



THE PONY IN THE GARRET.

THE
LITTLE BLACK PONY,
AND
OTHER STORIES.
FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

BY MRS. MOODIE,
AND OTHER DISTINGUISHED WRITERS.

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THE LITTLE BLACK PONY.

“STEENY, are you ready? the boat is waiting. Throw down your books, and make as much haste as you can to the river; or we shall be too late to join Captain Howard’s party this beautiful afternoon,” cried a fine-looking lad of fourteen, popping his head into the study where Mrs. Risdon’s sons were engaged in their lessons.

Stephen Risdon shook his head:—
“You must go without me to-day, Walter; I have particular reasons for wishing to stay at home.”

“Nonsense: the day is so fine, the water glitters like silver, and is as smooth as glass;—you must come.”

“Indeed, I must not.”

“Has your father forbidden you to go?”

“No, it is my own choice.”

“Your reasons, lad; can you give me a good excuse for declining my uncle’s invitation?”

“I hope so; I will walk a little way with you, on your return to the boat, and tell you my motive for refusing to accompany you.”

Stephen took down his cap, and, carefully closing the door after him, put his arm within Walter Howard's, and proceeded towards the Thames, which lay glittering before them, winding its majestic course amongst the meads and groves of Richmond.

“Well, Steeny!” cried his impatient companion, “why cannot you accompany us?”

“My brother Richard was invited by your good Uncle to join your party to-day on the water,” said Stephen.

“Well, I know that; but Mr. Risdon told Uncle this morning that Richard had displeased him, and that he had, to punish him, forbidden him to go.”

“True; but poor Dick is so fond of the water, and of every thing connected with boating, that he had reckoned for weeks on this water-frolic; and his disappointment is almost more than he has fortitude to bear. Besides, he is very sorry for his past fault, which I

thought but a slight one, and feel conscious of often having been guilty of the same myself."

"And what was it?"

"Laughing at Mr. Taylor, our writing-master, for his odd manner of speaking. Papa caught him in the very act, and told him severely of his cruelty in mocking the defects of others; and he ended by saying that, as he did not know how to conduct himself like a gentleman, he was not fit to mingle in genteel society, and that he should not join Mr. Howard's party in the afternoon, unless he

begged Mr. Taylor's pardon for his rudeness. Dick was too proud to do this before Mr. Taylor went away, and Papa would not listen to my entreaties for him to forgive my brother and let him go. After Papa left the study, Richard burst into tears, and said he should be perfectly wretched if I went without him; and, as we are not forbidden to walk and play in the garden, I promised him faithfully that I would stay at home."

"And you mean to keep your promise?"

“Certainly.”

“Well, Steeny, you are a good fellow ; but I think you very foolish for losing such a glorious opportunity of enjoying yourself. So good bye ; I wish you a pleasant game at bat and ball, and a very sentimental walk in the garden with Master Dick.”

Away ran Walter Howard : Stephen stopped a moment on the brow of the hill to see the party embark. The gay boat was launched upon the crystal tide, amidst the shouts of her joyous young crew. The breeze, which had

gently swept over the meadows of uncut hay, giving to them that undulatory motion which resembles the waves of a summer sea, filled the white sails of the little vessel, and she shot like a swan down the majestic stream, adding another pleasing object to the delightful landscape.

“How beautiful,” said Stephen, turning reluctantly away; “how I should have enjoyed the sail!” But there was a something in young Risdon’s heart, which more than repaid him for this act of self-denial—the pleasing con-

sciousness of having done a generous action; and, long before he reached the garden gate, all traces of regret had vanished from his smiling countenance. In the garden he met his father.

“How, my boy!—you at home; were you too late to join Captain Howard’s party?”

“No, Papa; but I preferred staying at home.”

“How was that, Stephen; yesterday you were so very anxious to go?”

“Yes—but poor Richard. Dear Papa, I could not be happy at another person’s

expense. How could I enjoy myself, when I knew that he was alone and miserable?" The tears sprang into Stephen's eyes; he turned hastily from his father, and joined his brother in the study.

Mr. Risdon was much affected at this proof of his son's generosity. He loved them both tenderly, and his severity in the morning had been dictated by the kindest feelings. He followed Stephen into the study, and found the lads with their arms entwined about each other's neck, and Richard leaning upon Ste-

phen's bosom.—“Dear Steeny,” he said, “I did not wish you to make this sacrifice for me. I was very selfish in wanting you to remain at home; it is not fair that you should be punished for my fault.”

“It is no sacrifice, no punishment, dear Richard. I thought it would be at the time; but I am so happy that I staid at home, my heart seems quite full of love to every one.”

“My dear boys,” said Mr. Risdon, taking a hand of each, “this little proof of your affection for each other has

made me happy also. Richard, I forgive you for your past fault, because I believe that your repentance is sincere. Stephen, your kindness to your brother shall not be unrewarded. You cannot now go upon the water; but you shall go to London this afternoon with me, and choose the bows and arrows I promised you, against the next grand archery."

The eyes of the brothers glistened with pleasure, nor were they backward in expressing, with childish eloquence, the joy of their hearts. Their books

were speedily consigned to the shelf. The carriage was ordered to the door; and the boys amused their father, during a delightful ride, in describing the pleasure they should feel in learning the use of the bow. This led to a long and entertaining discussion upon the antiquity of the weapon, of the celebrity of the English archers, and the fame of Robin Hood and his merry men, and brought to their remembrance the ballad of "Chevy Chace," and the famous anecdote of William Tell, till the boys, with all the enthusiasm of youth, al-

ready, in idea, rivalled those renowned archers, and longed for the time when they should take their places among the young people who had made this, for some months, a favourite diversion in their village. They were impatient to reach London, and, for once in their lives, paid little regard to the lovely scenes through which they were passing.

In their way to the fashionable shop in which these long-coveted weapons were to be procured, Mr. Risdon stopped at a pastry-cook's, in order to give the brothers a little treat after their ride.

Whilst they were discussing some excellent new buns, a respectable-looking man, in very mean apparel, entered the shop, leading by the hand a pale emaciated little boy, of six years old: in a subdued voice he asked the master of the shop if he had a stale loaf for him: "I would not beg of you so often," he said, "but I have had no work this week—my poor wife is ill—the children are crying for food, and we are greatly distressed."

"Had you come yesterday, Copley, I had saved a basket-full of old scraps for

you," said the benevolent pastry-cook; "but they were all given away this morning: however, give me your basket, and I will see what I can do for you."

"Oh, sir, I know not how we shall ever repay you for your kindness," returned the man. "My wife was too ill to be left alone, and the children too young to be trusted in the streets without a guide: I could not come out before, and so the poor little things went supperless to bed;—indeed, sir, neither they nor I have tasted food since noon yesterday."

Stephen, who had been listening attentively to every word that passed between the pastry-cook and his pensioner, suddenly put down the cake he was eating, for he felt as though it would choke him, and looked earnestly in his father's face without speaking a word. Mr. Risdon understood the mute appeal to his benevolence; but he was anxious to hear something more from the unfortunate mechanic, for such he appeared to be, before he offered him any pecuniary assistance.

“Copley,” said the pastry-cook, “have you got a customer for your horse?”

The man shook his head. “I have only applied to one gentleman yet, and he answered me very roughly: however, he promised to come up and look at him, but I have seen nothing of him since; and the children cried so bitterly at the thought of parting with the poor thing, that I felt glad of it. However, I now desire to sell the creature, for it is half-starved: it is cruel to keep it any longer; and, in my pre-

sent situation, I feel that it is dishonest.”

“Papa,” whispered Richard Risdon, “how can so poor a man afford to keep a horse?”

“That, my boy, is a mystery to me:”—then, turning to the stranger, he said, “My good fellow, is it possible that you can have a horse to dispose of?”

The man looked at the pastry-cook, and a melancholy smile passed over his wasted features. “You may well be surprised, sir, to hear a half-starved, ill-dressed person like me talking of his

horse; but I have as pretty a pony to sell as you ever saw."

"And how did you come by it?"

"Honestly enough," returned the mechanic; "and, although an expense to us now, poor little Jenny was once a great comfort. If you, sir, will condescend to listen to me for a few minutes, I will give you the history of my horse."

Mr. Risdon's curiosity was greatly excited; besides, he felt strongly interested in the poor man and his family, while the boys quite forgot their bows and their buns, in their eager desire to un-

ravel the mystery of how it was possible for a mendicant to possess a horse of his own.

“Six years ago, sir,” pursued the poor man, “I came to London with my wife and two small children, to follow the trade of a journeyman blacksmith. I was reckoned a good hand at my business in the country; and, being a strong, industrious fellow, I soon got employed by a master in the trade, who was so well pleased with my method of managing restive horses, that I had to shoe every spirited and valuable animal that

was sent to our forge. Besides my skill as a blacksmith, I knew a great deal about horses, and had received from my old master in the country, many valuable receipts for the different disorders with which that noble animal is afflicted. I was requested, one day, by a gentleman's head groom, to go over to Highgate, to dress the foot of one of his master's blood horses, which had been lamed at Ascot Heath races. I complied with his wishes, and accordingly went; and, whilst I was there, a very valuable little mare, and a great

favourite with John's master, died a few hours after foaling, leaving one of the prettiest little black foals you ever saw. 'Squire Gerald gave orders for the little orphan to be killed, as it was impossible, he said, for it to be reared without its mother. I thought otherwise, and I told John that I was sure that I could rear the foal for his master. The 'Squire laughed at my wishing to become the creature's foster-mother; and he said, that if I thought I could rear the foal, I was welcome to keep it; and to make what I could out of it, for

the benefit of my family. I carried it home in my master's luggage cart; and, as I had no place in which I could rear the little stranger, but the room which I occupied with my wife and children, I carried the foal thither in my arms. I rented a large garret in St. Giles's; and, whilst the place was decently furnished, it possessed many comforts.—Poor little Jenny had to travel up four pair of stairs before I could introduce her to my wife and children; and it was really amusing to witness the surprise and pleasure which all of them ex-

pressed at this odd addition to our family circle. My wife undertook to act the part of nurse, and Jenny was given her place at the feet of the children's bed, and regularly fed during the day, and several times in the night, out of a small tea-pot. For the first fortnight, she appeared thin and puling, and scarcely took any notice of those around her, though the children were always patting, and kissing, and calling her, their own black horsey, and tendering to her their own scanty rations of bread and butter. But after this period was

passed, the little stranger soon grew sleek and strong, and was as playful as a kitten, racing round the chamber, springing over the stools, and tossing her silken mane and tail with all the pride and wantonness of conscious health and spirits. Her form was perfect symmetry, her eyes large and bright, her skin black and shining; and, from her constant association with human beings, her face had an expression of human intelligence. In all her frolics, she carefully avoided running against the children. If the baby was

crawling upon the floor, she would stop in the midst of her maddest gambols, lick its innocent hands and face, and caress it with the utmost affection. It was curious to observe how well she understood the looks and signs of the children; how jealous she was of their regard; how proud she seemed to be when cantering, with one of them on her back, round and round the room; how gently she would throw them off upon the bed, when tired with her burden, answering their boisterous shouts of laughter with a low, whinnying sound,

which seemed to laugh to them again. She slept upon their bed, shared their meals, and was an active agent in all their sports. 'I do not know what we should do without Jenny,' was my wife's constant remark: 'she amuses and keeps the children quiet; and they are contented to stay in doors all day, if they can but play and romp about the room with Jenny.' But hard times came on, sir: I broke my arm, and was for many months thrown out of work. I found it a difficult matter to provide bread for the children; and Jenny, no longer a

foal, had grown almost imperceptibly into a fine pony. We talked of selling her to buy bread. The children wept at the intelligence: immured in a garret in St. Giles's, she was the only comfort they enjoyed. They came crying round me: they held up their little hands, and implored me not to part with Jenny; for, if I sold their dear black pet, it would break their hearts. My wife pleaded for the children; and from that time, the subject was, dropped. Jenny, too, seemed to understand our poverty. She was only fed with the scraps that

the children could spare from their meals; but she never demanded by her former winning importunities more. I know that the poor little rogues have often starved themselves to feed her; and, when I was forced by dire necessity to sell all my furniture, they would lie down by Jenny on the floor, without a murmur, and fling their half-frozen arms about her to keep themselves warm. A few weeks ago, my wife fell sick; and the death of my master threw me quite out of employ. I felt that something must be done; and I walked to

Highgate, in the hope of obtaining a few pounds upon Jenny, by selling her to 'Squire Gerald. But the 'Squire had removed into the country; and his successor, a proud old man, gave me an impatient hearing, promised to look at the creature, of the truth of whose history he seemed to entertain many doubts, and, finally, never came near us. If it had not been for the benevolence of this worthy man, who, visiting a poor family in the same house, accidentally heard of our distress, we must ere this have perished for want. This, sir, is

the history of myself and my horse ; and, should you know any gentleman who wants a gentle animal for the use of his children, I would thankfully part with her for a few pounds.”

Stephen and Richard Risdon clung eagerly to their father’s arm. “Dear, dear papa, do buy Jenny : we would love her, and treat her quite kindly for this poor man’s sake.”

“I am willing to grant your request, my boys,” said Mr. Risdon ; “but, if I buy the pony, I cannot afford to purchase the bows also. Now, which do

you prefer, the costly toys you were so eager to possess, or this poor man's horse? The one will be an act of charity, the other the mere gratification of vanity, and, at best, but an unprofitable amusement."

"There can be no choice, papa. We can make a bow out of an ash tree; but we cannot procure for money again a creature so faithful and docile, and whose history is so curious and entertaining," said Stephen.

"Can I see the pony?" said Mr. Risdon, turning to the man: "per-

haps you will bring it hither for us to look at."

"Indeed, sir, that is beyond my power to do; for the animal has never left the garret, since the hour I carried her thither; and how she is to be removed, I scarcely know at present. But, if you can condescend to visit our wretched abode, I will gladly show you the way."

Wishing to be of service to the poor fellow and his family, Mr. Risdon dismissed his carriage, and, accompanied by his two sons, followed the blacksmith on foot to the wretched abode of

want and misery. The house in which Copley and his family resided, had once been the dwelling of some wealthy merchant; but its numerous stories and apartments, divested of their former comforts, obscured by dirt, and darkened from want of repair, looked more like so many dens of thieves, each separately forming an asylum for the indigent and afflicted poor, whose squalid appearance and tattered garments form, in London, such a shocking contrast to the gay apparel and splendid equipages of the rich and

great. Mr. Risdon and his sons followed Copley up the first three flights of stairs without any personal inconvenience; but the last ascent was so dark, and the steps which led to it so narrow and broken away, that they were several times in danger of falling. A feeble light at length broke from above, and a child, in a plaintive voice, said, "Father, is that you?" This was quickly followed by a low neigh, such as horses accustomed to feed in the same meadow often greet each other with, after a short absence, and a black

head was immediately thrust through the aperture.

“You see, sir,” said the blacksmith, “that Jenny knows my step, and is among the first to welcome me.”

Trifling as this circumstance was, it almost affected the kind-hearted Mr. Risdon to tears. The attachment of the brute creature had in it a touch of human tenderness; and he paused a moment on the threshold of the miserable unfurnished apartment, before he could summon sufficient resolution to enter it.

On a bed of straw, in a corner of the wide desolate apartment, lay a young woman, not exceeding six-and-thirty years of age, covered with an old tattered cloak. Close by her side, and supporting her mother's head upon her knees, sat a tall, pale, fair little girl of ten years old, whose meek and resigned countenance bespoke her early acquaintance with grief. A boy, two years younger, was knitting stockings for sale: and two clean, but half-naked little ones, yet in their infancy, were reclining upon the floor, in the very

act of playing with Jenny, who, having said her how-d' ye-do to her master, was quietly reclining upon the floor, in the midst of the group, suffering the baby to twine its little fingers in her long mane, then shaking it over the delighted infant's face, who laughed and crowed, and talked to the pony in a language more unintelligible to the visitors than that of its black play-mate.

With a feeling of reverence, Mr. Risdon approached the bed on which the sick woman was extended, and, giving

her his hand, expressed the hope that she was better.

“Thank God, sir, the fever has left me, and I shall feel better when I have taken a morsel of food; at present I am too weak to rise.” She cast a wistful look towards the basket of broken cakes and bread, which Copley had received from the good pastry-cook. The children had silently gathered round their father, and each, without speaking a word, was holding up his hand for something to eat. Even Jenny’s silence was eloquent, and her hollow temples

proved that she was suffering from want.

“Poor hearts,” said Copley, as he distributed to each a share, “they are very hungry; you must forgive them, sir, for their rudeness.”

“Make no excuses, Copley, said Mr. Risdon, walking to the dusty window to conceal his emotion; “I too am a father.” Then, fearing lest the idea of parting with Jenny should distress the children, he whispered to the blacksmith, “I will settle with you the price of the pony elsewhere.”

“You may speak out, sir,” said Copley: “the children are prepared to part with her. Anne, James, and William,” he continued, addressing himself to the three who were of age to understand him: “which would you rather, that this kind gentleman took care of Jenny, and fed her well, and used her well, or that she should remain with us to die for want of proper air and food?” The children looked up with tears in their eyes; but each replied with apparent cheerfulness, “We love poor Jenny too well to wish her to stay with us.”

“You are good, dutiful children,” said Mr. Risdon; “and you shall neither part with Jenny, nor longer want food, whilst I can procure for you, without injuring myself, the necessaries of life. “Copley,” he continued, turning to the blacksmith, “can you groom horses?”

“One should not praise one’s self, I’ve heard, sir,” said Copley; “but it is what I have been accustomed to from my youth.”

“I want a person to take care of my horses, having just parted with my groom: you shall live upon my estate

at Richmond; and, though I mean to purchase Jenny for my boys, your children shall still enjoy the company of their old playfellow in fine pastures, where they may run races with her all day long."

The children uttered a shout of joy at this unhoped-for intimation. Poor Copley was too much overcome to speak; and the young Risdons thanked their father in the most lively terms for anticipating their wishes.

How to remove Jenny was the next thing to be thought of; and this, for

some time, appeared a matter of no small difficulty. At length, after much consultation on the subject, Mr. Risdon suggested the idea of letting her down into the street through the window, by means of ropes and pulleys; and he told Copley that he would give the necessary orders, and send people on the morrow to assist in effecting her removal. He then withdrew, leaving Copley and his family quite happy in the possession of fifteen pounds for the pony, and, ordering his carriage, returned to Rich-

mond, not a little pleased at his afternoon's visit to the metropolis.

“Dear Stephen, are not you glad that we did not go on the water to-day?” whispered Richard to his brother, as the carriage stopped at their father's mansion, and they were greeted by the party who had just returned from their aquatic excursion. Walter was eloquent in his description of their trip, and related with much vivacity all they had seen and heard. The brothers listened to him with interest; but they had enjoyed the pleasure of conferring a

benefit on a distressed fellow-creature. Their joy was of a more exalted nature, and they no longer envied Walter his short-lived gratification.

“Walter will forget his voyage before the week is out,” said Mr. Risdon; “but you will still be happy in the possession of Black Jenny, and in witnessing the happiness of poor Copley and his family.”

The next morning Jenny arrived in a cart, accompanied by Copley and his wife and children, dressed in new clothes, and all wearing smiling faces.

The boys ran out to welcome the party, and to caress their new favourite. If the honest blacksmith and his family were delighted with the snug little cottage they were to consider as their future home, the rapture of Jenny, at finding herself, for the first time in her life, in a wide paddock, in the possession of air and liberty, is beyond the power of my pen to describe. Regardless of the voice of her old master, or the children, she bounded round and round the field, snuffing the fresh breeze, leaping and capering with joy ; or wheel-



THE PONY IN THE Paddock.

ing about with the velocity of thought, making the green sward tremble beneath her hoofs. When tired of these diversions, she cast herself upon the grass, rolling upon it, and neighing aloud in all the wantonnes of liberty.

“I fear Jenny will never be tame again, or come when we call her,” said James Copley, regarding his frolicsome companion with a sorrowful eye.

“If you had been shut up in prison all your life,” said his father, “like poor Jenny, you would hardly know what to make of your liberty.”

The next day Jenny came as usual to receive her breakfast from the hands of her old companions, and suffered herself to be bridled and saddled with the greatest docility. Her beauty and gentleness excited the admiration of all who saw her; and few could have imagined, from the fleetness and elegance of her movements, that she had been educated and brought up in a garret.



THE ORPHAN GIRL.

THE ORPHAN GIRL.

How sad it is to be an orphan—to lose father and mother, and to be thrown for support upon the charity of friends, or the benevolence of the world. Ought we not to pity such a one; ought we not to assist the orphan by our means and our advice; but especially ought we not to rejoice if we see that he struggles honestly to sup-

port himself, and to rise above the station in which fortune has placed him? I am going to tell you of an orphan girl, who, after she had lost her parents, continued to support herself and her old grandfather, and became rich and happy.

Her name was Mary Gibson. She was always a sweet child, so that at home or at school, every body loved her. Her father was poor; so, he lived in a small cottage in the country, and earned his support by working on a farm for daily wages. His employer

was a hard master; so that Mary's father had to work hard all day and yet receive very small wages. Often she cried when she saw him coming home at night, so exhausted that he could scarcely speak. She was then but a child, and loved to run about the fields among the streams and flowers, as well as other children. But she did not do so. She staid at home after school, and assisted her mother. By and by, Mr. Gibson died.

Then a great change came over the little cottage girl. She had to leave

her school, and her mother was driven from their little home, and went to live with Mary's grandfather. He was very old and could not work for himself; but he owned the small hut that he lived in.

Mary's mother worked very hard to support the family; but she was not happy and smiling as when her husband lived. The little girl saw this, and feared that her mother too might be taken away. Oh, how often would she raise her hands to that Good Being, whom she had heard of in Sabbath school, and pray that he would spare

the life of her poor mother. But God saw fit to remove her parent from a world of sorrow, in order to provide a way of happiness for Mary herself. She died; and, as the little orphan stood by her humble grave, and saw men filling it up over the coffin, she longed to lie down and sleep in the dust with her.

And now who was to provide for Mary? Her grandfather was old and very poor, and she had no friends who thought of or cared for her. Must she beg? Must she forget her dead mother's teachings and steal? No. He

who clothes the lily and feeds the sparrow, provided for the desolate orphan.

One day two children came into the village singing. They stopped at each door, and the people who came to listen threw them pennies. Mary saw this.

“Why could not I sing, and get pennies,” she thought. Her voice was soft and clear; and often when living in her first home, she had sung simple hymns which pleased her father after his toilsome labour. The more she thought about it the more anxious she felt to begin.

“Grandfather,” she said, running in to the old man, “I know how to make my living now—I will sing to people and they will give me pennies.”

“Her grandfather would not listen to it; but at last, seeing that it made her weep bitterly when he refused, he gave his consent that she should try it for one week.

And now, children, I am going to tell you how this good little girl was rewarded. For two or three days she did scarcely any thing but sing over hymns and tunes, which she had learned at

school. Then she sat out to earn her living. But she did not begin in the village. She walked to the nearest town, and down a long street until she reached a very fine house. But now her heart began to fail. Strange faces were passing and repassing, many persons stared at her, and she heard so much noise, that she thought of running away. She tried again and again to raise her voice; but in vain. After remaining a long while, she became frightened and ran home. Her grandfather was sitting at the window; and when Mary reached the door

her heart was too full to speak. She threw herself in his arms and sobbed aloud.

And did she give up singing? No, children. Next day she felt ashamed of herself and again set out. It is true her heart throbbed when she reached the town, but at last she raised her voice and sung a piece that she had heard at school. A crowd gathered around—some laughing, some jesting, others listening. O how sad the little orphan felt. But at last a lady raised the window and gave her a small silver piece. Then

Mary was glad and felt encouraged. Next day she received some more money; but for two days longer she got nothing. You remember she had but a week to try in; and then if not successful she must give it up. On the ninth day while singing before a house, a gentleman stopped to listen. When Mary had finished her song, he went up to her, spoke kindly, and asked very many questions in so gentle a manner that the tears came to Mary's eyes, for she thought of her mother. Mary told him, that she was an orphan, trying to support herself

and her grandfather. The gentleman was much affected, and after taking her by the hand, showed her where he lived and invited her to come and see him.

Children, this man was leader of what is called the opera, where many persons sing and play on musical instruments. He was a good man, and loved little children. He could tell in a moment, if a child would make a good singer; so he knew by the sweetness and clearness of Mary's voice that she might become a great vocalist. She went next day. He had her educated, and taught her music,

at the same time providing for her grandfather. Mary improved rapidly, and became the *prima donna*, that is the first female singer in the opera. Wealth and honour flowed in upon her, and thus the little orphan was rewarded for her filial affection.



JANE MORRIS, WANDERING IN THE SWAMP.

JANE MORRIS.

IN a wild part of the State of South Carolina, lived the widow Morris. She had two children, named Charles and Jane, both of whom had the misfortune to be deaf and dumb. They were rather wild and unmanageable young people, and had nearly grown up to maturity at the period to which our story refers. They were quite harmless, however, though, at times, moody and passionate.

These children loved their mother, whose affection for them was unbounded, and who had taught them by the language of signs, to be useful to her by assisting her in her household duties and cares.

Charles was fond of shooting, and often used to go away for whole days together, with his fowling piece, in pursuit of birds and squirrels in the woods and extensive swamps, which abounded in that region where they lived.

Jane, though two years younger than her brother, was even more fond of

rambling in the forests and swamps. She was quite a wild nymph of the woods, rambling away day and night, at all hours and seasons, without any fear of wild animals or serpents. She would wade into the water to gather an exquisite flower, which pleased her, climb the hills, and penetrate the darkest recesses of the forest, without seeming to feel the slightest fear of danger. To prevent her from suffering for want of shelter in these wanderings, her mother caused a log hut to be built in the thickest part of the neighbouring swamp, where Jane

often slept, when the cold or rainy weather prevented her from reaching home before nightfall.

Her strange, but harmless character seems to have been understood by the wild birds and quadrupeds, who became her familiar companions. The deer, the wild turkey, the partridge, and the dove, who fly from the hunter, were not afraid of Jane, but suffered her to approach and play with them.

One morning, Jane and Charles, after a misunderstanding, which had lasted for some days, had quite a sharp quarrel,



DEATH OF JANE MORRIS.

and expressed their mutual indignation by many signs and gestures, such as deaf and dumb people use. They parted in anger, and Jane, leaving the house, wandered away, as usual, into the swamp. Soon after, Charles loaded his fowling piece, and went off in the same direction. At night he returned without his sister.

All this attracted but little attention; but, some days after, a hunter found the body of Jane, lying upon the ground, cold and lifeless. She had been shot, probably by some hunter, aiming at a

deer, and quite unconscious of the mischief he was doing. There seemed to be no motive for any one to injure so harmless a person.

This was not the view of the matter, however, which was taken by the neighbours. When upon inquiry of the mother, they learnt that Charles and Jane had quarrelled, and that the brother had followed his sister into the woods with his loaded fowling piece, they caused him to be arrested and brought to trial for the supposed murder.

The whole proceeding of confining and

bringing him to trial, was a perfect mystery to the poor deaf and dumb boy. He could not conceive what it all meant; and when, after hearing the particulars of the affair, the learned judge wished to inform him of what it was that he was accused, he was obliged to call upon the mother to explain it by her language of signs.

This was a very slow and difficult affair, and during its progress the court, jury, and spectators were all watching poor Charles's features with intense interest, waiting the moment when his

mother should succeed in making him understand that he was accused of murdering his sister with malicious intent, moved by the promptings of a wicked, bad heart.

It was a heavy accusation, and we cannot wonder that it took his mother a long time to make him comprehend it. When, however, at last the whole dreadful nature of the accusation was made known to him, he uttered a shriek of terrible intelligence, which thrilled through the whole assembly, leaped from the prisoner's dock, and putting aside all

obstacles, darting across the intervening space, bounding headlong up the steps which led to the bench where sat the presiding judge. In an instant he had fastened his arms around the judge's neck, and with many convulsive sobs and tears, made the most expressive signs of denial of his guilt, declaring that he loved his sister too well to give her pain; and as for the bad, black heart of which he was accused, he made signs of flinging it from him with aversion and horror.

His mute eloquence was effectual.

The whole court was in tears. The lawyer, employed to defend him, wisely declined to utter a word, feeling that the voice of nature was more convincing than words. The judge with feeling and eloquence charged the jury in his favour, and the poor deaf and dumb boy was fully acquitted. But it was never known to this day, by whose hand poor Jane was deprived of life. It is probable, as we have already hinted, that it was by the chance shot of some hunter, who might have passed on in the thick swamp without being aware that

he had inflicted a death wound on a human being.

This story, which, in all but the fictitious names, is literally true, may serve to convince us, that Providence watches over the innocent and the helpless, and furnishes them with the means of protection and defence, even in the most desperate circumstances. This poor dumb boy was enabled, simply by the promptings of a true and innocent heart, to defend himself against a dreadful accusation, supported by many circumstances which seemed to prove his guilt. With-

out being able even to utter one word, Providence enabled him to plead his own cause, and prove his innocence. And the innocent are always in the care of Providence. When we are unjustly charged with an error or a crime, knowing our own innocence, we may safely and confidently put our trust in that Great Being who watches forever to guard the safety of those who love and serve Him. If our prospects are overclouded for a season, the light of the Dayspring from on high shall at last burst forth, and show our integrity.



THE ZANGEN MAIDEN.

THE ZANGEN MAIDEN.

FLINSBERG, at the foot of the Tafelfichte, is a comfortable watering place; and many travellers resort thither for the benefit of the baths. There are other temptations to a sojourn in this region; the mountains well repay the most toilsome ascent; and the country is as rife with legends as with old bergs. A tourist, who lingered hereabouts, men-

tioned an incident received from a young man, a baker's apprentice, in the hamlet.

“Between the village of Schwerta, and the town of Marklissa,” said the youth, “there is a mountain called the Zangenberg. I remember hearing in my childhood, that it was inhabited by a strange woman, who did not belong to mortal race. At the foot of this mountain flows a stream, over which is thrown a foot-bridge. I crossed it late one night in 1837. As I walked over it, I saw a female figure standing just in my way, at the end of the bridge. She wore a

dark dress with long train, and had on her head a dark-coloured cap in the antique German fashion. Through her thin veil I could see a deathly-pale, emaciated countenance, the aspect of which filled me with terror. As I slowly approached, she beckoned me; and I heard a low mournful voice saying, ‘Come! come with me! Save me! It shall be thy fortune!’

“ ‘Depart!’ I exclaimed, ‘Depart, unhappy shade! I have naught to do with such as thou!’ As I hastened past, to go homeward, the apparition vanished.

For no reward would I venture again at night so near the Zangenberg.”

The belief in the stated appearance of the female, is current throughout that country. According to popular tradition, a certain count came from Italy many centuries ago, with a numerous retinue of servants, and built, in a short time, a stately castle upon the Zangenberg. Here he and his daughter lived in a pomp and luxury the fame of which was spread far and wide. Seldom did a traveller visit that portion of country,

without going to look at the abode of this wealthy noble.

When the count's daughter was grown to womanhood, her remarkable beauty brought many suitors for her hand; but all were rejected. It appeared very strange to the inhabitants of the neighbouring country, that of many knightly lovers who had visited the castle, none had ever been seen again; but no one took the trouble to enter into investigations with regard to these mysterious disappearances.

Ere long it was whispered that the

knight, allured to the castle by the daughter's charms, were robbed and murdered by order of the count.

For two years this continued; at length the count and his daughter were one day both found dead in his splendid hall. The count's features bore marks of violence, and his neck was twisted. The news soon spread; and the next morning people came from the valley to see the corpses. They could find no trace, not only of the dead, but of the castle or the servants. A peasant, who had passed near the spot on the preced-

ing night, declared that he had been startled by a loud explosion, and that by the light of the full moon he had seen the castle sink into the earth.

This tale of the strange and wicked count, and the castle swallowed up in the mountain, was long the talk of the people in that region, till other events gradually caused it to pass from their minds. The old inhabitants died, the younger had no personal recollection of the circumstances; and only here and there might one say, "my grandfather

remembers having seen the great castle on the Zangenberg.”

Thus a century passed. Then a rumour prevailed that the figure of a woman, in dark flowing dress, had been seen thereabouts. It was said she beckoned those who saw, to follow her; but none did so; and the general impression was, that the dark-robed woman, with face of such deathly paleness, was no other than the Zangen maiden, seeking deliverance from her thralldom.

She was seen no more till another hundred years had passed. One day a

countryman, crossing the Zangenberg, as he stepped on the bridge thrown across the stream, saw a female in white dress, but of antique fashion, wringing clothes she had rinsed in the water.

She beckoned to the passer-by; and as he came nearer, said in a soft, melancholy voice, "Follow me! Save me!" But the peasant, with a shudder of dread, hastened on to his home.

As he lay asleep that night, wearied with labour, he felt the touch of a cold hand, and started up. The Zangen maid stood there in the moonlight, beckoning

to him, and clasping her hands imploringly. When he made the sign of the cross, the phantom vanished.

The next day the peasant went to a priest, to relate what he had seen and heard, and ask counsel. The priest advised him, should the apparition pay him another visit, to ask what it was she desired; and if it were nothing evil, to fulfil her request. This the countryman promised to do.

On his way to Marklissa the following day, the Zangen maid again presented herself. She beckoned the peasant; he

stood still, and said to her, "What dost thou seek of me?"

"I am the maid of the Zangenberg," was the reply; "and am doomed to wander restless within these mountains, till redeemed by a man who has no evil deed on his conscience. Once in a hundred years I can appear on earth, and beseech good men to rescue me; but my time is only seven days. If not released then, I must languish another century in the bosom of the berg."

"What must I do for thy deliverance?" asked the countryman.

“Thou hast only to follow me,” replied the apparition, “and bear away all the evil-gotten gold thou shalt see. Half must be spent in masses for my soul, the other half belongs to thee. But, observe, while in the berg, thou must not utter a word; and of the coins not one must be left behind, or all thy trouble is lost.”

The peasant expressed his readiness to go with the maiden. They crossed the bridge. She smote her hands three times together, and they entered through a dark cleft in the rock, into a narrow

passage. After an hour's walk, they came to a vaulted cavern, lighted with a lamp.

At the entrance to this vault were two large black dogs. In the centre stood a table, at which several knights, in sable apparel, were seated. Upon the table was a heap of gold and silver coins.

At a sign from his conductress, the peasant gathered up the coins from the table, filling his hat and pockets. He did not observe that some gold pieces were left behind. Then leaving the vault as quickly as possible, he hastened

through the passage into the open air, stopping to breathe only when he heard the cleft in the rock close with a shock behind him.

When he sought the treasure, it had vanished altogether; and the maiden appeared to him no more.

The countryman to whom this adventure happened, had the fortune to live to an extreme old age! He enjoyed excellent health, and was highly respected, and the people from the hamlet of Schwerta used to come in the evenings to listen to the tales and legends he would tell. Two

favourites he had among the young people, who came often to ask his advice in love matters; one was the youthful Ignatz, the best weaver and the most accomplished horseman in the country; the other, Veronica, the daughter of a rich and proud farmer, but the gentlest as well as the most beautiful girl among all who lived in the valley.

It had not escaped the observation of their aged friend, that Ignatz and Veronica loved each other; and he soon learned that money alone was wanting to make them happy. In reply to the

young man's complaint of this want, his friend endeavoured to console him by reminding him of the transitory nature of riches; as, for example, the treasure he had brought out of the Zangenberg. Ignatz had often heard the story; the reference to it awakened new ideas in his mind. Day and night these were before him. He visited the mountain often after dusk; but confided not his thoughts to Veronica.

The day came that numbered a hundred years from the time of the old man's adventure. Ignatz obtained leave of

absence from his employer, on pretence of indisposition, and hastened to the Zangenberg.

On the third day after that on which he had awaited the mysterious visit, he saw a female whose dress and appearance answered the description given by his old friend. She beckoned him; he went quickly towards her. But as she was about to speak, a company of travellers passed along the road; and laying her wasted finger on her lips, the apparition vanished.

Ignatz reported to his aged friend

what he had seen. The old man warned him against the danger of companionship with unearthly beings, and too eager a search after riches. "You may come forth, like me, with empty pockets," said he. While they were speaking together, Veronica came in, and when the matter was communicated to her, besought her lover, with tears, to have no dealings with evil spirits. But neither warning nor entreaty could dissuade Ignatz from his purpose, when he saw wealth in the distance.

The youthful pair walked together to

the Zangenberg. At some distance from the bridge, Ignatz parted from Veronica, who promised to await his return. He already saw, afar off, the floating veil of the Zangen maiden.

The young man followed the apparition into the mountain, and was never seen afterwards. Veronica died in a few weeks of a broken heart. Her old friend was buried by her side.

It is believed that the Zangen maiden never afterwards appeared. But the baker's apprentice, if not led astray by his imagination, could testify to the contrary.

THE KING AND THE GLUTTON.

THERE once lived a king of Rome, who, out of charity to the blind, decreed that every subject of his that was so afflicted should be entitled to receive a hundred shillings from the royal treasury. Now there was in Rome a club of men who lived for the world alone, and spent all they had in rioting and eating. Seven days had they continued revelling at one tavern, when the host demanded to be

paid his bill. Every one searched his pockets, but still there was not enough to pay the reckoning.

“There still wants one hundred shillings,” said the innkeeper; “and until that is paid ye go not hence.”

These young men knew not what to do, as they were penniless. “What shall we do?” said they one to another. “How can we pay so large a sum?” At length one bethought him of the king’s edict.

“Listen,” said he, “listen to me; does not the king give one hundred shillings to every blind man that applies for it?”

“Even so,” said the rest; “but what then? we are not blind.” “What then?” rejoined the young man. “Come, let us cast lots who shall be made blind, that when he is deprived of sight we may take him to the king’s palace, and obtain the hundred shillings.”

So the young men cast lots, and the lot fell upon the man who had proposed this plan. And the rest took him, and putting out his eyes, led him to the king’s palace. When they knocked at the gate, the porter opened the wicket, and demanded their business.

“Business,” said they; “see you not our companion is blind? he seeks to receive the king’s benevolent gift.”

“The blindness is rather sudden,” muttered the porter, who knew the young man by sight. “Well, well, I will fetch the almoner.”

So the almoner, who distributed the king’s charity, came to the gate, and looking at the young man, asked him what he wanted.

“A hundred shillings, which my lord the king gives to those who are born blind,” replied the youth.

“Thy blindness is very sudden,” replied the almoner; when did it happen, and where? for I saw thee yesterday with both eyes perfect, in the tavern by the city wall.”

“Last night, noble sir,” replied the blind man, “last night at that tavern I became blind.”

“Go fetch the host,” said the almoner, sternly; “we will look into this matter more fully.”

So when the innkeeper came, he inquired of him how the matter was: and when he had heard all their deeds, he

turned to the young man and said: "Of a surety thou knowest but half of the law, and dost interpret it wrong; to such as are blind by God's act, does our gracious king give his charity; such the law protects and relieves. But thou—why art thou blind? Thinkest thou that thou deservest to be rewarded for voluntarily surrendering thine eyes, in order to discharge the debt thou and thy companions had contracted by gluttony and rioting? Begone, foolish man; thy avarice hath made thee blind."

So they drove away the young men

from the king's gate, lamenting their folly and wickedness.

This story, which is taken from the amusing old chronicles of the Middle Ages, although it may seem absurd and trivial, is not without its moral. We may learn from it, the folly of wasting or abusing any of those gifts which we receive from the benevolent hand of the Creator, our Father in heaven.

The glutton parted with that which he had received from Heaven, the blessed gift of sight; and this for no worthier

object than the gratification of appetite, without the ordinary price of labor.

We consider his conduct monstrous; but it is precisely the same in effect as that of every one who sacrifices health at the altar of intemperance. Every intemperate barter away the most precious gift of health merely for the gratification of appetite, and thus acts just as foolishly as this young glutton, who parted with his eyes, in order to pay for a dinner.

Children are not very liable to sin in the way that men do, by intemperance

in drinking. But the moral of this story has its uses for children as well as for men. They are very liable to intemperance in eating. Most children are apt to eat too much; and this vice not only exposes them to temporary loss, even of life; but if they escape this penalty, at the time, by persisting in gluttony for a long period, they lay the foundation of very severe diseases, in after life. Many a fine constitution has been utterly ruined by gluttony in childhood.

But it is not only by intemperance in eating and drinking, that we waste or

destroy the precious gifts of our Father in heaven. Time is one of his most valuable gifts; and many young people waste it as though they considered themselves destined to live forever in this world, and never expected to be called upon to perform any serious duty, or any useful labor.

While we are young we must lay the foundation of our future characters. We should learn to prize every moment of time in childhood, and to devote each moment to its appropriate duty. In school hours, we should be diligent and

attentive; in play hours we should be lively, active, and always good natured and kind to our brothers, sisters, and play-fellows.

By attention and diligence in school hours, we acquire the knowledge which is absolutely necessary to the maintenance of a respectable character and standing in society. By liveliness, and good humor, and activity in play hours, we preserve our health, and acquire the bodily vigor which is so essential to enjoyment and usefulness in mature life. Each hour has its duty.

