

# Fifteen To-Day.

MARY A. DENISON, in Harper's Young People.

For the last time, dear dolly, I dress you, and carefully put you away; you can't tell how much I shall miss you, but then I am fifteen to-day.

And you, not so very much younger—have you nothing at parting to say? Are you sorry our fun is all over, and that I am fifteen to-day?

What walks we have had through the clover; what rides on the top of the hay; what feasting in grandmother's garret! And now I must put you away.

Cousin Ethel just buried her dolly, with its eyes open wide, and as blue as yours, my sweet dolly, this minute; I couldn't do that, dear, to you.

Oh, stop, dolly! what am I thinking? Why cannot I give you away? There's a poor little girl I love dearly, and she's only ten years to-day.

How happy your bright face would make her! She never had playthings like you, with all your fine dresses and trinkets. Yes, dolly, that's just what I'll do.

I do believe, dolly, I'm crying. "What nonsense, child!" grandma would say. Good-by; one last kiss; I'm half sorry that I am fifteen, dear, to-day.

## FELONS.

BY CHARLES N. SINNETT.

Steve Crandall sauntered along the edge of Big Grove. He picked flowers and whistled softly until Aunt Jean Bruce went into her little house. When he heard the sound of the old lady's loom he darted in among the trees.

Thick clumps of yellow and blew violets looked up at him, columbines wagged their bright blossoms, and he almost stumbled over a lady's slipper with a fine flower nodding on its top. But he was looking up into the trees. He didn't seem to know that there was a single flower anywhere near him. Those that he held in his hand were so completely forgotten that he squeezed their stems very hard.

When he saw a bird's nest in the top of one of the trees near, his eyes twinkled.

"It belongs to that small heron that I've seen flying around here," thought Steve. "Yes, there's her long neck and legs."

Away flew the bird. Up climbed the boy, dropping his posies at the foot of the tree.

"Aunt Jean don't allow any one to touch a nest in this part of the grove," he laughed. "She says that boys who take eggs are as bad as felons. That's a funny word of hers. Guess she thinks a felon is some kind of an Indian. But a mean bird like this one deserves to have her eggs taken."

Steve was so confident in these opinions that he didn't look closely at a limb which he held of just then. He snapped in his grasp, and down went his left hand on a sharp knot.

He kept himself from falling, though. The aching limbs made him feel that the bird fluttering over his head was somewhat to blame for his mishap. In ten minutes he reached the nest and took one of the pale green eggs.

He bore his treasure safely to the ground. He heard Aunt Jean's loom thumping. He picked up the flowers again. He began to whistle as he wrapped the egg in his handkerchief and slipped it into the side pocket of his coat.

"She might see me if I went straight home," he thought. "Guess I'll go and make her a call, and see what she's got to say about felons."

But he stopped before he reached the edge of the grove. A little bird hopped off her nest. It held the kind of eggs for which Steve had been hunting so long. It was only a moment and some of them were put in a safe place about his clothing.

"According to Aunt Jean's theories something will happen to me before I get home," he said to himself. "I'll get found out like a thief or a felon."

With no belief in such a misfortune he walked straight on to the little brown house of the good old lady.

He was a trifle nervous as he went in and spoke kindly to her. She thought that he had been walking too fast, and gave him her easiest chair right by the west window.

"It's warm work getting these pretty flowers for me," said kind Aunt Jean smelling the bouquet which the boy had handed to her.

"Well, I like to pick them," Steve answered with a little stammer.

"You must take a long rest, my boy, and here are some nice cakes that I've just baked this morning."

While Aunt Jean was getting the goodies which he liked so well the boy started a little nervously.

Was he ashamed of his mean trick? Was the good old lady's trust in him making him feel as though he must take the birds' eggs right back where he had got them?

Not altogether. He saw a bird flying back and forth over the grove. He was afraid Aunt Jean would notice it, or that some other boy had found the nest. But when he was handed the cakes and a glass of milk the old lady didn't once look out of the window.

"I'm always glad to hear you whistle when you go by," she said as she seated herself at the loom again. "Boys that go stealing into my part of the grove after birds' nests don't do it. They don't seem to mind the flowers nor anything good. Their minds are full of robbery and hurting the hearts of the dear mother birds. They are sure to get into trouble. They're worse than felons."

Aunt Jean wiped her spectacles. Steve did not look straight at her. A piece of cake seemed to be stuck in his throat. He swallowed a large draught of milk. But he couldn't help noticing that Aunt Jean's hands trembled, and that one of her fingers seemed stiff and lame.

She talked on, though, and then began work at her loom.

When at last Steve started for home he said to himself triumphantly, "There! nothing's happened to me yet, in spite of all her talks about boys who take specimens from birds' nests. Heigho, how green she is!"

His mother had gone to a neighbor's. He took her large darning-needle and made a hole in the big, pale-green egg. "Blew like fun. Not a sign of a chick in it," he laughed, when he had got the prize cleaned.

He had a little more trouble with the other eggs. He broke more of their shells than he wished to.

But when he saw his mother coming he thought his work well done. He took the eggs up to his room and hid them away.

"Nothing happened yet," he laughed when he went to bed that night. "Finger's a little sore. But it's been that way before. It's just the thump I got on that tree."

When he wakened in the morning his finger was paining him more. He saw on it something that looked like a blister.

"Must prick that," he said to himself as he scrambled out of bed.

The darning needle which he had used the day before was still sticking in the wall paper over his washstand. He pulled it out and worked on his finger with it.

He couldn't pick out the pain, however. He was not looking as pleasant as usual when he came down to breakfast.

"Are you feeling sick, Stephen?" asked his mother.

"No," he answered bluntly.

But five minutes later he acknowledged that something was the matter with his finger.

"I'm afraid you're going to have a hard time," said his mother, anxiously. "I hit it on a tree yesterday, confessed Steve, with his mind flying back to his mean work."

"And you have picked it with something rusty. That makes it worse."

The doctor said the same thing when he was called.

But he talked cheerily about the finger being all right in a few days.

Steve heard him whisper in the entry, "Felon, sure."

"Don't see how they found it out," said the boy, growing pale.

When his mother came in she only remarked, "You must have this poulticed well."

There was a rustle at the door by and by, and Aunt Jean came in. She was out of breath, but full of sympathy.

"Doctor told me you were going to have a felon," she said. "I had one on my finger once. But I can help you. And it's so good you're a nice boy, and don't do things worse than a felon."

Steve stared out of the window. There was a mother bird flying around and around a tall tree. And what a sharp pain there was in his finger! But the bird—she must feel worse than he did.

And that was what Steve said with the tears bubbling up to his eyes, quickly adding. "A felon's bad. But I'm worse. And your goodness has kept shooting pains in my heart. I'll steal—no—more—eggs!"

## What are You Good for?

"Children," said Mr. Brown, "what is my watch good for?"

"To keep time," the children answered.

"But suppose it can't be made to keep time, what is it good for?"

"It is good for nothing," they replied.

"And what is this pencil for?"

"To mark with," said the children.

"But suppose it has no lead, and will not mark, what is it good for?"

"Good for nothing."

"Well," said Mr. Brown, "what is the use of my knife?"

"To cut with," answered the little ones.

"Suppose it had no blade," he asked again, "then what is the knife good for?"

"Good for nothing."

"Tell me, now," said Mr. Brown, "what is a boy or girl good for?"

"What is the chief end of man?"

"Oh, that's catechism," cried Willie Brown. "To glorify God and enjoy him forever."

"Very well. If a boy or girl does not do what he or she is made for, what is he or she good for?"

And the children all answered, without seeming to think how it would sound, "Good for nothing."

Dear boys and girls, if you are not seeking to "glorify God, and to enjoy him forever," is it not just as if you were "good for nothing?"—*Christian Observer.*

## If I Were You, My Boy.

I wouldn't be ashamed to do right anywhere. I would not do anything that I would not be willing for everybody to know.

I wouldn't conclude that I knew more than my father before I had been fifty miles away from home.

I wouldn't go into the company of boys who use bad language.

I wouldn't get in the sulks and pout whenever I couldn't have my own way about everything.

I wouldn't let any other boys get ahead of me in my studies.

I wouldn't abuse little boys who had no big brother for me to be afraid of.

I would learn to be polite to everybody.

I wouldn't cry for anything when mamma or papa told me it was not good for me.

I would try to see if I couldn't get people to like me by being civil to everybody.

I would never make fun of children because they were not dressed nicely.

I would try to learn something useful every day, and whenever I saw men making anything I would watch to see how they did it.

## It Pays to be Pleasant.

It seems even monkeys differ in disposition, and in this respect are like children. It is told of a small monkey in the zoological gardens at Marseilles that every one who visited the place noticed him because he was always friendly and apparently happy sitting in the front of his cage, bowing to everyone who passed. He never joined in the frequent quarrels that went on between the other monkeys in the cage, and never was cross or snappish over any real or fancied "teasing" of which the boys were guilty. The result was he had many more dainties given him than the others received, and was remembered by all visitors because of his sunny disposition, when none of the others were thought of twice.

Cross boys and girls lose many nice things they might have if they were not cross, and make themselves as well as others unhappy.

Cultivate the habit of being pleasant. It pays.

## Long-Lived Birds.

According to a foreign scientific journal the swan is the longest lived bird, in extreme cases reaching 300 years. The falcon has been known to live 162 years. An eagle died in 1819 which had been caught 104 years before and was then quite old. A white-headed vulture, which was caught in 1706, died in the aviary at Schonbrunn, near Vienna, in 1824. Parrots live more than a century. Water-birds have a long life, exceeding that of several generations of men. Ravens also live over 100 years. In captivity magpies live from twenty to twenty-five years, and still longer in freedom. The common hen attains the age of from fifteen to twenty years. Doves live ten years, and the little singing birds from eight to seventeen years. The nightingale's life is the shortest, ten years being the longest, and next comes the blackbird, which never lives longer than fifteen years.

An English lady declares that a mustard plaster on the elbow will cure neuralgia in the face, and that one on the back of the neck will cure neuralgia in the head. The reason given for this is that the mustard is said to bite; while, if put on a part where no nerve exists, it is of no use.

Borax water is excellent for sponging either silk or wool goods, that are not soiled enough to need washing. In washing cashmere or wool goods, put a little borax in the water. This will cleanse them much more easily and better, without injury to the colors. Do not rub them on a board, but use the hands, and throw on a line without wringing. Press them on the wrong side, and they will look almost like new.

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OUR MOTTO: ON WARD!!

—The Mystery—No. 31.—

No. 162.—HIDDEN NAMES.

(BY M. R. MCLEOD, Fton.)

Lou Lou is a good girl in school. That note paper, Cyril, isn't very good, I dare not go. Did Ed die a natural death? That red flannel lies out on the grass.

No. 163.—ENIGMA.

(BY M. R. MCLEOD, Fton.)

In Mary, and also in Jane; In pie, and also in pudding; In pear, and also in grape; In last, and also in least; In see, and also in hear; My whole is a fruit.

No. 164.—WORD SQUARE.

(BY M. R. MCLEOD, Fton.)

Opposed to stand; to chew and swallow; a number.

No. 165.—PIE.

(BY J. R. DELONG, Kingsley.)

(1) Bmnmrmr wno yth rtocrae ni hte ydsa fo tyh tytyo.

(2) Htr kwicde elef hnaw on nma htrpuae, thb hte gthruocrae dhol sa a noli.

(3) Moea tnoa em laly eh htrblau dna rae vyhae dnlea nda I liwl veig uyo tser.

(4) Orya vhaeyen htfare wkonhte hatt ey vhea dene fo lla sehet ghtnsi.

(5) Nrheie si ym hfrate ogfride htta ey rbae hium trfui.

No. 166.—PI PUZZLES.

(1) Het dicewk lhas eb denrut oint lehl dna lal eth aiontaa tath toofrg dgo.

(2) Eamk a lfuozy esnio outn teh dori, lla ey sdlan.

J. F. KNOWLES.

No. 167.—DIAMONDS.

(1) A consonant, an adjective; an adverb; a point of time; a vowel.

(2) A letter; did eat; a useful article; a woman's name; a letter.

J. F. KNOWLES.

—The Mystery Solved in three weeks.—

(The Mystical Circle.)

The first word-hunt list has been received from Emma L. Harkin, aged 17, East Pubnico, N. S.

MY POWERS.

I have two hands, a right and left, And fingers, ten in number; Out of the palms' end they are cleft, With naught their use to cumber.

Two eyes to see, two ears to hear All sights and sounds whatever; A tongue to speak good words of cheer But lies and bad words never.

A heart and brain to feel and judge, Two feet which none may fetter; These powers I'll use without a grudge, To make the world grow better.

UNCLE NED.

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