

The Orphans' Friend.

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A STORY OF 1779.

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A raw, chilly wind blew from the sea, and although it was August, the evening was so cool that the fire crackling in the great fireplace was very comfortable. Two old men—brothers—sat on one side of the hearth, in high, straight-backed chairs; and two old women—their sisters—sat opposite them. Between them stood a round, three-footed candle-stand, which held the candle-stick and the snuffers, and around it, like a moth, fidgeted a little girl.

After awhile the candle needed snuffing again, and she begged to do it. She took the snuffers in both her slender little hands and stood on tiptoe to reach. Woful zeal! Down came the heavy snuffers and put the light out.

'There,' said Aunt Patience, who condensed all of that virtue in her name, 'just as I knew it would be!'

'Never mind,' said Aunt Spiddy, whose words of comfort were swift to follow her sister's sharp one; 'sit down on your little bench and I'll tell you a riddle:

"Netty coat, netty coat,
With a white petticoat
And a red nose;
The longer she lives,
The shorter she grows."

Kitty folded her hands to a serious consideration of such a queer old woman, and somehow, after awhile she forgot about her, and became absorbed in watching the strange shadows stretch themselves up the white walls till they reached the ceiling. At last she burst out with—

'What makes you paint the top of your room black?'

'Why, we don't child!' said Aunt Patience, sharply.

'What makes it so black then?'

'It's because it's so old. This house was built before the Revolution.'

'Was it?' said Kitty, to whom the Revolution seemed as remote as the Deluge. They were not having Centennial celebrations all the time, and she did not know as much about our early history as you do.

'Yes,' said Aunt Spiddy, taking up the reminiscence. 'Father built it before he was married, and we've all of us lived here all our lives.'

'Why, were you alive in the Revolution?' queried Kitty, with increasing amazement.

'Yes, I'm the oldest,' said Aunt Spiddy, 'and I was eight when the war broke out.'

'What did you do? I should have been afraid.'

'Oh, they didn't have much fighting near us. They came here once, though. One morning—it was on Monday morning, the 5th of July—somebody woke us, pounding at the end door. Mother called from the window to know what he wanted. 'The red-coats are just off the town, and some say they are going to land. If they do, you'll want to be out of the way, that's all;' and off he rode to the next house.

'Oh, dear,' said mother, 'how I wish your father was here. What shall I do? Father died in the winter, and mother hadn't got used to thinking for herself. She

sat down on the side of the bed a few minutes, and then she said: 'Well, Spiddy, we must have breakfast and be ready to go, and I don't know but cousin Solomon's will be as good a place as any. I wish I knew what the British were going to do. There isn't very much in town for them.'

'Worried as I was, I couldn't help noticing what a beautiful morning it was. I was used to being up early, but it wasn't more than three o'clock, and the birds were singing as though there wasn't a trouble in the world. Well, we got the children up—Jesse and Isaac and Patience and the baby—and had our breakfast. It wasn't much more than four o'clock when a neighbor's boy came running 'cross the lots, through the orchard. He said the regulars were coming towards shore in their little boats, and almost everybody was starting away. There were two great ships and forty or fifty little ones, and they'd sailed up from York and were going to New Haven. Mother had hid her spoons and gold beads, and some hard money, and father's shoe-buckles, and an old silver tea-pot and sugar tongs that she set great store by because they had been her mother's mother's; so she hadn't them to think about.'

'Where did she hide them?' said Kitty.

'She buried 'em down in a cellar, in a dark corner. That round table over there was buried four years.'

'Why, did they steal tables, too?'

'No, but they were awful destructive, and they'd break anything they saw, specially if they thought 'twas anything anybody'd care about; and this is a very nice table; it's solid wood.'

'Well, mother put some bread and cheese and a tin cup in a pillow case, and then she looked all around the rooms, and we went away. It was a dreadful time. There were some sick folks, and they had to be moved, for they didn't want to be left, and there wouldn't anybody be so hard-hearted as to desert them. There were some Tory families, and they stayed at home. The baby was mightily pleased to be out of doors.'

'Who was the baby?' said Kitty, looking from one wrinkled face to another.

'Easter. She was your grand-ma, and a proper, heavy child. Mother carried her part of the way, but she wasn't very strong, and I helped her, and I thought my arms would drop out, they ached so. Jesse was bigger and stronger, and he would have helped, but mother sent him to pasture to get the cow and drive it on to cousin Solomon's. Part of the way we had company; women and children and old men. All who were able stayed behind to fight.'

'The road lay right away from New Haven, and when we had walked two or three miles we sat down to rest, for what with being up so early and the worry and the long walk, we were all tired out. It was a real pleasant place, right in a piece of woods. We had something to eat, and Easter

had a nap, and then we went on.

When we reached cousin Solomon's, Nancy came down to meet us. She said she had been watching for us all the morning, for some folks going beyond had told her the British were at West Haven, and she had been worried about us ever since. Jesse came by and by with the cow. We stayed there three days. Then we heard they had had a fight, and after robbing houses and getting fire to stores, they had gone away in their boats toward Fairfield. They set fire to a good many houses at West Haven, and mother sent Jesse to find out whether our's was standing. When he came back and said it was, mother cried, she was so thankful. She said that was the hardest part of going; she didn't know whether she should ever see her home again.

We children had a real nice visit. We didn't get away very often, and cousin Nancy was the kindest, pleasantest woman I ever knew. We went home in an ox-cart, and we found everything just as we left it,—the breakfast table, and all,—only the butter plate lay upside down and cracked in two, right in the middle of the kitchen floor. Every door in the house was open, and somebody had ransacked the chest of drawers, but we never missed anything. I suppose they were looking for money.

About two years afterward a man came to the door and asked mother if he might go up into the garret.'

'What do you want up in my garret?'

'I came to get a coat that I hid here when the British came this way. The day was so hot I had to take my coat off and carry it on my arm. I couldn't be plagued with it, so as I was passing here I went up into the garret and hid it in a hole in the chimney. If you'll go up with me, ma'am, I'll show you where 'tis.'

'So mother went up, and sure enough!—he took away two or three big stones, and there lay his captain's coat, just where he put it. It was such a bunch of wrinkles I don't believe it ever did come smooth. We'd been up there time and again, but we'd never thought of anything being there. He couldn't have hid it in one of our city chimneys. Mother brought out some wonder cakes and cider, and they had a long talk about the war.'

'And did anybody find the beads and the other things?'

'No, mother looked to see if they were safe, and then she left them there till peace was declared, for we didn't know but the British might come again.'

With a warning click and whirl, the tall clock struck nine, and the four old people folded their hands and bowed their heads in silent prayer. The fading embers were carefully buried, and sleep and silence blessed the ancient roof.

Anticipated sorrows are harder to bear than real ones, because Christ does not support us under them. In every sorrow we may see the footsteps of Christ's flock who have gone before us.

A POMOLOGICAL CURIOSITY.

A gentleman living on Wrightville Sound has an apple tree two or three years old, which he transplanted in the early part of the year. The tree apparently died. Late in the spring after some good rains had fallen, the tree budded afresh and bloomed, and again presented every indication of vigorous life. About a score of apple formed on it and grew to a good size. The drought came on, and, to all appearances, the tree again died. The leaves all withered and fell off, and all the apples except one fell off also. Since the rains of the early part of last month, the tree had again returned to life, and now it has not only a full supply of luxuriant foliage, but that one apple is still on it, and the tree is in full bloom. This is rather an unusual vegetable phenomenon.—*Wilmington Journal.*

PRESENCE OF MIND.

There is a lesson for mothers contained in the following incidents, clipped from an old magazine:

'About a half century ago Mrs. Manvers lived in a small country town in one of the Northern States.

She had several small children, and lived in a large three-story house. There was a scuttle-door in the roof of the house, with a convenient stairway leading to it, and this door was often left open in pleasant weather.

Mrs. Manvers had a good old neighbor living opposite, or nearly opposite, in just such a position, however, as to command a good view of Mrs. Manver's garret windows.

One beautiful summer afternoon, as Mrs. Manvers was seated in the large cool hall rocking her babe to sleep, neighbor Green came running in out of breath and pale with affright: 'Oh, Mrs. Manvers! your Willie and Geordie are a-teetering out of the garret window! they have put out a long board and one is on the outside and other—'

Mrs. Manvers waited to hear no more, but made her way as best she could up those long, long stairs, and putting on an appearance of calmness as she entered the garret, said, 'Sit still, Geordie; I only want Willie.' And taking hold of the end of the board where Geordie was sitting, 'Come in, Willie; mother wants you, now.'

What she did with the boys whom she had them safe, I won't say; but she was an excellent woman, and whatever she did was right.

It might have been two or three years afterward, the same Mrs. Green made her appearance at Mrs. Manver's door in pretty much the same way, only with a face rather more terror-stricken:

'The Lord have mercy upon us, Miss Manvers! little Annie (who, by-the-way, was a special favorite with the good neighbor), your little Annie is walking on top of the house; I saw her just now walk out to the end, lean her hand against the chimney and look over!'

'Merciful God, preserve my

child!' said Mrs. Manvers.

'What shall we do? what shall we do, Mrs. Manvers?'

Mrs. Manvers stepped to the door where the child could hear without seeing her and called as nearly in her usual voice as she could,

'Annie, come in now, dear! Mother wants you.'

You could almost see the throbbing of her heart as she listened.

Ha, the little feet come pattering down, and now the child stands by her side.

'Thank God!'

'Thank God!' echoed Mrs. Green, 'and don't let's be too hard upon the dear child, Miss Manvers.'

I don't recollect whether Annie was very severely punished for her temerity, but I do know that she never ventured to take walks upon the top of the house again.

These facts I can vouch for, as the little Annie of fifty years ago now occupies the same chair and writes with the same hand that I do.'

Children at Church.

My dear boys and girls of the Sabbath school everywhere, in the city and in the country, we would urge you all to attend the preaching of the Word. The sabbath school is not enough. The gospel is to be preached and must be heard. The children may hear and understand it. Dear young people do not turn your backs upon Jesus. Meet him in the public congregation.

Listen to his ministers when they preach. Do not merely move about the doors of the church, in the gallery or the lecture room; but go into the pew with your father or mother, get into the church with your heart, fully and forever inside the kingdom.

How beautiful it is to see a congregation where there are children here and there, plenty of them, all through the church, from the steps of the pulpit clear back to the doors! The singing would be sweeter, the preaching would be better, and, best of all, everything would be happier, and more like Jesus.—*Little Banner.*

HOW TO REMOVE WARTS.

Warts are not only very troublesome, but disfigure the hands. Our readers will thank us for calling their attention to the following perfect cure, even of the largest, without leaving a scar. Take a small piece of raw beef, steep it all night in vinegar, cut as much from it as will cover the wart and tie it on; or, if the excrescence is on the forehead, fasten it on with strips of plaster. It may be removed during the day and put on every night. In one fortnight the wart will die and peel off. The same prescription will cure corns.

'Mariah,' remarked one of the horny-handed sons of toil to his wife, 'pears to me it takes a sight o' calico to make you a dress, these hard times. Can't yer economize with one of them ar pull-backs the city gals wear?' It was then that Mariah fired the bread-board at him and remarked that she wasn't 'goin' to stop the circulation of blood in her legs for no bald-headed old penny-pincher.'