

THE CHILDREN'S PAGE.

A VISIT TO GRANDMAMMA.

'It isn't so very far,' said Elizabeth. 'We could get over there before dinner-time.'

'And ride home on the tree!' answered Reginald.

Without further ado they started. Sturdily they trudged on through the snowy roads, unconscious of the length of time it was taking. They crossed the bridge and climbed the hill. They had not started as early as they had thought; they could go but slowly, and it was nearly four o'clock, and beginning to be dark, when they reached the Dillinghams'.

The gate stood ajar in the white drifts of snow which stretched unbroken up to the doorway. Not a track marked the perfect whiteness, and no smoke issued from any of the chimneys.

'There's no one at home!' exclaimed Elizabeth. But Reginald was so tired that she waded alone through the snow to the door, and knocked violently.

Everything was still; down the hill in the barn could be heard an occasional stamp from the horses, and the lowing of the cattle. The children could tell by the tracks in that direction that some one had been there earlier in the morning—probably Joe White, the hired man.

'We must go home,' said Elizabeth, going back to Reginald. 'Look at the sky; it is going to snow again.'

'I can't,' answered Reginald. 'I must ride home; I'm too tired.'

'But you must come, Reginald! There is no one to give us a ride.'

'But I can't walk any more,' said Reginald; 'I am cold and my legs would go.'

Elizabeth looked up at the sky. It was growing very dark; a great puff of icy wind swept suddenly over the hill top and down the slope, laden with flakes of snow.

'Totie,' she said, 'you can easily get to Mrs Tucker's.'

'I can't easily get anywhere,' answered Reginald, who had firmly seated himself on the horse-block.

'She always bakes lemon snaps on Monday,' said wily Elizabeth.

Reginald climbed down from his perch and wearily plodded forward; but he soon dragged behind.

The air was now thick with snow, and the darkness and wind constantly increased. The child who was tired and hungry, began to be benumbed by the cold. Tears rolled silently down his cheeks as he unsteadily planted one foot before the other. Elizabeth coaxcd, scolded and pushed him onward, although herself almost falling from fatigue.

'O Ditty, Ditty, please let me rest!' Reginald begged, and from time to time in the midst of the whirling drifts she waited, shielding him in her arms until a nameless terror drove her to advance.

'Totie! Totie! Darling Totie, mamma's Totie, Ditty will save you,' she cried, panting and struggling against the blast.

'Leave me alone,' murmured Reginald, 'leave me alone!'

The storm, grown to a tempest, again rushed down upon them, almost blowing them from their feet.

'I'm not going any further!' said Reginald coming to a standstill.

Then Elizabeth's stout little loving heart seemed to break. Frantic and despairing, she lifted her voice and shrieked wildly again and again. The startling screams seemed to arouse Reginald from the lethargy into which he was sinking, and he made a feeble effort to go on.

Two tall, dark objects loomed up through the falling snow, and with a sudden throb of joy Elizabeth recognised Mr Tucker's pine trees; but no ray of light gleamed from any of the windows, and it was almost night.

'There is no one here either!' she murmured desperately, as, literally carrying Reginald, she staggered up the unbroken path, and fell helplessly with her burden against the closed door, knocking and calling loudly as she did so.

'I am sleepy, Ditty!' whispered Reginald, almost inaudibly.

The words conveyed a dreadful meaning to her fainting senses.

'You must wake up!' she cried. 'Wake up, Totie, or you will die!'

She shook him violently; she even slapped his cheeks and hands, but Reginald only muttered, 'Don't!' and sank in a little heap at her feet.

MARY TAPPAN WRIGHT.
(TO BE CONTINUED.)

AT THE SAVINGS-BANK.

IN the long procession that passes before the cashier of a savings-bank are many odd characters. The man behind the counter does not receive the deposits, little and great, without retaining also a good many amusing recollections. The other day a pleasant-faced woman handed her book to the cashier in a savings-bank, and said, with a good deal of what the French call *empressement*, 'I wish to draw the full amount of my deposit.'

'Very well, madam,' answered the cashier, looking at the book.

'I thought I would mention it to-day, and then it would not cause any inconvenience,' she continued, with a bright smile.

'Thank you very much,' replied the cashier. 'Come in any time next week and you shall have it. Or you can draw it to-day if you like. We have the amount on hand,' and he smiled upon his customer as if he took a personal interest in her plans.

'No, I will come in next Wednesday, thank you,' and she tripped happily away with her precious book.

The full amount of her deposit was five pounds and nine pence.

Not long ago an Irishman explained to the cashier that he wished to draw a certain amount from the deposit of a friend, whose book he presented.

'Very well,' said the cashier, handing him a printed blank.

'You must have your friend sign this order. Let him put his name here, and write "Pay to Bearer" here, and we will give you the money.'

Not many hours later Mr Riley appeared again. He pointed to his friend's name properly signed to the order, and also to an inscription after the printed words, "Pay to—"

'I don't know what ye wanted that name there for,' he said, 'but I wrote it in as ye told me.'

The name he had written in was 'Pater Barrer.'

There being no rule of the bank against phonetic spelling, Mr Riley received his money forthwith.

'Then let's both wish as hard as ever we can that some good fairy would appear now and turn our sticks into bundles of faggots, all nicely tied up.'

'Hain't we better say some rhymes, or something? That's the sort of way fairies like to be asked, I know,' George said.

'How would this do?' Nellie asked.

'Sticks, dear sticks, to faggots turn, Thee you in the fire shall burn; Cook our dinner, boll our tea, Your flames dancing merrily.'

'But,' George said, 'you shouldn't tell the faggots they are to be burned. They mayn't come if they think they are to be treated so unkindly.'

'They know that it is all we want them for,' said Nellie.

'Come, Georgie, sing away.'

So the two sang heartily, and the good fairy slipped off the branch, left herself to the ground by a silken thread, crept quietly along to the little heap of sticks, touched them with her wand, when, lo! a large pile of nicely tied-up faggots appeared in their place. Two little sticks that were lying on the ground close by were also turned into two bundles of long sticks.

Both children cried, 'Oh, look!' and jumped up. George took one bundle off the ground and sat down; it was so heavy, to look at it closely to make sure the sticks were real, whilst Nellie picked up the other bundle and put it on the large pile. If you look at the picture you will see them doing this.

They wanted to thank the fairy, but she had disappeared. So they ran home and fetched the big wheelbarrow, and spent all the afternoon getting those faggots home, and I can tell you their mother was pleased.

JACK FROST.

HOW FOUR CHILDREN WENT TO THE EXHIBITION.

TOM and Helen and Kate and Jack all went to the same school, and were great friends.

When they were at home from school, they kept hearing their mammas and papas and older brothers and sisters talk about the exhibition that was being held in the great new hall, built for the purpose, in the city where they lived.

They heard of the wonderful machines, of the beautiful dresses and dress fabrics, of the elegant furniture and the splendid toys, of the lovely jewelry and the fancy pickle department, and of the man who painted a landscape in oil for you, free, in three minutes.

They heard of the phonograph exhibit where a lady sang out of a machine, and the sewing machine exhibit and the piano and organ exhibit. They heard about the fine band that played, and about the apple and cake stands, until they were wild to go and see all these things for themselves, and I do not wonder that they were.

So they talked about it after school one day.

'It costs sixpence apiece to get in,' said Jack.

'Who is ever going to give us two shillings?' said Helen, in despair.

'Let's each earn our own,' said hopeful Tom, 'and then we'll all go together.'

'That's easier said than done,' answered Kate.

But they all agreed to try, and on Friday to compare notes. Then if they had the money, they would go to the exhibition on Saturday. When Friday came each one had a sixpence.

'I got mine for pulling all the bastings out of two of mamma's new dresses,' said Kate.

'Pooh! That isn't worth sixpence,' said Tom.

'Just try it and see,' replied Kate. 'How'd you make yours?'

'Cutting the lawn for my father,' said Tom, with an air of pride. 'There's some work in that.'

'And I made mine rocking the baby to sleep for mamma evenings,' said Helen.

'And I found mine in the alley,' said Jack.

'O-o-h!' said all the children at once.

On Saturday they went to the great building. They paid their money to the man at the little window, and then went eagerly through the big turastile in the doorway.

There they were in the great main room. They caught a glimpse of rows and rows of wonderful things, like a whole city-full of shop-windows all together, and then Master Tom said:

'This isn't the room to look at first. I know the way. We must go through that big door over there that says "Exhibit" over it,—that's where to begin, and then we can come back here.'

So they followed Tom straight across the big room, and never stopped to look at anything, not even the card over the door.

They opened it wide and through they went—the door slamming behind them. Then they stopped short and stared at one another.

Where do you suppose they were?

Why,—the card over the door said 'Exit,' not 'Exhibit,' and there they were *outside* again, in another entrance-hall, and right alongside of a big, burly policeman, who wouldn't let them go back!

Poor little children! Their money was all gone, there stood that dreadful policeman, and, worst of all, it was the very last day of the exhibition.

The girls sat right down on the steps and cried, and the boys came as near it as they could and not let the girls see; while Kate sobbed out:

'I could 'a' read better than that if I can't mow a lawn!'

But it was of no use. Tears would not avail. So they got up and walked home, and that was the way they saw the exhibition.

Before it opens again I think Tom had better learn to read more carefully, don't you?

WINIFRED BALLARD BLAKE.

FRED AND JOHNNY.

FRED came home with quite a useful look on his face. He had been punished at school, and though it had been deserved felt very much abused. The teacher rules with an iron hand, eh? asked Fred's papa, with a smile. His hand isn't iron,' Fred demurely replied, 'but it seems to me his ruler is.'

Three-year-old Johnny saw his papa making his garden, and set out to do some work himself. An hour later he was found busily engaged in sticking feathers up in the lettuce-bed, so he could 'raise chickens.'

WHEN the corn was growing yellow, and the nuts were turning brown. The children went to spend the day with grandma, out of town. There were Robert, Grace and Reginald, Maud Estelle and Mollie. But I ought to say, in passing, Maud Estelle was Grace's dolly.

A jolly little party! Just enough to fill the surry. And when the coachman cracked his whip they started in a hurry: And I rather think that mamma and pretty Auntie Flo Were just as glad to see them start as they were glad to go.

They frolicked and they rollicked as they rolled along the road; And grandma was waiting with a welcome for the load. They saw her watching by the gate with many a smile and nod, And said, "How pretty grandma looks among the golden-rod!"

She kissed their happy faces, as they hung about her neck; And then they asked for cakes—they wanted 'bout a peck. Now grandma was equal to a dozen hungry elves— She knew what she was doing when she stocked her pantry shelves.

Such pans of golden gingerbread all sitting in a row— With lovely men and animals, made out of cookie dough. A score of tiny dainty pies, an' a better than the rest, Plump doughnuts, just the colour of a baby robin's breast.

When luncheon time was over, and they started for a run, The leaden clouds came piling up, and quite obscured the sun; And then the rain fell patter-patter on the roof and eaves, And ran in little rivulets among the fallen leaves.

But grandma was equal to this emergency; She called her disappointed brood around her ample knee, And told them thrilling stories, with a patience quite sublime— Beginning every one of them with "Once upon a time."

Too soon the coachman cracked his whip and shouted, "All aboard!" And when the last good-byes were said, the rain no longer poured, But danced along the crysan boughs, and fell in pearly showers Upon the little outstretched hands that plucked the wayside flowers.

Such a quiet little party! As into town they rolled, Just as the sun went slowly down behind the gates of gold. And I rather think that mamma and pretty Auntie Flo Were quite as glad to seem them come as they were to have them go.

JULIA M. DANA.

FAIRY STICKS.

HE fairy Woodleaf has not been heard of for some time, has she, children? Well, I am glad to be able to tell you something about her to-day—something nice, of course. This fairy is one of the good kind, who always likes to do nice things for people, especially for children. One afternoon, when the leaves were falling off the oak trees, and off all others which have been planted in New Zealand and do not belong to the country, the fairy Woodleaf was sitting upon a branch of an oak tree. She was watching the leaves as the wind caught them, shook them, kissed them, and let them drop to the ground, where they all began to play at Kiss-in-the-King. Have you not often heard the little swiss-kiss, as two dry leaves touch each other? Some people say it is just



LOOKING AT THE FAGGOTS.

rustling leaves, but we know better, do we not? It is the leaves kissing when they catch each other. Woodleaf was busy watching two leaves which had been chasing each other for some time when the wind suddenly came behind the one that was trying to catch the other, gave a great push with his breath, and blew it right against the one that was running away. Such a loud kiss they gave each other that Woodleaf actually laughed aloud. The noise she made startled two children, who had come to the wood to gather faggots. Woodleaf sat further back, and hid behind the leaves which were not yet brown, and listened to what the children were saying.

'Did you hear that noise, Georgie?' asked the girl, Nellie.

'Yes,' answered Georgie. 'It sounded like someone laughing, but I cannot see anyone, can you?'

'No,' said Nellie. 'But let us be quiet and gather as much firewood as we can whilst it is dry enough to burn. Poor mother says we shall not be able to buy any coal this winter, and if we wait till rain comes the wood will be wet, and will not cook the dinner.'

'Well, we could make a fire and dry it,' said Georgie.

'You stupid boy,' said Nellie. 'How could we make a fire of nothing?'

Georgie laughed, then sat down on a tree stump and said he was too tired to gather any more of those tiresome little sticks.

'Do help me, Georgie dear!' said Nellie. 'I shall never get enough myself. These small pieces do burn so fast.'

'I wish each little stick we pick up would turn into a big bundle of faggots, don't you, Nellie?' the tired little boy said.

'Indeed I do,' Nellie answered, sitting down beside him.

'Georgie, do you believe in fairies?'

'Of course I do,' said her brother.