right off you weren't that."

A girl in an ill-fitting and dingy brown frock, wearing her hair drawn tightly back from her broad brow, but reaching, in a thick, golden-brown plait to her waist, leant across the table and said to Norah:—

"Unless you are very fond of hot water," she said, "you will keep that base deceiver at arm's-length."

"Shure, I prefer hot water to cold on a frosty morning," returned Norah, "and Patsy—one of the boys," hastily correcting herself, "told me that England is a cold, frosty sort of place, enough to turn warm Irish blood to ice."

"Somehow, I don't think it will turn yours," said the shabby girl in brown, and smiled, a smile of wondrous sweetness which completely transformed the over-grave young face. And Norah smiled in return, some instinct telling her that this girl's friendship, not lightly given, would be well worth the winning. Later on, she learned that Hazel Nesbit's mother had been Irish, and the motherless girl had therefore a warm corner in her heart for all who hailed from the little green isle.

"I never knew Hazel Nesbit talk so much to anyone," Margaret told Norah after tea. "She's a queer girl, but true blue. She has rather a rotten time here, because she is poor and shabby and doesn't go in for games. Someone said that her mother was a distant relative of Miss Meredith, and that she is kept here cheaply on that account."

"I'm sure she's nice, and clever, too," said Norah.

"Clever! There isn't another girl in the school who is in the same street. But she gets fearfully nervous at exams, so it's a chance if she wins the Masterton, our best scholarship, which means three years quite free at Girton. Mabel Warner is studying hard for it, though she can have Girton and anything else she fancies for the asking from her father. It's the honour she wants, and the pleasure of beating Hazel, whom she hates."

"Why?" asked Norah.

"Oh, just because Hazel is so clever, and perhaps

a little because the kiddies, who herd in the school-room till they are study-age, adore Hazel and fight shy of Mabel. Not that she bullies them.

"But, hush, here she comes, making straight for us."

Norah's lips tightened as she watched the approach of the tall, graceful girl, with the clear-cut, aristocratic features, the cold, proud mouth, and the hard grey eyes which must instantly repel the warm-hearted Irish girl.

"I have just been hearing that you are the Earl of Ashford's niece," she began in crisp tones. "His Devonshire place is quite close to ours, and my father and he are great friends, so you and I must be the same."

"I'm not the Earl of Ashford's niece. Lady Ashford is my aunt. I am Miss O'Neal of Bally-o-Neal!" And Norah's tone was that of a princess of the blood rather than the happy-go-lucky Irish girl who had gaily proclaimed the family poverty not an hour before. "Uncle Ashford is a dear, but his family was only born yesterday! An O'Neal has no need to hide under an English lord's wing!"

"Why, of course not!" answered Mabel, and her laugh made Norah's blood boil instead of turn to ice. "I'm sorry I've hurt your Irish pride, which is no doubt your chief possession. But I hope we shall be good friends all the same, though, of course, it isn't usual for a Sixth Former to chum up with a new-comer."

"Then please do not put yourself about for me," said Norah, with a haughtiness Lady Ashford herself could not have surpassed, and she turned back to Margaret, in token that the interview was at an end.

The Sixth Form girl's face was black with anger as she walked away, and Margaret looked and gave voice to her uneasiness.

"Oh, my dear, you shouldn't have snubbed her so," she said, in breathless tones. "She will hate you now, and you know a monitor can do you a power of mischief when she likes."

"Shure, she's welcome to try for all I care!" said Norah easily. "I don't like her, and I'm not going to pretend that I do. That isn't our Irish way. What's that bell for?"

"Prep. The kiddies go off to the schoolroom, the big girls to their studies. We're not supposed to stir out of them till nine, unless to go to the mistress on duty if we need help. Though you haven't any lessons for to-night, you had better come along. I do hope you will be put in my form. It's much jollier when your study-mate is in the same form. Miss Meredith usually tries for that, but, of course, it can't always pan out just so."

The girls were favourably impressed by the new-comer, who hadn't a scrap of side, though she was Lady Ashford's niece, a fact which had already filtered right through the school. But no one made any reference to it, and neither did Norah find it again necessary to mention that she was Miss O'Neal of Bally-o-Neal! Those new acquaintances were all frank, healthy-minded schoolgirls, with but little of Mabel Warner's snobbery, and Norah's eyes were shining when at length they reached the little study at the end of a long corridor.

"Shure. I love them all already, as if they were

Irish, Meg," she said, wasting no time in adopting the girls' usual name for the sedate-looking Margaret. "And it's a jolly little den, though you wouldn't have much room to swing a cat, if you wanted to do anything so silly. Are those empty shelves all mine? Can I put as many pictures as I like on the walls? Wouldn't the castle do nicely just above the mantelshelf? Patsy took it for me, and Denis made the frame. You'd never guess from the picture that it's all tumbling to pieces."

"Why?" asked Meg.

"Shure, for the usual Irish reason, me dear, that there's no money to patch it up."

Meg smiled, but made no answer, while Norah ran on:—

"What does the window look out to?" skipping across and drawing aside the blind. "Oh, the tradesman's yard! Shure, to think of getting up and seeing nothing but a tradesman's yard. But there's always some compensation, as Patsy says. There's a nice handy pipe, if you were just dying to slip out unknown any time."

Meg drew a long breath.

"Are you really game for that?" she asked.

"I'm game for anything," said Norah carelessly, continuing her tour of inspection, "just so long as it is good fun, and nothing low down or mean. The boys and I were regular night-hawks, and we never went out by the door. Aunt Doreen was horrified when she knew we had gone sailing by moonlight, Denis and Patsy and I, after all Bally-o-Neal was asleep. Daddy only laughed. Faith, I was forgetting! One can't do these things at school. It's the black shame I would put on daddy and Aunt Doreen if I did!"

"Yes, if you were found out," said Meg suggestively. "But I've gone out of that window every Friday night since I came to this study, and I haven't been caught yet! I'm crazy over cinema pictures, and at home I go nearly every evening. But Miss Meredith is a regular back number in heaps of ways, and every picture-house in the town is out of bounds. Not even a mistress dare go, she hates them so much, and that's what makes it so safe for me. Mother knows I go, and doesn't mind. She is an emancipated female, you know. Father would have me jog along on about sixpence-three-farthings a week, but mother gives me whatever money I ask for, so I can afford half-a-crown for a corner-seat in a box. They keep it for me. I can see everything without being seen, unless I choose. If you come along this Friday, I'll stand treat."

Norah grew red and white by turns. That "mother knows I go" gave quite an air of respectability to the weekly escapade, but, still, she knew that she was being tempted to do wrong. She thought of all her good resolutions, her promise to Miss Meredith, and her father's grief if she got into trouble right away, but set against it all was her longing to see a cinema show.

Nothing had been forbidden her at

Bally-o-Neal which was attainable. Her father did not share his sister's prejudices against a picture-house. Then where could be the harm in stealing the sweet pleasure so unreasonably denied?

Her head was bent, her hands were moving restlessly amongst the books and papers on the table. Meg saw that she was tempted sorely, and did not wait for her to speak.

"They always run a ripping serial at the Palace, and there's a new one beginning this week. They've usually some scrumptious animal pictures—polar bears last week. They were screamingly funny. Do you like animal pictures?"

"I don't know. I never saw a cinema picture," confessed Norah.

"What? Oh, but you're having me now! It's true? Well, you are a back number. Why, the tiniest kiddie in the First Form would simply shriek with laughter if you told her that!"

"She won't get the chance," was the quick, impulsive reply.

"Then you'll come," said Meg eagerly.

"Shure and I'll come," was the prompt reply. "And faith, school promises to be good fun, after all, though I wouldn't own as much to the boys for the world!"

CHAPTER III.

A Stolen Visit to the Cinema.

NORAH'S first week at school more than reconciled her to her exile, though she had many moments of bitter home-sickness. She made many blunders, betraying her ignorance at every turn. She was so ready to laugh at her own mistakes, so pathetically eager to learn the new



"My dear," she said, "just be your own sweet natural self."

customs and ways, that teachers and girls alike vied with each other in their anxiety to help her. She had speedily smiled her way into all hearts save Mabel Warner's.

Miss Meredith smiled over the reports, but she was in no special hurry to count Norah amongst her model pupils.

With so much to interest her, Norah gave scarcely a thought to the promised adventure for Friday evening, and Meg made no mention of it till they were safely in their study and the door shut.

"I slipped up and got our gym shoes," she said. "Put them on now, to save time, and get out your books. We have to wait till Miss Harris has been round. There's no risk when she's on duty. She has never been known to enter a study twice in one night—unless there's a noisy rag on."

Norah flushed a little. Miss Harris was her own form mistress, who had been kindness itself to her in those first few days.

"Shure, Meg, I don't just like it," she began. "I want the fun, but I wish we could have it open and above-board."

"It wouldn't be half the fun if we did," retorted Meg. "And you're a funny Irish girl to be in favour of the government. I don't want to think you are afraid."

"Afraid, is it, you dare to say to an O'Neal?" cried Norah, kicking off her slippers, and grabbing at the gym shoes. And when Miss Harris looked in about ten minutes later, both the black head and the yellow one were bent so closely over their books that the young mistress smiled knowingly as she closed the door. Her own schooldays were not very far back.

"Some mischief brewing between those two," she thought. "It's the first time I haven't found them talking nineteen to the dozen. I guess I had better be blind and deaf, however. Our little Irish girl cannot be out of the need of finding a safety-valve in some rag or other. Luokily I am on duty, instead of one of my colleagues who has forgotten that she ever was young."

The moment the mistress had passed from that corridor, Meg slipped noiselessly across, locked the door and prepared for flight.

Once they were safely outside, however, the spirit of the adventure fairly gripped Norah. It seemed the greatest fun imaginable to dodge along by back streets, keeping a sharp look-out for a mistress or any acquaintance who might recognize Meg and deem it his or her duty to sneak.

They came in safety to the Palace, where they drew their hoods more closely round their faces. Norah's heart was beating in most uncomfortable fashion while Meg bought the tickets and chaffed gaily with the gorgeously-attired man at the foot of the richly-carpeted stairs.

Meg caught her arm and made her start.

"Come along. We're just in time. The serial film is going on in five minutes. I've arranged that they'll keep two seats for us every Friday, without any booking fee. They are real sports here. I'll bet you they wouldn't do as much at the Olympia."

In a very few moments Norah had forgotten everything but the wonder and the joy of witnessing a thrilling picture drama for the first time. It far surpassed all her dreams, and the two young men who were the only other occupants of the box were much more interested in the naïve Irish girl than the film on the screen.

"I can't—oh, Meg, I can't bear to wait till next Friday to know what happens!" she said, drawing a long breath, as the serial film ended, and a comedian danced on the stage.

"I could tell you, but it wouldn't be fair," said one of the young men, in quiet, courteous tones, and Norah turned her smiling Irish eyes upon him.

"Shure, and how could you do that, sir?" she asked. "Meg says it is quite new."

"Yes, to Middleton. It's ancient history in London. And I chanced to write it, while my friend here—take a good look at him"—with a smile—"he looks innocent enough, doesn't he?—well, he acted the villain you wanted to tumble head first into the Bally-o-Neal bog."

Norah's eyes had grown big with wonder, and something like awe. This was indeed the adventure of her life.

"He looks harmless enough there," she said hesitatingly, and the two young men laughed.

"She doubts you, all the same, Carlyle!" said the author. "I'll stand sponsor for him, though, Miss—?"

"O'Neal," said Norah, as he hesitated. "Norah O'Neal. Shure, but how awfully clever you must both be. I never met a real live author before. How do you think of it all?"

"My dear child, that is too big a question to answer here and now, for Charlie Chaplin will be making his bow to you in a few minutes, and I'll have to take a back seat. But we are staying here for awhile, in search of what we writing folk call 'local colour,' and may have the pleasure of meeting again," answered Jack Warner, who was exceedingly fond of "girl kiddies," and was thinking that this was the most charming of the species he had met for a long time.

As he spoke, his glance fell on the scarf on Meg's knee. His eyes widened as he recognized the Cherryfield School colours. For he was Mabel Warner's cousin. She had primly refused his offer of a box for herself and friends during the run of his play in Middleton, because picture palaces were out of bounds. So he straightway jumped at the truth, and spoke out impetuously, in "big brother" tones:—

"Look here, kiddies, I don't think either my friend, Carlyle, or I are spoil-sports, but you know it isn't the thing for girls like you to be out alone on a Friday evening in an industrial town. Won't you let us see you safely home?"

"It would be still less the thing for complete strangers to see us home," said Meg, with sudden primness, even while she was thinking it would be quite a jolly finish up to the evening if the young men weren't the sneaky kind. For she had glanced at the author's name on the programme, recalled Mabel's boast about her cousin who was making a fortune writing plays for the movies, and straightway concluded that he might be good for quite a lot of "big-brother treats" if luck should let them be introduced to each other in the conventional way.

Jack Warner was just as much a mixture of impetuosity and shyness as Norah herself. Meekly accepting the snub, he drew back into the shadow of the curtains, and did not speak again until he glanced at his wrist-watch and quietly remarked:—

"I fancy you will be due at Cherryfield House by nine, girls. It is barely a quarter to."

Meg looked at her own watch and paled a little. She caught Norah's arm as she jumped up.

"I say, so it is! It's too bad, Norah, for this is a ripping film just beginning. I saw it in town last holidays. But we can't risk being late."

Slowly, reluctantly, Norah got to her feet. The author stooped and lifted the Colleen Bawn cloak which had slipped to the floor. As he put it round her shoulders he whispered in her ear:—

"Don't do it again, little lass. Believe me, it isn't worth it. And if you have just a little patience we may manage to work it that you will learn 'what happened to Nancy' in an honest, open way. I mean to call on Miss Meredith one of these days and perhaps convince her—"

Here Meg gave Norah's arm an impatient tug, so that she could not collect her wits for a direct answer. But she smiled, as only Irish eyes and lips can smile, so that something new and strange stirred in the rather self-centred, worldly-minded young Englishman's heart. He felt glad, exceedingly glad, that there was absolutely nothing in this play which those frank, honest young eyes should not see. He suddenly decided to scrap the greater part of the play he had begun. There wasn't anything wrong with it, but, still—

"I'm going to recast *Her Great Adventure*, Carlyle," he said, quietly. "I wouldn't have felt comfortable if that jolly kiddie had seen it for her first picture play."

Carlyle merely nodded his understanding. It wasn't his first experience of what the silent and wholly unconscious influence of a true-hearted young girl could do even for a grown man.

The moment they were outside Meg allowed her anxiety to show itself. "We'll have to take the quickest road, straight down the High Street, and run for it at that," she said, but the next instant caught Norah's arm and drew her into the shadow of a doorway.

"Don't speak," she murmured. "Who do you think has come out of the private door of the fancy-work shop two doors down but Hazel Nesbit. I wonder if she has a permit, or if she has broken bounds, too. What a jolly hold that would be over a monitor if she has! If only it had been the Warner wretch instead!"

Norah grew hot and cold by turns. The sudden fear that Hazel might possibly be guilty of the same brought with it a realization of the enormity of her own offence.

"She is taking it too easily to be out of bounds," Meg whispered next, "We'll require to take the back road, after all. Some girls might hush it up for a consideration if they caught us, but not Hazel Nesbit. I never had such rotten luck."

Norah was still silent, and as they sped homewards Meg put that continued silence down to fear. That it could be bitter self-shame never entered her head.

Their luck, as Meg put it, was in, after all. They got safely over the yard fence, climbed, swiftly as any boy, up the too-handy water-pipe, raised the carefully oiled window, and dropped on to their study floor just as the first bell for prayers sounded.

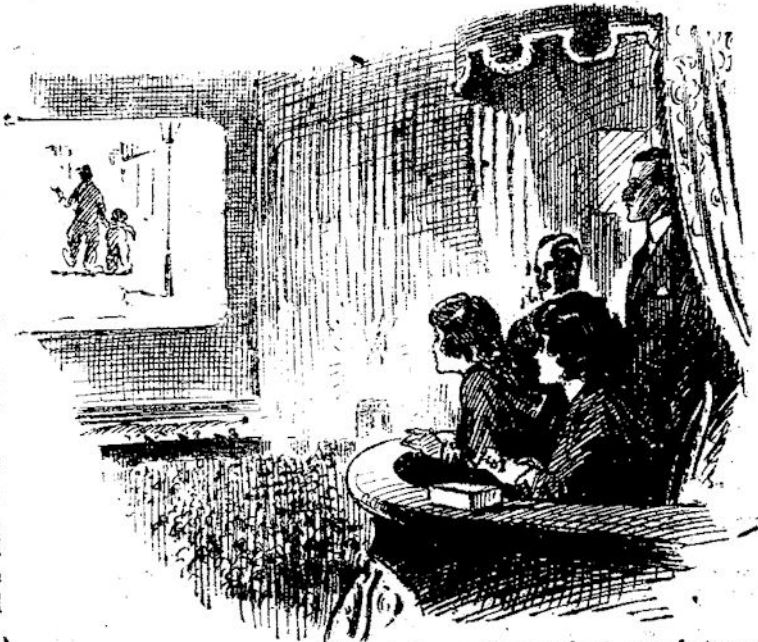
"Just gives us time to get our breath," Meg laughed. "It adds to the fun now that the danger is over. Where are you going?" sharply, as Norah walked straight across to the door and unlocked it.

"To tell Miss Meredith how wicked I've been, and ask her to punish me at once," said the puzzling Irish girl. "I never felt like a thief in the night before."

Again Meg paled, but did not lose her head and storm and rail.

"And where do I come in?" she asked quietly. "A lecture, and perhaps gates for a few weeks, would be all that you would get, because you are new and ignorant, but it would spell expulsion for me. If that is your Irish idea of fair play I'm not wanting any of it, thank you."

Norah stiffened where she stood, while the rare shadow darkened her eyes. She had given no thought to Meg in the matter. Her one desire was to be rid of her own burden of guilt through confession and penance. But she could not attain to it at so great a cost to another.



Norah forgot everything in witnessing a picture drama for the first time.

"Shure, I never thought of that, Meg," she said slowly. "Of course I cannot get you into a scrape. Perhaps the misery of holding my peace is meant to be my punishment."

It was Meg's turn to remain silent. The working of the girl's mind was beyond her understanding.

But she was still anxious in case Mabel Warner's cousin would give them away. Yet she slept the sound sleep of the just, for all that. Norah alone tossed restlessly on her pillow, and watered it with bitter tears of self-shame for the first time in all her life.

She was a little late next morning. The whole staff was already assembled when she entered the big schoolroom, where the day was commenced with prayers. Miss Meredith looked unusually grave. There was a subdued feeling of excitement in the air.

"There's something up," Meg whispered, as Norah slipped into her usual place. "I don't think we're in, but you never can tell. Mabel Warner's cousin might have given us away, though it isn't likely."



She climbed swiftly as any boy up the too-handy water pipe.

Norah did not really grasp the last words. Had they been seen, after all? Would she be sorry or glad? Neither Meg nor she joined as earnestly in the morning's devotions as they should have done.

The brief service over, Miss Meredith remained at her desk, and did not utter the usual word of dismissal.

"Sit down, girls," she said very quietly, but there was that in her tone which brought instant stillness on the most restless girl there. "I have something very serious to communicate to you. Yesterday, some time between half-past eight and nine, a pound note and ten shillings in silver were removed from the table in the games secretary's study, and while Ruth Laird is to be blamed for leaving her room to visit another study, and especially so for leaving the money lying there openly, that does not lessen the guilt of the girl who took it."

She paused, because a sudden lump in her throat had choked her utterance, and her voice was not quite steady when she resumed:—

"I am sorry to say that there is no doubt that the guilty person is one of our senior girls. I shall be in my private room until ten o'clock, and I trust that the guilty girl will come there and confess, thus justifying my hope that she yielded to a sudden temptation, and has already repented. That is all, meanwhile, girls. Dismiss!"

But as she turned to leave the door, Mabel Warner jumped to her feet.

"Miss Meredith, I know who stole the money!" she cried, in breathless haste. "I didn't think anything about it at the time, but I went along to the hockey captain's study about a quarter to nine, after my prep was finished, and just as I was opening her door, I looked back along the corridor, and saw Hazel Nesbit coming out of

Ruth Lamb's study. She glanced up and down, in a queer, furtive sort of way, though it didn't strike me as such at the time!"

"Mabel——" the headmistress began; but the girl ran on, unheeding:—

"But something else did strike me as strange, knowing that Hazel never has—I know it sounds mean, but it's true, all the same, for we all know it—that she has, scarcely any money at any time but just after prayers, when we senior girls were chatting together before going upstairs, I chanced to glance round, and she was standing over by the corner window, looking into her purse, in a gloating sort of way. I strolled over, and before she could shut it, I caught sight of a bank note. What I would like to know is where she got that money?"

"Mabel, I am deeply ashamed of you," Miss Meredith said sternly. "I did not ask for evidence, real or circumstantial, as yet! When you have offered it in this way, Hazel must have a chance to refute it. Where were you at a quarter to nine last night, Hazel?"

"I was in the town, Miss Meredith, with your special permit," she answered very quietly, though the cowardly attack had sent the last vestige of colour from her face. "With your permission, I prefer not to say in what part of the town, or what took me there."

"But you must say!" cried her enemy hysterically, as she saw her whole wicked plot in danger of destruction. "She had ample time to be back, as I know she was. Who let her in, and when?"

Then silence for a tense moment, while every girl and mistress seemed to hold her breath.

"I forgot to tell Mary that I was going out," Hazel answered at last, and her voice shook a little now. "I rang our bell two or three times, but got no answer. So I walked round to the private door. When I found it was not locked, I simply walked in. The first bell for prayers went immediately, and I did not go upstairs at all, but left my hat and coat in the senior cloak-room."

"I thought as much!" jeered Mabel Warner. "That is how you came in, no doubt, but at least fifteen minutes before the first bell!"

The next instant, Norah was on her feet, her eyes ablaze.

"Oh, the bad, wicked heart of ye!" she cried passionately. "Shure, Miss Meredith, it's all a made-up story, because she hates Hazel for being so much more pretty and clever and kind than she is! I know where Hazel was at a quarter to nine, and——"

A hand gripped her arm and dragged her back to her seat.

"Hold your tongue, you little fool!" Meg hissed. "Hazel will clear herself without you ruining yourself and me!"

But every eye was turned to the Irish girl now, and Miss Meredith was opening her stern lips to speak.

(To be continued.)

See Next Week's
Thrilling Instalment,
and read how Norah
got out of the scrape.

MY OWN SCHOOL PAGE.



WHO IS THE MOST POPULAR GIRL IN YOUR SCHOOL?

Send Her Photograph and Win 5s.

Have you ever tried your 'prentice hand at editing a home or school magazine? I have seen some of these efforts, and they were very amusing and most creditable to the youthful journalist.

Perhaps you have just such a production at your school. If so, will you post me a copy, and I shall publish a list of these, possibly a criticism or a quotation. If any of you care to send me a short paragraph about your sports and games with rival school teams, with a photograph of the winners, I shall suitably reward the sender.

Some of you who attend council schools may neither possess a magazine nor sports teams, and are thinking you have no chance of contributing to this page and so gaining publicity for your teacher or chums, but I've thought of all that, and would like to make yet another suggestion, for I wish this page to be one of the best in the paper.

THE BELOVED PRIZE.

In many schools a prize is offered yearly by the headmaster or headmistress for the pupil who is voted the best all-round girl. Sometimes it is called The Beloved Prize. Now, if you will send me the photograph of the most popular girl—not the prettiest or the cleverest—in your school, or anyone who within the last year has won such

an honour, I shall award the sender of all photographs published a prize of 5s., which she can divide with her heroine if she has a mind to.

All photographs must be accompanied by a coupon cut from the cover of this paper, and they must bear the names and addresses of the girl photographed and the chum who sends it, and should reach this office within ten days of the date of publication.

Now put your best foot foremost, and let's see which school will be the first to carry off the honour and the prize.

BUDDING WRITERS AND ARTISTS.

As I mentioned in my editorial letter, I shall also be delighted to consider carefully for publication and payment any short stories, verses, jokes or sketches you may send from time to time, so that you may feel you have a very special interest in this particular page.

Many of you dream dreams, and see visions, just like older folk, but you are too shy to show your inmost thoughts on paper to the home circle. You think they would either be over critical or perhaps too indulgent in their praise, and you would rather have an independent adviser. Isn't that so? Well, then, send them to me and I'll pass judgment.

GRAMMAR IN RHYME.

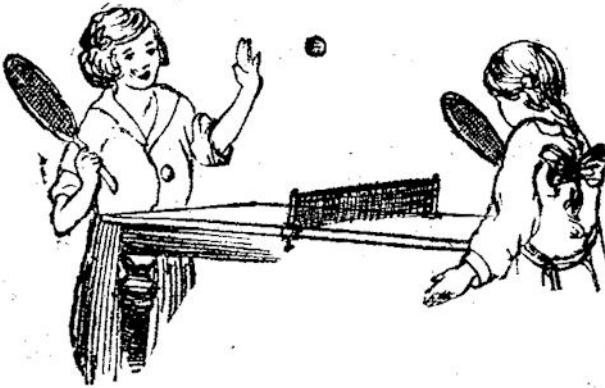
Every grammarian should commit to memory the following easy lines, and then she need never mistake a part of speech:—

Three little words you often see
 Are Articles—A, An and The.
 A Noun is the name of anything,
 As School, or Garden, Hoop or Swing.
 Adjectives tell the kind of Noun,
 As Great, or Small, Pretty, White or Brown.
 Instead of Nouns, the Pronouns stand—
 Her Hair, His Face, Your Arm, My Hand.
 Verbs tell of something being done—
 To Read, Count, Laugh, Sing, Jump or Run.
 How things are done the Adverbs tell,
 As Slowly, Quickly, Ill or Well.
 Conjunctions join the words together,
 As men and women, wind and weather.
 The Preposition stands before
 A Noun, as In or Through a door.
 The Interjection shows surprise,
 As Oh! how pretty; Ah! how wise.
 The whole are called nine parts of speech,
 Which reading, writing, speaking teach.

BEAUTIFUL GIRLS

*Beautiful faces never wear
 The look of hate or selfish care.
 Beautiful eyes should ever show
 The kindly thoughts that dwell below.
 Beautiful lips have words of love
 For all below and all above.
 Beautiful hands no work will do
 That is not earnest, good and true.
 Beautiful feet with gladness go
 On helpful errands to and fro.
 Beautiful shoulders ever bear
 Of someone's daily cross a share.
 Beautiful souls are those that shine
 Filled with the love we call divine.*

What Shall We Play?



A GIRLS' NAMES' COMPETITION.

Here's Your Chance!

FIRST PRIZE: Lovely Silk Jumper (any colour).

An American idea, which has crossed the Atlantic, is sufficiently interesting and amusing to be adopted as a means of entertainment at tea parties, or for a round indoor game any evening.

The competition requires little preparation. Each guest is provided with a pencil and card on which is written a list of questions, the answers of which are to be found in feminine names, or the questions may be read out at intervals of two minutes by the hostess, and the guests could write their replies.

On the conclusion of the game, the correct solutions are called out, each girl checks off those on her list which correspond, and prizes are presented to those having the greatest number correct.

Much as your Editor would like it, she cannot invite you all to tea, so it occurred to her that the next best thing was to announce this Girls' Names' Competition, and give lots of prizes.

Thirty Prizes of Bead Necklaces, Perfume, Brooches, Gem-set Pendants, etc.



- 28. A suitable name for a fisherman's wife.
- 29. A suitable name for an auctioneer's wife.
- 30. A suitable name for an astronomer's wife.

Cut out this page and enclose it with a card or sheet of paper on which you have written and numbered your replies, with your name and address most distinctly. You can send in as many solutions as you like, but each must have a coupon attached.

Mothers, sisters, cousins and aunts may compete, too.

Mark "Competition" on left-hand corner of the envelope, and send in by March 6th to the Editor, SCHOOLGIRL, 11, Gough Square, E.C. 4.

1. What would an army do if it found a river too deep to ford?
2. An admirable quality in women?
3. How to write a postscript?
4. A gem?
5. A favourite opera?
6. Something a little girl likes to possess?
7. Most prominent of Easter flowers?
8. A virtue?
9. A little valley?
10. Two consecutive letters of the alphabet in transposed order.
11. A mark of punctuation?
12. The cry of a horse?
13. One of Rider Haggard's novels?
14. Reads the same backwards and forwards?
15. A poetical measure?
16. An accessory to Japanese attire?
17. Name of a battlefield?
18. Name of a beautiful lake?
19. What a bicycle and a muffin man have in common?
20. Title of one of Tennyson's poems?
21. A city in Italy?
22. A suitable name for a lawyer's wife.
23. A suitable name for an accountant's wife.
24. A suitable name for a musician's wife.
25. A suitable name for a porter's wife.
26. A suitable name for a farmer's wife.
27. A suitable name for a gambler's wife.

CAN YOU TELL ME?

How do bees dispose of their honey?—They cell it.

Why is a member of parliament like a shrimp?—Because he has M.P. at the end of his name.

How many peas are in a pint?—One P.

What is most like a cat's tail?—Another cat's tail.

What three letters turn a girl into a woman?—A—G—E.

What island is nearest heaven?—The Isle of Skye.

What is that which is always invisible, yet never out of sight?—The letter i in invisible.

A FIRE PICTURE.

If you would like to draw a picture with fire here is the best way to set about it.

Prepare a strong solution of saltpetre and water. Use this instead of ink, a small paint brush instead of a pen, and draw on a sheet of paper what you please. After the paper is dry, light a line in the drawing. The fire will keep to the lines you have made with the saltpetre, and thus you will have the figure sketched out in fire. This must be done very carefully, in case of accident.

The queen stopped swinging by her beak on the topmost bough of her throne, and nodded pleasantly to Sophie.

"Speak up," whispered the grey parrot. "Please, Your Majesty," began Sophie, "why mustn't the parrots talk when they come to our land?"

"Because," said the queen, "they are only sent to your land when they are naughty. One parrot was sent to-day. He was vain, so we could not keep him here. But to-morrow you will find him at the Zoo, saying 'Pretty Poll!'"

"Oh!" exclaimed Sophie. "And what about the ones that say 'Good morning' or 'Thank you'?"

"Those are birds that were rude. They are sent away to learn manners, and they have to keep on saying 'Thank you,' don't you see?"

"Yes, I see," said Sophie. "And," she whispered, looking at the grey bird beside her, with its head bowed before the queen, "what about the ones that can't talk?"

"Oh!" said the queen. "Those are the ones that did not quite tell the truth. Told little fibs, you

know—things they knew were not quite true."

"And aren't they ever allowed to come back?" asked Sophie.

"Oh, they all come back," cried the queen. "When you think they die, it really means that they are forgiven and are called back here. And now, I think you should go back to Auntie Jane."

* * * * *

"Why, Sophie!" A voice spoke in Sophie's ear. She looked round. The queen and palace had all vanished and she was back in the Parrot House in the Zoo, standing before the grey parrot's cage.

"Why, Sophie," said her aunt, "are you still looking at that parrot? Has he said 'Good morning' again?"

"Oh, auntie!" exclaimed Sophie. "I've had such a lovely adventure. I'll tell you all about it. But first of all, I want to tell you that I do not think he said 'Good morning.' I think it was a little noise in his throat."

"Perhaps it was, dear," said Auntie Jane.

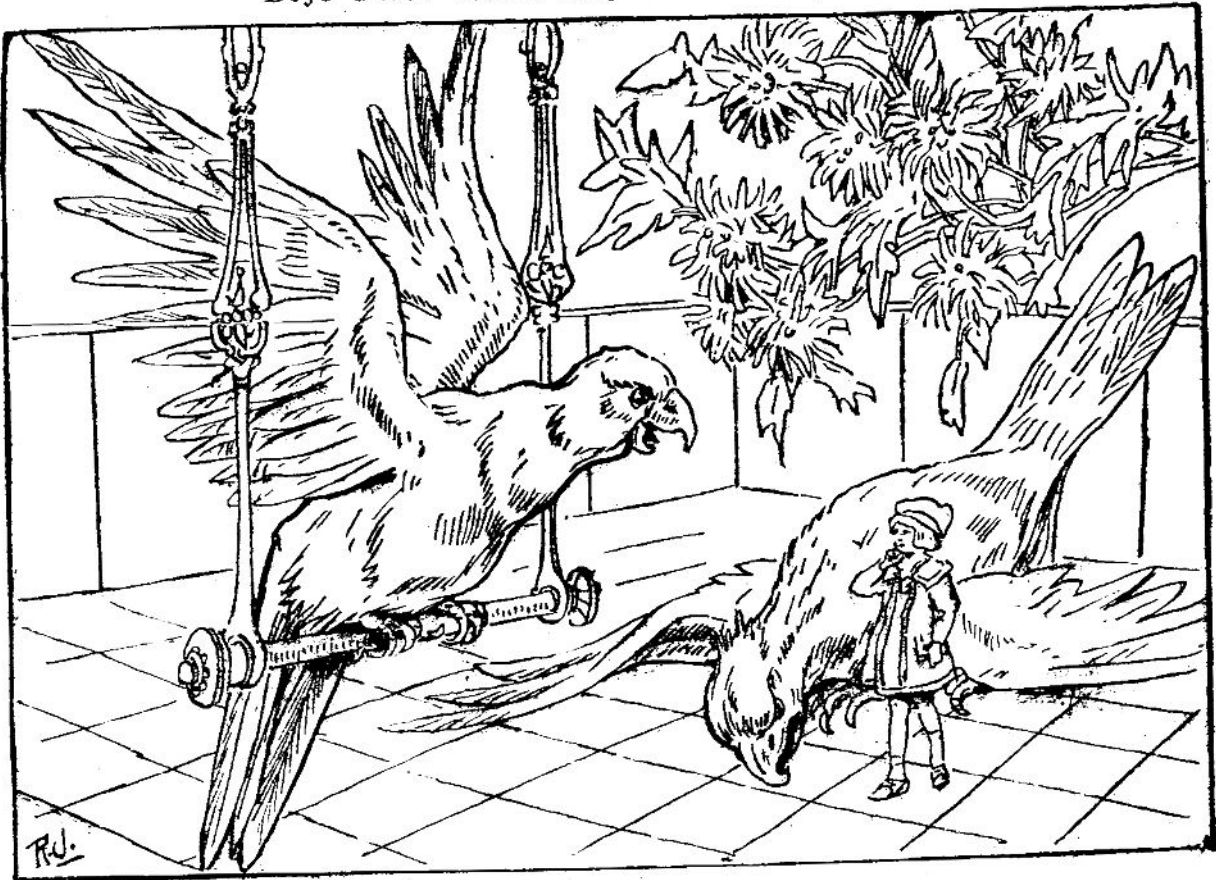
And the grey parrot looked very hard at Sophie, and winked one eye.

PAINTING COMPETITION.

FIRST PRIZE, 10s.

Fifty Other Splendid Prizes of Jazz Bead Necklaces, Brooches, Pocket Wallets, Dolls, Toys, etc., etc.

Boys under twelve may enter for the above.



Name.....

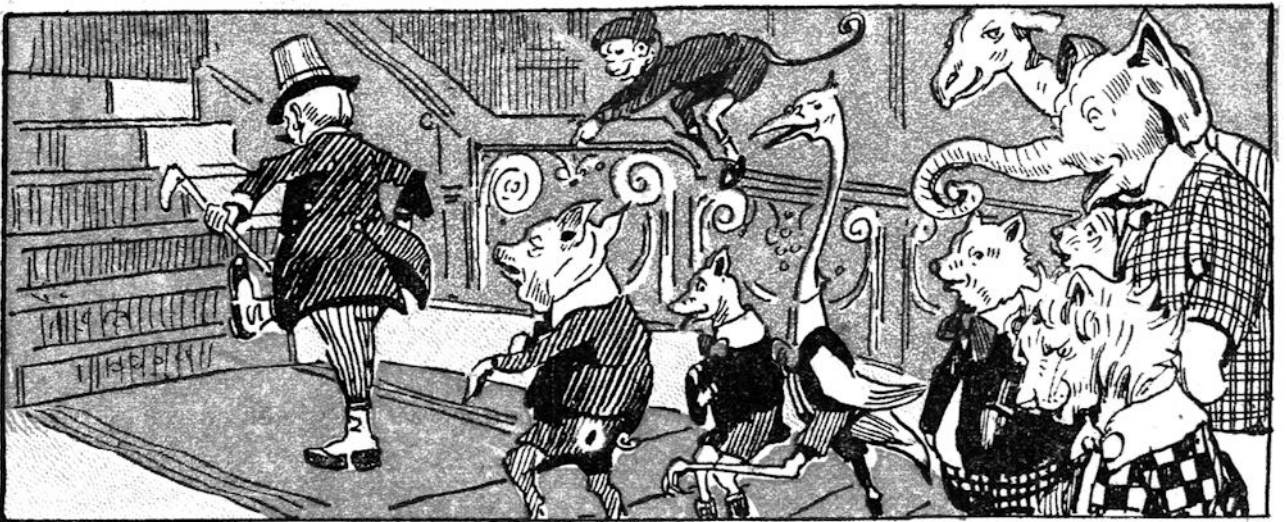
Age.....

Address.....

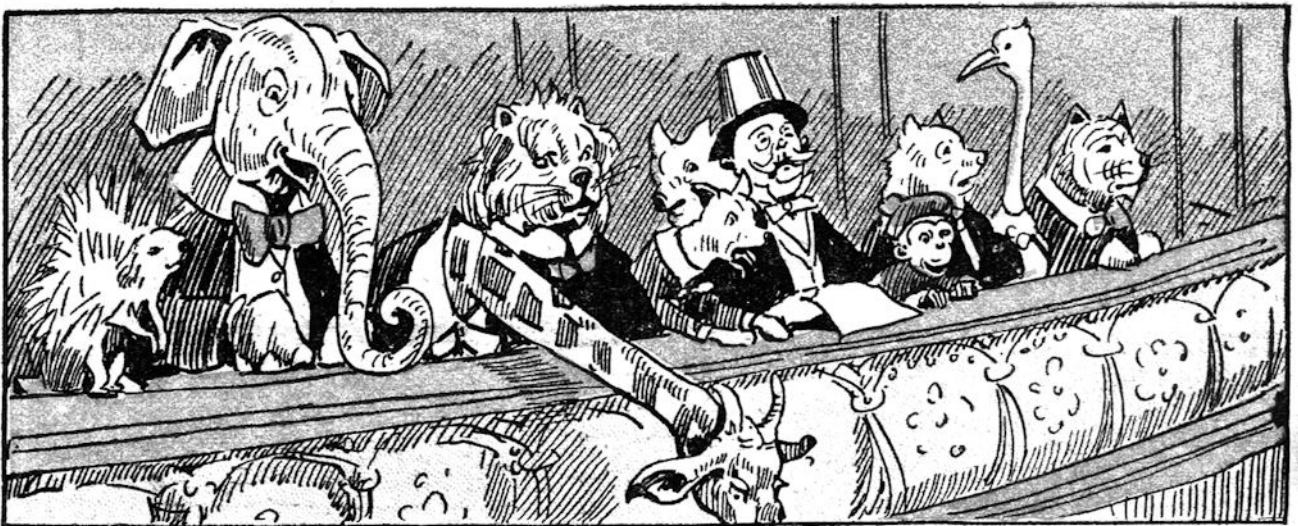
Post to "Auntie Kate," 11, Gough Square, E.C. 4, by March 6th.



4.—Fortunately a lot of big policemen on the platform looked after the travellers. After a terrific struggle, the policemen managed to conduct the pets to a large motor-bus, labelled "Private," which was waiting to take them to the theatre. It was a tight squeeze, especially as Trunky Elephant took up nearly half the bus.



5.—A triumphant procession trooped proudly up the grand staircase. Uncle Jack led the way, followed by Piggy-wiggý Porker, who was quite out of breath when he and the others took their seats in the grand circle. Uncle Jack was determined that his pets should have a fine time, so he had booked seats in the front row for all of them.



6.—Sharpy Porcupine, being rather small, had been provided with a tall stool all to himself. In addition to those pets already mentioned were Leggy Stork, Shaggy Lion, Stripey Tiger and Spot Terrier, who barked with delight as the curtain went up. Several of Uncle Jack's pets had been very naughty, and so had been left behind.

(Next week You will hear all about Their Lovely Time in the Theatre.)

The Adventures of Evelyn in Egypt.

By E. CHIVERS DAVIES.

School was over for the day, and Evelyn and Doris raced each other across the barrack square and down to the married quarters, which was their home. "Beat you in!" cried Doris, who generally won races, though she was only ten and Evelyn twelve.

"Never mind, I'll win to-morrow," laughed her sister, and pushed open the door. A lovely savoury smell greeted them, and Mrs. Smith, bending over the fire as she watched a sizzling frying pan, gave a jolly laugh as they came in.

"Ham and eggs for tea to-night," she said. "It's a special treat, and I'll give you three guesses why."

The children flung their satchels on the sofa and ran to wash their inky hands—a strict rule in the Smith household—before they sat down to the tea-table.

"I'll have the first guess, as I'm the eldest," said Evelyn. "It's a letter from dad."

"Mrs. Smith's eyes twinkled. "Yes and no," she replied. "You're warm, but not hot, Evie."

"Dad has sent me that Egypt beetle he talked about in his last letter," broke in Doris.

"Oh, no; you're quite cold," said her mother. "Now, who's going to have the last guess?"

The two children both spoke at the same time. "He's sent you a present," and "He's coming home on leave" was the simultaneous cry.

Mrs. Smith laughed. "You are a couple of duffers," she said. "No, it's better than any of those. There's a family boat going next week, and a few of the wives on the strength are going out by it to Egypt, and we're among the lucky ones."

There was a chorus of excitement then, which you should just have heard. Doris spilt her tea, and Evelyn clapped her hands so loudly that old Polly, the parrot, looked over the top of her cage with a most scornful expression, saying, "Sich a goings-on—sich a goings-on," which was a remark she only made when she was really annoyed with the family.

Mrs. Smith was overwhelmed with questions. What was Egypt like? Could they take Polly? Did she suppose Polly would like Egypt? Were they going to live in tents, or would they be in barracks as at home? And so on, till Mrs. Smith laughingly threatened to pack them all off to bed if they asked another question.

Directly tea was over and the tea-things cleared away, Evelyn fetched out her atlas, and she and Doris pored over it till bedtime, making up the most wonderful imaginary journey, so that their mother declared it would take them at least six months to get to dad if they wanted to see all those places on the way.

Mrs. Smith, though she took the news more quietly than the children, was really just as excited, for it was over a year since Sergeant Smith and two companies of the regiment had sailed for Egypt, and at that time it had not been possible for wives and families to accompany them.

Evelyn and Doris had been born in India while the regiment was stationed there, but they had been brought home when they were both still too little to remember anything about the country, and neither of them had been far from Edinburgh, which was their first home station till the war broke out. The regiment was now in York, and the grey old cathedral city was really more "home"



Doris clutched an old tin box, and Evelyn held Polly's cage.

to the children than any other town they could remember.

Mrs. Smith was a soldier's daughter herself, and she liked the chance of change which regimental moves afforded her, so she had been much disappointed when there had seemed no possibility of going with her husband to Egypt. Therefore, though the next week was so full of bustle and work that both Mrs. Smith and the children got very tired, they were all as happy as larks.

Mrs. Smith, as she often said, was an "old campaigner," and it was wonderful to see the amount of things which she managed to stow away into boxes and bundles. Every day Doris and Evelyn would bring fresh treasures which "couldn't possibly be left behind," and even when it looked absolutely hopeless to find another inch of space, Mrs. Smith would say cheerily: "What, must I find room for any more of your rubbish?" and pack the "rubbish" as carefully away into some corner or other as if it had been fine china.

They were all so busy that the week which elapsed before the *Zenobia* was to sail simply flew, and at last the morning dawned which was to see them start from York. They had to be up with the dawn, for the train left very early, and, almost too excited even to eat any breakfast, the two children sat with hats and coats on, Doris clutching an old tin hat-box that held things they were likely to need on the voyage, and Evelyn holding the cage where a most irate Polly sat, quite indignant at being sewn up in white cotton with just a little ventilation hole out of which she could peep if she liked at the top.

"Now we're really going," said Evelyn, delightedly, as the train moved off. "Good-bye, old York. You will be still here when we come back, but we're going to Egypt"; and from the depths of her shrouded cage Polly poked an inquisitive head and echoed "Good-bye-ee," which she had picked up from a drummer boy during the war.

It was a very long journey down to Southampton, and the children got very tired and rather cross by the time they reached their journey's end. All arrangements had been made to take them down to the docks, where the *Zenobia* was waiting. She looked a very small ship, berthed as she was between two much bigger liners, and the children were sadly disappointed.

"Why, mother, that ship will never be big enough to take us all on board—not with the luggage," exclaimed Evelyn, in a disappointed sort of voice. But Mrs. Smith only laughed.

"You wait a bit," she said. "You'll see we'll all be as snug and comfortable as can be in half an hour," and in her usual capable way she sorted the luggage out and spoke a friendly word with the quartermaster-sergeant, who was going about with a list on a piece of paper. Doris, a little bewildered by the lights and confusion, clung to Evelyn's hand, and Evelyn, followed close on her mother's heels, went down the companion-way and along a narrow corridor, with doors on either side, to the cabin which had been allotted to them. They were to share it with the farrier-sergeant's wife and her two little children, but the Smiths were first on the scene, and Mrs. Smith, taking advantage of the empty cabin, set to work at once to arrange their belongings so as to take up as little room as possible.

"You'll have to be neat and orderly here,

Evelyn," she said. "For there'll be little enough space when we all get in, and you, Doris, stop jumping up and down and come and unpack your bag. Then, when you've helped me to put this place to rights, you shall have your supper and get to bed—there'll be plenty of time to see the ship in the next fortnight, and they'll not want a pack of children running about till we're off."

The children presently had the cabin all fixed up, with everything so placed that they could get at it easily, and nothing in the way. Mrs. Gregory, who came in with her little Ivy and Baby Jim, exclaimed when she saw them all working away as busy as bees. "Well, my word, Mrs. Smith," she said. "I never saw anyone who lost less time than you do! I'll have to be getting my things out if Jim will let me, but he's so tired out, poor lamb and Ivy's crying for her supper."

Evelyn took hold of weary little Ivy's hand. "We'll take her to supper," she said eagerly. "Won't we, mother, and then Mrs. Gregory can get Baby Jim to bed?"

Just then a big bell rang, and the steward walked down the corridors telling everybody that supper was ready. It was immensely exciting eating supper in the ship's saloon, with a glimpse through the port holes of the lights of the docks, and the shining dark water lapping all around.

* * * * *

What a change it was to wake up and look out, not from your familiar bedroom window, but out of a round porthole on tossing grey waves! It wasn't a bit easy, either, to get dressed in such close quarters, and the three children came very near quarrelling once or twice as Ivy's boots got mixed up with Doris' and Evelyn's hair-brush had somehow walked across the cabin and slipped under Mrs. Gregory's berth.

However, at last they were washed and dressed, and after breakfast they began exploring the ship. It was rather cold, with a fresh breeze blowing, and as the ship got out into open sea she began to roll a little, which made it difficult to walk properly, and they had "balancing matches" with three or four other children, which meant seeing who could walk from one end of the narrow corridors down below, without touching the brass rail either side to steady themselves. Hardly anybody managed it, and most of them got a tumble or two in the course of the morning, but it was great fun all the same, and the dinner-bell sent them all trooping in as hungry as hunters.

Alas! before the day was over the rolling of the great ship grew worse, and both Doris and Evelyn—though they had been rather inclined to be "boasty" about their "sea legs"—were only too glad to creep into their little beds, and be tucked up by Mrs. Smith, who was an excellent sailor.

She was very much relieved when first Evelyn, and then Doris, began to take an interest in food and games again, and not to mind how much the ship bounced up and down on the big waves. They had their first peep at Gibraltar, which looked, as Doris said: "Just like a big rock lion lying down," and they saw the sun rise and make the brown rocks all pinky red. And once in the Mediterranean the weather was lovely, with blue skies and a bright blue sea, that Evelyn said reminded her of Reckitts' Blue!—which was not a very poetical comparison.

The two children were general favourites, for

they were jolly little people, always ready to take part in any games that were going on, playing fair and never minding if they didn't always win, and very kind to the tiny tots on board, who did not find it easy to amuse themselves as the older ones did.

One morning Evelyn ran up to her mother, in a state of excitement. "Oh, mother," she cried, "do you know to-morrow morning we shall be at Malta, and we're going to stop the whole day to get some more coal. Do you think we could go ashore?"

Of course, Mrs. Smith said Yes, for she herself had never been to Malta, and it was a chance too good to miss. So she put out fresh cotton frocks for the two girls, and the next morning they all looked very gay and summer-like as they went down the ship's ladder into the little boats that were waiting to take them into the port.

There on the quay, who should be waiting for them but Mrs. Gregory's brother, who was a

As the midday sun was really too hot to make any more walking about enjoyable, they all piled into two little carriages with awnings to keep the heat off their heads, and drove right out of the town to some beautiful gardens full of the most lovely flowers, where for the first time the children saw oranges growing. Altogether it was such a lovely day, that if it hadn't been for the prospect of seeing dad and Alexandria, I believe the Smith children would quite have liked to stop several days in Malta. But, of course, that wasn't at all possible, and as the sunset gun went off from the forts at Valetta, the *Zenobia* steamed out of the harbour, and was once more on her way to Egypt.

The *Zenobia* came into Alexandria harbour at midday, and all the children were eagerly lining



Evelyn and Doris hung over the deck-rail and gazed on the minarets of Alexandria.

petty officer in one of the warships lying in Valetta harbour.

"Well, if this isn't luck!" said Mrs. Smith. "Now we shall see the sights properly!" And so they did, for Mrs. Gregory's brother took them everywhere—to the governor's palace, full of fine old armour, pictures and tapestries, where they heard wonderful stories of the stormy past of Malta from the guide; to the Chapel of Bones, where the martyred victims of the great massacre were laid; through the quaint old street connected by long flights of stone steps, where they saw herds of goats being driven from house to house to be milked on the doorstep as the people wanted, and horses with gay high-peaked leather saddles and bright woollen tassels bobbing in every direction. They admired the Maltese ladies, with their curious hood-cloaks made of black silk and stiffened with wire, so that it stands out like a ship in full sail on one side.

the sides of the ship expecting every moment to be allowed to land. They forgot that a big ship cannot go straight into port without satisfying certain regulations, and they were very disappointed when they were told that they would have to wait until the port doctors had been to see that nobody was ill. Presently the little motor launch came puffing out, and everybody gazed eagerly at the brown-faced Egyptian crew who were rather disappointingly dressed in uniform, with only their red fez to mark them out from ordinary Europeans. However, when the doctor's visit was over and the pilot came alongside to take them in, they found his crew much more interesting to look at, for they were dressed in what the children described as "dressing-gowns" of gaily-striped stuff, and one had a gorgeous turban wound round his head instead of a fez, a "tarbrush," as they learned to call it.

Evelyn and Doris hung over the deck rail and

gazed over to the flat-roofed buildings and tall minarets of Alexandria.

"Look, Doris," said Evelyn, who, as the eldest, rather prided herself on being able to give information to her ten-year-old sister. "Those tall spiral-looking things are minarets, and they belong to the Egyptian people's churches—those are the churches, the round, fat buildings by the side. And dad says this city is a thousand years old and more, though it was all burnt down once in a bad fire—worse than the Great Fire of London"—which the children had just been learning about in history lessons at home. "And there's a big museum with mummies—dried dead people, you know, looking just like they used to look, because they've all been preserved in spices—and some of them are thousands of years old too."

Doris, however, was not particularly interested in mummies or museums—she never was, though Evelyn really liked history and pictures. Doris much preferred "alive things," as she called them, and her inquiry was: "Will there be camels at Alexandria? Dad said there were in Cairo."

Evelyn wasn't sure. "I don't think, somehow, Alexandria will be wild enough for them. I expect they're only for the desert. But I know there's a Zoo here, don't you remember dad said so in one of his letters? And there's a big one in Cairo, so I hope we go there some time. I expect dad will take us everywhere when he gets a day or two's leave."

"I wonder how Toby is," said Doris. Toby was their father's little dog, who had gone out with him on the troopship. "I expect he'll have forgotten all about us, though I don't suppose he'll have forgotten Polly." The two children giggled as they remembered how Toby, who was a friendly and inquisitive little chap, had put his face inside Polly's cage one day to try to find out what the queer beast was that made such queer sounds, and cried "meow" and "me-e-ek" when there was neither a cat nor the milkman about. Unfortunately, Polly hadn't at all appreciated his inquisitiveness, and she had given him a great tweak with her sharp beak, so that for the rest of the day Toby had gone about rubbing his poor sore nose with first one paw and then the other, as if he couldn't make out what was the matter.

Polly had enjoyed the voyage. Her cage had been hung up by the cook's special request outside his galley, as he called the neat little kitchen where he worked, and that just pleased Polly, who was of a sociable disposition and loved bustle and commotion. All the sailors had made a great pet of her, and of course, she was well known to all the regiment so everyone that passed the galley had a word with Polly and tried to teach her to say new sentences.

She had a comical way of hanging up to her cage when the ship rolled, with a look out of the corner of her eyes, saying in a sepulchral voice: "Oh, lor—now she goes—up she comes," very slowly, as the ship went this way and that, which used to send the crew into fits of laughter. Polly thoroughly enjoyed being the centre of attraction, and Mrs. Smith said she was afraid the bird would find life very dull when she had to go back to home life again.

Evelyn was holding Polly's cage, which had had the sacking removed after they got on the ship, but which once more, to the bird's great disgust,

was sewn round again, as Mrs. Smith was afraid she would make too much noise going through the street if she could see completely out. So only the top of her smooth grey head was visible, and she was muttering and chattering away to herself at the bottom of her cage, repeating over and over again: "Naughty Poll—poor Poll—Polly wasn't naughty Poll," like a gramophone record that has gone wrong.

As the boat drew alongside the quay everyone crowded to the side, eagerly scanning the faces of the people on the dockside, and waving their hands excitedly as soon as they found a familiar figure.

"Look, Doris! look, Evelyn! there's dad!" cried Mrs. Smith, as excited as a schoolgirl, for she had been the first to catch a glimpse of Sergeant Smith's tall form among the mass of khaki uniforms on the quay.

"So it is—there he is—wave, Doris," cried Evelyn, jumping up and down eagerly, and calling at the top of her voice: "Here we are, dad—better late than never." There was a few minutes hurly-burly, and the children had to control their impatience until the officers had collected their men and marched them off, before they could get at their father. Then the ship was invaded by Egyptian porters dressed in all colours of the rainbow, little boys selling oranges and Turkish delight, running in and out on bare brown feet. Baggage was being collected, officers' servants seemed afraid to take charge of their belongings, there was noise and bustle and the shouting of orders in strange tongues—it all seemed like a dream that Doris and Evelyn could hardly realize it when they found themselves packed tightly into a "gharry"—a little Victoria cab—with their father and mother, an excited Polly, and all the luggage, driving out of the dock gates through the narrow, twisting streets crowded with people of all nationalities which lead into the town.

"Well, and what sort of a voyage did you have?" asked their father. "Of course, you weren't sea-sick," with a laughing side glance at their mother.

"Yes we were," confessed Evelyn. "We were both ill, and then we got better and it was lovely."

"And we saw oranges growing in some gardens," chimed in Doris, "and we drove out there in a little carriage like this, only nicer, and it had a hood over the top."

"And Polly loved it, and she's learned ever so many new words, and why didn't Toby come with you?" broke in Evelyn again.

Their father laughed. "One at a time, kiddies," he said. "I'm nearly deafened. Look, there are the native bazaars, I'll bring you down here shopping sometimes, all of you, but you're never to come here alone." And they all gazed out eagerly at the narrow streets and lines of little booths with brown-faced men sitting beside them ready to sell their wares.

One street was full of nothing but shoe-shops and there were rows and rows of coloured leather slippers hanging on strings outside the door. Another street was full of a noisy "tap-tap"—"chink-chink," and here were men beating out brass into flat trays to hold coffee-cups, or working the pattern into a big brass bowl or water-jug. Another street was the leather-workers' street, and here were saddlers, and leather bags and

pouches of all shapes and sizes being actually made in the open air, before the children's delighted eyes.

"It's like *Chu Chin Chow*," exclaimed Evelyn, who had been taken to see that piece at the theatre on the only visit she had ever made to London; and this made her father laugh, for, as he told her, they had copied *Chu Chin Chow* from the East and not the East from *Chu Chin Chow*!

"Why, kiddie," he said, "they've been making slippers and brass trays and earthenware pots—look over there—there's a potter working his wheel now—like that in the street for hundreds of years," and I don't suppose they've altered the pattern much in all that time."

Doris was specially fascinated by the potter who sat working a treadle with his feet which made his wheel go round, while with his hands, he shaped the clay; and she would have liked to stop and watch him working, but the little gharry was moving too quickly, and soon they were in wide European-looking streets with fashionable shops and trains running down the middle and French signs over the shop fronts. "You'll have to learn to 'parlez-vous', here, miss," said her father to Evelyn jokingly as he noticed her spelling out one of the names. "There's lots of French people here and Greeks, and they speak as much French as their own language, and so do a lot of the Gypies."

Mrs. Smith laughed, and said English was good enough for her; but Evelyn thought it would be rather fun to learn a little bit of Arabic so as to talk to the natives, if it wasn't too difficult.

It was a long drive up to the barracks, but there was so much to see on the way that none of the party grew weary, and they were quite astonished when at length the gharry stopped at the big gate. Their quarters were pleasant, airy rooms, whitewashed and bare, without much furniture; but they had beautiful little balconies, which delighted the children, who ran out at once to explore them, followed by an excited Toby, who was simply overjoyed to see them all—even his old enemy, Polly, who looked quite at home presently, with her cage hung from a nail which the sergeant had fixed up on one of the walls.

"Now we'll all have to set to work and unpack and make the place a bit more like home," said Mrs. Smith. "And then to-morrow dad's got a whole day off, and he'll take us round a bit to see the sights," and she pinned a big apron over her dress and set to work with a will, just as if she were in York.

"My word, but it's good to see you all here," said the sergeant, as he watched them all busy as bees, putting out the home treasures, a picture or two, the old clock that used to stand on the dresser, and the blue vases that his mother had



They all looked out eagerly at the narrow streets and lines of little booths.

given him and which Mrs. Smith had packed with such care that they hadn't even a chip. And Evelyn stopped to give him an extra big hug for being so pleased to see them again.

Soon all was as cosy and home-like as possible, and after tea, the children, wearied out with work and excitement, were glad to tumble into bed. Doris raised a sleepy head from her pillow to whisper to her sister. "I say, Evelyn," she said, "I've got the loveliest sort of feeling that we're going to have lots of adventures in Egypt."

"Have you?" said Evelyn drowsily. "I'm glad of that, for I love adventures."

But neither of them remembered the old proverb that "there's many a true word spoken in jest," nor guessed what exciting times lay before them before they found their way back to England's shores again.

NEXT WEEK:

Look out for

DORIS' TERRIBLE EXPERIENCE.

A Bar of Sharp's Kreemy is Given Free with each copy. Did you get yours?

Terry and The Nigger Minstrels

A SHORT STORY

By MALCOLM CHEER

"Where's my dressing gown?"

"The sheets have gone from my bed!"

"Girls, someone's put treacle in mine!"

"Oh, the beasts, they have sewn up the neck of my nightgown!"

Dismal wails rose from Dormitory B, where Terry Grahame and her three chums, Pauline Stephens, Madge Wynon and Lulu Studd slept.

Terry clambered into bed and burst forth with a stifled shriek.

"Ow! Ow! A hedgehog—or a porcupine—in my bed!"

"How can I clear this treacle away?" lamented Pauline, as Terry leapt out of bed, and, rummaging under the clothes, produced two stiff-bristled hair brushes.

"I can't find my sheets anywhere," sniffed Madge, dolefully, poking carefully in the chest of drawers and under the beds.

"The beasts," said Lulu, ripping the neck of her nightgown open recklessly. "I'll wager you anything it's those girls, Phyllis and Molly."

A stifled giggle from the door seemed to confirm her words, and with one accord and muffled cries of rage, they seized their pillows and flung open the door to reveal the rapidly-retreating forms of Phyllis Newell and Molly Vivian. Terry hurled her pillow and words of rage at Molly's departing form.

"Pigs! We'll pay you out, see if we don't!"

At this juncture Miss Monkton, the Maths Mistress at St. Agatha's, came sailing round the corner and stopped further discussion.

Having given them a lecture, "short and sweet," on the behaviour of young ladies, she departed, first pausing to put out the light, and left Pauline rummaging in the pool of treacle in the dark.

"Just let them wait," whispered Terry in an ominous voice. "They'll hear of this one day."

And when Terry Grahame said a thing she meant it.

* * * * *

"Girls," said Pauline, bursting into Study A, where Terry and the two others sat eating cream puffs and grumbling at the scarcity of wealthy uncles and godparents, "I've got precisely one ha'penny," said Lulu, sadly, cyeing a cream puff with her head on one side.

"Girls, do listen," said Pauline, tweaking Terry's pigtail. "Or, rather, look at this."

She waved a scrap of paper over Madge's head.

Madge wrinkled her nose scornfully. "My sweet Polly, as I've hardly the energy to eat a cream puff, how do you think I'm going to sit up and read anything?" And she subsided into the couchette.

"You read it, Paul," prompted Lulu from the floor, as she popped the last piece of cream puff into her mouth.

"So be it, O Lazybones," said Pauline, clam-

bering on the table so as to get a more commanding position.

"Listen to this:—

"At the concert to be given in the Big Hall on Saturday evening next, in aid of Heathfields Hospital, Miss Phyllis Newell and Miss Molly Vivian, with six of their classmates, have very kindly consented to appear as nigger minstrels."

"There, Terry, Madge, don't you see? Here is our big chance for r-r-revenge."

She rolled her eyes dramatically.

"Al-r-r-ready, my sweet and innocent companions, your little Polly has hatched a plot."

"Come down, then, and tell," said Terry, sitting up and making a grab at Pauline's ankles.

Pauline descended with more haste than dignity, and the four heads, yellow, brown, red-gold and black, were bent together, a sight that boded ill for someone.

* * * * *

Two days later Phyllis and Molly and their troupe of niggers had a dress rehearsal.

Terry strolled into the big dressing-room where they were putting the finishing touches to their make-up.

Eight black faces were turned to her. Eight red buns bobbed above them.

"You do look frights," she smiled encouragingly.

"Oh, Terry, do bunk off," said Phyllis, from the other end of the big room. "You're only in the way."

"Thank you, my darling sister pupil," said Terry, making a mock bow, "for those few kind words: all the same, I mean to stay."

She roamed restlessly round the room, until, of a sudden, her eyes lighted on a large blue bottle that stood in a conspicuous place on the dressing table.

She opened it and sniffed gently, then, with a wry grimace said: "What a delightful perfume! What is it, Nina?" To one of the niggers.

"The stuff we black ourselves with."

"Humph! You have my sympathy O chee-ild!"

"It wipes off easily with a little cold cream," said Nina.

"It does? Lucky for you. I will begone." She waved an airy hand, and departed, followed by a chorus of: "Thank goodness!"

That was on the Wednesday. The following Saturday, the day of the concert, came in due course.

The big dressing-room was a scene of wild confusion.

"Doesn't this stuff smell funny?" said Mabel Phillips, as she applied the black make-up with a generous hand. "Seems somehow different."

"Imagination, Mats," said Phyllis, as she straightened her red bow. "Do I look all right?"

"Here, you don't want all the mirror, Rene."

"Daisy, do pin me up."

"Ouch! That's my toe, if you don't mind, Dora."

Pauline popped a wicked face round the door.

"Five minutes more," she twinkled. "My! you do look beautiful—the enchantresses of the file." She threw herself into a Cleopatra pose in the centre of the room.

"My dear infant," in scornful tones from Phyllis, "we are niggers."

"You certainly look it," laughed Pauline, as she departed.

Mabel Phillips dabbed the last spot of black on a white patch at the end of her nose, and, pulling on her wig, fastened her bow, and prepared to follow the others, who were already hurrying down the stairs.

Mavis Vincent finished her song, rose, and bowed.

The noise of clapping, and the buzzing rise and fall of voices reached the ears of the nigger minstrels standing at the side of the stage.

"Oh, dear, I'm so—so nervous," stammered Dora Beaston.

"Buck up, soon be dead," said Terry cheerfully, as she passed, and joined Madge, Polly and Lulu on the other side of the stage, where, for some

unaccountable reason, they were chuckling wickedly.

The niggers went on, acted their parts, singing and dancing well, and received their well-earned applause, then retired, flushed with success beneath their dark complexions, and at peace with the world.

They ascended the stairs to the dressing-room, chattering merrily, and Terry and Pauline followed.

"It was ripping, Phyl," they gurgled, as the girls poured into the dressing-room, and taking off the nigger wigs, clamoured excitedly for the cold cream.

Dora took her towel, and with a sweep across her chin, removed the grease, but not the black.

She rubbed a little harder, and Phyllis and Molly rubbed their noses with some heat.

"Whatever's the matter?" asked Terry anxiously. "Won't it come off?"

"O-o-o-h! How dreadful," said Polly, raising seraphic blue eyes. "Girls, whatever will you do?"

"But it must come off," said Phyllis, almost in tears, as she rubbed hard, and the wails of the other girls rose around her.

Mabel applied more cold cream, with little success. They lathered with soap and water, they scrubbed with nail-brushes, and still their faces remained a dark grey tint that was decidedly unbecoming.

Terry hurled her pillow at Molly's departing form.



"I'm going to Miss Hunt," wailed Phyllis at length, throwing the nail-brush away.

The seven other niggers vanished after her through the door, and after a wild fit of giggles, Terry and Pauline pulled themselves together and followed.

They found Miss Hunt, the head mistress, surveying the weeping niggers with a grave face.

"Oh, Miss Hunt," said Terry. "What could have happened?"

"Do you think," asked Polly, blue eyes wide and innocent, her voice shocked, "that anyone could have been wicked enough to change the bottles?"

"I sincerely hope not, Pauline," said Miss Hunt.

"Besides," broke in Rene Godfrey, "there isn't another bottle like it."

Miss Hunt turned to Mabel Phillips.

"Go and fetch the bottle here, Mabel," she said, and Mabel vanished, weeping copiously, to reappear holding the bottle at arm's length.

Miss Hunt wrinkled her nose daintily over it.

"It looks the same—quite the same," she said.

"My dear girls, are you sure it isn't?"

"It can't be," wailed Phyllis. "It came off all right at the dress rehearsal.

"Have you tried to get it off?" asked the headmistress.

"Tried! We've rubbed it, cold creamed it, lathered it, s-s-scrubbed it, and s-still it w-won't come off," said Dora, dissolving into tears.

"Turpentine, then," said Miss Hunt, rising and marshalling them before her. She took them back into the dressing-room, and sent Nina to the storeroom for some turpentine.

Some half an hour later she surveyed a group of girls, whose faces were tinged an unbecoming smoke-grey tint.

"I'm afraid we shall have to leave it at that," she said. "It will fade off in time.

"Please, Miss Hunt," said Phyllis, pausing on the top stair, "need—need we go to classes till it's faded?"

"Why not? Of course you must go," said Miss Hunt. And slowly, sadly, the eight wandered down, to be met by Terry and Pauline.

"Poor dears," said Terry sweetly. "You do look frights. Don't you feel bad?"

"Much the same," Pauline twinkled wickedly, "I should think, as I felt when I was clearing treacle from my bed in the dark."

Phyllis scanned Terry with a searching glance.

She raised wide, innocent eyes and smiled seraphically, then she sniffed daintily. "What a queer smell that stuff has. Smells—like—like—rather like—hat dye—don't you think?"

Phyllis gasped, Molly gasped, the six others gasped, as the truth slowly dawned upon them.

"Terry! Oh, how could you? You little cat!" burst from eight indignant pairs of lips.

But Terry and Pauline had vanished, and were rolling in glee on the floor of Study A.

"O-oh, Polly!" gurgled Terry, as her eye fell on four empty bottles labelled "Hat Dye" standing in a row on the mantelpiece. "O-oh! Four bottles at one and sixpence per bottle—six shillings—it—o-oh—oh—means no—cream puffs—or chocs for years—but—Polly, darling—do hold me up—it was worth it."

THE MASCOT DOLL

A Money-making Idea.



A girl of my acquaintance was greatly interested in a sale of work and wished to give a contribution. She hadn't much time for needlework and very little money, so she put her brains in soak and decided on mascot dolls. She bought half a dozen saucy ones at twopence each, found some pale primrose-coloured crepe paper in the house, also part of a ball of Sylko. From the former she cut oblong pieces to simulate wings, pleated each in the middle, and tied it round the doll's neck with the Sylko.

Some squares of stiff coloured paper served for the fortune and the rhymes, etc., and she persuaded her sister to type these for her. The squares were folded envelopewise, tacked together tightly with the Sylko, and tied round the body.

She sold her first lot at ninepence each to friends, bought a dozen next time, and got rid of them almost as fast as she could make them, and went on in this way, till she made altogether thirty shillings for the sale—a splendid donation.

THE MOTTOES

These gave her the most trouble, but a girl chum who could string rhymes together helped her out. Here are some of them, and no doubt others may suggest themselves to you.

My dear, 'twill ever be your part,
To reign alone in one true heart.

* * * * *

Unless you quickly mend your ways
You'll find yourself with none to praise.

* * * * *

Constant, clinging, tender, true,
Your mate is steering straight for you.

* * * * *

Be very sure she loves you well,
But being shy, she dare not tell.

* * * * *

You're a sorry flirt; take care that you don't
fall between two stools.

* * * * *

An old man's nurse, for a big fat purse

Storyettes.

A MOVING CRACK.

"Auntie, there's hair in my soup."
 "Nonsense, Harry, it's only a crack."
 "I never knew cracks moved before."

A HUMAN RAINBOW.

A little girl was recently heard to say to her doll: "Well, dolly, if first you cry and then you smile, a rainbow will come on your face."

GOOD ADVICE.

A schoolgirl, on hearing of a companion who was unkindly treated at home, remarked: "Little girls should be very careful in their choice of parents."

AN EXCITING WALK.

Nellie, aged four, returned home with nurse, and running up to her mother, called out: "Oh, I've been for a walk, and my hat blowed off, and I came home all the way with my head bare-footed."

TEA AND TONGUE.

Mrs. Jones was entertaining a select company to tea, and Bobby, who had behaved very well, refused some cake, and asked: "Ma, may I have some tongue instead?"

"But there isn't any, dear."

"That's funny," remarked her young hopeful, "for I heard pa say there would be lots of it."

A PERFECT LADY.

Her mother was entertaining in the drawing-room when Jenny clattered noisily down from the nursery.

"Go upstairs again and come down very quietly," said Mrs. Jones.

A short pause ensued, and Jenny reappeared, saying:—

"You didn't hear me this time, did you, mother?"

"No, Jenny, you came down without a sound, as a lady should."

"H'm! yes," returned her daughter. "I slid down the banisters."

THE FAIRY FOLK.

Such lovely guests as throng my gates
 Were never seen, I trow—
 Quaint fairy folk with lightsome step
 And many a curtsy low.
 Grave, gentle dames in purple caps,
 Wee babes in bonnets white,
 Fair maids in gowns of pearl and rose,
 A gay and gladsome sight!
 My neighbours say, with careless air:
 "Your sweet peas bloom to-day!"
 They know not these are fairy folk
 A-keeping holiday.

The Care of Boots and Shoes.

Never wear a shoe that will not allow the great toe to lie in a straight line.

Never wear a shoe that pinches the heel.

Never wear a shoe or boot that is tight anywhere.

Never wear a shoe or boot so large in the heel that the foot is not kept in place.

Never wear a shoe with a sole turning up very much at the toes, as this causes the cords on the upper part of the foot to contract.

Never wear a shoe that presses up into the hollow of the foot.

Never come from high heels to low ones at one jump.

Never wear one pair of shoes day after day unless obliged to do so. Two pairs of boots worn a day alternately last longer, and are much more healthy.

Never wear a short stocking or one which, after being washed, is not at least half an inch longer than the foot. Bear in mind that stockings shrink. Be sure that they will allow your toes to spread out at the extreme ends, as this keeps the joints in place and makes a strong and attractive foot.

SHOE LACES.

When the tags come off quite new laces, smear the ragged ends over with black sealing wax and press into a point while the wax is warm.

SHOES THAT PINCH.

If a boot or shoe pinches in any particular part, a cloth wrung out of very hot water and laid over the place while the boot is on will expand the leather and give relief.

WHEN BUYING SHOES.

These should be tried on in the afternoon or evening, when the feet are at their largest. Wear your thickest woollen stockings on these occasions and you need never be troubled with painful feet.

HOME-MADE HEEL PRESERVERS.

These can be easily fashioned at home from the wrist part of old kid gloves. Five inches is quite wide enough, and one and three-quarters in depth, as they must not be seen above the shoe. Cut and leave the centre part for the under part of the heel, the length being about three and a-half inches. Then sew about six inches of strong elastic at each corner; those who have a very high instep would require more. Of course you sew the upper to the under part, then it fits the heel, and is a great saving to the stockings.

THE SCHOOLGIRL
 COMPETITION COUPON

21st February, 1922.



“Who Said Sharps?”

If there's anything that will get Lazy Bones out of bed quicker than anything else it's SHARP'S SUPER-KREEM TOFFEE. You won't really eat it before breakfast, of course, but it's a scrumptious thing to look forward to later in the day, and a fine thing to dream about when the Dustman claims you at bed-time. It's just the very nicest, the purest, and most nourishing sweet you can possibly have. Everybody says so—so it must be true.

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