

work well if I only had the chance."

"I'm sure you could," said Mary, all sympathy. "I know you are an honest man. We want such a man to work for us. Please go round to our house and tell my mother that I—Mary—sent you. I'll be there as soon as I can find that poor kitten."

"Well, I'll go, and a thousand thanks to you, little girl," said the old man. "If I were more sprightly, I'd hunt the kitten for you, but my legs are not very nimble any more. If your mother has work for me, I'll see you again, and thank you a thousand times more."

Then the old man, repeating the name "Stone" and the number "eleven," went off round the corner of the block, and Mary continued looking for the kitten. She went on down the alley, and just as she was about to give up the search for a second time, she came full on the kitten, crouching against a fence while some boys from across the alley threw stones at it. It seemed to have lost all its strength, and crouched there in its misery, waiting for death. Mary, shaming the boys till they sneaked off behind a barn, stooped down and stroked the kitten tenderly. Then, as the little thing did not try to get away, she picked it up in her arms and went homewards as fast as she could run.

When she entered the living room she was a little surprised at the sight she beheld. There, seated in a comfortable chair, his hat on the floor beside him, was the poor old man she had befriended in the alley, and talking to him as though he were an old friend, was Mrs. Stone. And while she talked she busied herself making a cup of tea for him.

Now Mary had expected her mother to find some light employment for the old man, but she had not expected to see him seated—like some privileged friend—in the living room, a cup of tea being made for him by the lady of the house. But her mother was not long in explaining how it happened that the old man had not been sent round to the kitchen door, where Cook would see that he was supplied with food.

"Well, dearie," said Mrs. Stone, "I shall now introduce you to an old friend—my father's most faithful servant, one who lived on our farm when I was a little girl, like you are now. I used to call him 'Somas,' not being able to say 'Thomas.' And I knew him the moment I lay eyes on him at the door a few minutes ago, and before he had spoken three words, I said: 'Why, its old Somas.' And I had not seen him for fifteen years—not since my marriage, when I came here to live, such a long way from the old home. And then, as you have heard me tell, father and mother sold the old place and went to live with my brother, where they both died a few years ago—as you remember. But we had all lost sight of good Thomas—and here he comes in, so unexpectedly. And I am so glad to have him with us. He's worth his weight in gold. And such a gardner as you used to be, 'Thomas. Oh, such strawberries you did raise!'"

"And I'll do it again if you'll give me the chance," declared Thomas, his age seeming to slip from him, while the hot tea he was now drinking was warming him up. "Yes, I'll be as happy as any old man can be if I may work for you.

Miss Lucy, excuse me, I mean Mrs. Stone. I always think of you as little Miss Lucy." And the old and trusted servant smiled like a happy child.

"Oh, you shall never leave us," said Mrs. Stone. "But—Mary, dear, where did you get that poor kitten? It looks as though it was half dead."

"Oh, I'd most forgotten my poor little waif," said Mary, putting the kitten down on the floor. "It's a little orphan and I have adopted it," she said. "And while you are fixing up dear old Somas I'll take kitty to the pantry and feed her. We've increased the household by two new members today. Isn't that a coincidence, mamma?"

"Yes, and my little daughter is to be thanked by both man and kitten, for it's her good heart that found them both."

Hidden Proverb

A well-known proverb is hidden in the following six sentences, each sentence containing one word of the proverb, the words appearing in their rightful order:

A wise man keeps his own council.

The coin rolling uphill has never been found.

Stone not your neighbor for your own offences.

When the storm approaches the wise hen gathers her brood under her wing.

It is the weakling who has not the strength to say no.

The greenest moss grows in the darkest and gloomiest spot.

Beheadings

(1) Behead a word used to describe a knife blade and leave a musical instrument.

(2) Behead that which is often seen coming from the engine of a moving train and leave a place where people go to enjoy a warm afternoon.

(3) Behead that which a man must do when playing the cornet and leave a certain kind of land.

(4) Behead a slow-moving little creature and leave something quite necessary in building a house.

Letter Enigma

My first is in cat, but not in kitten;
My second is in frost, but not in bitten;
My third is in weak, but not in strong;
My fourth is in narrow, but not in long;
My fifth is in trap, but not in mouse;
My sixth is in door, but not in house.

My whole is a word
That nobody can love,
And you'll know what it is
When you solve the above.



LITTLE JOHNNIE NIMROD JR., DECIDES HUNTING IS NOT SUCH GREAT SPORT.

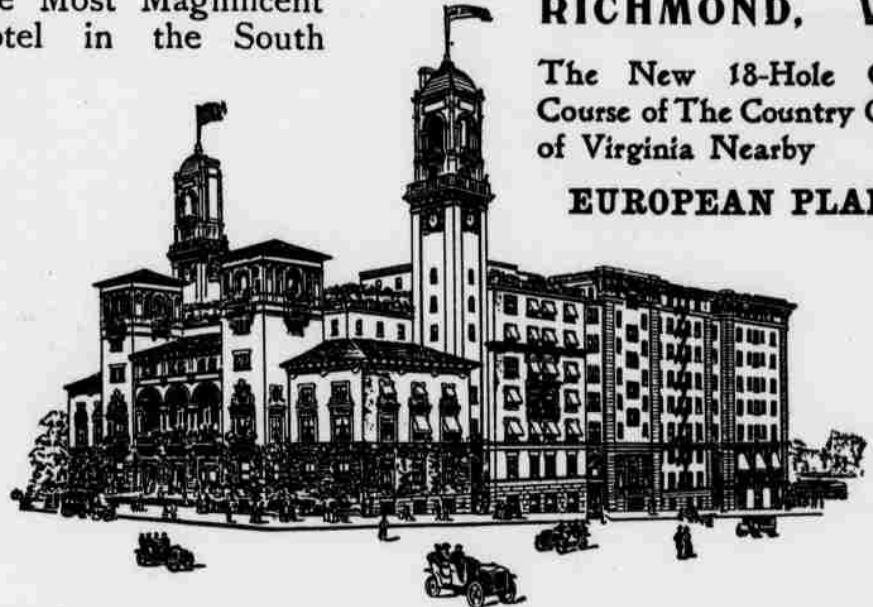
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