

VARIOUS

HARPER'S YOUNG
PEOPLE, DECEMBER 2,
1879

Various

**Harper's Young People,
December 2, 1879**

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Harper's Young People, December
2, 1879 / An Illustrated Weekly

THE TWINS



FEEDING THE TWINS. A QUEER PAIR OF HOUSEHOLD PETS.

Young bears have always been great favorites as pets, being playful and affectionate when kindly treated. They can be trained to perform all kinds of amusing tricks; and their antics when playing together or with children are very laughable. They have been taught to execute difficult parts in theatrical displays; among other things, to ring bells, pretend to fall dead when shot at, beat the drum, and go through the manual exercise of the soldier with the musket.

But though playful and harmless when young, they can not be trusted when their teeth and claws are full grown. Then their good nature can not be counted on; and many instances have occurred in which they have repaid friendly confidence with sudden treachery. It must be said in their favor, however, that their wildness is often the result of bad treatment or thoughtless teasing. There is a story in print of a planter in Louisiana who once picked up a young cub that had either been abandoned by its mother, or had run away from the parental den. He carried it home and threw it down in the yard, where it was immediately adopted by the little negroes. It became a great favorite with them, sharing their corn-bread, and taking part in all their sports. "Billy"—that was the name given to him—thrive and grew large and stout, and learned to box and wrestle with the boys so well that visitors to the plantation were always entertained with these droll exhibitions.

But one day, in the spring, when he had been about a year in captivity, Billy was detected in making free with the young cabbages in the garden. A stout negro man picked up a branch of rose-bush, and gave the marauder a playful stroke. Filled with rage, Billy sprang upon the man, shook him as if he had been a bundle of straw, and bit the poor fellow so severely that he died. Billy was at once shot. A pet that could not control his temper better than that was considered rather too dangerous to keep.

In a wild state, when in distress, young bears utter cries like those of a child in trouble. During an overflow of the Mississippi the inhabitants of a plantation were alarmed by the dreadful wailings, as was supposed, of some children in a swamp. After a careful search two little cubs were found in the hollow of an old tree, locked in each other's arms. The mother bear had been drowned or shot, and these funny little "babes in the woods" were crying with fright and hunger, and appeared to welcome the protection of man with real joy.

Bears are very fond of whiskey and other kinds of strong drink, and when intoxicated will act very much like a man in a similar condition.

THE BRAVE SWISS BOY

[Begun in No. 1 of Harper's Young People, Nov. 4.]

IV.—A TERRIBLE FALL

For a moment father and son stood silent on the brink of the crevasse, looking after the chamois. "We can't get across here, father," said Walter, in a whisper; "let us try and find some other way."

"We can't find a better spot than this," replied his father, examining his gun.

"But what's the use of shooting him? What's the good of a dead chamois if we can't get him?"

"When he's once dead, boy, we'll soon find some means of getting at him," was the answer. "A board laid over the crevasse will be an easy way of recovering the venison."

"But we haven't got a board, father."

"That we'll see about. Just stand on one side, Watty."

The hunter cocked his gun, took aim for a moment, and was going to fire, when he turned suddenly pale, and dropped his arm.

"What's the matter, father? Do you feel ill?" inquired Walter, with anxiety.

"No," replied the huntsman; "but it seemed as if the ice was giving way just as I was going to fire. But it can't be," he continued, stamping his foot; "the ice is solid and firm enough."

"Let us go home, father," implored Walter. "I feel a presentiment that something will happen. Come home now, and we can try for the buck to-morrow."

But the old mountaineer had in the mean time become self-possessed again, and again raised his gun to fire. Just as he pulled the trigger, however, his foot slipped, and with an exclamation of horror, Walter saw him carried rapidly toward the rift in the ice, and suddenly disappear. With the recoil of the gun the hunter had lost his balance on the slippery ice, and at the same moment that his shot struck the chamois, he was hurled into the "rift."

"Father! father! father!" screamed Walter, throwing himself on the ice, horror-stricken, and peering wildly down the crevasse. "Father, speak!"

All was silent. Only a slight trickling, as if from some subterranean stream, reached his ear.

For several minutes the youth lay at the edge of the chasm, paralyzed with terror. When he recovered his consciousness, a feeling of alarm and distress overwhelmed him. He wept, and wrung his hands bitterly.

"Father!" he cried again into the abyss that yawned beneath him—"father, speak to me, for God's sake!"

A sudden thrill passed through his frame as a low murmur came up from the icy grave. He strained his ears to listen to the broken words. "I am alive, Watty," was the reply of the unfortunate man; "but my ankle is out of joint, and one of my arms broken. I shall never see the light of day again."

A cry of mingled joy and agony burst from Walter's lips.

"Don't be afraid, father," he exclaimed. "You shall be rescued, with God's help. Have you got your bag with you?"

"Yes, but my bottle is broken."

"Well, then, take mine. I'll lower it down with a cord. Have you got it?"

"Yes," was feebly answered. "I can hold out now for a while, unless the cold strikes me."

"Courage, father, till I run down to the village, and get the neighbors and shepherds to come with ropes and poles. Try to hold out for a couple of hours, and with the help of God you shall be saved."

"Ay, ay, dear boy," was the faint reply; "I will try to be patient till you come back." And with a godspeed Walter hurried off to rouse the neighbors to the rescue.

It was a dangerous journey that the brave boy undertook for his father's rescue; but courage, and the agility which is acquired by those who are accustomed to the mountains from childhood, enabled him to reach the valley in a wonderfully short time. Pale as death, with hands bleeding, and clothes torn to shreds, he rushed to the inn, which was the nearest spot where help could be found. His

appearance naturally created consternation, and in answer to the numerous questions addressed to him he related in a few breathless words the dreadful accident which had befallen his father. A score of stalwart hands were instantly ready to rescue the unfortunate man from his dreadful position; the landlord of the inn ordered ropes, poles, and ladders to be got in readiness, and meanwhile pressed refreshment on the well-nigh exhausted youth. Moments were precious, but ere long the party reached the scene of the disaster, when Walter, leaning over the edge of the cleft, cried to his father, and was answered.

"Yes, I'm still alive," replied the mountaineer, in feeble tones; "but I am almost frozen to death, and in dreadful pain. Make haste and help me, if you can, for I'm losing my senses."

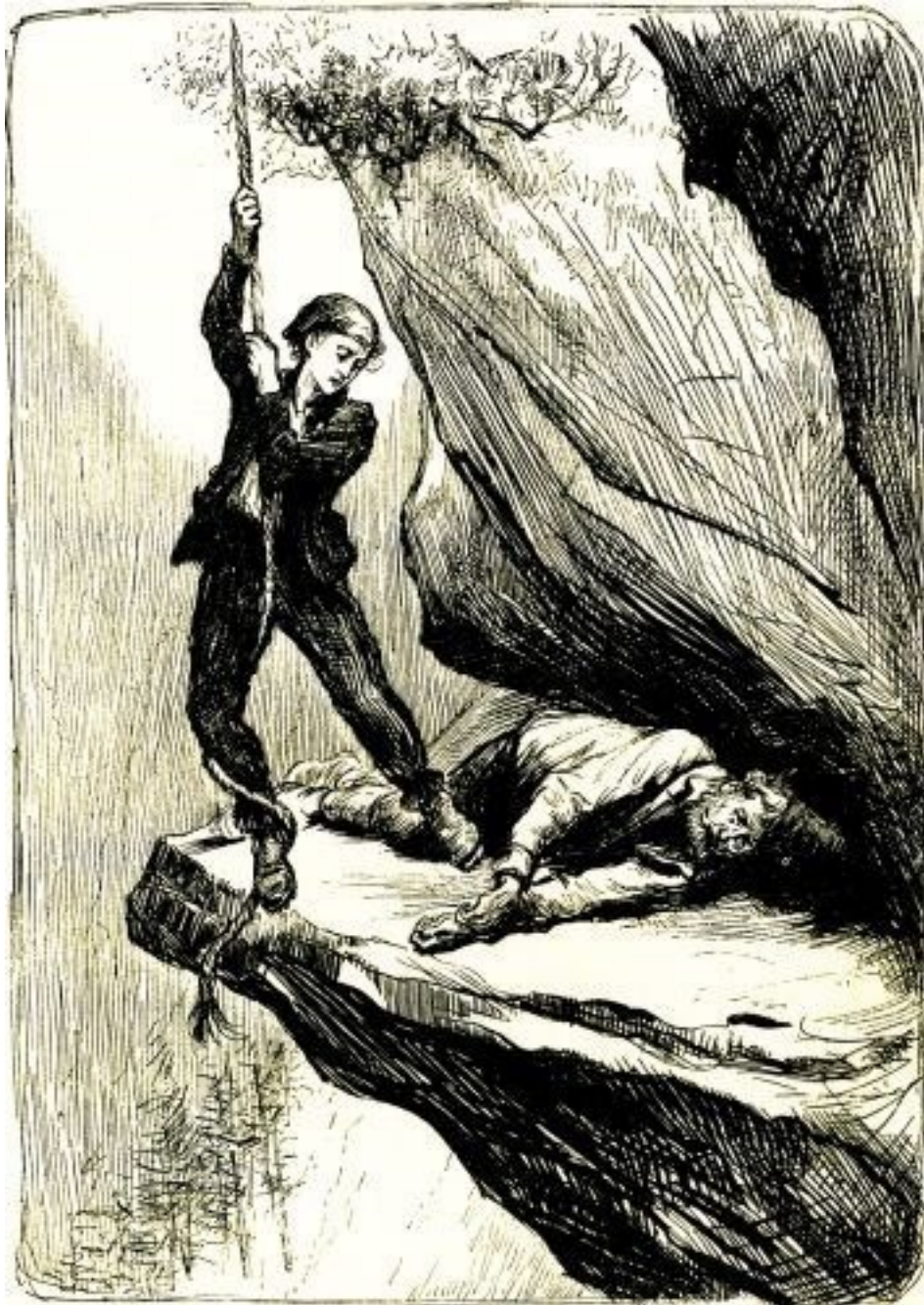
"Down with the rope!" shouted the landlord, who had himself come up with the party.—"Look out, Hirzel! Place the loop over your shoulders and under your arms, and try to draw it tight. There are plenty of strong arms here that will soon get you up."

The rope having been made fast to an iron stanchion driven into the ice, the looped end was lowered away into the chasm; but no sign was made by Hirzel that he had obeyed the directions, and fastened it round his body.

"Father, why don't you make haste?" exclaimed Walter in agony.

But there was no answer.

"He must have fainted at the last moment," said the landlord; "and if so, then may God have mercy upon him! for not a living creature could venture such a depth."



"LET ME GO!" HE CRIED. "I MUST SAVE MY FATHER!"

"I will venture it!" exclaimed Walter, seizing the rope. But twenty hands held him back. "Let me go!" he cried. "I must save my father!" and breaking loose with a sudden effort from the men who surrounded him, the courageous youth seized the rope and disappeared in sight of his horror-stricken companions.

A few terrible moments passed, when a shout from below was suddenly heard, and the cry, "All right! pull away, friends!" sent a thrill of joy through every heart.

"Pull steadily, my men," cried the good landlord; "but pull as if your own lives depended on it. I can see them now!" exclaimed he, gazing into the gloomy abyss. "Hirzel seems to have fainted, just as I thought, but Watty has fastened the rope round him securely. Pull away! they will be at the top in a few seconds."

Encouraged by success, the men redoubled their efforts, and had soon the satisfaction of landing father and son safely on the ice.

A rough kind of stretcher having been hastily made of poles and ropes, the wounded hunter was laid upon it and carried home; and as there was no lack of stout hearts and sure feet, the journey was accomplished without accident. After setting his broken limbs and binding up his wounds, the doctor, who had been speedily called in, expressed the hope that Hirzel's life would be saved, but he doubted very much if he would ever be able to climb the mountains for chamois again. Walter was thankful to find that his father's life was in no danger, and had himself so far recovered his equanimity as to be able to relate how he had rescued him from his icy grave, and how he found that the rope, instead of having reached the wounded man, had actually rested on a ledge ten feet above the place where he lay. Walter, who felt devoutly thankful that his efforts had been so successful, was overwhelmed with praises for his heroism.

Nor was the chamois forgotten. The generous landlord had it brought down to the inn from the spot where it had fallen, and sent an ample equivalent to Hirzel's cottage.

[to be continued.]

THE PROFESSOR ON TWINKLING

Jack was delighted with the idea. Gus differed from him entirely. Joe and I, being girls, pronounced it—horrid.

"Papa wants us to, you know," said May, who always sets us straight.

Jack, who had recently joined one of the college societies, moved that the Professor be cordially supported. "His lecture last week was exceedingly entertaining," he argued. "That he should be so good as to come here and talk to us about his wonderful science in a pleasant familiar way, simply because he's papa's old friend, shows the interest he takes in the family."

"Do hush, Jack."

"My dear sister, I can not. What the Professor has to tell us about the heavenly bodies—"

"I hate the heavenly bodies," growls Gus.

"Is it jealousy, Augustus, because they are allowed to stay out late nights, while you are not?"

"Whatever it is, I agree with him," puts in Joe, who always stands by Gus. "I hate astronomy too."

"Feeling as I do, Josephine, that your knowledge in the science is confined to 'Twinkle, twinkle, little star,' and the fact that 'the moon is made of green cheese,' I am surprised at you."

"What makes them twinkle?" asked May.

The Professor heard this, for he was just coming up stairs.

"What makes them twinkle, May?" and the Professor seated himself in an easy-chair, as if ready to talk.

"I don't know, Sir. Won't you please tell us?"

"Pooh, May, don't bother the Professor with such juvenile questions. He'll think he's intrusted with the charge of the third form in an infant school."

"But," persisted May, "I would like very much to know, and I don't believe you can tell, if you *have* been to college. Now there!"

Jack was somewhat nonplussed at this, but after a moment's hesitation said, "Well, anyhow, the books I studied never told anything about the stars twinkling, and I don't believe they do twinkle. It's nothing but a baby notion."

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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