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## OUR FIVE-YEAR-OLD.

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## HER SPHERE

Miss Susan's Fortune and the Trouble It Caused Her.

"Mother, Miss Susan has had a little fortune left here." "A fortune? Miss Susan? Nonsense, Herbert, why do you say such childish things?" "A child is supposed to speak a simple, unvarnished tale, isn't it? Well, my admiring mother, that is just what I am doing. Miss Susan, I tell you, has had a fortune left here." "By whom?" "Ah, now your curiosity comes to the rescue of your unbelief; you grant me, then, that Miss Susan has had a fortune left here?" "I would grant you a box on the ear, if my hands were not so busy just now, for teasing me about a matter that you must know I am sincerely interested in." Mr. Herbert Johns' handsome mother threw enough reproach into her tone to bring the young man to more sober speech. He landed his chair safely on its four legs, after pirouetting it around on one, and left off bantering his mother. "Yes, madame, in good earnest, her California uncle has left her \$10,000." "Is it possible? I wonder what the good soul will do with it? I really am afraid, Herbert, that the change at her time of life will make her unhappy." "Then I hope, mother, that you will suggest to her to give it to me. It would not make me unhappy, I assure you." But Mrs. Johns was not far wrong. Miss Susan Park had learned the dress-making trade while she was a girl in her teens. She was an old maid of forty now, doing an excellent business, getting a dollar and a-half a day, and laying by a little something every year. She was entirely content with her lot. The California lawyer's letter had upset her whole plan of life. Instead of becoming the beneficiary of the Old Ladies' Home for the consideration of a three hundred dollar entrance fee, which had hitherto been her earthly ambition, Miss Susan now felt both the pleasure and the responsibility of a possible benefactress. And what, indeed, as Mrs. Johns had said, should she do with it? "I'm thinking of setting up an orphan asylum, ma'am," Miss Susan said in answer to the kind lady, the next time she went to her for a day's sewing. "An orphan asylum!" exclaimed Mrs. Johns, in natural surprise. The old maid's cheek was still fresh enough to color deeply. "Yes'm, I love childer, an' I think I'd hardly want to go to Heaven, if I could have a dozen of them, with blue eyes, and curls, and white dresses, in my house all the time." This was the old maid's first dream of what to do with her money. Mrs. Johns had not the heart to break in upon it with cruel facts, of dirty, wilful, unruly, diseased, ungrateful little creatures, such as she well knew fell to the lot of most orphan asylums. She only said: "Don't be hasty, Susan, take some time to look around you before you make up your mind."

"Well, Miss Johns," said the heiress, plaintively, some weeks later, "I'm glad enough I took your advice about looking around a bit before I set out for an orphan asylum. I went to the Home of the Helpless, told 'em what I was thinkin' about, and asked them to let me stay a few days and look 'round. But land's sake! I could hardly stick it out for two days. I didn't have an idea that childer was so noisy and so pesterin'. If I was younger may be I could get used to 'em, but it wouldn't suit me now, no way."

There was something in Miss Susan's decided tone which suggested to her patron's sharp ears that some other object had risen above the old maid's horizon, and she promptly turned her glass upon it. "Well, yes'm," reluctantly admitted Miss Susan. "I did get hold of a plan that it seems likely would just suit; the doctor at the house says they're awful short of nurses; he says, says he, 'you'd make a good lady superior, Sister Susan.'" It does sound a little popish, but we wouldn't wear crosses nor black veils, nor nothin' like that." She looked anxiously at Mrs. Johns; her approval had been Miss Susan's law for so many years that she could not be comfortable without it. But that lady shook her head sagaciously. "Don't you get yourself pledged to a nurse's life till you've tried it," she said, warningly; "remember the orphans." Miss Susan was evidently disappointed at her friend's lack of enthusiasm, but agreed to take a nurse's position at once and put herself to the proof. "Mother," said Mr. Herbert Johns, coming into her dressing-room one day, "did you set Miss Susan Park up for a nurse?" "No, my dear," answered the lady, trying vaguely to recall what she had done in the matter; "but why? She hasn't poisoned anybody, I hope."

"Oh, Herbert, what sort of speech is that? Do tell me what you mean?" "I mean," said he, with an effort to look reasonable, "that Miss Susan has about as good an idea of nursing as a blacksmith, and I felt obliged to go and tell Dr. Carr so." "It was some time before Miss Susan could be coaxed back to Mrs. Johns' house, but the tide of confession set in at last: "Yes, I like to go crazy at the job; the doctor told me so many things to do and not to do, that I was all in a muddle, and then, bless your life, the sick man wouldn't let me do anything. He just swore at me and told me to let him alone, and go about my business. Now, you know I never could stand with my hands folded doing nothing, so I tried to tip around and tidy up things a bit on the sly, but la me, I'd as soon go into a wild beast's den as try to nurse a sick man again."

Little by little came further confessions; Miss Susan had thought of making a home for old people, of going on a foreign mission, of being a tract distributor, in fact she had aspired to all the forms of usefulness open to her ken. "But 'tain't no use," she said, breaking down into a good old-fashioned cry. "Seems as if I couldn't do any of the things that the Lord wants done; I don't see what good I am anyhow."

The soft folds of Mrs. Johns' surah fell over Miss Susan's scant calico skirt, as the handsome, fashionably-dressed woman sat down on a sofa close to the disconsolate old maid. The shapely white hand was laid over the bony fingers that had known such constant labor, and Miss Susan's friend spoke as soothingly as one does to a tired child: "Now, Susan, I want to tell you something. I went to Mrs. Brown's high tea last week, and while a party of us were sitting at a little cluster of tables, eating wafers, and sipping bouillon, your name was mentioned. 'I am so sorry to hear that Miss Susan is going to give up sewing,' said one; 'not on account of the sewing; of course somebody else can do that, but I shall miss the little woman herself so much. I always feel more charitable to my fellow men, more reverent towards my Maker, more humble minded, and less frivolous when I have had her in my house for two weeks.'

Mrs. Johns' paused and Miss Susan's downcast eyes were full of tears. "Then," she continued, "another lady spoke up; 'Yes, indeed,' she said, 'you can't think what a loss she'll be to me. I have always said I owed Miss Susan Park a great deal for her influence over my girls. They have always been devoted to her ever since they were little tots, sitting by and getting her to cut out quilt pieces; and now that they are grown they still love and admire her. Her gentle Christian character, together with her pure, high-minded views of things, and the earnest little speeches she makes, checks their levity and vanity. Oh, I assure you I could cry about her leaving her old customers.'

As Mrs. Johns talked on, telling the lonely old maid how one and another household loved and valued her, a streak of sunshine seemed to touch her tears with rainbow colors. "Go 'long, Miss Johns," she said, blushing like a girl, "ain't you 'shamed to be saying such things to my face; but I feel all made over somehow by what you tell me. La, how nice it will be to go to Miss Holmes next week, and make over her blue chaille. As for my money, I'll tell you a secret, Miss Johns, I was so beat out about it that I took the papers and things last week to Mr. Herbert, and he promised to tie it up in something so I couldn't get any more if I wanted it, 'cept the interest, and I'm just going to divide that 'round. When I come to think of it, I know lots of 'people that'll be pleased to get a little help out of it, and then I won't have any more stayin' awake at nights. If you b'lieve me, my fingers are fairly itchin' this minute to get hold of Miss Holmes' blue chaille."—Elizabeth P. Allen, in Interior.

## TRUSTS AND COMBINES.

An Edict Against Them Issued by Emperor Zeno in A. D. 483. In 483 A. D. the Emperor Zeno issued the following edict to the Praetorian Prefect of Constantinople (Code iv., 59): "We command that no one may presume to exercise a monopoly of any kind of clothing, or of fish, or of any other thing serving for food, or for any other use whatever its nature may be, either of his own authority or under a rescript of an Emperor already procured, or that may hereafter be procured, or under an imperial decree, or under a rescript signed by Our Majesty; nor may any persons combine or agree in unlawful meetings that different kinds of merchandise may not be sold at a less price than they may have agreed upon among themselves. Workmen and contractors for buildings and all who practice other professions, and contractors for baths are entirely prohibited from agreeing together that no one may complete a work contracted for by another, or that a person may prevent one who has contracted for a work from finishing it; full liberty is given to any one to finish a work begun and abandoned by another, without apprehension of loss, and to denounce all acts of this kind without fear and without costs. And if any one shall presume to practice a monopoly, let his property be forfeited and himself condemned to perpetual exile. And in regard to the principals of other professions, if they shall venture in the future to fix a price upon their merchandise, and to bind themselves by agreements not to sell at a lower price, let them be condemned to pay forty pounds of gold. Your court shall be condemned to pay fifty pounds of gold if it shall happen, through avarice, negligence or any other misconduct, the provisions of this salutary constitution for the prohibition of monopolies and agreements among the different bodies of merchants shall not be carried into effect."

## HABITS OF WASPS.

An Incident Illustrative of Their Cunning and Ferocity. The subterfuges resorted to by animals in search of food have been regarded by the general reader as the most interesting and instructive portion of the works of naturalists. An incident illustrative of the cunning of the wasp was recently related to the New York Ledger by an observing gentleman. A blue wasp, known as the solitary wasp, because it lives alone in its little clay nest, was seen to hurl itself upon the strong, wheel-shaped web of a large spider. Here it set up a loud buzzing, like that of a fly when accidentally entangled in a similar web. The spider, watching at the door of his silken domicile, stole cautiously forth. His advance was slow, for he evidently felt that he was approaching the common enemy. The apparently desperate yet fruitless efforts of the wasp to free himself encour-

aged the spider and lured him forward. But when within some three inches of his intended victim, the wasp suddenly freed himself from his mock entanglements, and darting upon the poor spider, in a moment, as it were, pierced him with his deadly sting in a hundred places. The wasp then bore his ill-gotten spoil to his lonely home. This home is built of clay, thumb-shaped and originally containing but one apartment. In the lower part of this cell-de-see the wasp deposits its eggs. Immediately over them it draws a thin, glutinous curtain. Upon this curtain it packs away the proceeds of its hunting excursions, such as spiders, flies and all other insects which it regards as suitable food for its young. Consequently when the young escape from the ova, they find above them a well-stocked larder, and gradually eat their way through the choice depository, finally appearing to the delighted world in the agreeable form and stature of perfect wasps.

## PETROLEUM LANGUAGE.

The Peculiar Slang Used by Dwellers in the Pennsylvania Oil Regions. It has been frequently remarked that every separate trade and occupation has a language of its own, built up from its wants, and in the main unintelligible to other craftsmen. As a marked example, says the Golden Days, take the oil business of Pennsylvania. This region has a very peculiar slang, one phrase of which has drifted into general use. "He's got the sand," as a synonym for "nerve," had its origin in the oil country. In an oil-well every thing depends upon the sand. "The sand" is the rock in which the oil is found, and on its quality depends the production of the well. If no sand is found, the well is at once abandoned. If the sand is good—that is, of a coarse texture—the well is more than likely to be a good one; but if the sand is fine and hard, it is sure to be a small well, if not an utter failure. Therefore the important question, when a well is being finished, is "Has it got the sand?" "Hitting her jugular," means to strike a well that flows immediately. "A duster" is a dry hole, and about twenty-five per cent. of all the wells drilled are dusters. "A spouter" is a flowing well, and "a roarer" is a large gas well. "Spudding" is a term used for drilling when the well is just started. After the hole is deep enough to cover all the tools, it is called drilling. The drilling-tools of any well consist of several pieces screwed together, and hence are called "a string of tools."

An operator never says there are twenty wells drilling in a certain district, but "there are twenty sets of tools running."

"The big hole" means that part of the hole drilled before the casing is put in. "Shooting a well" is the process of exploding a torpedo in it to increase the production.

The "bull wheel" is an important part of the drilling machinery of a well, around the large wooden shaft of which the drilling cable is wound.

The "sand pump" is a valve about six feet long that is run into the hole to pump out the drillings.

The "bit" is simply the drill, and the "reamer" is the tool which is run into the well after the drill to make the hole uniform.

"A fishing job" is to hunt in the hole for lost tools, and this is a distinct and important part of the business. Fishing has become an art. There are one hundred different and curious varieties of "fishing tools," a peculiar one for every part of the drilling appliance that may be lost. There are men who make a business of "fishing," and their skill in securing tools lost at as great a depth as two thousand feet some of the amazing things of this peculiar industry.

The "white sand pools" are districts where the oil sand is white and full of pebbles. The oil produced in these pools commands a premium of twenty-five cents above the market, and is known as "premium oil." All the Pennsylvania districts are "white sand districts" except Bradford. The Bradford sand being of a dark color, it is known as "the black sand district." The oil is inferior, and does not command a premium. In drilling a well the drill is turned round and round, and a driller is known as a "junk-twister."

## AT THE FRONT DOOR.

An Excellent Picture of a Young Woman Wrestling with a Latch Key. If you have never had the pleasure of watching a woman open her front door by means of a latch key it is worth dawdling away the fifteen minutes she requires for her operation to be amused at the thorough femininity of her actions, says the New Orleans Picayune. The other evening, shortly before dusk, a bright-faced, quick-stepping girl, buttoned up in an English walking jacket, swinging along-handled parasol, and carrying half a dozen small parcels, passed briskly by, on Camp street, to run up a flight of stone steps and opened siege on the front entrance with the skeleton instrument concealed somewhere about her person.

First she shifted the responsibility of purse, packages, umbrella and handkerchief on one hand, while she used the other to feel in both coat pockets for the key. They failed to produce it, and by that time one bundle and the tiresome parasol lay half-way down the stoop. With slightly flushed cheeks the girl picked up the awkward parachute, leaned it up in one corner, took a firmer hold on the slippery parcels and examined the palms of her snugly-fitting gloves. This process gave her handkerchief to the breeze, and mistaking the trifle for a miniature sail, the zipper playfully caught it up and helped it flutter a dozen paces down the street. By this time a dense expression had grown about the young lady's lips; she paid no heed to the results of an evening's industrious shopping now lying scattered at her feet, but plunged boldly into the intricacies of her smooth draperies and instituted instant search for a secret pocket. With nervous fingers she pulled at one fold after another until finally a section gave way, and with a latch her hand disappeared in the depth of some hidden recess.

The triumphant expression beginning to dawn upon the girl's features gave way first to one of dismay, and then growing mortification her memory seemed to point to the exact spot on her dressing table from which she had not taken her key that afternoon. Indignant and disgusted, this independent young woman gave a vicious tug to the bell, bowed humbly as a sympathetic man gathered and restored her disordered belongings, and with meek head passed out of sight through the door held open by the smiling maid.

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