

**THE BOY CAME BACK.**

James Whitcomb Riley, in his inimitable way, tells the story of a "much-aggravated and unappreciated lad" who made up his mind that he "could not stand the tyranny of home longer," and so early one morning he put a long-contemplated plan into execution, and ran away.

All day long he played down at the old "swimming-hole" with the other boys, making a raid on an orchard at noon to stifle the pangs of hunger. At night, when his companions went home he was left alone, "with a lump in his throat that hurt worse when he didn't notice it than when he did." As it grew dark he "oozed" toward home. He climbed the back fence into the big back yard, which had such a "homey" look that he had never noticed before. After roaming around getting acquainted with his home that he had left so long ago, about twelve hours since, he wandered into the sitting room, where father was reading the evening paper and mother was sewing. They took no notice of him and he sat down on the remote edge of a chair and waited to be recognized. He could hear the boys playing out on the commons their nightly games of "town-fox," but he didn't want to join them. He just wanted to stay right there at home forever. The clock ticked, oh, so loudly; but otherwise the silence was so deep that it was painful. Finally, when it became more than he could bear, he cleared his throat and mustered up courage enough to say, "Well, I see you've got the same old cat."

God bless the boy who, finding he had made a mistake in his valuation of home, is brave enough to go back and prove just how much the "same old cat" is worth, as compared with no cat and a homeless life.—*Selected.*



**Some Strange Things Worth Knowing.**

It has been said that the bee will travel as far as twelve miles in search of honey; but beekeepers say this statement is absurd. They claim that it may occasionally fly five or six miles, but as a usual rule bees must find their supplies within two miles or so of home, otherwise they will die.

The figure of a fish was a well known emblem among the early Christians, and the name was often used as a counter-sign when secret meetings were held. It has been found engraved on seals and tombs, and small ornaments in the form of fishes were worn about the neck. The symbol was chosen because the Greek word fishes is made up the first letters of Greek words which mean, "Jesus Christ, of God the Son, the Saviour."

Spiders are met with in the forests of Java whose webs are so strong that it requires a knife to cut through them, we are told. A spider weighing four pounds, which has taken up her residence in a cathedral at Munich, regales herself with a large supply of lamp oil. A Texas spider weaves a balloon four feet long and two feet wide, which she fastens to a tree by a single thread, then marches on board with her half-dozen little ones, cuts the thread, and away goes the air ship to some distant point on the prairie.



Miss Bessie Nason, a well-known lady of Cloyne Hill, N. B., writes: "I gladly recommend Laxa-Liver Pills to anyone suffering from constipation. They cured me entirely before I had finished the third box."

**DON'T WORRY.**

Don't start nervously if a child makes a noise or breaks a dish—keep your worry for broken bones.

Don't sigh too often over servants' short-comings.

Don't get excited if the servant has neglected to dust the legs of the hall table; neither the welfare of your family nor the nation is involved.

Don't exhaust all your reserve force over petty cares. Each time that a woman loses control over herself, her nerves, her temper, she loses just a little nervous force, just a little physical well being, and moves a fraction of an inch farther on in the path that leads to premature old age.

Don't go to bed late at night and rise at daybreak and imagine that every hour taken from sleep is an hour gained.

Don't eat as if you only had a minute in which to finish the meal.

Don't give unnecessary time to a certain established routine of housekeeping, when it could be much more profitably spent in rest or recreation.

Don't always be doing something; have intermittent attacks of idling. To understand how to relax is to understand how to strengthen nerves.

Don't fret and don't worry are the most healthful of maxims.—*Selected.*



**THE LOST GRIP.**

A woman came to Mr. Carr, at the close of one of his Bible readings, and said: "You told the truth today. My husband is an infidel, but he did respect Christianity a little, until one night I took a character in a drama played in our church. That night I lost my grip on my husband. I am afraid I shall never get it again."

The church that resorts to broom drills and dramas and mum socials and fairs and festivals to raise money is without the faith that takes hold on God. A genuine Holy Ghost revival is a thing unknown. Fathers have lost their grip on wayward sons, mothers have lost their grip on unconverted daughters, the church has lost her grip on God. Down on her knees in sack-cloth and ashes before Him who drove the buyers and sellers out of the temple, let such a church plead with God for mercy, promise to forego all worldly measures of money-making, and regain the lost grip.



**CHINESE ODDITIES.**

It is well known that girl babies are of little account in China, but that boys are carefully tended, guarded, and counted. If a Chinese mother is asked how many children she has, she tells how many boys she has. One day, in passing a house, I saw two boys and a girl near the doorway, in which stood the mother, and, as is customary, I asked her how many children she had. She replied, "Two." Then I asked, "But whose is this one?" pointing to the girl. The reply was, "Oh! that thing? That's mine." The birth of a girl brings no congratulations to the parents, but at the birth of a boy they are overwhelmed with congratulations and gifts. If a little boy dies the death is often attributed to some evil spirit, and to guard the others the parents seek to deceive the spirit in regard to the sex, on the supposition that the demons will not bother themselves about a girl. All girls, as a rule, wear ear-rings, and now and then we see a boy wearing one, and in some cases two ear-rings, to deceive the spirit, which, mistaking him for a girl, will let him alone.—*Rev. S. B. Partridge.*

**The Biggest Pawnshop in the World.**

Think of a pawnshop with so many customers that sometimes in the morning two policemen are needed to keep the visitors in order; a pawnshop that ministers to the urgent wants of eight hundred men and women every day, loaning in three months, between January 1, 1903, and April 1, more than a million dollars to people who are among the poorest in the United States, and you have an idea of what is said to be the biggest single pawnshop in the whole world. This remarkable institution is on the east side of New York city, in the district called Ghetto. In sums ranging from a few cents to several thousand dollars, this shop loaned to its customers last year three and a half million dollars. The amount of loans this year will probably reach five million dollars, as the business is growing very rapidly. And this remarkable enterprise was started as charity. It is one of the four branches of the Provident Loan Society of New York.

The society lends money on personal property at the rate of six per cent per annum for the first two weeks that the money is used, the rate of interest after that being twelve per cent per annum. The regular pawnbrokers usually want three times this rate. As security the society takes any form of property that has value—jewelry, clothing, or anything else that can be handled conveniently. It has four shops where property may be pawned. Its business in loans and redemptions last year was eleven million dollars, and this year the volume of it will probably be fifty per cent greater. Already this public pawnshop, as it might be called, has driven many of the regular pawnbrokers out of business, threatening to become a monopoly. By far the largest of the four branches is that in the Jewish tenement district of the metropolis. That the biggest pawnshop in the world should be in the heart of one of the poorest districts in the world, and in the midst of a people distinguished as a race for their thrift, is an odd and apparently a contradictory state of facts.—*Tom Thorne, in Leslie's Weekly.*



**NO VACANCY.**

The German idea that the place for women is in the house and not in the church, led recently to a curious complication, which the Philadelphia *Evening Telegraph* reports: In a small town in Pennsylvania there is a female preacher. One afternoon she was preparing her sermon for the following Sunday when she heard a timid knock at the parsonage door. She answered it herself, and found a bashful young German standing on the step. He was a stranger, but the minister greeted him pleasantly, and asked him what he wished.

"Dey sey der minister lifed in dis house, hey?"

"Yes, sir."

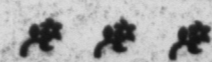
"Yees? Vell, I vant to kit marriet."

"All right; I can marry you."

The German jammed his hat on his head, turned and hurried down the walk.

"What is the matter?" called the parsoness after him.

"You kits no chance mit me!" he called back. "I don't vant you; I haf got me a girl already!"



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**SHYLOCK UP TO DATE.**

An old Jew attended a meeting called to settle the affairs of a merchant who had failed for a large amount. The merchant stated the situation to his creditors—that his liabilities were \$100,000 and his assets absolutely nothing.

"Who owns the house in which you live?" asked one creditor.

"My wife," was the reply.

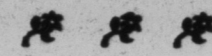
"And that farm in the country?"

"My daughter."

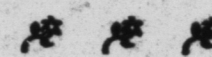
"And the store over there on the corner?"

"My son owns that gentlemen, and I must reiterate, that I have nothing, nothing except my body, which you can divide among you."

"Vell, shentlemen," spoke up that thrifty son of Abraham, "if you do dot, I speaks right now for his gall."



Mrs. Thos. Tracy, Byrnedale, Ont., writes: "We have used Dr. Low's Pleasant Worm Syrup and find it to be better than any other remedy. It is easy to take and always effectual."



"Rob, said Tom, "which is the most dangerous word to pronounce in the English language?"

"It's stumbled," said Tom, "because you are sure to get a tumble between the first and last letters."

"Good!" said Bob. "Which is the longest English word?"

"Valetudinarianism," said Tom promptly.

"No; it's smiles, because there's a whole mile between the first and last letters."

"Oh, that's nothing," said Tom, "I know a word that has over three miles between its beginning and ending."

"What's that?" asked Bob, faintly.

"Beleagured," said Tom.

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