

Annie's Curls

"Oh, if my darling could only have the wine! How hard it is to be so poor, so poor." Annie heard her mother's words, although they were not intended for her to hear. She saw her brush away the tears from her eyes and then go back to Teddy's room.

"What did the doctor say, mother?" asked Teddy, in a weak voice; "did he say I will get well?" Annie heard the reply: "He says that the fever is broken, and that all you have to do now is to get well."

Teddy's voice trembled as he replied: "Oh, mother, I was afraid he would say I might die, and I wondered who would take care of you and little Annie. I am glad God is going to let me live to do it. Now I must begin to get strong! Can't you give me lots to eat?"

Annie saw her mother's lips quiver as she turned her face from Teddy. "Yes, my son, but not too much at once, you know," she said. "Teddy looked very thoughtful. "But is there anything in the house, mother? I have been sick a good while, and my last wages must be nearly gone, and you haven't had time to color many photos lately, have you?"

The boy's mother answered, bravely: "Sick folks mustn't bother about these things, you know." Then she left the room, and Annie saw that she did so to hide their tears which were streaming down her worn face.

"I must do something, I wonder what it will be?" murmured Annie to herself, and, crushing her hat down over her curls, she slipped into the street.

Annie thought constantly of wine for poor Teddy, and wondered if she summoned courage to beg a bottle whether anyone would be kind enough to give it to her for a poor sick boy, her only brother. She knew that grocers sometimes kept wine, especially around holiday time, and felt sure if they only knew how very, very much it was needed at home by her poor sick Teddy that some one of them would surely give her a bottle.

Then there were other places where they sold nothing but wine and such stuff, for she had seen big windows full of the bottles, with pictures of great bunches of beautiful grapes standing behind them.

Annie wasn't a bold, forward child; she was timid, but brave and resolute; her love for her brother, at least, made her brave for the time; so she resolved in her heart to beg for the wine which the doctor said would bring back strength to Teddy.

Christmas had come and gone, but Teddy was so ill with fever that Annie thought nothing about the absence of the gifts usual to that happy day; but now Teddy was to grow better, and she did long to be able to make his New Year's and her mother's brighter than Christmas had been.

"I wouldn't take it, but—" "Please don't refuse me, sir; my hair will grow in again; it grows awful fast; see, it is below my waist!"

"It is beautiful, a very rare color, and so curly," said the man, stroking the rippling mass of shining hair.

"Mother's is just like mine, only it is a little fady here and there. You will take my hair, won't you? Please do; it will surely grow again, and my brother needs things so very, very much; the doctor says so!"

The man led her into a back room and himself cut the glossy locks, laying each curl carefully down. Then he called a man who wore a white apron and gave the little shorn head into his charge.

"I believe that you are prettier than before," the kind man said, when the hair-dresser had finished. Then he laid a little roll of bills in the child's hand and bade her be careful not to lose it on her way home.

Annie hurried home. When she arrived mother was reading to Teddy, and Annie crept in like a little mouse. She removed her hat carefully, so as not to spoil the hair-dresser's work, then dropped the bills in her mother's lap, with a "Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, mamma!"

"Oh!" screamed Teddy. "Oh!" screamed mother, as they both saw and knew all. "How came you to think of it, my poor baby?" asked the mother.

"It's for wine—wine is better than curls any day," answered Annie; then, turning to Teddy, she hugged him in joy and said softly: "Get well, Teddy, and pay me back some day!"

Then she told how it all happened, and how she was going in a couple of days to see her curls in their pretty satin-lined case. After they had both kissed her and thanked her over and over again she crept away.

"I'm glad I did it; but how lonely my pretty curls will be!" said the child.

But the curls were not at all lonesome. The kind man was looking at them when one of the boys showed a gentleman in. The visitor was a big man and he had gentle eyes, though his face was somewhat rough to look at.

"I'm quite out of heart, Alfred; I can get no clew; but what's that you have there? Pretty, aren't they?"

"Yes, beautiful!"

Then the kind man told all about the little girl who sold the curls to him, so she could have money to buy things for the sick brother.

"Alfred, this hair is just the color of Ellie's; could it be? Could it be Ellie's child's hair?"

"She's coming here day after tomorrow to see her curls in their satin-lined box; then if you will be here you can find out who she is," answered the jeweler.

Sure enough, Annie came to see her curls as they looked ready for sale; she wanted to see the box. While she was admiring it and telling about Teddy, and how the wine was doing him good, the stranger with the gentle eyes arrived. He talked to the little girl for awhile, then surprised the jeweler and little Annie by bursting into tears.

"They've told you about Uncle Luke, haven't they?" he asked.

"Oh, yes, often," replied Annie. "He is in Australia, where the bark falls off the trees and the leaves stay on, and where the birds have no wings, and everything is so queer!"

PESTS OF THE ANTIPODES

AUSTRALIANS WORRIED BY THE RABBIT AND FOX.

Another Beast that Makes Great Trouble Is the Native Wolf.

During the first year of the proclaimed Commonwealth of Australia it may be interesting to consider a few of the troubles, unknown to us, with which our distant colony has to deal. First and foremost is the rabbit. Many years ago, when Australia was very young, it occurred to some enterprising Victorian colonist, that the harmless, skittish little bunny of his native land would form a welcome addition to the fauna of his adopted country, and he imported a few. The idea caught on. People liked to see the pretty little things gamboling about, and other colonists imported a few more; while the landowners upon whose property they were domiciled carefully protected the furry colonists from wicked men with dogs and guns. Indeed, for years after permission had at length been given to kill them, the injunction not to shoot the young ones was religiously given as it was respected, says Household Words.

MEANS OF EXTERMINATION.

To-day you may turn any deadly thing, from Maxims down to microbes, loose among them, and no man will raise a hand to stay. Nay, men will rather call you blessed. For the rabbit that Australia nurtured so gently has been ungrateful. In return for her hospitality it has laid waste hundreds of miles of waving corn and pasture land, and no man can tell what the end will be. And this, too, notwithstanding that every known means of extermination has been employed against him.

In the northern colony of Queensland, for instance, the most arduous efforts have been put forward to keep out the pest. A rabbit-proof fence, 700 miles long, was thrown across the line of march from New South Wales and South Australia. Bacilli of chicken cholera in pollard pellets were freely distributed among his runs, while private owners were state assisted with their fencing to the extent of 4,421 miles, and about 3,000 miles by lessees.

In 1898 alone the state paid rewards for 1,522,835 scalps, and this was, of course, exclusive of countless slaughterings for which no reward was claimed. Recently some enterprising individuals have frozen the pests and exported them to England. There are already signs that this trade may attain considerable dimensions. Once convince the man in the street that there is money in it, and brer rabbit's extermination should degenerate into a sum in simple proportion.

THE UNNECESSARY FOX.

After brer rabbit, brer fox. He was originally imported for the twofold purpose of killing off brer rabbit and affording colonial sportsmen a taste of the joys of "Tally Ho!" He has fulfilled the latter function in a manner worthy of Dewet himself. He has also slain a few rabbits. On an average he kills six domestic chickens and a dozen young lambs for each rabbit he consumes. The squatters have consequently voted him de trop, and started to hunt him for more than merely sporting reasons.

The Antipodes is noted for topsyturvy customs, and an Antipodean fox hunt is no exception. From first to last, Reynard has it all his own way. With hundreds of rabbit and wombat burrows in every square mile around his habitation, the hounds have never a chance. Brer fox runs just far enough to stretch his legs, and then goes to earth. Meanwhile the farmer colonist, who is only just beginning to get rid of his plague of dingoes, contemplates doing a little fox hunt on his own account—with dynamite.

THE SHEEP'S ENEMY.

The dingo, or native Australian wolf, is a handsome black hound with a white chest and tail tip, and often scales as much as four or five stones. He is the only animal domesticated by the aborigines, and before the advent of the white man preyed upon the young kangaroos and bandicoots. But to his mind there is nothing to beat the taste of lamb, and lamb he will have at all hazards. It is intensely difficult to thwart him, even with the aid of the best dogs, owing to the thickness of the bush and the stupidity of the sheep.

Two or three dingoes will suddenly rush out and cut off perhaps a dozen sheep from a flock of a thousand head. Their 900-odd companions will immediately bolt through the bush, and it will take their distracted shepherd perhaps an hour's hard toil before they can be re-marchaled. Meanwhile, the dingoes have eaten their fill, mauled the remainder, and slunk off. Were it not that the dingo seldom hunts in large numbers than two or three, sheep farming would have been impossible in the Australian continent.

THE CHEERFUL SPARROW.

The sparrow is another Antipodean curse. He was imported to kill the Antipodean insects. After he had been protected by heavy penalties for several years, it was suddenly discovered that the wrong sparrow had been imported. "The hedge sparrow, not the common sparrow, was the insect-eater," the colonists were told. But it was too

late. They had got the common sparrow, and they have him to this day.

He levies a heavy toll on the farmer. Nothing escapes his attention, except, perhaps, his original objective—the insects. Corn, fruit, seed and vegetables alike fall a prey to his voracious appetite. Countless "sparrow clubs" exist for the sole purpose of his destruction, countless rewards are paid for his heads and eggs. Still he flourishes, one of the most distracting problems of the Australian farmer.

THE ABORIGINES.

The black fellow is another thorn in the colonist's side. The original gaol scum, which the wisdom of past legislators let loose in Botany Bay, found him an unsuspecting child. Their outrages upon even his primitive notions of honor and womanhood converted him into a blood-thirsty maniac. He became regarded as so much vermin to be shot on sight, or dosed with opium and fiery spirits, according as the fancy took his tormentors. The effect upon his kind has been most disastrous.

In 1790 Capt. Phillip estimated the total number of aborigines at a million. By 1881 the number had shrunk to 200,000, while to-day it is probably not more than 170,000. Indeed, Tasmania is already blackless, the last native having died so long ago as 1876. If appearances are to be trusted, the natives will not survive the present century. And they will not be missed.

A MYSTERY TO THE END.

Only a couple of years ago a party of six black fellows and half-castes terrorized several hundreds of miles of up-country ranches by wounding and murdering all with whom they came in contact. It took several strong posses of police, aided by the keenest "trackers" in the government employ, many weary months on that crimson trail before the gang was finally "dispersed."

Educationally and socially he will remain a mystery to the end. He has named every bird, beast and fish that he knows, yet he cannot generalize, and would regard you with stupid incredulity were you to speak of a sparrow and a crow as "birds." His numeration ends at "three." Four is merely "two two," and five is "two three," and so on. He eats aike his slain enemy and his deceased friend; but in the latter case he regards it as his duty to the dead. He has never built himself a hut, reared a crop, or, dingoes excepted, domesticated an animal. He has, in fact, lived only for the moment; and, now that the moment is passing, he is fast getting pushed off the earth.

THE AUSTRALIAN HOOLIGAN.

The larrikin is the Australian Hooligan. In a large degree the lineal descendant of the original Botany Bay transportations, he possesses most of their vices and none of their redeeming qualities. He is better educated than his London prototype, and not infrequently starts well up in life. Then the spirit of "freedom" so common to new countries, gets him. As a rule it finds first bent upon the race course. Betting is Australia's greatest vice, no less than £80,000,000 annually changing hands in this way. Gambling means debt, and here it is that heredity swamps him. He descends to pilfering, and in a few months has forfeited his right to respectable employment. Then he takes to mooching about the Sidney streets in search for mischief.

Here he is joined by stranded gold-diggers, ne'er-do-well sons of good old English families, out-and-out scally-wags, larrikinnesses (of whom the least said the better), and the sweepings of the Polynesian ports, all of whom combine to make him a power to be dreaded. Starting his career in his early teens, the larrikin is at his height in the early twenties. By 25 he is either a confirmed criminal or has lapsed back in the paths of virtue. Such lapses are rare. His reclamation or extermination are probably the toughest of the many problems which confront the new Australian Commonwealth.

RAG PICKER AND ARTISAN.

One of Cork, the Other of Dublin, Each Heir to \$300,000.

It is doubtful if a fortune ever tumbled into the lap of a person less likely to use it to advantage than the \$300,000 which the United States Supreme Court recently awarded to 65-year-old Hallan Callagan, of Cork, Ireland, as her share of the estate of her cousin, John Sullivan, who died in Seattle, Wash.

Wrinkled, haggard, with a narrow, pointed nose, thin lips, a bitter tongue and aggressive disposition, the woman who has just inherited \$300,000 earned her living until a few days ago as a ragpicker. For years she had made her home in a squalid little room in a narrow alley appropriately named Crane's lane, in Cork's worst slum. She began life as a crocket worker, and once earned as much as \$5 a week. Then she got to be a scrub-woman and made less, and of late years she has collected bones, sold fruit and generally lived from hand to mouth. She has been somewhat partial to gin. Edward Corcoran, a poor Dublin artisan, got the other half of the Sullivan estate.

Early rhubarb is sent to London in December from Yorkshire.

PERSONAL POINTERS.

Doings of Prominent Actors on the World's Stage.

The Pope is an enthusiastic philatelist, and possesses some of the finest stamps in the world. Their value will be considerably augmented next year, for the Roman Catholic priests of Cashmere will present to him, on the occasion of his Silver Jubilee, a unique collection of obsolete stamps of Jemmu and Cashmere.

Probably the youngest private secretary in the world is Ye We-Chong, the only son of the Minister from Korea in Washington. He is only thirteen years old, and a year ago did not know a word of English, but so rapid has been his progress in this language that he can now both write and speak it. He dresses in American style, and has already adopted many Americanisms.

Miss Elspeth Campbell, in addition to being an expert angler, is one of the best lady bagpipe players in Scotland. Her father, Lord Archibald Campbell, who is most enthusiastic about Highland manners and customs, still keeps up a pipe band at Inverary. Prominent Scots who still have private pipers are the Duke of Fife, the Duke of Sutherland, the Duke of Argyll, the Duke of Atholl, Lord Macdonald of the Isles, and Lord Lovat.

Few people know that there is such an office as that of Inspector of Colors for the Army. Sir Albert W. Woods, Garter King-of-Arms, is the holder of this office, and his expert knowledge of heraldry proves of valuable service when the authorities require information on technical points regarding the colors of any regiment needing alteration or renewal. Although colors are not carried into action nowadays, they are regarded as vitally important symbols of everything that is best in a regiment's life and history.

As a crack whip, huntsman, yachtsman, boxer, and racing man, there are few better-known sporting peers than the Earl of Lonsdale, who recently entertained the German Emperor as a guest. It is perhaps, not so generally known that he has also been a traveller in Arctic regions. About fourteen years ago Lord Lonsdale went on a long and arduous journey through the wild territory of Northwest Canada. His travels occupied close on twelve months, and during that time he secured many splendid trophies, which now adorn the various rooms in Lowther Castle.

When President Roosevelt was making a State visit the other day a little girl managed to elude the police and, running up to the President, said: "Mr. Roosevelt won't you please wear my rose in your button-hole?" The President stopped and smilingly said: "Certainly, my dear; I will exchange with you." And taking from the lapel of his coat the carnation that he always wore, he gave it to the little maid and put the rose in its place. Then the procession of Cabinet Ministers, diplomats, governors, senators, generals, and other dignitaries, who were wondering at the cause of the interruption, was allowed to pass on.

During the King's last review His Majesty noticed that the reporters had been placed a considerable distance from the royal dais, too far off, in fact, to hear the extempore address which he was about to deliver. He therefore sent an equerry to request that they would come nearer. Two reporters were deputed to wait on His Majesty, and pencil and note-book in hand, stood by the King's side. At that moment Major-General Trotter, who was in command, "spotted" them, and riding up asked what they were doing there. Before they could explain, the King said: "Oh, it's all right, Trotter. They are reporters. I asked them to come. I want them to hear my speech."

DEMOCRATIC EMPEROR.

There is no barbaric splendor about the court of Japan, nor does the emperor insist on fantastic forms of homage. He is just a plain individual. His guests he receives standing, and he enters freely into conversation with all. There is scarcely a subject that does not interest him, or one on which he is not well informed. A delightful host, it is his custom to surround himself with clever men—men who are the shining lights of their professions. Engineers, artists, musicians, writers, soldiers, scientists—every class of persons who have won distinction is welcome at the royal table, for it is one of the characteristics of his majesty that in the distribution of his favors he is thoroughly impartial.

FREAK IN NAMES.

People in Melbourne are beginning to say that in order to do any good in Victoria your name must be Clarke. The Governor is Sir George Sydneyham Clarke, the late Agent-General is London was Sir Andrew Clarke, the first Victorian baronet was Sir William Clarke, the richest squatter is Sir Rupert Clarke, the new Bishop of Melbourne is Canon Clarke, the most prominent member of the Melbourne Stock Exchange is Mr. A. Clarke, the chief Australian novelist is Marcus Clarke, and the handsomest Victorian matron is Lady Clarke. Probably it would be difficult to match this in any Angle Saxon community in the world.