

VARIOUS

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Various

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THREADING THE NEEDLE

WHERE is Lucy all this while?" asked Mrs. Ludlow of Anna, the maid.

"I left her five minutes ago, trying to thread a needle," replied Anna.

"She is a long while about it," said Mrs. Ludlow. "Send her to me."

When Lucy entered the room, her mother asked her what she had been about; and Lucy replied, "I have been teaching myself to thread a needle."

"But you have been a long time about it," said mother.

"I will tell you why," continued Lucy. "When I went to walk with papa yesterday, he saw me get over a stone-wall, which I did rather clumsily: so he said, 'A thing that is worth doing at all is worth doing well. Let me teach you how to get over a wall quickly and gracefully.'"

"So he gave you a lesson in getting over walls, did he?"

"Yes, mother: he kept me at it at least half an hour; and now I can get over a wall as quickly and well as any boy."

"But what has getting over walls to do with threading a needle?"

"Only this: I thought I would apply papa's rule, and learn to do well what I was trying to do. So I have been threading and unthreading the needle, till now I can thread it easily."

"You have done well to heed your father's advice," said Mrs. Ludlow. "If you do not see the importance of it now, you will see it often in your life as you grow older."

It was not many months before Lucy comprehended how wise her father had been in training his little girl. She was gathering violets in a field one day, when she heard a trampling sound, and, looking round, saw a fierce bull plunging and twisting himself about, and all the time drawing nearer and nearer to her. Suddenly he made a rush towards her in a straight line.

Not far off was a high stone-wall. It would once have seemed to Lucy a hopeless attempt to try to get over it before the bull could reach her; but now she felt confident she could do it: and she did it bravely. Confidence in her ability to do it kept off all fear; and she did not even tremble.

The bull came up, and roared lustily when he found she had escaped, and was on the other side of the wall. But Lucy turned to him, and said, "Keep your temper, old fellow! This child's father taught her how to get over a stone-wall in double-quick time. You must learn to scale a wall yourself, if you hope to catch *her*."

"Boo-oo-oo!" roared the bull, prancing up and down, but not knowing how to get over.

"Why, what a sweet humor you are in to-day, sir!" said Lucy, walking away, and arranging her bunch of violets for Cousin Susan as she went.

Ida Fay.

THE BUTTER SONG

When I was a little boy, I often helped my mother when she was making butter.

I liked to stand in the cool spring-house, and churn for a little while; but I liked better to look out of the window, and watch the ducks swimming in the creek, or the little shiners and sunfish darting back and forth through the clear bright water.

Sometimes I would forget all about my work, and stand watching the insects, ducks, and fishes, until some one would call me, and tell me to go to work again.

One day I wanted to churn very fast; for my mother had told me that I might take a swim in the creek when my work was done.

So I sang a little song that our German girl Bertha had taught me. She called it the "Butter Song;" and here it is:—

Come, butter, come!
Little Harry at the gate
For his buttered bread does wait:
Come, butter, come!

Come, butter, come!
Fish for Lent, eggs for Easter,
Butter for all days, butter, come faster:
Come, butter, come!

I thought then, as Bertha told me, that if I sang that song a hundred and eleven times, and didn't stop churning once while singing it, the butter would soon be made. I believe so yet; but I think now, that the *steady work* had more to do with it than the song had.

S.

THE SINGING MOUSE

Have you ever heard of singing mice? There are such creatures, you must know, or you will not believe what my verses will tell you. Yes, indeed: it was only the other day that I heard of one that was kept in a little cage, like those used for squirrels, and sang so delightfully that her owner used to have her by his bedside to charm him to sleep. She was a wood-mouse. Wood-mice are the best singers. Whether the one about which you shall hear came from the woods or not, I cannot say; nor how she happened to be in my friend C.'s house: but there she certainly was; and this is the story of what she did there. I call it,

SERENADE

A certain friend William I have, who's so nice,
He's charming to every one,—even to mice.

You ask how I know it? Well, listen: I'll tell
Of something which proves it, that lately befell.

One night, when young William was snugly in bed,
A very queer notion came into his head.

He woke from his slumbers, quite sure that he heard
The musical warbling of some little bird.

He listened a moment: all silent, and then
The sweet little songster was singing again.

A lamp, dimly burning, gave light in the room:
Will raised his head softly, and peered through the gloom.

The door was wide open; and there, on the sill
(It's true, on my word: let them doubt it who will),

A mite of a mousie sat singing away
As sweetly as bobolink on a June day.

Erect on her haunches, her head in the air;
That Pussy might catch her she seemed not to care,

But sang till her sweet serenade was quite done;
Then ran away swiftly as mousie could run.

Now, said I not truly, that Willy's so nice,
He's charming to every one,—even to mice?

S. C. R.

OUR PONY

We have a pony whose name is Duke. He was very skittish when we first had him. There are four of us children who ride him,—Mamie, Winnie, Arthur, and myself. We have another little sister, Florence; but she is not old enough to ride, being only five years old.

Winnie is a nice little rider. Duke was Mamie's birthday present. We were all very much pleased when he came. We danced round him, and clapped our hands. Mamma wanted to surprise us: so, while we were at dinner, she had the pony brought up and put in the barn.

After dinner we went out to play; and Winnie saw the whip and the saddles, and then she suspected something. So she began looking around in the stalls. There she found the pony, and then came running in to mamma to ask if it was really ours. Mamma said, Yes.

Then we were very much pleased, and said we would ride him. Winnie rode him up to the house first; then Mamie wanted to ride, so she got on the boys' saddle. Duke would not stand still for her; and, when she got on, he went galloping down to the barn. Her hat flew off, and she was very much frightened. She kept calling out, "Stop him!" but he would not stop until he reached the barn. Duke was frightened too, because we shouted at him.

Mamie is thirteen, but is more afraid to ride than Winnie, who is only seven. Mamie asks if boys always ride better than girls. I say, "No! Look at Winnie." Once we tied Duke to the swing; and then he got his nose pulled by getting the rope twisted round it. Sometimes we have a good frolic with him in the pasture. He never kicks us.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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