

A Howling Swell

By ANNA PHILLIPS SEE.

Millie Brown combed her long bright hair by the light of the rising sun. It was only four o'clock on a summer morning, but a farmer's daughter in the haying season must be up and about betimes.

As she braided her locks and pinned them up coronet-wise about her pretty head, she thought of Ed. Martin—big handsome Ed—who loved her so well. His every look said so. And Ed was coming to-day to help her father with the haying. Her heart fluttered at the thought of waiting on Ed at mealtimes. After supper he might perhaps join her on the porch. Then—maybe—

At her mother's hurried call, she slipped into her prettiest gingham dress, a rose pink that matched her cheeks, and hastened down the steep stairs.

The Brown farm was large and several acres were given up to grass. These acres were mowed by hand by Mr. Brown and his neighbors. In haying time the hamlet of Rhodes Valley was a co-operative community.

By half past five the men were swinging their scythes through the dewy grass, Ed Martin among them. Ed, however, did not look the mowers. Slender, wiry little man, by name Sam Gay, set the pace.

Sam was as plain as Ed, was handsome, but he was the best mower in the valley, and the quickest witted man. His jests and hearty laughter kept the men in spirits through many a long day. Sam was a favorite with men, but in the presence of women he was tongue-tied. Millie, and every one else, knew that he adored her, but he never seemed to get beyond an embarrassed greeting.

At ten o'clock Millie carried a pan of gingerbread and a jug of switched to the mowers resting in the shade. Sam Gay jumped up and went to meet her, taking the heavy jug from her hand.

Ed Martin remained comfortably outstretched on the grass. His abundant fresh made exertion distasteful—Millie thanked Sam casually, but her brightest smile was for the big fellow with the clustering curls. He was so good to look upon that she overlooked his laziness.

After the men had laughingly drunk her health in the icy switchel the girl started back to the house. She had gone a short distance when she heard a commotion. She turned. The men were beating the grass with sticks and Ed Martin, very white, sat against the stone wall. Sam Gay was bending over him.

"What's the matter?" cried Millie, running to Ed's side.

"A snake bit me," he said excitedly, holding up his wrist. "My arm was lying on the grass and all of a sudden I felt a sharp pain. Something rustled. Then I heard a rattling noise. I—perhaps it was a rattlesnake. It—perhaps that once in a while one comes down—"

"Oh, nonsense!" broke in Sam Gay, cheerfully. "No rattlers have been seen here for years. The fellows will find your snake and prove that it was harmless."

"I hope so," moaned Ed. "See, the bite's swelling already. It must be poisonous!"

Sam dropped on his knees and began to suck the wound. "Miss Millie," he asked, "has your father any whiskey?" That would be good for Ed, anyway.

Millie started toward the house. Fear for Ed winged her feet, and she sped over the rough stubble, and in a few minutes she was telling her tale to her mother.

Mrs. Brown, who was nothing, if not practical, went straight to the telephone and summoned the doctor.

Meanwhile the men in the field had put Ed Martin into the big hayrack and sent him to the house with Sam Gay. Sam drove the rack carefully to the door. On a mattress of hay lay the big man very pale and moaning at intervals.

When Ed had been made comfortable on the parlor sofa, Millie took Sam to one side. "Oh, did they find the snake?" she asked.

"No, they didn't," he replied with a puzzled expression, "but no one believes for a minute that there are any rattlers around here. Yet we are sort of worried about Ed. When he tried to get his arm into the sleeve, as soon as he thought he was swelling all over he dropped in a faint. I can't understand it. He doesn't look any different—does he to you?"

"No, only paler," said Millie truthfully. "But he must be dreadfully sick to groan so. Oh, I do wish the doctor would come."

The doctor did come in a few minutes, driving his raven-boned horse at a lively rate. Every joint in the rusty buggy creaked when it stopped at the Browns' hitching post.

The doctor looked unsympathetically at his despairing patient. "Glas you dreamed snake bites. Looks to me like a bee sting, but I'll cauterize it to ease your mind."

"Oh, doctor, I'm afraid I'm going to die," moaned Ed. "I'm swollen terribly. I couldn't even get my arms into my coat sleeves!"

"Well, you don't look any fatter's nash, to me," the doctor remarked dryly, "but maybe you are. I'll give you a dose that'll make you forget your woes, anyway."

When the opiate had calmed the terrified man into slumber, Millie and her mother served the dinner to the men. Outwardly the girl was very quiet, but her mind and heart were in a turmoil. She had seen Ed Martin as he really was—a coward.

Several times during the meal Sam sprang to help her, his homely face illumined with an unselfish devotion. He looked almost beautiful to her in spite of his physical disadvantages.

In the late afternoon Ed Martin awoke just as Sam entered the parlor—carrying a coat. Sam was gleeful.

"Well, Ed, your terrible swolliness is now explained. You tried to put on my coat this morning. No wonder a great behemoth like you couldn't get into the attire of a grasshopper! I guess you'll feel better now."

Ed sat up looking like a man re-prieved from death. "I suppose I'm all right then," he remarked, with an embarrassed laugh, glancing at Millie. "She did not smile in return, as once she would have done."

In the twilight, fragrant with the odor of the newly mown hay, Millie sat on the porch. She felt unaccountably weary and disheartened.

Whistling cheerily, Sam passed down the walk on his way home. He saw the drooping figure in the hall light and stopped.

"Tired?" he asked awkwardly.

"-Yes." Then she burst into tears.

In a moment Sam's shyness was gone, put to flight by his sympathy.

"Don't cry." He took her handkerchief and tenderly wiped her eyes. "It broke you all up to have Ed sick, didn't it?"

"Ed?" she burst forth. "I hate him!" Then she gave Sam one look from tear-wet brown eyes.

"Sam was not slow. He saw his opportunity and fervently embraced it—and Millie.

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The only medicine a mother should give her little ones is one she can give and feel absolutely safe that not the slightest harm will result—a medicine that is guaranteed strictly free from injurious drugs. Such a medicine is Baby's Own Tablets—every bottle sold under such a guarantee and the mother may feel perfectly safe in giving them to even the new-born babe. Concerning them Mrs. Albert E. Wood, London, Ont., says: "I have found Baby's Own Tablets all that is claimed for them. My baby has had them from birth and will take them eagerly. I am sure there is no better medicine for little ones."

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Crab Makes Its Own Wig.

There is a small crab found upon the English coast that is so afraid of his enemies that he has found out, or has perhaps been taught, a clever way to hide himself.

The writer once saw one of these crabs which was kept as a pet; he was lucky enough to visit him when he was in the very act of making his wig. The crab first tore off a piece of green, ribbon-like seaweed with his pincers, and put one end in his mouth.

This he sucked and nibbled and moistened with some kind of glue that hardens under water, and then he pressed the sticky end upon his back. By and by his broad back was covered with a regular green and waving wig so that as he crawled about he looked like a bunch of seaweed in gentle motion.

We must suppose that he makes a very sweet moustache for a hungry fish, and that he makes the wig to preserve him from being gobbled up. From time to time the wig requires repairing of course.—Raja Yoga Messenger.

The Mexican Dwarf Deer.

While hunting in Durango, Mexico, last spring I learned some facts as to the natural history of the whitetail deer of that region, which were so surprising to me that they appear to be worth nothing in print.

These deer are dwarfs a full grown male weighing probably less than 100 pounds. In fact when running at full tilt through the chaparral they very much resemble jack bandits. They subsist entirely upon the leaves of the manzanita and the acorns of the live oak. The latter are swallowed whole, but my surmise is that they are thoroughly masticated upon regurgitation.

Why these animals should be so diminutive in a land abounding in food and water and why their habits should be so different from those of their Northern congeners is surely a puzzle.

Valuable Knowledge.

"And these?" we asked, as we were ushered into a room filled with children deeply immersed in study, relates Fuch.

"They are learning," said the principal, "the difference 'twixt tweedle-dum and tweedledee!"

We were not a little struck. "But is the game," we objected, "worth the candle?"

"Oh entirely so!" rejoined the principal. "When they grow up they will be able, with a very little assistance from the agent, to distinguish a car of the current year's model from a car of the previous year, thus to save themselves much humiliation and loss of social rating."

Crumpled Them.

Life—We observe that the man's fingers are all twisted and bent into the most uncouth shapes.

"Poor fellow!" we say to our friend. "Evidently he is a victim of rheumatism."

"No," our friend explains. "He is deaf and dumb and has been trying to talk Scotch dialect on his fingers."

Chuckle and grow chubby.

A GREAT CONTRIVANCE.

Farmer's Wise Remark on Seeing Great Invention.

In the department called "About People," in the June Woman's Home Companion, is the following paragraph about Angus Campbell, the man who invented the machine that picks cotton. A farmer when he saw the machine the first time, said very wisely: "It will put the children to school."

"Twenty-five years ago a Chicago pattern-maker went on a pleasure trip to Texas, where he saw hundreds of men, women and children laboriously picking cotton and dragging their slowly-filling sacks behind them as they toiled through the hot fields. Like others before him, he wondered if a machine might not be devised to do this work better, and to accomplish in the south a marvel paralleling that which the great grain-harvesters have worked in the wheat and corn states. (Others had tried and failed, as he also might have failed had he not been of the persevering Scotch strain guaranteed by his name, Angus Campbell.) Comparatively, the grain harvesters presented a simple problem, for grain ripens uniformly and the entire field may be cut at once. But the cotton bolls mature at different times. A cotton harvester, therefore, must be a machine that thinks—a machine with sufficient discrimination to pick out all the lint from the ripened bolls, yet to pass over those not yet matured, leaving the delicate plant unharmed to ripen. Campbell wrestled with the problem nearly twenty years and suffered many discouragements and failures before he at last devised a wonderful contrivance with countless delicate fingers that will really pick cotton. It is hard to realize all that this invention may mean to the cotton-growing states. That it will cut down the cost of harvesting cotton two-thirds is a moderate estimate. And, as a farmer's wife thoughtfully observed, "You don't have to cook for it." Indirectly it will enormously increase the natural production of the cotton staple, and will save the southern farmer tens of millions of dollars each year. Moreover, where farmers have actually been compelled to limit their cotton acreage because of the difficulty of securing labor in the picking season, this ever-ready servant will enable them to increase their crops without fear, perhaps doubling the value of their lands. Better still, it will release from the drudgery of the fields thousands who should be otherwise employed."

Pretty Well Examined.

Montreal Gazette.

Michael Fraser, a man eighty-four years of age, said to be wealthy, who some time ago married a woman considerably younger than himself, is before the courts because of an effort by some of his relatives to prove that he is insane. The case is now before the courts and the wife is being one of the grounds alleged. So far he has been examined by ten medical experts, four judges and a number of lawyers. Last week four judges had him under examination at once. This sort of ordeal would be hard on an ordinary active man in good health and mental vigor. It can be thought that if an eighty-four-year-old is subjected to much more of it he will either lose his mental grasp or die.

He Could Divide Eight All Right.

In one of the West Philadelphia elementary schools little Robert is the "bright boy" of the class, and, of course, the "teacher's pet." When the children were being rehearsed in arithmetic the other day the teacher asked Robert what was the half of eight, says the Philadelphia Times.

"Which way, please?"

"Why, Robert, what do you mean? The half of eight—by subtraction, I suppose, according to your question."

"Well, it depends on the way. Up and down, it's three, and straight across it's nothing."

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