

Which Shall it be.

A tidy little home for Betsy and me,
With just enough room for one, two, three,
Or a tumble-down but with a broken gate?
And a sad-eyed woman toiling early and late;

Which shall it be
For mine and me?

A five cent glass of beer for me,
Or a five cent loaf for all of us three?
Beer or baby—wine or wife.
Which do I hold more precious than life

Which shall it be
For mine and me?

Potatoes and salt with a crust of bread
For the best little woman the Lord ever
made,
While the rum-seller's wife feeds on turkey
and wine,
Bought with my money if I so decline,
Which shall it be
For mine and me?

Tatters and rags for my little one,
My fair, comely baby, my own darling son
While the rum-seller's children go warm
and well clad
On my earnings, wrested from my bonny
lad;

Which shall it be
For mine and me?

Well, man, do you think me a whole eyed
fool
Blindly to serve as the rum-seller's tool;
Ah! how can I hesitate which to choose,
When it's all to gain—or all to lose;
For mine and me,
For mine and me.

A Successful Experiment.

BY EMILY HUNTINGTON MILLER

Bert looked up from the book whose pages had absorbed every thought for the last hour to see Robert with elbows on the table, and chin supported by two big, bony palms, staring at a blot on the much-abused cover originally designed as a decoration to their study table.

"What is it, old fellow, headache, or does genius burn?" he asked, throwing his history one side and stretching his long arms above his head.

"Genius," said Rob, decidedly. "See here, Bert, what did you think when the little mother was helping us make out the list of camp supplies to-night?"

"Think! Why, lots of things. Thought the little mother was a brick—no hurt to think slang if you keep it to yourself—and I thought—well, I thought it was jolly to have a mother that entered into your fun just like a boy and didn't say, 'It's a mystery to me what satisfaction boys find in going camping, unless it is making all the trouble they can to other folks,' like—"

"Well, never mind the like; that's about what I thought, but after I came up here I got to thinking how she learned so much about camping and tramping and all that, and I remembered the stories she used to tell us of the jolly times she and father had when they went off to the mountains on his vacation."

"Yes, I remember; she hasn't spoken of them lately and I'd almost forgotten. She used to wear rubber boots and enjoy fishing and tramping and canoe voyages just as well as he did."

"It set me to wondering if she wouldn't enjoy that kind of thing just as much now, and thinking what a tiresome, humdrum life she had any way and how awfully selfish we fellows were to go off and leave her here for six weeks or two months."

"Well, but I don't—we can't very well drop out now the party is all made up."

"The Foster boys would be glad to take our places. You know they were only left out because they expected to go off with their father."

"The little mother wouldn't let us stay—she knows you need it and I want it."

"But if we drop out of this party and go somewhere by ourselves and take her along?" said Robert, eagerly scanning Bert's face to see how the proposition struck him.

"Why, yes," said Bert, slowly, "that would do if you are sure she'll go."

"She'll go if she is sure we want her. I tell you, Bert, she needs it more than you or I do. I never thought till lately what a grind her life must be compared with old times, when there was plenty of money and father was here."

"The money is one trouble, can we make it stretch? Suppose we get some work to do and send her off to the seashore for a regular out and out good time."

"She wouldn't like it half so well as going somewhere with us, and I believe we can get all the fun and the good of an outing without going so far or letting it cost so much. At any rate, we can take the money and divide it by three, instead of by two, and make our plans accordingly."

"Yes," said the little mother, laughing and blushing almost like a girl as she looked down at the pale dressmaker who was "hanging" the skirt of her dark blue flannel dress, "I'm really going into the woods with my boys, and I'm as ex-

cited over it as if I were only sixteen myself. They planned it all themselves, bless 'em, and wouldn't take any excuses. I thought at first I would just wear some old gown that I could afford to spoil, but then I remembered how it always pleased them to have me look trim and pretty, and I decided to have a neat outing suit, seeing I should save its cost by not needing any summer dresses. Be sure you get it short enough."

"You're a happy woman," said the dressmaker, with a faint little sigh.

"I ought to be; I'm a blessed one in spite of—"

"She did not say in spite of what, but the dressmaker knew very well she was thinking of the loss that had once seemed too heavy to bear."

She sat down again to her machine, but Mrs. Hamilton's eyes followed her thoughtfully.

"Jennie," she said, suddenly, "why can't you come too? It would make a new woman of you to live out doors for a month."

The dressmaker's face brightened with pleasure at the kindness of the suggestion.

"Thank you for thinking of it," she said, in a tremulous voice, "but it would be impossible. Happiness to me means a chance to work, not time for holidays, and I am so fortunate as to have work engaged for all summer. That is unusual because the people I work for nearly all go away for the summer, but this year I have three large housekeeping orders of white goods to do while they are gone. I like that because there is no fitting or planning and I can take my time with it."

"Then, Jennie," said Mrs. Hamilton, with a sudden inspiration, "bring your work and stay here while we are gone. Here's this big, old-fashioned house and the trees and the garden and the hammock—you could find some friend to come with you, I suppose."

"O Mrs. Hamilton, said the dressmaker, with dilated eyes, "do you really mean it? It would be like heaven. If you knew what those hot little rooms are in a July day."

"Mrs. Hamilton—there are six of us that have almost forgotten how the country looks."

"You shall all come," said Mrs. Hamilton, impulsively, "it will add double delight to our outing to know that somebody is enjoying the flowers and trees and comforts here."

"If you would let us rent the house for July and August."

"I couldn't think of it. Nothing would induce me to rent my dear old home, but to have my friends in it, that would be much better than closing it up. I leave it in your care you see."

"We'll care for it as if it belonged to the king."

"Why, so it does, and so do we all, only sometimes we are too much in a hurry to stop and ask what he wants us to do with his property."

"There is one of the girls I'm afraid will not come unless she can pay. She's foolish I know, but she is that way about everything."

"Well, then, I'll tell you—you shall pay five dollars apiece for the house, and you shall be my treasurer. And I want you to use that money in bringing people out here for a day—women with babies, or children, or anybody you like—use it just as you please for those who need it most, only don't make it a burden on yourselves."

Mrs. Hamilton saw the tears dropping on the white fingers that were skillfully shaping the work, and like a wise little woman hurried away to busy herself in another room.

"You look just like a girl," said Bert, surveying his mother with admiring eyes. "Look at her, Rob, you'd never guess she had a gray hair under that hat."

"She's forty times better looking than any girl in the country," said Rob, stoutly, taking in every detail of the costume—trim skirt, jaunty little blazer, gray outing skirt with soft, full tie of silk, and rough straw hat that shaded a face full of quiet happiness. "Tisn't every mother that would take so much pains to get herself up nice to go into the woods with her boys; everything sensible, too, and stout enough to stand the racket, only you ought to have a cap, mamma dear."

"I've got one," said Mrs. Hamilton, pulling a blue tennis cap from the pocket of her blazer. "I thought I wouldn't put it on till I got away, for fear people might think I was to giddy for an old woman."

"Let anybody call my mother an old woman," said Rob with a threatening scowl. "She's my best girl, and I never mean to have any other."

And so the three lovers went away on their holiday journey of mountains and valleys, forests and farms that lay at no great distance from their home, so near in fact that most summer travellers overlooked it altogether. They set up their tent among the hemlocks by a tiny lake, from which a crooked channel led into another and much larger one. And there through

long days they hunted and fished and followed faint, mysterious trails through the forests to dim little pools, under whose shadowed banks the speckled trout lurked, shooting out suddenly into the sparkling current and slipping down stream under their very noses. They made excursions for blueberries or rested for days in quite farmhouses; they read and studied and played games through days of rain; they came back from long tramps tired and ravenous, and ready for such blissful sleep as new-created soul and body. And when, at last, they crossed the track of some of their school friends, off on a pedestrian excursion, the boys took staff and knapsack and joined them, while Mrs. Hamilton took up quarters at a sleepy little homestead where the life of the last century seemed never to have felt a ripple of change.

They came home clear-eyed and refreshed and full of new vigor. The plain old home with its simple furnishings looked sumptuously by contrast with tent and cabin, and all three took up their work with keen pleasure.

"We never had such a tiptop vacation," said Bert, "and just look at the little mother; she's gained fifteen pounds."

"I think I must have gained fifty pounds."

"I feel as if I must have gained fifty when I think how I've been eating. I tell you what, Bert, it adds a good deal to the fun of camping to have somebody along that knows how to cook."

"And somebody that's good company rainy days."

"And all other days. Don't you remember how Ben Nash roped us into playing cards last summer because we were all so sick of each other and didn't know what under the sun to do? Now, I've done half my work in English history when I should just have been growling at the weather."

At that very time the "little mother," with tears in her brown eyes but a smile about her sweet mouth, was folding up a letter in which she read: "You never can know, dear Mrs. Hamilton, how much good you have done us this summer. Mary Dean was breaking down under the pressure of her work and we were all of us tired and discouraged. The blessed change the sweet air, the things that took us out of ourselves and, more than all, I think, your loving kindness has put new hearts into us. And I can't help thinking of the many beautiful homes that are shut up and left alone every summer that would be like heaven to tired folks who can't be helped in any other way. But I suppose people who are used to such things don't think about it."

"I know one woman," said Mrs. Hamilton to herself, "who will never forget it again. I've learned more than one lesson of this summer's experience and so have my boys, bless their dear hearts."—*Congregationalist.*

Back to Base.

Two merry groups of boys and girls were playing what they called "Base" the other day. Each party was clustered around a big tree, the "bases" of the game, where they were safe from capture by the enemy; they made incursions into the enemy's country, and excursions around their own, but at the first signal of danger back they flew to "base" and safety.

So our young people must do in higher matters; it is an anxious and unsafe age for their faith; they hear matters discussed, disputed, which their fathers and mothers implicitly believed in; some of these doubters and disputers seem to be honest, intelligent, Bible Christians. Where can these young minds and hearts rest?

"Go back to base." That Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and the Gospel story is true, can be proved to the entire satisfaction of anybody who devotes an hour a day to the careful study of the evidence. Very well; that is base; there you are safe; make inroads if you choose into the regions of doubt and scepticism, make excursions into the outlying truths of revealed religion, but keep close to base; and watch the danger signals, and whenever you find your faith trembling, lay hold of this one proven fact (which, though not all of the truth, is enough to save), saying: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast their words of eternal life, and we believe and are sure that Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God."

Good works for Boys.

Be gentle, boys. It is high praise to have it said of you, "He is as gentle as a woman to his mother."

It is out of fashion to think if you ignore mothers and make a little sister cry whenever she comes near you, that people will think you belong to the upper stratum of society. Remember that, as a rule, gentle boys make gentle men (gentlemen).

Be manly, boys. A frank, straight forward manner always gains friends. If you have committed a fault, step forward and confess it. Concealed faults are always found out sooner or later. Never do anything which afterward may cause a blush of shame to come to your face.

Be courteous, boys. It is just as easy to acquire a genteel, courteous manner as an ungracious don't care style, and it will help you materially if you have to make your own way through life. Other things being equal, the boy who knows the use of "I beg your pardon" and "I thank you" will be chosen for a position, three to one, in preference to a boy to whom such sentences are strangers.

Be prompt, boys. It is far better to be ahead of than behind time. Business men do not like tardiness. They realize that time is valuable. Five minutes every morning amount to half an hour at the end of the week. Many things can be done in half an hour. Besides, disastrous results often follow lack of punctuality.

Be thorough, boys. Black the heels as well as the toes of your shoes, and be sure that both shine. Pull out the roots of the weeds in flower beds. Don't break them off and leave them to spring up again when the first shower comes. Understand your lesson. Don't think that all that is necessary is to get through a recitation and receive a good mark.

Anticipation of evil is the great disturber of our comfort. Jeremy Taylor says: "Enjoy the present, whatsoever it may be, and be not solicitous for the future; for if you take your foot from the present standing and thrust it forward to ward to-morrow's event, you are in a restless condition. It is like refusing to quench your present thirst by fearing you shall want drink the next day. If it be well to-day, it is madness to make the present miserable by fearing it may be ill to-morrow." The homely proverb, "Never cross a bridge till you come to it," has much of wisdom. Better still is the teaching of our Lord, "Be not, therefore, anxious for the morrow; for the morrow shall be anxious for itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

He Broke up the Game.

In public, as well as in private, one should ever be mindful of the rights of others. Not long since a clergyman accompanied by two young ladies was travelling. It was nearing the hour of midnight, yet they had not ordered their sleeping berths made up. Instead, they were indulging in a game at words—trying to see who could think of the most words that began with this or that letter.

They spent half an hour or more on "A," and then went to "B" with a freshness that seemed to indicate that they intended, despite the lateness of the hour, to go to the end of the alphabet. At any rate, that was the impression they gave to the tired man in the berth opposite, who was trying in vain to sleep.

Presently there came a lull, when none of the three seemed able to think of another B. The tired man took advantage of the lull. Parting his curtain the least bit of a space, he shouted,

"And 'bores,' sir—'bores!'"

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-BARGAINS-

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1872	\$48,210.93	\$546,461.95	\$1,076,350.00
1874	64,072.88	621,362.81	1,864,302.00
1876	102,822.14	715,944.64	2,214,093.43
1878	127,505.87	773,895.71	3,374,683.14
1880	141,402.81	911,132.93	3,881,478.09
1882	254,841.73	1,073,577.94	5,849,889.1
1884	278,378.65	1,274,397.24	6,844,404.04
1886	319,987.05	1,411,004.38	7,030,878.77
1888	373,500.31	1,573,027.16	9,433,358.07
1887	495,831.54	1,750,004.48	10,873,777.09
1888	525,273.68	1,974,316.21	11,931,300.6
1889	563,140.52	2,223,322.72	17,164,383.08
1890	889,078.87	2,911,014.19	20,698,589.92

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