Pete the Peddler or A Boy's Start in Life



CHAPTER VIII.

When Pete had given the jailor's wife his brief history she was very indignant and called her husband and said:

"This boy has been committed to jail on the complaint of that idiotic Constable Lukens. You could have told by one look at him that he was not a bad boy. Why did you put him among those miserable tramps?"

"What other place have we got?" asked the jailor, who seemed a bit afraid of his better half.

"If there is no other place then he must come into the house with us. I tell you I won't have him herding in with such human beings. He has neither father nor mother, and the Constable ought to be here in his place. It may be three or four days yet before his case is called. Pete, if I take you out of the jail part will you give me your word that you won't run away?"

"Yes'm," was the prompt reply.

"But if he does run away then we will lose our place here," observed the jailor.

"If he says he won't then he won't, and I'm going to trust him."

That evening the boy ate supper with the jailor and his wife and was given a clean bed. Next morning he was up bright and early and at work in the garden, and along about 10 o'clock he heard the jailor's wife scolding some one and soon discovered that Constable Lukens had come around to see how his prisoner got along.

When told that the boy had been taken out of jail he began to bluster, but the woman said to him:

"Jim Lukens, you are the largest fool-man in this whole county! That boy is honest and straight, and you ought to go to jail yourself for arresting him. I am going to have him sue you for false imprisonment."

"He looked to me like a hard boy," replied the officer.

"Then you must have sore eyes. If you had had any spunk about you you'd have followed the tramp and put him under arrest. This boy has got a rich old man behind him, and when he gets here I wouldn't want to be in your shoes."

"If I've made a mistake I'm sorry," whined the Constable.

"Well, you'd better get a move on you at once and go and tell the Justice to let him out. You have no proofs and you know well enough you can't get any."

"I'll go at once and I hope you'll say a good word for me to the boy."

It was not yet 12 o'clock when Pete was informed that he was at liberty, and the Constable brought around his tin box. The boy was for setting off at once, but the jailor's wife, who had taken a great liking to him, said:

"You'd better stay with us another night and rest up. It isn't every boy who gets into jail one day and gets out the next, and you ought to have time to get over your surprise. I once had a boy about your age, and he looked a good deal like you, but he fell sick and died."

Pete wanted to be as obliging as he could, and while he finished weeding the garden the woman washed and ironed his handkerchief, socks and collar. When evening came she heard his story again, and in return told him many stories about jail life. Once, when they had forty-two prisoners in the jail, all would have broken out but for her. She wounded two of them with her husband's revolver, and the noise of the shooting brought help from the street.

Before he went to bed she said:

"I think you will get along in the world all right. I believe you had a good mother and father, and if you are the right sort of boy this Mr. Mims may do a great deal for you. Don't lie to people about your goods, and don't cheat in prices. Don't fall into bad habits as you grow up. People bring trouble on themselves by being mean. There is only one straight path and that is to be honest and truthful."

It is a good many years since Pete the Peddler sat on the back porch of that jail-house with the wife of the jailor and listened to her words of advice. She has long been dead, and the jail was long ago torn down to make room for a better one, but he hasn't forgotten what was said to him.

That night the boy had all kinds of dreams, and it will not surprise you to hear that he dreamed of the trunk. He dreamed that he went to the curve in the railroad and looked into the ditch and among the bushes for hours and hours, but failed to find it.

He awoke and felt much cast down, as he knew how important those papers were to Mr. Mims, but when morning came he was in better spirits. He got a good breakfast, and when he was ready to go the jailor shook hands with him and his wife kissed him and insisted that he take along a bottle of milk and a basket of luncheon.

There were three or four men in the street near the jail who had heard about the boy being arrested, and when he came out and they saw that he was at liberty they insisted on shaking hands with him and buying some of his goods. His sales among the little crowd amounted to a dollar and a half, and the men wished him all kinds of good luck as he finally moved off.

It was a distance of about four miles to the curve in the railroad. Pete was very anxious to reach the spot and begin his search, but he did not neglect to stop at any of the farm houses on the way. He could not tell who else was looking for that same old hair trunk, and he did not want to make a move to excite suspicion. As a peddler, he was expected to call at every house and be in no hurry to leave.

(To be Continued.)



"HE HEARD THE JAILERS WIFE SCOLDING."

JANE'S BALL.

A GRANDMOTHER STORY

Grandma sat on the wide veranda knitting a rainbow shawl, Phyllis and Margaret and Emma lay on their stomachs before her waiting for the story; and directly, with a tender little twinkle in her beautiful blue eyes, Grandma began:

"This is to be a true, true story, and the heroine is another child that thought she could do everything."

Grandma paused here to undo more of the ravage Phyllis (who had no knowledge of the art of knitting had made in the rainbow shawl; and each of her hearers wondered if the story-child had been Grandma herself. Each also wondered if the lecture was to be for them; for in all Grandma's stories, hidden like a solid little pebble under rose leaves, there was always a tiny, excellent lesson of some sort.

"Yes," went on Grandma, still busy with the bad stitches in a golden stripe in the rainbow shawl, "she was a very opiniated and wilful child. You had only to say that the moon was a wonderful creation for her to decide at once that she could make one just as good with scissors and goldy paper.

"Well, one day, when she was just six, this vain little girl saw dancing for the first time. It was at a grand family ball, at which she was allowed to look on for a moment, and at which a beautiful young lady, with an awkward partner, wore a long white tarlatan dress looped up with rosebuds. So Jane, which was the vain little girl's name, went home and practiced dancing for a whole day in front of a big gold-framed mirror in the parlor, which went from the ceiling to the floor. And to make herself beautiful she took one of her white dresses and looped it up with old artificial flowers her mamma had taken from a hat and given her for her doll.

"After a while Jane said to herself: 'What's the use of a ball without partners? It's too childish.'

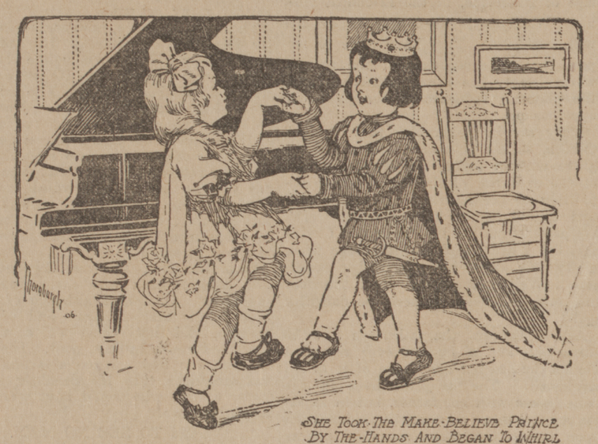
"She thought a little moment in front of the gold-framed mirror and then she said, 'Oh.'

"For all at once she had thoubht up a make-believe partner, whom she called to herself the Prince. He was only a little child like herself, but he wore a crown and a long ermine trimmed robe, such as princes always wear in fairy stories.

"You see, as she couldn't wear a train herself like the beautiful young lady, she made the make-believe Prince do it. In fact, he was a most splendid partner, even if he was only a thought person; but he was strangely stupid, too, for not a word would he say. He only stood staring at Jane with his finger in his mouth and looking almost as if he were going to cry.

"At last Jane said, 'Come along, stupid,' and she took the make-believe Prince by the hands and began to whirl around with him.

"Now, you may not know it, but to waltz or polka by yourself is difficult enough when you don't now



SHE TOOK THE MAKE-BELIEVE PRINCE BY THE HANDS AND BEGAN TO WHIRL AROUND WITH HIM

now. But when you've got hold of even a make-believe partner that you have to teach, it is the most difficult thing in the world. Jane and the make-believe Prince bumped into sofas and tumbled over chairs. At last Jane kicked out her foot — for everything seemed very real by now —to push his ermine-edged robe out of the way, as she had seen the young lady's awkward partner do at the ball. But she had forgotten that make-believe garments are very transparent things; and so, alas, alas, through this one her toes went —straight into the gold-framed mirror. The crash was terrific and when she got to her feet, for the kick sent her sprawling, there was a great accusing star the break had made in the lovely old looking-glass.

As for the make-believe Prince, he skipped away at once in his ermine robe, so only Jane was left to get the scolding.

"She told her mamma the whole story, for she was a truthful child; and at the end of the lecture her mother said: 'So if you had waited till you were old enough to learn to dance, my dear, you would have understood two things. First, how to keep away from valuable mirrors; and, secondly, that to kick a train out of the way is not included in elegant behavior, even if awkward gentlemen do indulge in it sometimes.'

"And that's all the story," said Grandma, smiling sweetly at Phyllis, who smiled sweetly and understandingly back over the rainbow shawl. They knew that there had been a second lecture in the story; and the rainbow shawl, which had picked up all its dropped stitches, knew it too.

THE LAND PIRACY OF CAPTAIN JEREMY STAYBOLT

BY CAPTAIN A. B. HAWSER.

Captain Jeremy Staybolt was a sailor man who loved piracy partially for its own sake, but mostly for the money that there was in it. So for many years he cruised along the rich coasts of Hoboken and Harlem in his craft, which had been built low and rakish after the most approved model, and as he could show his heels to all the government boats he robbed and destroyed with impunity.

Morning after morning the householders of Harlem would arise to find that the milk which the milkman had left on their doorsteps had been ruthlessly taken by the mysterious pirates, who never left a trail. And scarcely had the alarm gone forth before word would come from far Hoboken, at the other end of the coast, that the men of the Flying Salt Horse, which was the name of the dreaded craft, had descended on that peaceful and timid town and carried off all the morning newspapers, thus cutting Hoboken off from communication with the civilized world. Once they seized the constable of Oyster Bay and made him walk the plank, which would surely have been the end of him had the water happened to be more than four feet deep. Another time they would infallibly have captured an excursion barge full of Sunday school pupils. The only thing that prevented it was that they were at the other end of the coast at the time and never saw the rich prize.

Captain Jeremy Staybolt and his cruel crew might have continued their wicked career indefinitely, for nobody could catch them, but one day the captain decided to keep abreast of the march of progress by putting a gasoline engine into his vessel.

This was the beginning of the ruin of what had been a prosperous and easy business, for from that time on the Flying Salt Horse lost prize after prize through the constant breaking down of her engine. At last when a rowboat full of home-made cake and currant wine slipped by their very noses while they tinkered in helpless rage with the machinery, the cruel crew walked aft in a body and resigned their positions as pirates.

There was nothing left for Captain Jeremy Staybolt to do but to get out of the business, for good, reliable pirates who were willing to work day and night were scarce and, besides, the pirates of the Flying Salt Horse formed a Pirates' Union as soon as they had resigned and served notice on everybody that they would let no one work aboard the Flying Salt Horse.

So Captain Jeremy Staybolt dropped the anchor and went ashore at Hoboken. For a while he earned a great deal of money by lecturing about piracy at church entertainments, but soon his adventurous spirit tired of this and he looked around for some more exciting occupation.

He had observed that Hoboken was a favorite place for automobilists — not to stop at, but to speed through —and the place they loved most was a level stretch of road that ran for about a quarter of a mile along the ocean beach almost at the edge of the surf.

Captain Jeremy Staybolt went to two of his old pirates, and after they had consulted all night long, they hit on a wicked plan.

Early the next morning Captain Staybolt bought that section of the beach along which the road ran. Then he and his two accomplices secretly cut a ditch to it from the sea and put in a floodgate.

The very day it was finished a millionaire came along at ninety-one miles an hour, with his wife and his wife's sister and his wife's mother and his wife's bull-terrier and his wife's French maid and his wife's jewel box. He did not observe one of the pirates sitting in a tree with his brass telescope, nor did he see the glittering eyes of the other pirate where he lay concealed by the floodgate.

The only thing that he saw was Captain Jeremy Staybolt sitting peaceably by the side of a little boat which lay high and hry on the sand. So he careened madly along, tooting like anything.

But the moment he got to the beach road the pirate in the tree waved his telescope and at the signal the other pirate opened the floodgate.

In rushed the sea! Fast though the automobile went, the water came faster, and soon it was over the hubs of the wheels and the automobile had to stop.

By this time the boat was afloat and Captain Staybolt jumped in and hoisted his black flag with the skull and cross-bones. He bore alongside of the automobile and cried "Heave to!"

"Save us! Save us!" cried the millionaire's wife and his wife's sister and his wife's mother and his wife's French maid.

"Step aboard," commanded Captain Staybolt, and they lost no time, for the water was rising fast. He ferried them to the high land and they went to a hotel a dry themselves. As soon as they had gone the pirates closed the floodgate and allowed the water to drain off. Then they tied a rope to the automobile and dragged it away to the captain's lair.

The next morning the millionaire called on Captain Staybolt bright and early to get his automobile, but the captain refused to give it up.

"Do you not know marine law?" asked the cunning captain. "According to it, every craft that is disabled at sea and in distress and abandoned by its crew becomes the prize of the rescuer. So I shall keep your automobile and your wife's jewels."

The millionaire promptly went to court about it, but the captain proved that he had found the automobile on water and not on land and that marine law applied to it, and the court decided that he was right.

After that hardly a day passed that the captain did not capture at least one automobile, and sometimes he got as many as three. He auctioned them off and soon he was the richest man in all the country around.

He never lacked for victims, because, as is well known, automobilists are in too much of a hurry to read the newspapers or even to converse with each other. So he prospered exceedingly and became so much respected for his business success that there was talk of electing him to the Senate.

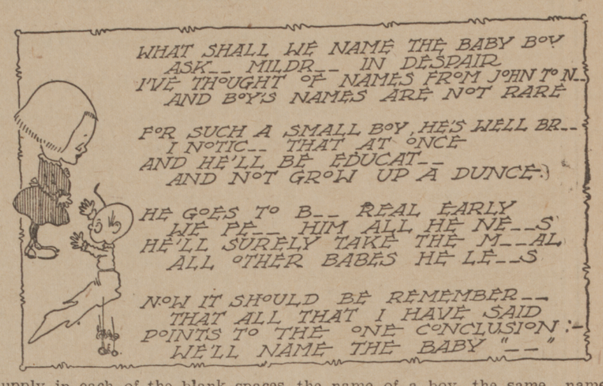
But on an unfortunate day he captured the automobile of a clever man who loved to invent things. And this man, when he discovered the trickery of the cruel pirate, went straight home and began to invent like mad, until he had invented an automobile that looked very innocent, but was not so at all.

As soon as it was finished he went to Hoboken as fast as he could go, and of course the pirates turned the water on promptly and captured him. He did not say a word, but allowed himself to be saved, and as soon as he got ashore he went away chuckling.

When the water had drained off the three cruel pirates fastened a rope to the automobile as usual and started to drag it to their lair. But the moment they pulled the pull released a mechanism that set the automobile going at the rate of one hundred and fifty miles an hour.

Before the cruel pirates could let go the machine had backed straight into the sea, dragging them with it, and the last that the horrified spectators on shore saw was a great splash, and that was the end of the land piracy of Captain Jeremy Staybolt, of the Flying Salt Horse.

MISSING NAME PUZZLE.



Supply in each of the blank spaces the name of a boy, the same name in each space.

IN THE GOOSEBERRY SEASON.

BY SARAH NOBLE-IVES.

Gooseberries were ripe.

Now that meant more to the six little Amfaloras than you or I can imagine. They had been waiting for this delectable season all Summer, for there was nothing they loved better than a roast gooseberry. The way it is done is this:

You get a bunch of glow-worms together in half a walnut shell, put a flake of mica across the top and your gooseberry a-top of that. By and by it will begin to sizzle, and the juice comes boiling out from a hundred pores. Then the mica with the gooseberry on it is lifted off and allowed to cool. Then, if you are an Amfalora, you run your proboscis in up to the hilt, and drink deep of the most luscious nectar ever distilled from fruit or flower—honey is nothing to it.

So the six little Amfaloras sat up on a maple twig and looked longingly over a stone wall to where the gooseberry tree hung thick with prickly crimson globes. For you must understand that old Farmer Paltiwigla owned the fruit of the Amfaloras' hearts' desire, and he was as miserly an insect as ever wore six legs.

"We cannot go after them in the night," said Bing, the eldest Amfalora, "for in the night we cannot fly."

"Nor see," said Wing.

"Because we are asleep," said Ting.

"Then we must go by day," said Buzz.

"We certainly must," said Wuzz.

"But if we do old Paltiwigla will see us," said Fuzz, the youngest of all.

"Yes, old Paltiwigla will see us!" chorused all the little Amfaloras.

Then spoke Bing, the eldest:

"At noon, when the sun is hottest, old Paltiwigla takes his siesta. While he sleeps we will go together and visit the gooseberry tree."

"We will, we will!" hummed all the other little Amfaloras.

All the next morning they waited, their little wings buzzing and whirring with impatience. At last the slow noon came, and old Paltiwigla spread himself sleepily on a hydrangea blossom and dozed off. Then silently, silently, over the wall crept Bing, Wing, Ting, Buzz, Wuzz and Fuzz, with their wings folded and rubber soles on their shoes. Under the gooseberry tree they stole, and its sheltering branches screened them from old Paltiwigla as he slept on the hydrangea blossom.

The smell of the fruit in the hot sunshine floated down to them. It was like ambrosia to the Olympic gods. But the fruit hung high, and if they flew to it, old Paltiwigla would hear the wing-music.

Oh, so sweet, that fragrance! Amfalorean senses could not endure it without tasting.

"I will climb," said Bing, the eldest, "and I will break off a gooseberry for each of us."

Slowly, stealthily, up the gooseberry tree he mounted. It was half-past noon by the old sun-dial in the garden when he had broken the stems of five gooseberries. The others kept watch as he started on the sixth and largest—his own. Just then old Paltiwigla yawned and stretched himself.

Heavens! what a start it gave poor guilty Bing. He lost his footing—he rolled off the branch; then, horror of horrors; as he fell his trousers were impaled by a projecting thorn. As he hung there between heaven and earth, he felt sure that he had found the place of torment.

"Help me down," he whispered, reaching eager arms.

Wing jumped and grasped his hands, while Ting clutched at Wing's feet and pulled.

But the trousers were made from the best hornet's nest paper. They would not tear.

"I will saw the branch off," said Buzz, and he scrambled up the tree, while Fuzz and Wuzz looked on in blank despair.

Wing and Ting pulled, Buzz sawed and Wuzz and Fuzz shivered.

Old Paltiwigla rubbed his eyes and sat up on the hydrangea bloom.

He saw all six of the naughty little Amfaloras.

"What are you doing with my gooseberries?" he thundered. Then, like Jove's lightning, he swooped down upon them.

"Oh, Mr. Paltiwigla, spare us!" cried Wuzz and Fuzz, falling on their knees. "We wanted only one little, small, wee gooseberry apiece for roasting."

Just then the saw of Buzz crashed through the fatal branch and down toppled Bing on top of Wing and Ting and Buzz, and they all fell into an overripe gooseberry. It crushed beneath them and there they lay, with their wings wet with the juice—helpless. The fate of the dishonest had engulfed them.

"I will give you each a thrashing," said old Paltiwigla, "and you will get no gooseberry except what is on you at this moment."

So Paltiwigla gave six little thrashings to the six little Amfaloras, and Bing, Wing, Ting, Buzz Wuzz and Fuzz limped sadly across the wall to their barren maple twig.

Then old Paltiwigla, the mean curmudgeon, gathered up the fallen fruit. That evening he and his family dined off roast gooseberry and the odor was wafted up to the six hungry little Amfaloras as they sat just outside of Paradise on the maple twig.



"I WILL GIVE YOU EACH A THRASHING," SAID OLD PALTIWIGLA.

THEIR PECULIAR DIET.

Ron and Reg were two dear little boys who had been born and bred in a big city and knew nothing at all of country life. So when they were taken to the real country this year, far away from towns, they were quite overcome at first by the marvels that they saw everywhere.

In the beginning they were afraid of everything from the cows to the grasshoppers, but after a short time their naturally enterprising spirits overcame all their timidity and soon their mother had her hands full trying to prevent them from bringing home such uncomfortable pets as green snakes and tods.

One day she saw them busy in the garden picking something up and eating it delightedly between them.

"Boys! boys!" she cried, "what are you eating there?"

"Oh, muvver, muvver!" answered Reg, "we 'ust finded two tunning tatterpillars, a smoove one and a fuzzy one, and the smoove one was 'licious!"

AN INSECT RIDDLE.

One day the insects met to boast
Which one of them was known the most,
"I am," cried one, "a splendid game,
And thus I am best known to fame,"
"Without me," cried another then,
"Wives could not mend their clothes for men!"
"A female relative am I,"
Another said, "of honor high,"
"Without me," said one, "men would fret,
For there could be no alphabet!"
"I think," the next said "that I beat,
For I am something all men eat,"
"The prize," cried one, "belongs to me,
For I am quite a well known tree."
Now, all you puzzle experts, please
Tell us what insects are all these.

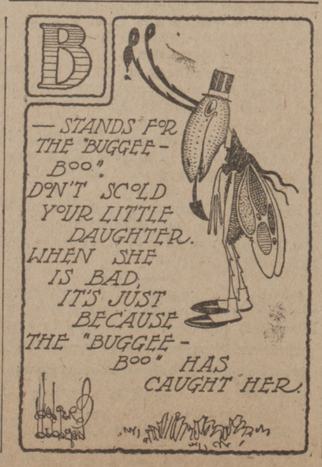
A SEA HORSE REGRET.

Said a sea-horse that lived in the sea,
"What hard names the people give me!
For science to cramp us
With the name 'hippocampus,'
Is certainly too free!"

A DRAWING LESSON



See if you can make a picture of a doctor out of the picture of a bottle of medicine.



BOASTING MR. BIRD.



To young Miss Thrush said Mr. Wren;
"If you will marry me, why then
I will give you for your abode
This mansion you see down the road!"
"What! Do you own it?" asked Miss Thrush,
"I do," said Wren, without a blush,
"Upon the roof-top we'll reside
And we will rent out the inside."