

Family Reading.

Falling Leaves.

What will become of the trees, Mamma? The leaves are falling, one by one. Colder it blows; Soon come the snows. What will become of the trees, Mamma. The bare, brown trees, when all is done? Will not the trees be cold Mamma, When all the leaves are blown away? When nights are long, And winds are strong, Will not the trees be cold, Mamma, On many a cold and wintry day? What will become of the leaves, Mamma? Away before the wind they fled; After their play, Hurried away. What will become of the leaves, Mamma? I can not think that they were dead. Poor little leaves! It is sad, Mamma. If I run after them, will they mind? Now for a race! Now for a chase! I will bring you some pretty leaves, Mamma; Some tired leaves that are left behind. —St. Nicholas Almanac

My First Day as a Senate-page.

At a few minutes before twelve o'clock, the venerable gentleman Captain Bassett told me to go to the Vice-President's desk and put the gavel upon a certain spot on the table. Hardly had I done so, when, exactly at twelve o'clock, in walked two men through the door near me. They were Schuyler Colfax, the Vice-President of the United States, and Dr. Newman, the chaplain of the senate. The Vice-President advanced to the side of his desk, took up the gavel, and gave one loud rap. At once the buzzing in the galleries and on the floor ceased; and in perfect silence, Dr. Newman ascended the steps to the Vice-President's chair, and standing up, delivered a short prayer.

The prayer was hardly finished, when nearly all the senators began to clap their hands in every part of the chamber, making quite a racket. They had a habit of doing that immediately after the opening exercises, and, on one occasion, caused an old man in the gallery to exclaim, 'Wall, I'll be hanged if I saw anything perkerkerly fine about that prayer!' But they were not applauding the prayer—they were merely calling for pages!

When the clapping commenced, the pages started to run in every direction to see who should be the first to get the messages of the favorite senators and a certain senator who sat far over on the Democratic side, even amused himself by writing letters and soaring them high up into the air, and even against the ceiling of the room, and watching the pages attempt to catch them as they sailed down toward the floor. I think he could sail a letter better than any other senator.

Of course, this was no great achievement to boast about, but some of the senators sat through a whole session so quietly that they seemed never to do anything except to go to the Senate every day and sit still and vote. And I remember once a senator came into the chamber just as his name was reached by the clerk who was calling the roll on a vote. He looked around, and did not know what was going on or what he should do, and I pitied him and called out from behind him, 'Vote 'No!' And he did! Of course he thought it was some responsible senator speaking to him. But I had been in the senate several days before I had enough courage to pretend to advise a senator. Sometimes the senators could not think of anything to send the pages for, and we would have an easy time; and, instead of sitting, as we ought, up in an erect and dignified position, we would kneel down upon the soft carpet and play marbles. I have often gone up on the Republican side to where the Vice-President sat, as on a throne, and played marbles with a page on the Democratic side, almost under the Vice-President's chair. It would make some of the senators angry to see us do this, but most of the senators believed in letting us do whatever we pleased, so long as we kept still, while the young ladies in the gallery usually paid more attention to what we did than to what the law-makers were doing. —St. Nicholas.

Advice to a Boy.

Get away from a crowd a little every day, my dear boy. Stand one side and let the world run by while you get acquainted with yourself, and see what kind of a fellow you are. Ask yourself hard questions about yourself. Find out all you can about yourself. Ascertain from original sources if you are really the manner of man people say you are. Find out if you are always honest; if you always tell the square, perfect truth in business dealings; if your life is as good and upright at eleven o'clock at night as it is at noon; if you are as sound a temperance man on a fishing excursion as you are at a Sunday-school picnic; if you are as good a boy when you go to Chicago as you are at home; if, in short, you really are the sort of a young man your father hopes you are, your mother says you are, and your sweetheart believes you are. Get on intimate terms with yourself, my boy, and believe me, every time you come out from these private interviews you will be a stronger, better, purer man. Don't forget this, Telemachus, and it will do you good. —Burlington Hawkeye.

"If I were a Girl."

'If I were a girl' said a well known New England clergyman recently, 'I wouldn't parade too much in public places.' He mentioned a number of other things that he would not do. He would not think too much about dress or about parties, or about fashionable society. But in regard to the folly of parading in public places he was particularly emphatic. A good many girls acquire the habit of parading the streets before they comprehend how objectionable it is. Their motive at first is simple amusement, and afterwards they like thus to draw upon themselves the notice of others. But notice so attracted is seldom respectful, and the very young man who will look admiringly at the girls he meets under such circumstances will probably rejoice in his own heart that his sister is not among them. There is too much of this sort of thing in many of our smaller towns and villages and we are glad the practice has been publicly denounced from the pulpit.

Inquisitive Floss.

If there ever was an inquisitive dog, it was Floss. Nothing came to the house, in the way of a basket, hamper, parcel, or package of any kind, that he did not examine carefully, sniffing around, and rubbing his nose against it, and watching eagerly to see it opened.

He knew the butcher's boy, and he knew the grocer's man, and manifested the liveliest interest in them.

More especially in the grocer, as Floss was particularly partial to biscuits; and the rustling of the paper bags excited him greatly. He knew quite well that if he were in the way when they were opened, he should get a biscuit thrown to him; and he was accordingly always on the watch at the proper time.

Unfortunately, Floss was too often on the watch; and if no one were near to gratify his curiosity, he would seek to do it himself. This led to many disasters, which placed him in continual disgrace with the cook.

'Was ever such a provoking dog known!' said she: 'he's always in mischief. If he could have a sharp lesson some day, it would do him all the good in the world.' Get out of the kitchen, sir! and she flapped one of her dusters in the face of Floss, who speedily beat a retreat.

'What is the matter, Ann?' asked her mistress, who met Floss running at full speed from the kitchen regions.

'Matter! ma'am?' said Ann. 'Why, Floss has upset the basket of eggs that came in this morning, and half of them are broken. There will be no good done till the dog is well punished.'

Floss took care to keep out of Ann's way for the rest of the day; but the next morning he discovered a packet on the kitchen table that he had not seen before. To jump upon a chair, and from that upon the table, was the work of a moment. And there was Floss, worrying at the parcel, which had only thin paper wrapped around it.

Worry, worry, worry, puff, puff, puff, a tear in the paper, and a white cloud; and then Floss looked like a miller, for he was covered with flour.

'The fine flour that was for the best pastry!' cried Ann, as she hurried back to the kitchen. 'And what a litter to be sure!' Then she turned around to vent her wrath on the unfortunate Floss, who, as usual, had crept away when he had done the mischief.

But, in a few days, Ann was avenged. A basket arrived—a covered basket—which was placed in the larder, where some water-lilies had also been placed for coolness.

By some wonderful instinct, Floss discovered that something fresh had come into the house, and was on the alert for the opening of passage and pantry doors that would enable him to take a survey.

He found his opportunity at last. Ann was busy making tarts, and no one was about.

Cautiously he approached the basket, cautiously he inserted his paw, and forced open the lid. And then he waited; for two black creatures, such as he had never seen before, began to stir.

The next thing that he knew was that the two black creatures had escaped from the basket and that one was holding on to his fore-paw. 'Holding' perhaps scarcely describes it: the creature was pinching his poor paws as hard as he could; and struggle as he would, he could not get rid of it.

So, in abject misery, Floss sat down on his hind legs and howled loudly. Ann was the first to appear.

'Ah, my master!' said she: 'you are served out for meddling at last. I'm not a bit sorry for you. I'm not going to help you, for you're having a good lesson; and I hope it will cure you of your meddling ways.'

But, though Ann did not help him, his kind mistress, who heard him crying out, came and released him from the claws of the lobster; for the black creature who was punishing him so severely was nothing more nor less than a live lobster.

'You must take warning, my poor Floss,' said his mistress, 'and not meddle with what you do not understand. You may be sure that those who play with fire will some time be burned.'

Floss slunk out of the kitchen beside his mistress, a sadder and wiser dog, and determined henceforth not to pry into matters not concerning him.

The Message of Music to the Soul.

The following are the more salient passages of Rev. Canon Knox-Little's sermon in Worcester Cathedral on the music festival there. He took as his text Zech. ix. 17: 'For how great is His goodness, and how great is His beauty.' After having alluded to the evidence of musical and poetic gifts contained in the writings of Zechariah, he went on to ask what is the message of the music to the soul of man? He said:—

Whatever the message of the music may be, music is a gift of the highest, the most glorious. But what is the message of music? For any saying of prophet or apostle to bring a message to the human heart three ingredients are necessary. For there are messages that belong to classes and peculiarities of social distinction, and there are messages that belong to mankind. Now a message for mankind must be enabled first of all to answer three questions: 1. What is its pathos? What is the pathos of music? It is this, like the withering grass and like the fading flower, it is beautiful, but soon it is gone. Sphor, Mendelssohn, Beethoven, Handel take the common sounds, they put them to lofty uses. But, however beautiful, however moving, suddenly it is gone. The pathos of music is like the withering grass and the fading flower, however beautiful, it draws to a close. There is one power in beauty that thrills us; it is its passing character, its fading life; and that very pathos wakens us to the perception how great is His goodness, how great is His beauty. For the best and the brightest that we know in our mortal pilgrimage, at its best, at its

brightest, tells us how great is that that knows no ending, and that is God. The pathos of music is not only that it ends so swiftly, but also that it speaks to us of a world of mystery which we only touch for a moment, and then which vanishes away. How sad it is to some of us that the sensations of music cannot abide sometimes an hour beyond the sound. Why, ye musicians, remember as the throne of Tyre was set between the sands and the sea, so the lordly art that illustrates God's worship this week in this cathedral is set on the border land between sensation and the soul. And who can draw a line between them? Our best affections are side by side with our most disastrous passions, and music thrills the sensuous nature; but if we will, through sensation it thrills the soul. Let us remember that in every life there is music, a chamber of sound. There comes a moment when death or sin or sorrow makes that life a frightful pause; is it to end after the pause in discord, or is it to end in the harmonies of heaven? 2. What is the danger of music? Ah! ye musicians on that orchestra, your choir that sing God's glory in this stately cathedral day by day, can you believe that there is danger in your glorious art? Your science of music may be a science of sensation. There are your modern apostles of culture, and what do they teach? They teach that man is in an ascending scale, and that he has advanced from point to point, not by that which we Christians call the grace of God, but by art, by culture. The danger of music; it may vibrate through your nerves, touch and quicken and stimulate your passions, raise you up to an excitement that is beyond the ordinary level of life. What then? There have been musicians, very possibly are now, greatly gifted with power of hand, of heart, of brain, who are yet the miserable victims of mortal sin. Do not be deluded into the thought that the most glorious art that God has given you can regenerate your nature or purify your souls. There is a materialism which is not the coarsest, there is a vagueness of the idea which is not the most evidently flimsy, but that materialism is worse than the coarsest, and that flimsiness of idea is more deluding than the purest expression of merely mental thought, because it steals God's robes to enwrap it; and modern culture and the apostles of modern teaching steal, in music above all, the very clothing of the Eternal for the purpose of enwrapping mortal sin. Oh ye apostles of what is called beauty, in an age that forgets the Divine presence and the power of the grace of God, never allow yourselves in music or in other things to take the part of a divorce court between those whom God has indissolubly joined, Goodness and Beauty.

Which do you mean by the image, sir?' asked the father with mock severity. 'If your schoolmaster, I can not allow you so to slight those in authority over you, and if Billy, he is merely your own image in mischief. However, there is nothing to be done; Billy must go.'

'Baa!' came a hoarse voice near, as the door was butted open, and the culprit himself appeared.

Billy was a fine goat. His long hair was white as snow, and as Tom took good care to give him a thorough bath at least once a week, Billy was not the unpleasant companion which many neglected Billies are.

'Yes, sir, you have come in time to hear your doom pronounced,' and Mr. Craig raised a warning forefinger at the intruder, whose only reply was a toss of the head, while he walked gravely to the side of Tom for his expected treat—a piece of bread from his young master's hand.

'You need not hope for pardon or grace there,' continued the station-master. 'Were he on bended knee to intercede on your behalf, it would not abate a jot of your sentence.'

'But what has he done?' asked Mrs. Craig.

'He has transgressed against the powers that be, broken the bylaws of the Cambrian Railway Company, shamelessly trespassed on their lands, willfully destroyed their property, and absolutely made for himself a veritable bandit's den in our very midst. I shudder to think of his utter depravity.'

'Craig, what are you thinking of? Do be serious for a moment.'

'Serious, my dear? I am serious as a judge should be. I speak only the truth. You know Jones, the inspector was here yesterday evening. He intended making arrangements for selling that hay-rick yonder, for now, at the close of such a hard winter, it would fetch a good price. We went out to view it. It appeared all fair until we got to the lee-side beyond, when we saw a good-sized hole in it near the ground. Jones bent down to look in it, and then said in an awful whisper:—

'Craig, something unearthly is in here. There is some big white thing with eyes like burning coals.'

'Nonsense,' said I. 'Perhaps the Cambrian are lodging angels unawares.'

'Jones stooped down again for a second look, when, with a frightened "Baa!" Billy leaped out of the hole over Jones' prostrate figure, and scudded away.'

His listeners both laughed aloud, while Billy looked gravely from one to the other.

'As soon as Jones had recovered his feet and composed himself, and I had assured him that Billy was the only one of his species within half a dozen miles, we examined the rick minutely. It was nothing but a shell! Billy had eaten it nearly all, except an outside crust all round, and had indeed made himself splendid winter quarters. 'Tis no wonder he kept in such good condition through-out the hard winter. You see there is nothing for it; Billy must go.'

A Welsh Goat's Temperance Lecture.

'Tom, I am afraid you must make up your mind to part with a very dear friend,' said his father.

'A dear friend of mine,' asked Tom, looking up with his cup still in his hand.

'Yes, one of your dearest friends, perhaps, I should have said.'

The party—father, mother, and a rollicking boy of fourteen—were seated at breakfast in the station-master's house of a village on the Cambrian Railway, in Montgomeryshire.

Tom and his mother both looked their surprise, but there was a twinkle in his father's eyes that made Tom doubtful whether his father was in earnest or not.

'Who is it, Craig?' asked the wife.

'Billy,' was the laconic reply.

'Billy!' echoed Tom, in a very different tone of voice. 'Why, father, what has Billy done now?'

'Ask rather, What Billy has not done? and it would be easier to answer you. I should think that eating every green thing in the garden, inspecting the ventilation of the house from the chimney top, frightening the school-children out of their wits, and butting your schoolmaster into the ditch, were enough.'

The wife smiled, and Tom laughed outright.

'Oh, father, surely you don't count

that last as any wrong? He only paid a part of my debt. But what an image he presented,' and the boy laughed immoderately at the recollection.

'Which do you mean by the image, sir?' asked the father with mock severity. 'If your schoolmaster, I can not allow you so to slight those in authority over you, and if Billy, he is merely your own image in mischief. However, there is nothing to be done; Billy must go.'

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'Oh, father, surely you don't count

your station, and finding, on reference to our letter-book, that your attention has been previously called to a similar occurrence, I have now to request that you will immediately dispose of the animal in question, and so effectually prevent the recurrence of such damage to the Company's property. I am, sir, your obedient servant.

'J. CATTLE, Traffic Manager.'

'What will you do, then, father?' and there was a gulp in the boys' throat.

'We will give Billy the chance of retrieving his honor by serving his Queen and country.'

Tom could not for the moment make our his father's drift.

'That is to say we will make a soldier of him.'

Tom understood now.

'The Royal Welsh!' he exclaimed.

'Will Billy be the regimental goat?'

'I think so. The post has been for some time vacant, and I have already made some arrangements. So Billy will be sent in a day or two to the headquarters of the regiment at Rhyl.'

A few days after Billy started on his journey his horns having been suitably bristled by Tom before he left. The officers of the train were all known to Billy so that he was duly handed over at Rhyl to Corporal Price, who awaited him with a guard of honor to receive the new officer. For such should Billy be considered, the goat always marching at the head of the regiment.

In a very little time Billy became as prime a favorite with the men as he had been with the railway officials, and they petted and spoiled him as much as a goat of Billy's character could be spoiled.

Billy soon became as well known in Rhyl as the regimental uniform was, and in the public parades through the town his dignified appearance, as he stalked proudly and with head erect at the head of the regiment, attracted universal attention.

Never had a regimental goat been more attentive to his duties than was Billy. At drill, parade and roll-call, Billy was ever to the fore. He seemed to take as much pride in the regiment as the men did in him. And when the men—overgrown boys that they were—had leisure, as they had in abundance, they found in Billy as hearty a play-fellow as they found him a ready comrade in duty.

Well-fed, well-groomed, well-housed, well cared for in every way, Billy's lot among goats was indeed a happy one. But, alas! pride goeth before a fall, and Billy was to be no exception to the rule.

Billy had not merely the right of entry to the mess-room, but was always a welcome guest there, and received many a dainty morsel from the friendly hands of the men. One evening, however, it happened that Corporal Price out of a spirit of thoughtless mischief, proposed that Billy should partake of the liquids as well as the solids of the mess-table. The suggestion was at once seized upon, and the men eagerly watched Billy's first bibulous attempt.

Corporal Price coaxingly held out his cup and Billy, after a suspicious preliminary sniff, quaffed off the contents. Another and yet another of the men offered Billy a drink, an invitation he could not think of declining. Finally the large earthen vessel which held the beer at the head of the table was placed upon the floor and Billy was directed to help himself, which he proceeded to do with such hearty good-will that he became, to the intense amusement of the men—I am ashamed to have to acknowledge—helplessly, unmistakably intoxicated.

I shall not attempt to describe his symptoms. Suffice it to say that the next morning Billy was, for the first time, absent from roll-call, and did not put in an appearance all day. Nothing could tempt him to leave his stable.

When a second day brought a repetition of the desertion, and a second evening mess commenced without Billy putting in an appearance, Corporal Price was directed to bring the deserter before a court-martial of the men's mess.

With considerable difficulty he managed to induce Billy to leave his lair at all, and it was only by dragging him by main force he could get him inside the door of the room which had been the scene of his orgies two nights before.

Billy's appearance was greeted with a cheer, but sadly changed were his looks. His once glossy coat had an unkempt appearance, while the once proud and erect head was lowered in shame.

'Come, Billy, take a drink!' said the sergeant at the head of the table. The words seemed to rouse the animal. He lifted his head; his eye lit up; his fore hoof beat the floor. Then, with a snort, a rush, and a bound Billy butted full against the large earthen vessel containing the men's evening allowance of ale, breaking it into a thousand pieces, and deluging not only the table, but the men who sat near. Then with his head once more erect, he stalked proudly and majestically out of the room.

'And really, sir,' said the corporal to me in reciting the incident, 'Billy was the best blue ribbon lecture I ever listened to!' —Boys' Own Paper.