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VOL. X. PLYMOUTH, N. C., FRIDAY, OCTOBER 21, 1898. NO. 5.

A JUVENILE OPTIMIST.

My gran'dad says these modern days
Of steam an' 'lectric light
Beat anything that ever was;
An' gran'dad's mostly right.
But I can't help one doubtfulness
When into bed I climb
An' dream about those good old days
Of Once Upon a Time.

I've got to hustle on the farm
When I get big enough,
I wish I knew some fairy spell
To do the work that's rough.
I'd like to make the brownies toil
By saying some queer rhyme
The same as them there wizards did
In Once Upon a Time.

I wish that polishin' our lamp
A genie would arouse
So's I could say, "Go, slave, an' feed
Them pigs an' milk the cows."
I'd make him wear the overalls
An' face the mud an grime,
But this ol' earth ain't what it was
Of Once Upon a Time.

Yet history repeats itself,
My gran'dad says, an' so
I keep on hopin' as I watch
The seasons come an go
That I may live to see 'em back—
The brownies in their prime,
The wizards an them other folks
Of once Upon a Time.

"THE BLUE RAT."

A Klondike Episode.

BY HAMLIN GARLAND.

Even in the Klondike life is not altogether simple or always free from guile. Were proof of that nature needed it might be found in the history of our experience with the Blue Rat.

We came to know him through our need of a pony. We had two serviceable pack horses, but we needed a little pony to run along behind and carry the tent and a few little traps like that.

A citizen of Quesnelle possessed such a steed. This citizen was a German and had a hairlip and a most seductive gentleness of voice. His name was Dippy, and I gladly make him historical. He sold me the Blue Rat and gave me a chance to study a new type of horse.

Herr Dippy (Dutch Dippy) was not a Washington Irving sort of Dutchman; he conformed rather to the modern New York tradesman. He was small, candid and smooth, very smooth of speech. He said: "Yes, the pony is gentle. He can be rode or packed, but you better lead him for a day or two till he gets quiet."

I did not see the pony till the morning we "hit the long trail" on the west side of the Fraser river, but my side partner had reported him to be a "nice little pony, round and fat and gentle." On that I rested.

In the meantime Mr. Dippy joined us at the ferry. He held a horse by the rope and waited around to finish the trade. I presumed he intended to cross and deliver the pony, which was in a corral on the west side, but he lisped out a hurried excuse. "The ferry is not coming back today and so—"

Well, I paid him the money on the strength of my side partner's report; besides it was Hobson's choice.

Mr. Dippy took the $25 eagerly and vanished into obscurity. We passed to the wild side of the Fraser and entered upon a long and intimate study of the Blue Rat.

He shucked out of the log stable a smooth, round, lithe-bodied little cayuse of a blue-gray color. He looked like a child's toy, but seemed sturdy and of good condition.

His foretop was "banged," and he had the air of a mischievous, resolute boy. His eyes were big and black, and he studied us with tranquil but inquiring gaze as we put the pack saddle on him. He was very small.

"He's not large, but he's a gentle little chap," said I to ease my partner of his dismay over the pony's surprising smallness.

"I believe he shrunk during the night," replied my partner. "He seemed two sizes bigger yesterday."

We packed him with a hundred pounds of our food. We put a small bag of oats on top and lashed it all on with rope, while the pony dozed peacefully. Once or twice I thought I saw his ears cross; one laid back, the other set forward—bad signs—but it was done so quickly I could not be sure of it.

We packed the other horses whilst the blue pony stood resting one hind leg, his eyes dreaming.

Flung the canvas cover over the bay pack horse * * * something took place. I heard a bang, a clatter, a rattling of hoofs. I peered around the bay and saw the blue pony performing some of the most finished, vigorous and varied bucking it has ever been given me to witness. He all but threw somersets. He stood on his ears. He humped up his back till he looked like a lean cat on a graveyard fence. He stood on his toe calks and spun like a weather vane on a livery stable, and when the pack exploded and the saddle slipped under him he kicked it to pieces by using both hind hoofs as gently as a man would stroke his beard.

After calming the other horses I faced my partner solemnly.

"O, by the way, partner, where did you get that nice, quiet little blue pony of yours?"

Partner smiled sheepishly. "The little imp. Buffalo Bill ought to have that pony."

"Well, now," said I, restraining my laughter, "the thing to do is to put that pack on so it will stay. That pony will try the same thing again, sure."

We packed him again with great care. His big innocent black eyes shining under his bang were a little more alert, but they showed neither fear nor rage. We roped him in every conceivable way, and at last we dared him to do his prettiest.

He did it. All that had gone before was merely preparatory, a blood-warming, so to say; the real thing now took place. He stood up on his hind legs and shot into the air, alighting on his four feet as if to pierce the earth. He whirled like a howling dervish, grunting, snorting, unseeing and almost unseen in a nimbus of dust, strap ends and pine needles.

His whirling undid him. We seized the rope and just as the pack again slid under his feet we set shoulder to the rope and threw him. He came to earth with a thud, his legs whirling uselessly in the air. He resembled a beetle in molasses.

We sat upon his head and discussed him.

"He is a wonder," said my partner.

"He is a fiend," I panted.

We packed him again with infinite pains, and when he began bucking we threw him again and tried to kill him. We were getting irritated. We threw him hard and drew his hind legs up to his head until he grunted.

When he was permitted to rise he looked meek and small and tired, and we were both a little remorseful. We rearranged the pack—it was some encouragement to know he had not bucked it entirely off—and by blindfolding him we got him started on the trail behind the train.

"I suppose that simple-hearted Dutchman is looking at us from across the river," said I to partner, "but no matter; we are victorious."

This singular thing I noticed in the Blue Rat. His eye did not roll nor his ears fall back. He was neither scared nor angry. He still looked like a roguish, determined boy. He was alert, watchful, but not vicious. He seemed not to take our stern measures in bad part. He regarded it as a fair contract, apparently, and considered that we had won. True, he had lost both hair and skin by getting tangled in the rope, but he laid up nothing against us, and as he followed meekly along behind, my partner dared to say:

"He's all right now. I presume he has been running out all winter and is a little wild. He's satisfied now. We'll have no more trouble with him."

Every time I looked back at the poor, humbled little chap, my heart tingled with pity and remorse. "We were too rough," I said. "We must be more gentle."

"Yes, he's nervous and scary. We must be careful not to give him a sudden start."

An hour later, as we were going down a steep and slippery hill, the Rat saw his chance. He passed into another spasm, opening and shutting like a self-acting jack-knife. He bounded into the midst of the peaceful pack-horses, scattering them to right and left in terror.

He turned and came up the hill to get another start. Partner took a turn on a stump, and all unmindful of it the Rat whirled and made a mighty spring. He reached the end of the rope and his handspring became a vaulting somersault. He lay, unable to rise, spatting the wind, breathing heavily. Such annoying energy I have never seen. We were now mad, muddy and very resolute. We held him down till he lay quite still.

Any well-considered, properly bred animal would have been ground to boneclust by such wondrous acrobatic movements. He was skinned in one or two places, his hair was scraped from his nose, his tongue bled, but all these were mere scratches. When we repacked him he walked off comparatively unhurt.

The two days following he went along like a faithful dog. Every time I looked behind I could see the sturdy little chap trotting along. His head hung low, and his actions were meek and loyal. For a week he continued thus. Partner became attached to him and began once more to make excuses for him. "He will never make us trouble again," he said.

Rain came, transforming the trail into a series of bottomless pits and greasy inclines and we were forced to lay in camp two days. The Blue Rat stuffed himself on pea-vine and bunch grass, and on the third day "pitched" with undiminished vigor. This settled his fate.

I made up my mind to sell him. Once I had determined upon his motives I could not afford to bother with him any more. He delayed us with his morning antics, and made us the amusement of the outfits which overtook and passed us by reason of our interesting sessions with the Blue Rat.

He must go and I selected my purchaser. He was a Missourian from Butte. He knew all there was to be known about trails, horses, gold, politics, and a few other things. He considered all the other men on the trail merely tenderfeet out for a picnic. Each time he passed us he had some drawling remark indicating his surprise that we should be still able to move. Him I selected to become the owner of the Rat.

I laid for him. When he had eaten his supper one night I sauntered carelessly over to his tent. I "edged around" by talking of the weather, the trail, and so on, and at last I said:

"We'd leave you tonight if it weren't for the blue colt. He delays us."

"How so?"

"O, he pitches."

"Pitches, does he?" He smiled. "I'd mighty soon take that out of him if I had him."

"I suppose an experienced man like you could do it, but we are unused to these wild horses. I'd like to sell him to some man who knows about such animals. He's a fine pony, strong as a lion, but he's a terrible bucker. I never saw his equal."

He smiled again indulgently. "Let's take a look at him."

The pony had filled his hay basket and looked as innocent as a worsted kitten.

"Nice little feller, shore thing," said the Missourian, as he patted the Rat. "He's young and coltish. What'll you take for him?"

"Now, see here, stranger. I am a fair man. I don't want to deceive any one. That pony is a wonder. He can outbuck any horse west of Selkirk range."

The old man's eyes were very aggravating. "He needs an old hand, that's all. Why, I could shoulder the little kid whilst he was a-pitchin' his blamedest. What'll you take for him?"

"I'd throw off $5, and you take the rope; but, stranger, he's the worst—"

He refused to listen. He took the pony. As the Rat followed him off he looked so small, so sleepy, so round and gentle you would have said, "There goes a man with a pony for his little girls."

We laid off a day at Tchincut lake. We needed rest anyway, and it was safer to let the man from Butte go on. I had made every provision against complaint on the Missourian's part, but at the same time one can't be too careful.

There are no returning footsteps on the long trail, but a few days later I overtook the man from Indiana, who had been see-sawing back and forth on the trail, now ahead, now behind. He had laid off a half day.

He approached me with a curious look on his face.

"Stranger, what kind of a beast did you put off on that feller from Butte?"

"A mighty strong, capable little horse. Why?"

"Well, say, I was just a-passing his camp yesterday morning, when the thing took place. I always was lucky about such."

"What happened?" queried I.

"I don't wish any man's barn to burn, strangers, nor his horse to take a fall outen him, but when anything does go on I like to see it. You see, he had just drawed the last knot on the pack and as I came up he said: 'How's this for a $10 pony?' I said, 'Pretty good. Who'd you get him off of?'

"'A couple of tenderfeet,' he says, 'who couldn't handle him. Why, he's gentle as a dog; then he slaps the pony on the side. The little fiend lit out both hind feet and took the old man on both knees and knocked him down over a pack-saddle into the mud. Then he turned loose, that pony did, stranger. I have saw horses buck a plenty, Mexican bronks, wild cayuses in Montana, and all kinds o' beasts in California, but I never seen the beats of that blue pony. He shore was a bucker from Battle Creek. The Butte man lay there a groanin', his two knees in his fists, whilst a trail of flour an' beans an' sacks an' rubber boots led up the hill, an' at the top of the trail 'bout thirty yards up the blamed cayuse was a-feedin' like a April lamb."

"What happened to him?"

"Who?"

"The pony."

"Old Butte, as soon as he could crawl a little, he says: 'Gimme my gun, I've been a-packin' on the trails of the Rocky mountains for forty years and I never was done up before. Gimme that gun.' He sighted her, stranger, most vicious, and pulled trigger. The pony gave one big jump and went a-rollin' and a-crashin' into the gulch. 'You'll never kick again,' says the feller from Butte."

Poor little Blue Rat. He had gone to the mystic meadows where no pack-saddle could find him.—Detroit Free Press.

Wealth From Fish.

The development of the Irish mackerel fisher has proved a boon to the fisher folk of Cork and Kerry. Forty thousand barrels were cured last year, almost all of which came to America. This industry puts $500,000 a year into circulation among the people of these two counties.

WEIRD BATTLE SCENES.

FAMOUS WAR CORRESPONDENT'S RECOLLECTIONS OF GUASINA.

All the Men He Saw Shot Went Down in a Lump—The "Chug" of the Bullets—They Don't "Shriek" or "Sing"—Pluckiest Songs Human Beings Ever Sang.

Edward Marshall, the New York Journal's correspondent who was wounded at Guasina, has written his "Recollections" for Scribner's Magazine from which the following extracts are made:

"I saw many men shot. Every one went down in a lump, without cries, without jumping up in the air, without throwing up hands. They just went down like clods in the grass. It seemed to me that the terrible thud with which they struck the earth was more penetrating than the sound of guns. Some were only wounded, some were dead.

"There is much that is awe-inspiring about the death of soldiers on the battlefield. Almost all of us have seen men and women die, but they have died in their carefully arranged beds with doctors daintily hoarding the flickering spark; with loved ones clustering about. But death from disease is less awful than death from bullets. On the battlefield there are no delicate scientific problems of strange microbes to be solved. There is no petting, no coddling—nothing, nothing, nothing but death. The man lives, he is strong, he is vital, every muscle in him is at its fullest tension when, suddenly, 'chug!' he is dead. That 'chug' of the bullets striking flesh is nearly always plainly audible. But the bullets which are billeted, so far as I know, do not sing on their way. They go silently, grimly to their mark, and the man is lacerated or torn or dead. I did not hear the bullet shriek that killed Hamilton Fish; I did not hear the bullets shriek which struck the many others who were wounded while I was near them; I did not hear the bullet shriek which struck me.

"There is one incident of the day which shines out in my memory above all the others now as I lie in a New York hospital writing. It occurred at the field hospital. About a dozen of us were lying there. A continuous chorus of moans rose through the tree branches overhead. The surgeons, with hands and bared arms dripping, and clothes literally saturated, with blood, were straining every nerve to prepare the wounded for the journey down to Siboney. Behind me lay Captain McClintock with his lower leg bones literally ground to powder. He bore his pain as gallantly as he had led his men, and that is saying much. I think Major Brodie was also there. It was a doleful group. Amputation and death stared its members in their gloomy faces.

"Suddenly a voice started softly:

My country, 'tis of thee,
Sweet land of liberty,
Of thee I sing.

"Other voices took it up:

Land where my fathers died,
Land—of—the—Pilgrims'—pride,

"The quivering, quavering chorus, punctuated by groans, and made spasmodic by pain, trembled up from the little group of wounded Americans in the midst of the Cuban solitude—the pluckiest, most heartfelt song that human beings ever sang.

"There was one voice that did not quite keep up with the others. It was so weak that I did not hear it until all the rest had finished the line:

Let Freedom ring.

"Then halting, struggling, faint, it repeated slowly:

Land—of—the—Pilgrims'—pride,
Let Freedom—

"The last word was a woeful cry. One more son had died as died the fathers."

Sun Yat Sen Turns Insurgent.

Sun Yat Sen, one of the leaders in the rebellion in China, is quite well known, not only in this country, but also in many of the countries of Europe. He has always been known in China as a dangerous rebel leader, and a price has been set on his head for some time. In fact, his visit to this country was due to the fact that he was being hunted by the authorities in his native land.

He was in San Francisco for some time before any one found it out, and before he left he managed to organize several societies which, while seemingly peaceful in object, were in reality hotbeds of rebellion. Sun Yat Sen was described as a cultured, pleasant man of unusual ability and education, and his pleasing manners and polite conversation won for him many friends not only among the Chinese residents of that city but also among the Americans. He manifested great interest in the mission work among the Chinese, and it was in this way that he succeeded in winning so many of them over to his side in his schemes for the overthrow of the present dynasty.

His adventures in England and his arrest there are matters of history. It is the general opinion among those familiar with conditions in China that Sun Yat Sen will prove a strong leader, and that a rebellion under him is likely to amount to more than if it were under an ordinary man.—Philadelphia Press.

ONE OF THE UNKNOWN DEAD.

Pathetic Incident Which Attended the Death of a Soldier at Montauk.

He is one of the unknown dead. A plain wooden cross marks the grave where he lies by his comrades on the hillside overlooking the lake at Camp Wikoff, Montauk. There was none beside him at the last to whom he was anything more than a dying soldier, yet he died with the smile of a hope realized when hope was all but gone. From the time he was brought in there was no hope for him. The deadly poison that oozes from the Cuban soil had permeated his system. They call it pernicious malarial fever. It doesn't matter much what they call a hopeless disease. The soldier alternated between unconsciousness and delirium, and all efforts to find out who he was were unavailing. His one glimmering of reason was when he called in plaintive iteration for his mother.

"Mother! mother! Isn't she coming at all?"

Across from him was another soldier suffering from malarial fever in a lighter form. His mother had come on from the West, and had found him already on the road to recovery. She sat on the edge of his cot holding his hand and talking in low, happy tones. When the surgeon came along on his rounds she rose and half turned. The unknown soldier turned on his side and saw her standing there. For a moment there could be seen in his eyes the struggle of returning consciousness; then a great peace shone on the wasted face.

"Mother," he said weakly. "You've come at last."

The woman turned and saw a stranger feebly holding out his arms to her. She stood amazed, but it was only a moment before the mother heart comprehended.

"Yes, dear boy," she said softly. "I've come."

"Lift me up," he said. "I want to go home. You've come to take me home, haven't you, mother?"

She stooped over and kissed him, then sat on the edge of the cot and took the emaciated form in her arms. He leaned back, his eyes closed, and he smiled. But soon he opened his eyes again.

"I don't believe I can go," he whispered. "Don't you mind, mother, but—I—don't—believe—I—can—go."

His breathing grew slower and softer. His head dropped back, and he half turned in the woman's arms.

"I've longed for you so mother," he said, and died.

The woman laid the body down and went back to her own son.—New York Sun.

A Curious Relic From Ireland.

The Ontario Archaeological museum at Ottawa, Canada, is in receipt of a curious survival from prehistoric times, in the shape of a good sized lump of "bog butter." In Ireland, in the very old times, the art of making butter was known, but the preservative effects of salt were as yet undiscovered. Nevertheless, the people of that age possessed some means of preserving it, burial in a bog being a part of the process. Firkins of it were frequently left there for safe keeping, and from time to time these relics of prehistoric housekeeping are unearthed. Mr. Lefroy of Toronto, who is now in Ireland, is the donor of the good-sized piece of the cheesy-looking stuff to the museum. He writes:

"I have just sent a piece of 'bog butter' to you. I don't know whether it is a thing of sufficient antiquity and rarity, but as the Dublin museum has a keg in a prominent position, perhaps you may consider it worthy of admission to a place in your museum. The keg of which this is a portion, was dug up recently in a bog near Dunlavin, county Kildare. The staves are said to have been around it, but to have fallen off on removal. It lay in a peasant's garden, and the dogs fed on it for a time."

Mr. Lefroy has also secured an "Ogham stone," and it will come over in due time. An Ogham stone is a stone which is occasionally found in Ireland, inscribed with the "Ogham" alphabet, which was current in Ireland prior to the ninth century. The Ogham alphabet is of the runic variety, the characters being straight lines, generally upright and parallel.—New York Sun.

A Dried-Up Lake.

Tulare lake, in Tulare county, once the largest body of fresh water in California, is now dried up. About 1872 the lake was about 80 miles long and 35 miles wide at the greatest width, but its depth was never great. Irrigation was introduced into this region in 1872-75, and as the water was drawn off from its tributaries the lake began to shrink in size. In 1895 the lake was only four to five miles wide; and though it remained stationary in its dimensions for some time, lack of rainfall and increased demands for irrigation upon its former tributaries have finally prevailed, and Lake Tulare has dried up. Farmers are now reclaiming the land and putting it into shape for cultivation, and channels are being made and gates put in to control the waters that a rainy season may send into the old lake basin.—Engineering News.

SCIENTIFIC SCRAPS.

The only two animals whose brains are heavier than that of a man are the whale and the elephant.

The female brain commences to decline in weight after the age of thirty; the male not ten years later.

Hydrogen is the lightest substance known, but coronium is supposed to be lighter, and consequently would prove even more difficult to liquefy.

The horse, when grazing, is guided entirely by the nostrils in the choice of proper food, and blind horses are never known to make mistakes in their diet.

Mercury is a foe to life. Those who make mirrors, barometers or thermometers, who etch or color wood or felt, will soon feel the effect of the nitrate of mercury in teeth, gums and the tissues of the body.

The fecundity of microbes is prodigious, so much so that if fifteen drops of water polluted with bacteria are allowed to fall into a cup of broth the germ population would have increased in twenty-four hours to 80,000,000.

Injudicious Use of Disinfectants.

It is a foible of human nature to pass from extreme to extreme. People are slow to accept a new theory, but, having once adopted it, they are ready to work it to death. How many years it is since medical officers had to implore the folk in their districts to use disinfectants, and encountered the most senseless opposition in their crusade? Now they are finding a new difficulty. People have recognized the value of disinfectants and deodorizers, and they employ them by bucketful without rhyme or reason, trusting blindly to their efficacy, on the principle that one cannot have too much of a good thing. So we find the Clerkenwell medical officer warning the public against this injudicious use, and declaring that "it has been found that disinfectants are used in haphazard and indiscriminate manner by the public. Not only are they absolutely valueless in many cases, but, by creating a false impression of security, they do an immense amount of harm." In other words, people imagine that cleanliness may be ignored provided only that they empty unlimited carbolic washes and powders over the unclean places. That is a dire superstition, born mainly of laziness and aversion to soap and water. The latter are just as necessary as they ever were.—London Telegraph.

How Insects Breathe.

A naturalist, describing the curious arrangement for breathing furnished insects, says: "If we take any moderately large insect, say wasp or hornet, we can see, even with the naked eye, that a series of small, spot-like marks run along either side of the body. These apparent spots, which are generally eighteen or twenty in number, are, in fact, the apertures through which air is admitted into the system, and are generally formed in such a manner that no extraneous matter can by any possibility find entrance. Sometimes they are furnished with a pair of horny lips, which can be opened and closed at the will of the insect; in other cases they are densely fringed with stiff interlacing bristles, forming a filter, which allows air, and air alone, to pass. But the apparatus, of whatever character it may be, is always so wonderfully perfect in its action, that it has been found impossible to inject the body of a dead insect with even so subtle a medium as spirits of wine, although the subject was first immersed in the fluid and and then placed beneath the receiver of an air pump.

Meat Kept Forty-Four Years.

In a recent display of canned meats in this city a case of mutton was exhibited which, it is claimed, holds the record for longevity. Forty-four years have elapsed since it was placed in the tins, and the can which was opened showed the meat to still be in good condition.

When the good ship Fury was wrecked in 1854 the canned mutton, with other stores, was cast ashore at Prince's Inlet, in the far north. Sir John Ross, the Arctic explorer, found them some eight years later, and helped himself to a number of cans. The remainder rested there for twenty-four years, when the ship Investigator appeared and brought them home. For nearly a quarter of a century the meat had withstood a climate where the variations of temperature range from ninety degrees below zero to eighty above, being alternately frozen and broiled. It is still preserved as an object lesson of perfection in canning. —Philadelphia Record.

Mountain Sickness Caused by Fatigue.

The Swiss Alpine club stated that, according to the personal experience of the members and many accounts of high-mountain climbing in other countries, "mountain sickness" is due to extraordinary physical exertion under very unusual conditions, rather than to rarefied air. The general opinion of the climbers is that their excursions are beneficial to their health.—From "The Jungfrau Railway," by Edgar R. Dawson, M. E., in Scribner's.