

Problems.

LULU LINTON.

Our girls bend over a problem; She had tried it o'er and o'er, But seemed no nearer the answer Than she'd been an hour before.

'If you'd help me ever so little, I'm sure I could get it right; It's just like groping in the dark Without one speck of light.'

Her words brought a deeper meaning To my heart that was sore dismayed, I had struggled on in my weakness. Not asking the Father's aid.

I thought of the way my problems I had tried to solve alone, Forgetting the precious promise That the Father cares for his own.

The Boer's Big Gun.

BY EDITH MACLENNAN YOUNG.

Of course it was Bobs that captured the Boer's gun. That might go without saying were it not for the fact that I have to confess to you that this Bobs was not the famous Lord Roberts whom you all know so well.

Before the war everyone called him Bobby; but one day not long ago, mother and he had a long talk, and when at last he slipped down from her knee, he was no longer Bobby, but Bobs, and he had promised to do his very best to be brave and kind and true just like the great, good, British soldier.

When father came home from his office that night he found his little son dancing excitedly round the hall, a sure sign that something important had happened during the day.

'And I'm to fight the Boers, father, just like the real Bobs; only my Boers are to be all the bad thoughts that come and try to make me say 'I can't' and 'I won't' and 'I don't want to.'

And in this Bobs proved to be right, for almost the hardest fight he ever had, was the one in which he defeated that very Boer and captured his big gun.

The grand battle took place that same night, and it all came about in such a simple way. Bobs wanted an apple, but when he went into the dining-room, he found the big fruit-dish on the sideboard quite empty.

'Now, Bobs,' said he to himself, 'are you a coward or are you not? If not, you'll go down and get that apple.'

Then came the big Boer quietly up behind him, and whispered ever so slyly, 'You don't really want an apple to-night. Do without it, or else ask mother to get a light and go with you.'

For just one moment Bobs hesitated. Then came the command sharp and clear from his own determined little lips, 'Bobs, quick march!' And down the cellar stairs he went with a run.

In the darkness below he had to feel his way very carefully, but bravely on he went past the horrid-looking furnace that loomed up so black in the darkness, and straight away into the tiny inner room where he had himself helped to put the apple barrel that very morning.

Quickly he got his apple and started back, tremblingly threading his way through the long dark passage. At last he came out safely into the wide furnace-room and when, away at the far side, he made out the faint glimmer of light, that marked the stairway, he thought his troubles were over.

But the big Boer was not to be defeated so easily as all that. Suddenly something soft brushed Bobs' cheek.

he glanced up, and then stood still, fairly numb with horror. For there, going swiftly and silently through the darkness, glided an awful ghostly shape. Even as Bobs watched it, fascinated, it circled nearer and nearer, and at last swooped right down towards him. Without a word, he turned and ran blindly for the foot of the stairs.

Crash! Bobs went full tilt into a big brick pillar. The shock brought him to his senses, and through clenched teeth he fairly growled at himself, 'Bobs, you miserable little coward.' And then he did the bravest thing he had ever done in his life.

Without once looking back, he walked quietly to the foot of the stairs and went slowly and deliberately up, setting his foot down firmly on each step, although his head was giddy with fear, and his flesh fairly crept with the certainty that the awful creature below was close behind just ready to seize him and drag him back into the darkness. Then, when at last he reached the top step and closed the door, he knew that the battle was won.

Next morning, the very first chance he got, he told mother all about it, and his arms were very tight around her neck as he whispered, 'Was that dreadful thing a ghost, mother?'

'Why no, dear,' she replied cheerily, 'I think that must have been the Boer's big gun. And now what would you say if we were to get the candle and go down to look for it? Very likely he abandoned it when he fled.'

Bobs hailed the idea with delight, so down they went. Soon mother stopped in a dark place, near the coal bin, and held up the light.

'There it is,' she said. And Bobs looked up at the strangest little creature you could ever imagine. At first he thought it was a mouse which had gone to sleep in the midst of an acrobatic performance, for it was hanging head downwards from a beam, with its hind claws firmly fastened in the wood.

Bobs reached up a finger and cautiously touched the gray furry back. The little creature did not move, so he grew bolder, and gently spread out one of the tiny umbrellas. Suddenly the puzzled look faded from his face.

'Why, mother,' he cried, 'it's a bat; and these funny things are its wings. But however did it get in here?'

'It must have come in the other night when the window was left open,' said mother. 'You know, dear,' she continued, 'bats live on flies and insects, and when the cold weather comes there is no food for them, so instead of sending them away to other countries, as He does the birds, God just tells them by the wonderful instinct He has given them, to go into some warm, dark place and go to sleep till the summer comes again.'

But mother thought it nicer than all the South African guns ever made, for it was her Bobs who had captured it, and thus proved himself worthy of his glorious new name.—The Westminster.

The Sad Plight of Queen Victoria.

Brucie's papa sat at the desk in his office when the telephone bell went 'ting-a-ling-ting.'

'Dear me,' he cried impatiently, 'can't I have one minute's peace?'

'Hello,' he shouted. 'Who is it?'

'It's me, papa,' cried a small voice. It's Brucie. Come home. Somefin' awful's happenin'.'

'What?' asked papa. 'Oh, somefin' awful. I'm bweedin' an' I'm all alone. I'm terrible frightened. Come home, papa, kick. It's in here again. Oh-h. Come kick, papa.'

Brucie's plea ended in a shriek, then papa heard a crash, a wild howl, and Brucie's scream. Something awful was happening in the dining-room where the telephone hung. He dashed out of the office. Somebody called, 'Mr. Wilson,' as he ran down the stairs; but Brucie's papa did not answer. He opened the door of the wheel-room and lifted the first bicycle he saw, then he flew down the crowded street just as fast as the pedals would go round. He dodged in among wagons and in front of trolley-cars. Drivers shouted at him, and once a policeman tried to catch him; but he did not even turn his head.

At last he caught sight of the little house in the big yard where Brucie lived. It looked very quiet and peaceful. He had expected to find it on fire or tumbled down by an earthquake, but he did not hear even a sound till he opened the front door. His hand shook while he turned the latch with his key.

'What if I am too late to save Brucie?' he thought. He was not, for it was Brucie who came rushing through the hall to meet him. He was a dreadful sight. His clothes were torn, and his face and hands were covered with scratches.

His pinafore was stained with blood, and his yellow curls hung like a mop over his tear-stained eyes.

'Brucie, Brucie,' cried his papa, 'what is the matter?'

'It's Keen Victoria,' said the sobbing little boy. 'Come and see.' He dragged his papa into the kitchen. Something was thumping and yowling frightfully. It was Queen Victoria the big gray cat. She had squeezed her head into an empty salmon can, and she could not get it out again.

Brucie's papa felt so relieved that he began to laugh. Then he led Brucie to the sink to sponge the blood off his face and hands.

'Now,' said papa, after he had bathed Brucie's scratches with witch hazel, 'now we will see what we can do for Queen Victoria.'

The old gray cat was very cross. She tried to scratch papa, but she did not succeed, for he wrapped a towel about her. Then he put her between his knees and held her head while he sawed away at the tin with a can-opener. Queen Victoria screamed wildly, but Brucie's papa did not mind; and presently off came the old salmon can. When Queen Victoria was set free, she crawled under the stove and began to smooth her ruffled fur. Brucie cried again with joy, and just then mamma came home. Papa and Brucie tried both at once to tell her the story, and at last she understood.

'Dear me,' she said, 'how glad I am there was a telephone in the house, and glad I am that Brucie knew how to use it!'—Isabel Gordon Curtis, in Good Housekeeping.

Sharing the Potato.

Johnnie Rands was one of the kindest boys that ever lived, and without knowing if he had found out the way to be happy. He was kind, and kind boys and girls are always happy. You cannot make another happy without being happier yourself.

Johnnie earned a few shillings a week, for, in addition to his evenings, he worked all Saturday, and carried his money home to his mother, who was very proud of her boy. There was something about Johnnie that made everybody love him. He was bright, open-hearted, and frank; but no doubt the reason why people loved him was because he was so kind, and somehow he seemed always to be finding out people, or they came in his way whom he tried to help. He never whined, and said, 'What can one poor boy do?' He just did the kind thing without thinking he was doing a kindness at all.

One frosty, foggy November night, he was running off with his papers, and at the end of High Street, thought how nice a hot potato would be, for he had had no tea, and so he got a splendid one for a halfpenny, and just as he broke it open, he saw a poor, pinched girl, who had been warming her hands by the hot oven which stood upon old Michael's potato barrow, and Johnnie saw in a moment how hungry the girl looked, and so he said, 'Would you like to go halves with me?'

'I should like a piece ever so much, as I am very hungry, if you can spare me a bit.' 'Oh,' said Johnnie, 'you should have it all if I were not so hungry myself, but you are quite welcome to go halves with me.' In breaking the potato, one portion was bigger than the other; but Johnnie gave the poor girl the bigger piece, and hurried off on his errand. Ah, just to think that one farthing made the hungry girl happy, and she was so grateful, and to think also that a halfpenny made two children happy; but Johnnie was the happier of the two.

If we have only the heart, the way is open to us all to make others happy without costing us much.—Our Boys and Girls.

Several Surprises About Kid Gloves.

Barefooted boys and hens form a curious partnership in the making of a pair of fine gloves. Thousands of dozens of hens' eggs are used in curing the hides, and thousands of boys are employed to work the skins in clear water by treading on them for several hours, says the Philadelphia Record.

When a woman buys a pair of kid gloves she speaks of her purchase of "kids." If the clerk who sold her the "kid" gloves knew the secrets of the glovemaking business he might surprise his fair customer by telling her that those beautiful, soft, smooth-fitting "kid" gloves came from the stomach and shoulders of the three-weeks-old colt, whose neck was slit on the plains of Russia, and whose tender hide was shipped, with huge bundles of other colts' hides, to France, where they were made up into "kid" gloves; or he might, with equal regard to the truth, tell her that those gloves in the other compartment once darted from tree to tree in South America on the back of the ring-tailed monkey.

And if he made the sounds of the store and could distinguish one skin from another he could point out "kid" gloves made from the skins of kangaroos from Australia, lambs or sheep from Ohio or Spain or England, calves from India, muskrats from anywhere, musk oxen from China and other parts of Asia, rats, cats and Newfoundland puppies. But the Russian colt, the fourfooted baby from the plains, where the Cossacks live, the colt from the steppes of Siberia, where horses are raised by the thousand, supplies the skins which furnish the bulk of the dainty coverings for my lady's hands.

Salt as a Remedy.

Salt is a great natural remedy. A weak solution of salt and water is one of the best remedies for imperfect digestion; and for a cold in the head there are few things better; snuff up a little from the hollow of the hand. A handful or two of rock salt added to the bath acts as an invigorator, and a gargle of a weak solution is a ready remedy for an ordinary sore throat. For the teeth salt and water is very cleansing, and it hardens the gums. Severe pains in the bowels and stomach are often speedily relieved by the application of a bag of hot salt.

Sneeze and Blow.

That is what you must do when you have a cold in the head. The way to cure this disease is to purify the blood with Hood's Sarsaparilla. This medicine soothes and heals the inflamed surfaces, rebuilds the delicate tissues and permanently cures catarrh by expelling from the blood the scrofulous taints upon which it depends. Be sure to get Hood's.

Olive-Oil for the Nerves.

If you are neuralgic, anemic, or nervous, try the 'oil cure,' and see what it will do for you. However, purchase only the pure olive-oil, which may be bought in the bulk at from two to three dollars a gallon, and that, considering its nutritive value, is one of the cheapest of foods. Take one teaspoonful three times a day as a 'dose' if you are in a hurry for results. Or, if you can physically afford the leisure to cultivate an oil taste, begin by putting a very little on some lettuce-leaves, or any salad combination of which you are fond, adding enough good vinegar to almost entirely disguise the taste. Gradually increase the oil, and lessen the vinegar, until you grow fond of the oil, and really enjoy dipping your bread into it, as you surely will in time.—Woman's Home Companion.

What Some Birds Are Called.

'Listen,' said Ned, as he stood in the farmhouse door with Uncle Horace. It was an early autumn morning. A rim of light frost sparkled on the still green grass, and the woods were gay with their leaves of red and gold. Across the field, clear and cheery, sounded once and again the whistle of a quail.

'Do you hear that?' asked Ned: 'that is an old quail who has raised her family in the north pasture this summer. There is quite a flock of them now,—little speckled beauties; and father has put up a sign that hunters must keep off the place, for we don't want our little 'Bob Whites' killed. Hear them now!' as the call rang out again on the quiet air.

'If you were a French instead of an American boy,' said Uncle Horace, 'you would speak of the quail as 'the bird of prophecy.'

'What would I call him that for?'

'Because in France they think or at least they say that the number of calls of a quail foretells the price of wheat.'

'What a queer idea!' exclaimed Ned.

'What makes them believe that?'

'I don't know. But they say that, if the quail calls twice without resting, the farmer need expect but 2 francs (about 40 cents) a bushel for their wheat; but, if he calls four times, it will be twice that.'

'How very odd! Do you believe it?'

Uncle Horace laughed. 'I don't, Ned, any more than I believe that the white rooster which is crowing so loud on the fence there is 'the bird of ill omen.'

'Why do they call it that?'

'You will remember that the cock crowed when Peter denied his Lord, and there is an old legend that he crowed for joy at the time of the crucifixion.'

'Is not that what they call a superstition as is the Swedish one about the turtle-dove?'

'They look upon it as sacred, and call it 'God's bird' and 'Noah's bird'; for they believe that it is the same kind of dove that Noah sent out of the ark at the time of the flood, to bring him a sign whether the water had gone down.'

'That is certainly a very pretty superstition or fancy,' said Ned, 'If Bob White is a prophet, I hope nothing will happen to any of our 'birds of prophecy.' Now I am going to the barn to get some wheat to feed my 'birds of ill omen.'—Sabbath School Visitor.

A Good Dog.

A little child was once lost in the woods. Its parents and friends had hunted everywhere, but could not find it. At last some one thought of a great dog that belonged to a man a few miles away.

They had sent for him, and he came at once with his dog. He asked for a stocking that the baby had worn; then he took the dog to the place where the baby had last been seen, let him smell the stocking and told him to 'seek.'

The dog ran around in a circle two or three times and then put his nose to the ground and started into the woods. The man who owned the dog followed with the baby's father, and pretty soon they came back with the baby. The dog had found it at the foot of a tree curled up fast asleep.

The dog was buggy and petted almost as much as the child; he seemed to know he had done something very smart, and for a long time afterward he would come every day to see the child and would play with it for an hour or so and then trot off to his own home.

The Non-irritating Cathartic—Hood's Pills.

The chief business of the Christian Church, is not to nurse itself, but to evangelize the world.—Dr. E. E. Hoss.

When a man's chief business is to serve and please the Lord, all his circumstances become his servants.—R. C. Chapman.

AFTER A COLD DRIVE a teaspoonful of Pain-Killer mixed with a glass of hot water and sugar will be found a better stimulant than whiskey. Avoid substitutes, there is but one Pain-Killer, Perry Davis'. 25c. and 50c.

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