

YOUNG FOLKS.

A Sleepy Little School.

A funny old professor kept a school for little boys, And he'd romp with them in play-time and he wouldn't mind their noise; While in his little school-room, with its head against the wall, Was a bed of such proportions it was big enough for all.

"It's for tired little pupils," he explained, "for you will find." How very wrong indeed it is to force a budding mind; Whenever one grows sleepy and he can't hold up his head, I make him lay his primer down and send him off to bed!

"And sometimes it will happen on a warm and pleasant day, When the little birds upon the trees go toot-al-loot-alay, When wide awake and studious it's difficult to keep. One by one they'll get a nodding till the whole class is asleep!

"Then before they're all in dreamland and their funny snores begin, I close the shutters softly so the sunlight can't come in: After which I put the school-books in their order on the shelf, And, with nothing else to do, I take a little nap myself!" —[St. Nicholas.

MOTHER'S WAIF.

BY WM. CLYDE FITCH.

We were at the tea table, mother and father, and all seven of us children, and Aunt Sue beside. We are very fond of Aunt Sue, and she always comes and spends New Year's with us. Some people call her an "old maid." She isn't married, still she isn't exactly an "old maid," either, for she was going to marry a man, only he was killed in the war.

It was one of the times mother lets us have tea, most of us only "cambric tea," and Phil nearly got sugar in his twice, by handing his cup to mother right while she was telling Aunt Sue about the cook leaving Christmas Day just before dinner. Mother took the cup without thinking, I suppose, and went on talking, and Phil would have had the sugar if she had not noticed us. We were watching to see if she would do it, and Jeannette had her cup all ready to hand back, too, when mother said, "What in the world is the matter with the children?" and we all laughed right up; we couldn't help it. Aunt Sue put her hand up quick and felt of her curls, the way she always does when anyone laughs, because she lost them once at a tea party, but mother saw what it was right away, and told Phil she had a mind not to let him have his cup back, laughingly, and giving it to him just the same, of course; but without any more sugar.

Aunt Sue said, "Give him a little more sugar, Margaret." But mother does not think much sweet is good for us. Then she went on telling how impudent the cook had been, while Aunt Sue said, for her part, she was sorry she was gone, for she was afraid to-morrow's dinner would not be as good as last year's. But mother told her we'd had four cooks since then, and that this one was learning, which made Aunt Sue glad she was gone after all. Phil was sorry. She used to have parties in the kitchen and a great deal of fun, which was one of the very things mother didn't like—and it was just because she wasn't invited, Phil said in a mischievous sort of way.

Then we told our resolves for the new year. We children had made pretty nearly the same ones as last year, but we determined this time we would keep them. Father said he would give Phil two days, and then Aunt Sue, who always fights Phil's battles (he was named for the man she didn't marry, who was killed in the war), and who delights in trying to tease father, said she thought there was more need for father than for all of us, to turn over new leaves—new sermon leaves—and she positively wouldn't go to church if he had that same New Year's sermon laid upon his desk for to-morrow. Of course father doesn't use old sermons that way, and he only smiled and answered if she had been working all afternoon over one, as he had been trying to write on a subject which, though itself brand new, was really as old as the hills themselves—the new year—she would realize better what sermonizing was.

Mother asked what text he had chosen, and he said, "Whatever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." Aunt Sue said she guessed she would go to church after all. And just then, the bell rang.

"Now," said Aunt Sue, "who is that ringing at this time?" "Perhaps it is some one coming to see about the children's festival," said mother. "Or very probably the sexton to see me about the church," said father.

"I think it's Mary Pendleton, to see what time we are to go to the hospital to-morrow," said Anna.

"Maybe it's one of the boys to make arrangements for our calls," said Howard, who was twelve years old and had had some cards printed this year.

"Perhaps," Phil said, "perhaps it's Santa Claus come back again, because it's New Year's."

"O! O!" exclaimed the twins, and Ethel added, "I wish it was!"

Then Jane came back looking really frightened. "O! ma'am," she said, "there's something on the door-step."

"What is it?" said mother, looking up. "Why didn't you bring it in?" asked father.

"Gracious," cried Aunt Sue, "is it alive?"

"It's quite a big basket, ma'am," said Jane, "with something in it, and a letter on the outside, and there bein' no one with it, ma'am, I was afeared to do anything with it."

"It certainly must be Santa Claus," said Phil, "he never shows himself, you know."

Howard thought it was dynamite, but mother told Jane to bring it in. We were getting quite curious, and most of us were away from the table when Jane came back and put the basket down upon the floor. It had what looked like a little bundle in it, covered over with an old shawl. I wanted to have all of us guess what it was, but father said he had rather disagreeable suspicions and thought mother had better open the net pinned on to the shawl at

once. She did, and it only took her a moment to read it. She handed it to father without saying a word. He took it and read it aloud. "Dear Mrs. Townsend, please take my little baby and care for her. God bless you always." There was no name signed. For a second we were all perfectly still; then Aunt Sue said:

"Of course you wouldn't think of keeping the child, I never heard of such impudence."

"Well, we have seven already," answered mother.

"And my salary is \$1,200 a year," added father. But we children all wanted them to keep it, it would be such fun naming it.

"I think you'd better have Jane put it back on the stoop," advised Aunt Sue; "there's no telling what disease the child may have, or been in contact with."

"I hardly like to put it back," father said, "it is pretty cold out to-night, and yet what you say is true, I can't run any risk with my own little ones, and besides they already crowd our fireside."

"Poor little thing," said mother; "poor little homeless, friendless thing, it is innocent of all the trouble, and what reason have we to believe it is sick; yes, we must take it in, though I don't see how we can afford to add another to our little family."

"Well, I think if you take that wait in, not knowing a thing about it, you'll be crazy. Why, you'll have all the stray babies in the country left at your door," Aunt Sue said, almost getting angry. But just then mother turned to father.

"George, what about your text, 'Whatever thy hand findeth to do'?" And father, who had been walking up and down with his hands behind his back, stopped and smiled, the way he always does at mother, and said, "Thank you, Mary, you are right; you are always my good genius. We will keep the child."

"I was going to remark," said Aunt Sue, "keep it or not, you'd better stop talking and take the child out of that basket anyway; most likely it's half starved, though I must say it has been remarkably quiet and well behaved."

"Dear me," mother exclaimed nervously, and she knelt down and took off the shawl while we all crowded around. Phil was on top of father's back to see better, and I was hoping ever so hard it would have blue eyes and light hair, for there were so many of us dark, when mother took out the bundle. She gave a little cry and jumped up. We all started, and then laughed until the tears ran down out of our eyes. I thought Aunt Sue would lose her curls this time, too. For the bundle was just a beautiful long seal skin coat for dear mother, and a card in a pocket said it came because of the love that was borne her by Laura Vaughn. Mrs. Vaughn was one of the richest ladies in the church, and helped mother a great deal in the parish work. And oh! we were all so delighted.

Mother didn't say anything, but father turned to Aunt Sue and said, "Well, Sue, if all the county babies are like this one, they may be left at our door and welcome."

And Phil murmured rather sleepily from Aunt Sue's arms, "It was a sort of Santa Claus after all wasn't it?"

Joy Doubled.

Two little girls are better than one, Two little boys can double the fun, Two little birds can build a fine nest, Two little arms can love mother best.

Two little ponies must go in a span, Two little pockets have my little man, Two little eyes to open and close, Two little ears and one little nose.

Two little elbows, dimpled and sweet, Two little shoes on two little feet, Two little lips and one little chin, Two little cheeks with roses set in.

Two little shoulders, chubby and strong, Two little legs running all day long, Two little prayers does my darling say, Two times does she kneel by my side each day.

Two little hands soft folded down, Two little eyelids o'er cheeks so brown, Two little angels guarding her bed, One at the foot and one at the head.

A Graceful Reproof.

When the Johnsons came to the dinner-table the other day it was quite apparent that little Maud had anticipated the feast and helped herself to some of the good things, but no reprimand was given until her older sister, Alice, aged eight, was asked to say grace—a pleasant duty with which she was sometimes intrusted. Her observant eyes had detected the younger one's delinquency, and the opportunity was not one to be neglected. Alice solemnly said grace as follows: "For what we are about to receive—and for what Maud has had already—O Lord, make us duly thankful!"

Tommy's Politeness.

Tommy (at dinner table)—Mamma, when a little boy does anything impolite he always ought to beg pardon, oughtn't he?

Mamma—Yes, my son.

Tommy (to guest)—Mr. Gobblum, I beg your pardon for thinking you eat just like a hired man.

Who The Undertaker Was.

A lady was considerably astonished the other day by hearing a little miss of 8 years remark, "I am getting up a surprise party; there will be six besides the undertaker invited."

She called the little girl to her and asked her who "the undertaker" was. The little one replied, "Why, me! I am the one who undertook it."

Not Portable Property.

Mrs. Hobson (to caller)—Oh, by the way, Mrs. Van Blunt, did you know that my husband left the bank and is spending a few days in Canada?

Mrs. Van Blunt—Why, no; that is a surprise to me. And so he really left the bank?

Mrs. Hobson—Yes.

Mrs. Van Blunt—Too heavy, I suppose.

What He Found in the Pockets.

Here is a story from Harrison street: A young dude bargained for and got a light colored Spring overcoat for four dollars, and walked out of the store admiring himself.

In two minutes he came back, and diving his hand into the pocket said to the clothes-dealer, holding up two cockroaches "See what I found in the pocket?" "Well," said the dealer, "ain't you satisfied? Did you expect to get two canary birds with a four-dollar overcoat?"

A STROLL IN MOSCOW

WITH COUNT TOLSTOI.

The next afternoon there came a series of remarkable knocks upon our door, like a volley of artillery, which carried me across the room in one bound. Servants, messengers, etc., so rarely knock in Russia that one gets into the way of expecting to see the door open without warning at any moment, when it is not locked, and one rather forgets what to do with a knock when a caller comes directly to one's room and announces himself in the ordinary way. There stood Count Tolstoi. He wore a peasant's sheep-skin coat (*tulup*). The *tulup*, I will explain, is a garment consisting of a fitted body, and a full, ballet skirt, gathered on the waist line and reaching to the knees. The wool is worn on the inside. The tanned leather exterior varies, when new, from snow white, to gray pale or deep yellow or black, according to taste. A little colored chain-stitching in patterns on the breast and round the neck gives firmness where required. In this case the *tulup* was of a deep yellow hue, over it streamed his gray beard, peasant boots of gray felt, reaching to the knee, and a gray wool cap of domestic manufacture completed his costume.

"It is too cold for our expedition, and I am afraid that I started a little late also," he said, as he divested himself of his sheepskin. "I will find out the exact hour of service, and we will go on Christmas Eve."

It was only 15°-20° below zero Fahrenheit, and I felt inclined to remonstrate. But it is useless to argue with a Russian about the thermometer; and moreover, I discovered that the Count had come all the long way on foot, and was probably afraid of freezing us, I politely but not quite truthfully agreed that Christmas Eve was a better time.

Presently he proposed to go to the shop where books for popular reading are published by the million at from 1½ to 5 kopeks. He had business there in connection with some popular editions of the masterpieces of all ages and literatures.

The temperature of our room was 65°, but the Count's felt boots and a cardigan jacket, worn over his ordinary costume of dark blue trousers and strap-belted blouse, made him uncomfortable, and he sought coolness in the hall while we donned our outdoor garments. The only concession in the way of costume which I could make to suit the occasion was to use a wool instead of a fur cap.

This was not sufficient to prevent us from being a remarkable trio in the eyes of all beholders, beginning with the real *muchik* and the waiter, who were peering round corners in disapproval. Our appearance at the door effected a miracle. I could not believe my ears, but not one of the numerous cabbies standing in front of the hotel opened his lips to offer his services. Ordinarily we had to run the gauntlet of offers. On this occasion, the men simply ranged themselves in a silent, gaping row, and let us pass in peace. I had not supposed that anything could quell a Russian cabbie's tongue. Did they recognize him? I doubt it. I had been told that every one in Moscow knew him and his costume; but diligent inquiry of my cabbies always elicited a negative. In one single instance the man added: "But the Count's a good gentleman and a very intimate friend of a chum of mine!"

"Are you a good walker?" asked the Count, as he puffed his thick stick, evidently recently cut in the grove adjoining his house. "I walk everywhere myself. I never ride. I can't; for I never have any money."

I announced myself as a crack pedestrian—but not when burdened with a Russian coat and galoshes. And I added; "I hope that you do not expect us to walk all those *vershs* to church, because we must stand through the whole service afterward; they would be too strict to allow us chairs."

"We will go in the horse-cars then," he replied. "But this constant use of horses is a relic of barbarism. As we are growing more civilized, in ten years from now horses will have gone out of use entirely. But I am sure that, in enlightened America, you do not ride so much as we do here."

Familiar as I am with Count Tolstoi's theories, this was a brand-new one to me. I thought of several answers. Bicycles I rejected as a suggestion, because the physical labor seems to be counterbalanced by the cost of the steel steed. I also restrained myself from saying that we were coming to look upon horses as a rather antiquated, slow and unreliable mode of locomotion. I did not care to destroy the Count's admiration for American ways too suddenly and ruthlessly, so I said:

"I think that people ride more and more, with us, every year. If they do not ride even more than they do, it is because we have not these thousands of delightful and cheap carriages and sledges. And, how are people to get about, how are burdens to be carried, how is the day long enough, if one goes everywhere on foot? Are the horses to be left to people the earth, along with the animals which we now eat and which we must give up eating?"

"That will regulate itself. It is only those who have nothing to do who have no time to do it in, and must be carried, in all haste, from place to place. Busy people always have time for everything." And the Count proceeded to develop this argument; the foundation, of course, was the same as for his other doctrines—the dependence on one's self, freeing others from bondage to one's wants and whims. The principle is excellent; but it would be easier for most of us to resist the temptation to do otherwise on a desert island than to lead such a Robinson Crusoe and physical encyclopedic existence in a city of to-day. And this is almost the only argument which I felt capable of offering in opposition.

Thus we discussed, as we walked along the streets of the White (China) Town. When the sidewalk was narrow the Count took to the gutter. And so we came to the old wall and the place where there is a perennial market, which bears various names—the Pushing Market, the Louse Market, and so on—and which is said to be the resort of thieves and receivers of stolen goods. Strangers always hit upon it the first thing.

We had ventured into its borders alone, had chatted with a cobbler, inspected the complete workshop on the sidewalk, priced the work—real, artistic, high-priced jobs were worth 30-40 kopeks—had promised to fetch our boots to be repaired with tacks and whipcord—"when they needed it"—and had received an unblinking appeal for a bottle of vodka in which to drink the health of ourselves and the cobbler. With true feminine faith in the efficacy of a man's

presence, we now enjoyed the prospect of going through the middle of it, for its entire length. I related the cobbler episode.

Imagine a very broad street, extending for several blocks, flanked on one side by respectable buildings, on the other by the old, battlemented city wall, crowned with straggling bushes, into which are built tiny houses with a frontage of two or three windows, and the two stories so low that one fancies that one could easily touch their roofs. These last are the real old Moscow merchant houses of two or three hundred years ago. They still serve as shops and residences, the lower floor being crammed with cheap goods and old clothes of wondrous hues and patterns, which overflow upon the very curbstones. The signs of the fur stores, with their odd pictures of peasant coats and fashionable mantles, add an advertisement of black sheepskins which precisely resemble a rudely painted turtle. In the broad, place-like street surged a motley, but silent and respectful crowd. A Russian crowd always is a marvel of quietness—as far down as the elbows, no farther! Along the middle of the place stood rows of rough tables, boxes, and all sorts of receptacles, containing every variety of bread and indescribable meats and sausages. Men strolled about with huge brass teapots of sbiten (a drink of molasses, laurel leaves, spices, etc.), steam-heated. Men with trays suspended by long straps from their necks offered "delicious" snacks: meat patties kept hot in hot-water boxes, served in a gandy saucer and flooded with hot bouillon from a brass flask attached to their girdles behind; or sandwiches made from a roll split, buttered and clapped upon a slice of very red, raw-looking sausage, fresh from the water-box. But we did not feel hungry just then, or thirsty.

"There are but two really Russian titles," said the Count, as we walked among the merchants, where the women were dressed like the men in sheepskin coats, and distinguished only by a brief scrap of gay petticoat and gay kerchief instead of a cap, on the head, while some of the dealers in clothing indulged in overcoats and flat caps with visors, of dark blue cloth. "Now, if I address one of these men, he will call me 'batushka,' and he will call you 'matushka.'"

So we began to price shoes, new and old, and so forth, with the result as the Count had predicted.

"You can get very good clothing here," the Count remarked, as a man passed us, his arm passed through the armholes of a pile of new vests. "These mittens," exhibiting the coarse, white-fingered mittens which he wore, piles of the same and stockings to match, being beside us, "are very stout and warm. They cost only 30 kopeks. And the other day, I bought a capital shirt here, for a man, at 50 kopeks."

I refrained from applying to that shirt the argument which had been used against my broad suggestion. This market goes on every day in the year, hot or cold, rain, sun or shine. It is a model of neatness. Roofs improvised from scraps of canvas protect the delicate eatables during inclement weather. In very severe weather the throng is small, the first to beat a retreat being, apparently, the Tartars in their odd caftans "cut going," as the old woman says, who deal in old clothes, lamb-skins and "beggars' lace." Otherwise, it is always the same.

Our publisher's shop proved to be closed, in accordance with the law, which permits trading—in buildings—only between twelve and three o'clock on Sundays. On our way home the Count expressed his regret at the rapid decline of the republican idea in America and the surprising growth of the baneful "aristocracy"—not to say snobbishness. His deductions were drawn from articles in various recent periodical publications, and from the general tone of the American works which had come under his observation. I have heard a good deal from other Russians about the snobbishness of Americans; but they generally speak of it with aversion, not, as did Count Tolstoi, with regret at a splendid opportunity missed by a whole nation.

I regret to say that we never got our expedition to the Old Believers' Church, or the others that were planned. Two days later the Count was taken with an attack of liver complaint, dyspepsia—caused, I am sure, by too much pedestrian exercise on a vegetable diet, which does not agree with him—and a bad cold. We attended Christmas Eve service in the magnificent new Cathedral of the Savior, and left Moscow before the Count was able to go out-of-doors again, though not without seeing him once more.

I am aware that it has become customary of late, to call Count Tolstoi "crazy," or "not quite right in the head," etc. The inevitable conclusion of any one who talks much with him is, that he is nothing of the sort; but simply a man with a hobby, or an idea. His idea happens to be one which, granting that it ought to be adopted by anybody—peculiarly difficult in his own case. And it is an uncomfortable theory of self-denial which very few people like to have preached to them in any form. Add to this that his philosophical expositions of his theory lack the clearness which generally—not always—results from a course of strict preparatory training, and we have more than sufficient foundation for the reports of his mental aberration. On personal acquaintance he proves to be a remarkably earnest, thoroughly convinced and winning man, altho he does not, deliberately, do or say anything to attract one. His very earnestness is provocative of argument. But one cannot help growing attached to him, and one who has ever had the good fortune to see him and his family is never likely to forget them.—[Isabel F. Hapgood in N. Y. Independent.

The Skipping-Rope.

The spring is upon us, and with it comes a number of practices, more or less injurious to humanity, but as regular in their attendance upon the season as is the sun itself. In these days of prohibitory amendments there are some things that are in need of such treatment that have not been mentioned, and among these is the skipping-rope. Let us have an edict against this destroyer of youth. Every year brings its list of victims to this pernicious practice, facetiously called sport. Every year adds to the list of women who have been condemned to a life of invalidism by this skipping-rope business. Science has decided that the exercise has only evil effects, so why is it not sensible to protect the little ones who cannot comprehend the risk that they run in practicing it, by interdicting its manufacture and sale? It is reasonable, and will meet with a grateful support from parents and guardians.—[Boston Home Journal.

The tea gown and the house gown are both made to define the figure more till spring.

LATE CABLE NEWS.

Pan-Slavist Intrigue—Austria's Abdication—The Empress Mad.

The triumph of the Russophile party in Roumania paralyzes the power of the King to execute the secret treaty with Austria. Premier Cartargi does not conceal his enmity against the triple alliance. In Thursday's debate in the Chamber on the country's foreign policy he refused to pledge the Ministry to action against Pan-Slavist intrigues or to negotiate a compact with Russia allowing the latter liberty to march through Roumania to occupy Bulgaria.

It is reported that the King will abdicate unless the Ministry is overturned. The Serbian government is also Russophile. M. Ristic, receiving the Russian Minister to-day, declared that the Regents would do their utmost to strengthen the bonds of friendship between Russia and Serbia.

AUSTRIA'S AFFLICTIONS.

Advices from Vienna state that the Empress of Austria has been attacked by the family malady—insanity. She suffers from long spells of melancholia and entertains delusions, accusing herself of the death of Crown Prince Rudolph.

She is possessed with ideas of suicide, thinking to leave the Emperor free to remarry.

Sometimes she dandles a cushion or a pillow, thinking it a new born heir to the throne. The Emperor is greatly affected. He suffers from insomnia and has no zest for work, taking only a languid interest in State affairs. It is reported that he has consulted with Count Klnoky and Count von Taffee upon the advisability of abdicating in favor of his nephew Franz. It is also said that he wrote to the Pope declaring that he longed for rest and wished to retire, and that the Pope's response, urging upon him the necessity of submitting to the decrees of God, combined with the protests of the Ministers, induced him in the meantime to remain upon the throne.

The discontent in Turkey is becoming very serious. A correspondent at Pera writes that officials, especially in the remoter provinces, having received no salaries for nearly two years, are screwing every possible piastre out of the wretched taxpayers, and not half of the proceeds find its way into the imperial treasury. Army officers and men alike are clamoring loudly for some of their arrears of pay, and their attitude is at times so threatening as to afford justification for fears of the military rebellion which the Ministers are known to entertain. Meanwhile the Sultan calmly exacts the uttermost farthing due to him, and goes on with his pleasures with Oriental indifference to the hard fate of his unhappy subjects. For a week past he has been spending money even faster than his complaisant Ministers could collect it, and there are rumors that the Grand Visier has had to contract a private loan at exorbitant interest.

Turning the Tables on an Auctioneer.

A Brooklyn auctioneer named Tobias is a popular man as a wit and a gentleman. No person is offended at what he says, and many a hearty laugh has he provoked by his humorous sayings. He was recently engaged in a sale of venerable household furniture and "fixins." He had just got to "going, going, and a half, going!" when he saw a smiling countenance upon agricultural shoulders winking at him. A wink is always as good as a nod to a blind horse or to a keen-sighted auctioneer; so Tobias winked and the man winked, and they kept winking, and Tobias kept "going, going, going," with a lot of glassware, stoves, carpets, pots and perfumery, and finally the lot was knocked down.

"To—a who!" said the auctioneer, gazing at the smiling gentleman.

"Who? Golly!" said the stranger, "I dunno who!"

"Why, you, sir," said Tobias.

"Who, me?"

"Yes, yes; you bid on the lot," said Tobias.

"Me? Darned if I did," insisted the stranger.

"Why, did you not wink and keep winking?"

"Winking! Well, I did; so did you wink at me. I thought you were winking as much as to say, 'Keep back; I'll stick somebody on that lot of stuff,' and I winked as much as to say, 'I'll be hanged if you don't.'"

He Warned Them up at Last.

"Ladies and gentlemen," said the manager, coming in front of the curtain at the end of the fourth act, "we have just discovered the cause of the stifling temperature, from which you have doubtless been suffering. The house has been on fire for nearly half an hour. In assuring you of my regret at the occurrence and the unavoidable necessity of bringing the performance to a close you will permit me to express my heartfelt joy that we have succeeded at last in thoroughly warming up a Boston audience." —[Chicago Tribune.

The Reason Why.

"John," said Mrs. Hawkins, as they were going home from church, "why did the minister call the dove that brought back a green twig to the ark 'he'? 'I don't know,' replied John; 'unless that it was that if the dove had been a female she couldn't have kept her mouth closed long enough to get the bough to the ark; and there was ill-feeling in that household all the rest of the day.'"

Took Him Off His Guard.

They were sitting close together in about as dark a corner of the visitors' gallery as they could find, watching the proceedings of a night session of Congress.

"What is it, Charley, that man on the platform asked the others?"

"That is the Speaker, my dear," Charley explained; "he is just getting ready to put the measure before the House to vote, and he asked, 'Are you ready for the question?'"

"Yes, Charley," she sighed as she drew a little closer, as though to make room for four more visitors on a crowded seat, "yes, Charley, I think I am."

Then they went out into the calm, starry night. Congress had no more attractions for them.