

Freckles and Tan.

Why, what are these wee little freckles, And what in the world is the tan, That color and sprinkle all over The face of our dear little man?

The tan is a heavenly mixture Of happiness, sunshine, and joy, That darkens the shade of the roses That bloom in the cheek of our boy.

The freckles are scars from the kisses That angels, in loving embrace, Here pressed, in a careless confusion All over our little boy's face.

Here's to the boy with the freckles— The boy with the freckles and tan— These glorious imprints of heaven Have labeled him God's little man.

—Selected.

Conquering Difficulties.

Nearly a hundred years ago, a stout, freckle-faced, awkward boy of eighteen years, dressed in a ragged waistcoat and short breeches, without stockings or shoes, rapped one evening at the door of a humble cottage in northern England, and asked to see the village schoolmaster. When that person appeared, the boy said, very modestly: 'I would like to attend your evening school, sir.'

'And what do you wish to study?' asked the teacher, roughly.

'I want to learn to read and write,' answered the lad.

The schoolmaster glanced over the boy's homely face and rough clothes scornfully, and said, 'Very well, you can attend, but a barelegged laddie like you would better be doing something else than learning his letters.'

When he closed the door in the lad's face.

If that 'bare legged laddie' had said the schoolmaster, I mean to become a great inventor, to be the friend of rich and powerful men, to hold convention with kings, and to write my name among the great ones of the earth, it is likely he would have called the boy a fool to cherish such wild dreams.

Yet this poor, ignorant lad, who did not know the alphabet at sixteen, accomplished all these things before he died.

He did it by hard work and because he made up his mind to do the best he could. He kept pegging away. His ignorance was a misfortune, and not a fault. His parents were too poor to send him to school. He was the son of the fireman of a pumping engine in Northumberland colliery. His birthplace was a hovel with a clay floor, and walls and bare rafters. When he was five years old he began to work for his living by herding cows in the day, and barring up the gates at night.

As he grew older he was set to picking stones from the coal, and after that to driving a horse which drew coal from the pit. He went half-fed and half-clothed, but for 'a' that he had a man's soul in his sturdy little body.

For several years he was assistant fireman to his father; then he was fireman himself. Subsequently, at the age of seventeen, he was pluggin' of a pumping engine, a post superior to his father's.

But all this time, though ignorant of books, he had been studying his engine. Gradually he acquired so complete a knowledge of his machine that he was able to take it a part and make any ordinary repairs. The 'bare-legged laddie' was smarter than he seemed, and this fact the teacher was not long in finding out after he began to teach.

At the end of two years, by attending evening school, he had learned all that the village schoolmaster could teach him. This brought his school to an end, but he still kept on studying. He bought books on engineering and mechanics, and spent his leisure in learning what they taught in experimenting. At last he began to think about making better engines than those around him.

Meanwhile he had secured the appointment of engineer at one of the great collieries of northern England, and he gradually applied his plans for an improved locomotive. He was not at all discouraged. He saw his mistakes and corrected them. Before he was twenty-five years old he had constructed several locomotive steam engines, and years afterwards he had become known as a successful and energetic engineer, and was called upon to build and difficult lines of railway.

But his locomotives were too slow; he wanted them to run faster. He proposed to build one that would run at the rate of twelve miles an hour. Everybody laughed at him. Some thought that he was going crazy. One gentleman, who considered himself a wise man, said to him:

'Suppose you invent an engine capable of running nine or ten miles an hour, and suppose while it was running it should stray upon the track, would not that be a very awkward circumstance?'

'I should think it might be awkward indeed—for the cow,' he answered.

Well, he succeeded in making his locomotive, and at a trial which took place near Liverpool it attained to the unprecedented speed of fourteen miles an hour. By making certain improvements, this same engine, the Rocket, was made to attain the speed of thirty miles an hour. People laughed no longer, but admired.

He was invited as a consulting engineer to foreign countries, and wealth flowed upon him. Philosophers sought his friendship, his king offered him knighthood, but he refused a title, preferring to remain plain George Stephenson.—The Presbyterian.

Suppose Ted Hadn't Obeyed.

The boy who obeys his mother, even when the day is warm and his book is unusually good, may not have his reward quite as soon as Teddy; but he will generally have 'good feelings about it,' as one little fellow expressed it.

'Teddy, dear!' called mamma.

'Yes'm,' replied Teddy. He was busy over his book on the cool shaded piazza, and it was a warm August afternoon.

'I want you to take Victor down to the river for a bath. The dog is so hot in the cellar.'

'But, mother, at sundown.'

'Who promised to play the hose for Patrick at sundown?'

'I did,' said Teddy, a little smile replacing the sober pucker over his nose.

'Dear me, mamma,' he remarked, pulling on his cap, 'what a thing it is to be the man of the house!'

'Yes,' returned mamma, 'it is beautiful thing to be a cheerful little man of the house.'

Presently she loosed the big St. Bernard; and he came leaping toward Teddy, eagerness in every movement; for his freedom usually meant a bath these hot days.

'Come on, Vic!' called Teddy. 'You're more bother than you're worth, old fellow!' he declared, fondling him.

'Just think of me, a two-legged boy, waiting upon you, a four-legged dog!' Victor could not think about it; but he licked Teddy's hand lovingly, as if to acknowledge the condescension, and they started off.

'It seems to me,' said mamma to Betty, when they sat on the porch later, with their fancy work, 'that Teddy and Victor have been gone a long time.'

'They're coming this minute, mamma!' murmured Betty, peering through the creeper.

'Why, Ted, how flushed you look! Charge, Victor! That's right. Did he have a cool swim, dear?'

'Did he?' cried Ted, excitedly. Then his round face sobered. 'Mamma,' he said, 'how strangely things happen! If I had not promised to play the hose—Why, you see mamma,' he continued, breaking off and plunging into the heart of his story, 'when we got down to the water, there was Patrick's old father trying to swim for his straw hat, which had blown into the river. He's so old and feeble, I thought it queer he should be swimming for his hat so wildly, with all his clothes on. So I sent Victor in for it; and what do you think?'

'What?' cried Betty, breathlessly.

'He never went near it, but straight for Patrick's father instead, and brought him to shore. A wise thing, too; for the old man had given out. I pulled him ashore, dripping; and then away went Victor after the hat, and brought that! The poor fellow grabbed it, and pulled a ten-dollar bill out from under the leather. He had drawn it from the bank, and thought he had lost it; and they're so poor! He cried over the money! Vic and I took him home, and his sick old wife cried over him. Oh, I tell you 'twas a wet time!' he finished, winking oddly himself.

Mamma and Betty both looked suspicious also; and Ted said: 'Come here, Vic, till I apologize. You darling old dog, I am proud to wait on you, sir!' And he buried his arms in the damp fur of the noble fellow's shaggy neck.—Youth's Companion.

An Industrious Beaver.

Mr. A. D. Bartlett, son of the late superintendent of the London Zoo, has an interesting story of a captive Canadian beaver, which he relates in 'The North and West.'

A large willow tree in the gardens had blown down. A branch about twelve feet long and thirty inches in circumference was firmly fixed in the ground in the beaver's inclosure. Then the beaver was watched, to see what he would do.

The beaver soon visited the spot, and walking round the limb commenced to bite off the bark and gnaw the wood about twelve inches from the ground. The rapidity of his progress was astonishing. He seemed to put his whole strength into his task, although he

left off every few minutes to rest and look upward, as if to determine which way the tree would fall.

About four o'clock, to the surprise of those who saw him, he left his work and came hastily toward the iron fence. The cause of this sudden movement was soon apparent. He had heard in the distance the sound of the wheelbarrow, bringing his supper.

The keeper, not wishing to disappoint the beaver, although sorry to see his task interrupted, gave him his usual allowance of carrots and bread. The little fellow quickly ate it, and afterwards was seen swimming about the pool until about half-past five. Then he returned to his work, and in ten minutes the 'tree' fell to the ground.

Afterwards the beaver cut the log into three convenient lengths, one of which he used in the upper part of his house.—Chris. Uplook.

Uses For Oilcloth.

Table oilcloth may be used for stiffening for dress skirts instead of crinoline, and it will keep its stiffness until the dress is worn to rags.

A good lining for the collars of little boys' sailor suits is table oilcloth, as no amount of romping will spoil the shape of the collar when this is used for that purpose.

For rough work about the house nothing is more economical than the apron of table oilcloth. It will last as long as a dozen gingham aprons, and requires no washing, except an occasional wiping off with a damp cloth. It must be cut to fit smoothly, since it wears out quickly if there are wrinkles.

White oilcloth, pinked around the edges, dyed or painted any pretty color, makes good scarfs for dressers and commodes, and should always be used in the children's room until they have learned to make their own pretty things and care for them.

Table oilcloth may be used for hall carpeting and several layers of paper placed underneath it will make it wear nearly as long as that usually sold for carpeting, and the cost will only be about one-third as much.—House-keeper.

The Punctual Man Got the Place.

A manufacturer was about to establish an agency in London. He had in his employ two young men whom he regarded highly, and both of whom he would like to advance to the coveted position. As it could go to only one, he watched the men closely for some time, while trying to decide which he should send to represent his interests in the English capital. One of the young men was an industrious plodder, always on time to the minute. The other was a much more brilliant fellow, who did his work well and easily, made friends readily, and was universally popular; but he had the serious defects of making promises carelessly, forgetting them almost as soon as they were made, and of rarely keeping appointments promptly.

Finally the employer invited both of these young men to dine with him on a certain evening at exactly seven o'clock. The plodder presented himself to his host as the clock was striking, and they two immediately sat to dinner. Five minutes later the other guest appeared with a laughing apology for being late, which, he said, was entirely the fault of his watch. On the following day the London appointment, with a large increase of salary, was given to him who had learned the business value of promptness.—Kirk Munroe, in April Success.

A Scared Tiger.

It was discovered by a keeper of the Clifton, England, zoo, on the morning of a children's fete, that a tiger had escaped from his cage. The superintendent maintained an absolute silence and trusted to luck. A secret search of the gardens convinced the keepers that the tiger had scaled the walls, and was in the open country.

Thousands of children romped through the day, and cried, 'Oh!' and 'Ah!' as the fire-works gleamed in the night. They played and sauntered about amid trees and shaded alleys and dark corners in the evening; and then everybody went home, tired and happy.

In the early dawn there was another search; and in the corner of a disused monkey-house was found the 'monarch of the jungle,' still trembling from freedom and fireworks. His keepers threw a handkerchief about his neck and led him back to the grateful safety of his cage. But many things might have happened!—London Chronicle.

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Tommy's Lesson.

I thought when a boy was big enough to have a slate and book and go to school he was big enough to take care of himself and go the way he wanted to. So I did not go straight down the road, as my mother told me, but I climbed the fence to go across the field.

By and by somethingsaid, 'Bow-wow-wow' and there was a big dog running right at me. Didn't I run? That dog almost caught me before I got to the fence, and I tumbled over and scratched my arm and broke my slate and tore my clothes; so I had to go home to mamma. She said: 'Ah, Tommy boy, people never get too old to go in the right way instead of the wrong one. The straight path is the safe path. Remember that!' And that is all the lesson I learned in my first day at school, 'cause I didn't go.—The Gem.

A Good minister of the Gospel once said in an address to young people. 'Live as long as you may, the first twenty years form the larger part of your life. They appear so when they are passing; they seem so when we look back on them; and they take up more room in our memory than all the years that come after them. 'Take good care of the first twenty years of your life. On the use which you make of them your happiness and usefulness in after years will very largely depend. See that they are spent in learning right habits and cultivating good tastes.'

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