



How Rob Won.

A STORY OF AN AMERICAN BOY.

Rob, the new boy in school, stood irresolute. With scarlet cheeks, dilating nostrils, and fists tightly clenched, he stood, the centre of a group of his schoolmates. Buck Clark, a boy of his own size, with coat and vest off and sleeves rolled up, blocked Rob's homeward way.

"Put up your fists and fight. What're ye 'fraid of?" sneered Buck.

"I have already told you that I do not care to fight," Rob answered.

"You're a coward, that's what's the matter with you. Take that and that to remember me by," said Buck as he struck at Rob.

"Leave him alone, Buck; you're always picking a fight," interposed an older boy.

The little boys standing about on the outskirts of the crowd, whooped and shouted. "Fraid cat, 'fraid cat—Buck can lick you with one hand tied behind him—cowardly calf, cowardly calf?"

Stung by these taunts, Rob said: "I would fight soon enough, but I promised my mother I wouldn't, and a McArthur never breaks his word." Then, lowering his voice and unclenching his fists at the thought of his mother, he added, "She isn't very strong and I'm all she's got. I don't like you boys to think I'm a coward, but I promised her I wouldn't fight and I won't."

"Girly boy. Tied to his mother's apron string. Where's your sun-bonnet, boss?" derisively hooted the small boys.

Rob, raising his head very high, apparently unmindful of the jeers and taunts flung at him, brushed Buck to one side and started homeward.

"Buck, you had better be a little careful which way you stroke that new boy's fur," said one of the older boys. "He could lick you if he wanted to."

"Oh, he's strong all right, but he hasn't any sand. He's a coward," answered Buck.

"That's what he is," chimed in several of Buck's supporters.

The next few weeks were hard weeks for Rob. Buck Clark and his crowd made the boy's life miserable by all the petty annoyances they could devise; but Rob had good Scotch grit and though his eyes flashed and his fists involuntarily clenched at times, he kept the promise he had given. At home a frail and gentle little mother greeted him lovingly, smoothing his brow with her soft and gentle hand or caressing his wavy brown hair. Not for words would Rob let his mother know by word or sign how much it was costing him to keep his promise. "Ah, Rob, my laddie, you are such a comfort to me, so tender, so thoughtful, and so manly. How proud your father would be of you, laddie; you are his very picture. God grant you may be as strong and brave and true as he."

Rob had all an active, growing boy's interest and curiosity in his new surroundings. He had come from an eastern state, and until his arrival in Butte a few months previous, he had never seen a mine or a smelter. Rob spent all his spare time visiting the mines and prospect holes near his home. One Saturday afternoon he went down in the cage at the Alice to the thousand foot level. It seemed like a page out of a fairy book to see men nearly a quarter of a mile beneath the surface of the earth, picking, drilling and blasting in the different drifts and tunnels. Rob was all the more attracted to mining as his uncle had been foreman in a mine for many years, until he had been killed by the premature discharge of a blast a short time before they came to Butte. This uncle had left his property to Rob's mother; it consisted of a house and lot, a few hundred dollars in the bank, and several thousand shares in a mine, which in its early days had given promise of being a rich silver producer. Grossly incompetent management, coupled with the fact that the expensive machinery must be purchased to keep the shaft free from water, led to the temporary closing of the mine. Then the shares, which had been quoted at nearly par, could be had for a few cents.

Rob's mother brought the certificates of stock out to Rob one day.

CHILDREN'S PAGE.

COUSINS' CORRESPONDENCE.

Dear Cousin Kate,—I have not written to you lately, because I did not know if we were going to get the "Graphic" any more, but I thought I would write and tell you why it is you haven't had a letter from me. If we do get it, I hope you will let me write again, Cousin Kate. I have read some grand books lately; "The Caged Lion," by Charlotte Yonge, is very good, all about Henry V. of England and James I. of Scotland; "We Two," by Edna Lyall—it is a beautiful story; Luke Rastburn, the atheist, is a grand character. "A Corner of the West" is a pretty story, though there is not much in it. I am reading George Elliot's "Romola" now; I think you told me to a long time ago. There is to be a tableau at the yearly bazaar soon, and it consists mostly of girls, who represent England's possessions, dressed in a characteristic way of the country they represent; I am Ireland and have to wear some shamrocks on a white dress—not forgetting the four-leafed one. I have been promised a canary when the bird brings them out, but a few days ago she scratched out the eggs and broke them, so I was "counting my chickens—rather czaries—before they were hatched." I hope she will sit again soon; they are supposed to lay three times a year. I have planted some white lilac plants, and although this is not the proper time to move them, they are growing; whether they flower, however, is another thing. I love lilac, don't you, Cousin Kate? Roses are coming out in quantities now; the rose season seems the best part of the year to me, because the flowers are so lovely. The Bishop's examination comes off on Sunday week, and we are all pleased it is earlier this year, because it was so fearfully hot before. I don't think it will be the same thing, not having the prize from Bishop Cowie. I hope you will still let me make something for the Maori girls' bazaar, even if it is only a scrap-book. A few schoolgirls have given me pictures for it, so I hope it will be a good one. I do not know how to send it to you, though. I have no more to tell you, so will say good-bye, with love, from Cousin Alison.

[Dear Cousin Alison,—I shall be very sorry if you do not continue to write letters, as yours have always had a special interest for me. You are fond of reading, and so am I, so that makes a bond of sympathy. I have a small lilac bush out, and it smells just delicious. I have never seen a white one in New Zealand, but we had lovely ones at Home. Thank you very much for saying you will make a scrap-book. I shall be delighted to have it for the bazaar. Hoping to hear from you soon, Cousin Kate.]

Dear Cousin Kate,—I feel ashamed of myself for not writing, because I take such a long time. I went to play with my cousins on Sunday, and had such lovely fun. My sister could not write, as she had a bad headache. I must say good-bye, because I must go to bed.—Cousin Alice.

[Dear Cousin Alice.—Thank you very much for your letter, which I was very glad to get. I am sorry

your sister was ill and hope she is all right by this time. Have we not had lovely weather lately?—Cousin Kate.]

Two Dogs and Some Geese.

A goose is no fool, and still less is a gander. He will remember a kindness and revenge an injury; he is courageous; he has an immense sense of humour, although it chiefly shows itself, writes a contributor to "Our Four-Footed Friends," in a rather deplorable fondness for practical jokes.

We had at the ranch a little dog, Roxy by name, very round and fat, and unfortunately very near-sighted. He used to be called to his supper about the time the geese are called to theirs. He had to go through the garden gate to get his supper, while the geese take theirs outside.

Now the gander, a most observant bird, was not long in noticing the fact of Roxy's appearance simultaneously with his own, and at once proceeded to utilise his discovery. He arranged his harem in two lines on each side of the gate and leading thereto.

Not dreaming of harm, the trustful Roxy trotted briskly between the lines, and there made his fatal error. The first goose nipped him as only a goose can, then the opposite goose, and so on alternately. The unhappy dog ran a regular Indian gauntlet, getting finally through the gate and howling with anguish. Then the geese gave vent to shrieks of demonic laughter, long and loud. The joke was too good for words.

Three times did the wretched Roxy fall a victim to the wiles of his enemy, till finally he would stop short, raise one paw, regard his tormentors more in sorrow than in anger, and run around to the other side of the garden, where a friendly hole in the fence gave him entrance.

Roxy died full of years and experience, and was succeeded by a pug who thought his chief duty in life was to rush upon the geese unexpectedly, and drive them from their supper. He was an immense success till his fate overtook him. One ever-to-be-remembered afternoon he tackled the gander and seized him by the tail.

The gander immediately made for the pond, half-running and half-flying, but with such speed that the astonished pug did not dare to let go. The feathers were strong, and the dog performed most of the transit in the air. When the pond was reached, the gander, with undiminished speed, reached the middle, where the pug got a chance to let go, and struck out for the shore.

The avenger of blood was behind him, and before he reached land he was the recipient of the most scientific, broad-minded and colossal thrashing an offending creature ever endured. A sad little dog reached the shore, where he sat down and lifted up his voice and wept. He has not thought it for his interest to meddle with the geese since.



Cousins' Badges.

Cousins requiring badges are requested to send an addressed envelope, when the badge will be forwarded by return mail.

Important Notice to "Graphic" Cousins.

BAZAAR IN AID OF SCHOOL FOR MAORI GIRLS.

"GRAPHIC" PRIZE COMPETITIONS.

Dear Cousins,—It is impossible to tell you at present all the different objects for which I shall give prizes. But there will be heaps of prizes, and the more children (and elders) who send me objects for the bazaar the more prizes I shall be able to give. At present I can tell you this. There will be four prizes for the best-dressed dolls in ordinary doll's clothes, and four prizes for the best fancy-dressed dolls. Two of each will be for cousins under 13, and two for cousins over that age.

SPECIAL PRIZE FOR A FROCK.

There will be a prize of \$1 for the prettiest little frock for a child from 4 to 8 years of age. This is open to cousins over 13 years of age only.

There will be a valuable prize for the prettiest or best-made pinafore or overall for a child of from 4 to 8 years of age. Prizes will be given for crochet work, for embroidery and for knitting. If there are any cousins who can make simple frames I will send pictures for framing, and give a prize for the neatest frame.

A prize will be given—a very nice one too—for the most original and prettiest pin-cushion. It may be made in any form or shape you like.

Country cousins can make boxes of ferns, and a prize will be given for the best.

Scrap-books are easy to make, and if made for the purpose of amusing very tiny children, always find a ready sale. Very fine screens can also be made of scrap pictures and pictorial advertisements, and though these take some little trouble, they are well worth it. Writing cases and blotting books, covered in pretty silk scraps, are always purchased at a bazaar, and really beautiful effects can be secured in patchwork cushions, quilts or table-centres. I wonder if any of these ideas will suit the cousins?