

THE
CHILDREN'S PAGE.

A SUN SONG.

'WHEN I hide the people from ;
They all smile when I shine down.
When their world is warm they say,
"Oh, the sun's so hot to-day."
While the truth is simply, I
Never change here in the sky.
'Tis their spinning world below
Makes me seem to vary so.'

J. M. L.

AN UNKNOWN LANGUAGE.

NOTWITHSTANDING baby's wonderful qualities, it must be admitted that he speaks an unknown tongue to the uninitiated. Mamma can of course understand her king, but she enjoys unusual advantages. The listener may mention the case of a fond mother of his acquaintance who had so remarkable a baby that, the mother insists, it says 'Mamma's little girl' so distinctly that anybody in the world could make it out. And this is the way, exactly, that the baby pronounces it: 'Lubbe, lubbe, lubbe!' This is not nearly such plain English as that of a friend of the listener's, now a man, and an honest, able one, who, when he was two years old, mystified the members of his family by calling out in the most imperative mood: 'Bixit, baxit, cloxit!' They all gathered round, and tried hard to make out what the youngster meant. But the most definite statement that they could get out of him was, 'Bixit, baxit, cloxit!' At last, by dint of a good deal of pantomime, the child got them into the pantry, and indicated a particular place in it, and then his remark translated itself to them. What he meant, to say was, 'I want a biscuit, in the basket, in the closet!'

BONY, THE BEAR.

NOT a very long time ago I got a letter from a little boy. The little boy's mamma wrote the letter, but she wrote just what the little boy told her to write, and this is what the letter said: 'If you please, won't you tell some of the stories for little boys, and not all of them for little girls, because I like 'em about bears best, and monkeys and wild elephants, and some about going fishing.' So this is a true story of a bear. He was a performing bear, and his coat, which had once been black, was ragged, and faded to a rusty brown. His name was Napoleon Bonaparte, and all through the long, hot summer days he went tramping about from village to village with a hand-organ and a man and a little girl. The man played the organ, and the little girl, whose name was Lizette, shook her tambourine, and the bear danced and presented arms, and went through with his broom drill, and all his droll tricks a good many times in a day—so many times that it was no wonder that the three got very tired of it all. Some days they reaped a rich harvest of pennies, and some other days when everything seemed out of joint they tramped long distances without getting a pleasant word or the smallest gift of money. It was at such times that Lizette's black eyes would grow big and wistful, and her father's face would wear a scowl, and Bony, the bear, would tug restlessly at his chain, as if he knew that things were not going just as they should, and as if he were longing for the shady forests and a taste of freedom. Then the father would give his chain into Lizette's wee brown hand, because Bony would always mind Lizette's voice, and follow where she led. They were such good friends—the big black bear and the little brown girl; at night he often slept with her curly head resting on his shaggy coat. But times were not often so hard. One day the three came to a little village between two hills where very few hand-organs, and never a dancing bear had found the way before. And when Bony came with Lizette and her father and the tambourine and the hand-organ, the children all flocked to see, and the fathers and mothers came to look after the children. So Bony, feeling the cheering prospect, danced as he hadn't danced for a long, long time; and Lizette shook her tambourine with a great deal of spirit; and her father turned the organ-crank vigorously; and just as Bony with his wooden musket was presenting arms in his very best style, a dreadful cry was raised: 'The dog is mad! M-a-a-d-o-g-o! Clear the way!' Lizette's father was collecting pennies. The little crowd parted and scattered here and there, until in less time than I can tell you of it, little Lizette and Bony, the bear, stood all alone in the midst of the grassy village square—all alone, with a great savage dog, almost as big as Bony himself, coming upon them. Bony dropped his musket and Lizette crept close to him as he stood upon his haunches straight as a soldier. And when the dog sprang with a fierce snarl at Bony's throat, the old bear caught him in a mighty squeeze; and he hugged him tighter and tighter; and the people cheered. And Lizette's father shouted, 'Run Lizette!' But she did not. It was over in a minute, and of course Bony—brave old Bony—had the best of it. He had hardly a scratch to show for his battle, either, thanks to the thick leather collar about his neck. And of course, too, Bony was praised and Lizette was petted, and they were all treated so kindly that they haven't gone away from the little village between the hills yet; neither Lizette nor her father nor Bony, the bear. I saw Bony last summer while I was staying in that little village, and he licked my hand with his rough tongue, and seemed very well pleased with his new home in the inn-keeper's orchard, where every day Lizette comes to play with him for a while.

months, in 1703. Dampier knew everything about Selkirk's case, but in his earlier voyage he describes this previous abandonment of a solitary man, and his stay for three years on the same island. Here is the narrative as given in his book.

The nineteenth day (March, 1683), when we looked out in the morning we saw a ship to the southward of us, coming with all the sail she could make after us. We lay to, to let her come up with us, for we supposed her to be a Spanish ship come from Baldivia, bound to Lima, we being now to the northward of Baldivia, and this being the time of the year when ships that trade thence to Baldivia return home. They had the same opinion of us, and therefore made sure to take us; but coming nearer we both found our mistakes. This proved to be one Captain Eaton, in a ship sent purposely from London for the South Seas. We hailed each other, and the captain came on board and told us of his actions on the coast of Brazil and in the River Plate. He met Captain Swan (one that came from England to trade here) at the east entrance into the Strait of Magellan, and they accompanied each other through the Straits, and were separated after they were through by the storm before mentioned. Both we and Captain Eaton being bound for Juan Fernando's Isle, we kept company, and we spared him bread and beef, and he spared us water, which he took in as he passed through the Straits.

March twenty-second, 1684, we came in sight of the island, and the next day got in and anchored in a bay at the south end of the island. We presently got out our canoe, and went ashore to seek for a Moskito Indian, whom we left here when we were chased hence by three Spanish ships in the year 1681.

This Indian lived here alone above three years, and though he was several times sought after by the Spaniards, who knew he was left on the island, yet they could never find him. He was in the wood hunting for goats, when Captain Watlin drew off his men, and the ship was under sail before he came back to shore. He had with him his gun and a knife, with a small horn of powder and a few shot, which, being spent, he contrived a way, by notching his knife, to saw the barrel of his gun into small pieces, wherewith he made harpoons, pincers, hooks, and a long knife, heating the pieces first in the fire, which he struck with his gun-flint and a piece of the barrel of his gun, which he hardened, having learned to do that among the English. The hot pieces of iron he would hammer out and bend as he pleased with stones, and saw them with his jagged knife, or grind them to an edge by long labour, and harden them to a good temper.

All this may seem strange to those that are not acquainted with the sagacity of the Indians, but it is no more than these Moskito men are accustomed to in their own country, where they make all their fishing and striking instruments without either forge or anvil, though they spend a great deal of time about them.

With such instruments as he made in that manner he got such provision as the island afforded—either goats or fish. He told us that at first he was forced to eat seal, which is very ordinary meat, before he had made hooks; but afterward he never killed any seals but to make lines, or cut them into thongs. He had a little house, or hut, half a mile from the sea, which was lined with goatskin; his couch of sticks lying about two feet distant from the ground, was spread with the same, and was all his bedding. He had no clothes left, having worn out those he brought from Watlin's ship, but only a skin about his waist. He saw our ship the day before we came to an anchor, and did believe we were English, and therefore killed three goats in the morning, before we came to an anchor and dressed them with cabbage, to treat us when we came ashore. He came then to the sea-side to congratulate our safe arrival, and when we landed, a Moskito Indian, who was named Robin, first leaped ashore, and, running to his brother Moskito man, threw himself flat on his face at his feet, who, helping him up and embracing him, fell flat with his face to the ground, at Robin's feet, and was by him taken up also. We stood with pleasure to behold the surprise and tenderness and solemnity of the interview, which was exceedingly affectionate on both sides; and when their ceremonies of civility were over, we also that stood gazing at them drew near, each of us embracing him we had found here, who was overjoyed to see so many of his old friends come hither, as he thought, purposely to fetch him. He was named Will, as the other was Robin. These were names given them by the English, for they have no names among themselves, and they take it as a great favour to be named by any of us, and will complain for want of it if we do not appoint them some name when they are with us, saying of themselves they are poor men, and have no name.—*Bristol Observer*.

CORRESPONDENCE.

TO THE EDITOR.—I have had much pleasure in reading your illustrated paper, the NEW ZEALAND GRAPHIC, and anticipate its arrival every week with much interest. If you will allow me, I shall be pleased to contribute. Hoping your paper will always remain a success—I am, yours sincerely,
Ashburton.

ETHEL GATES.

DEAR ETHEL.—I am very pleased to welcome you as a new correspondent. As you see, I am publishing your poem this week, for which and your kind letter I tender many thanks. I have plenty of poetry, and we have little room for it. Will you try a short story?—EDITOR YOUTH'S PAGE.

REST.

NIGHT, with slowest, softest footsteps,
Comes in robes of dark arrayed,
Evening shadows, dim and silent,
Lengthen into one vast shade.
Rest, too sad to rest
Now evening falls.

Gazing far beyond earth's silence
To the splendour born on high,
Myriad lights, their radiance flinging,
Lighting all the earth and sky.
A rest, brighter rest,
This eventide.

Will my life be one long sadness?
Could I shine a star of love?
Add my note to cheer and brighten
Like those glorious stars above!
Rest, perfect rest,
Heaven's eventide.

ETHEL

A LITTLE BROWN HEN.

ONCE upon a time, long ago, there was an old-fashioned farmhouse with a very large kitchen.

This kitchen had two doors, one opening into the yard, and one into the orchard, where the hens were sometimes let out to scratch about.

One morning there was a dear little baby girl sitting on the floor right in the middle of the room, where she could play with her spoons and look out of doors at the same time. On one side she could look out into the yard and study the big pump, and on the other she could watch the chickens running about under the apple tree.

When no one was at the pump, she liked the chickens best, and tried to call them to her.

One day the little brown hen came up to the door and looked in. All was still. She could see no one but the brown-eyed baby, sitting flat on her blanket.

'Da! da!' said baby.

'Cluck! cluck!' said the little brown hen.

'Da! da!' squealed little brown-eyes, shaking her spoons in delight.

The little brown hen cocked her head on one side and looked at baby's little red boots with the black buttons on them.

'They are good to eat,' she concluded, and hopped a little nearer, and then a little nearer until she came at last to the little red shoes—and soon she was tugging at them with her bill, trying in vain to get them off.

'Da! da!' said baby, pleased with her new playmate and not a bit afraid.

'Cluck! cluck!' said the hen, wondering why these strange berries wouldn't come off their stems, when 'Shoo! shoo!' came from behind and sent her flying from the kitchen in a hurry to find the other hens and tell them of her discovery.

And then baby began to cry because she didn't like to have her caller driven away so suddenly.

L. B.

A LITTLE PRISONER.

If I tell you Patty was a prisoner, perhaps you will think she was shut up in one of those great gloomy goals you may have seen sometimes, where the windows are all barred with iron and the doors have heavy locks on them for fear the people kept in there will get out; but no, Patty was not a prisoner of that kind. Let me tell you her story.

She was a dear little girl, five years old, and she went to school in the next house to her own home, so that on stormy days she could be lifted over the railing that divided the piazzas, and not be obliged to go out in the rain at all.

On this particular day I want to tell you about she had started off as usual at nine o'clock, with a message from her mother asking the teacher to dismiss her half an hour earlier than usual, in order that she might have time to go into town and get a pair of shoes.

The permission was given, and when the clock struck half-past twelve Patty put her book in her desk, kissed the teacher good-by, and ran downstairs and opened the big front door, which it was somewhat hard for her to do, as she is such a little girl, and the handle is so slippery and the door so heavy.

She shut it carefully after her, as she had been taught, but as it shut, Patty's white apron fluttered into the crack, and was caught in the heavy door, and when she turned to go she could not move a step; she was held fast by the apron a little prisoner!

'What could she do? must she stay there ever so long? The dreadful thought came into her mind that perhaps no one would miss her, and she might even have to stand there all night; she gave the apron a tiny pull, but it was quite fast, and she knew that she would have to tear off a large corner to get it out, and what would mamma say to that? oh, what could she do?

If she had been a little older and wiser she would have twisted herself around and rung the door-bell, but she did not think of that, and one or two tears were beginning to come to her bright brown eyes, when a gentleman who knew Patty happened to pass the house.

He could not help smiling when he saw the poor little girl, but he at once came up the steps and rang the bell, and in a minute Mary had come and opened the door, and Patty was released, and after thanking her kind friend, skipped merrily home, and went with her mamma to buy the new shoes.

Now don't you think Patty was a prisoner?

M. S.

A little sister came to live at her house, and Bessie was much pleased at first, but grew rather jealous after a time, and said, 'I do wish it had been two little kittens.'

Little Walter had been put to bed and his mamma had read to the sitting-room when a stray cow began lowing near the house. 'Mamma! mamma!' called the small man excitedly, 'do you hear that cattle mewing?'

Doctor: 'Well, my fine little fellow, you have got quite well again. I was sure that the pills I left for you would cure you. How did you take them—in water or in cake?' 'Oh, I used them in my pop-gun.'

Mamma: 'It is very wrong in you, Johnnie, to quarrel in this way.' Johnnie (who has just had a fight with his brother Tom): 'Well, I got wild, and had to do something.' Mamma: 'But you must not let your temper carry you away in that manner. I will tell you a good rule: When you are angry always count twenty before you strike.' Tommy (the victor in the recent unpleasantness): 'Yes, and he'd better count forty before he strikes a fellow who can whip him.'

The small boy is not notably proficient in sacred lore, but when his sister referred to him the query: 'Where was Solomon's Temple?' he indignantly resented the supposed impeachment of his stock of information and retorted: 'Don't you think I know anything?' She assured him she did not doubt that he knew, but urged him to state for her benefit. Though not crediting her sincerity, he finally exclaimed with exasperation: 'On the side of his head, of course, where other folks are!' You suppose I'm an idiot?'

Not long since a young man applied for permission to teach in a school, and utterly failing in the necessary examination, was finally asked when it was that Napoleon flourished—before or after the Conquest? After meditating some time, he replied, 'You have got me this time, gentlemen.'