

FOR OUR YOUNG READERS.

I CANNOT AND I CAN.

Away far off in Slowtown, many, many years ago. (Twas the place just out of Notown, as geographers may know). There lived a plain old farmer, and a most eccentric man.

Who called his sons these curious names: I Cannot and I Can. Twin brothers they, and like as peas, through childhood's tears and joys.

They daily grew, till one bright morn wore a great big, grown-up boys' In face and form, tho' much alike, alike they like began.

I Cannot was in many ways far different from I Can. I cannot, when a baby, always wore a scowling face.

And his nurse he'er was blinking, or else making sly grimace. And all he seemed to live for was to wriggle and to twist.

Or to scream, and choke, and strangle, while he shook his little fist. And when to boyhood he was grown, his only thought was play.

From school he ran a truant oft, and idled time away. And if to work he ever was asked, he'd always rave and rant.

Or else he'd frame and cry aloud: "I can not, O, I can't!" I Can, the blessed baby, always wore a smiling face.

And he'd "patty cake the baker's man" with dainty, childish grace; And if a stranger took him, he would neither squirm nor twist.

But would only try to swallow hard his chubby little fist. And when to boyhood he was grown, through brimming of wit with fun.

He went to school, and college, too, and laurels there he won; His teachers called him oft and oft a manly lit. He man.

He never whined, but always said: "I'll try; I think I can." A young man grown, I Cannot was a sorry sight to see.

For he scarcely knew his letters, only A and B and C. Of course his head was empty, as an old tomato can.

For slinking it, he laughed at work, and e'er from duty ran. But what he sowed, that must he reap, it was the same in kind.

opened wider. Soon there appeared in the middle a tiny pink point; then—as the crack widened—a pair of very bright black eyes; and when it was opened about half an inch, we saw in the doorway the drollest face that one can imagine.

The whole face came to a sharp edge (like a wedge). At the top, between the eyes, was the funny pink nose, with blackish dots on it, as if he had been playing in the mud; and below the nose a small black mouth, with corners drawn in the primmest fashion.

He looked like a very precise and prim old gentleman, and he proceeded to take a good look at his neighbors, who, by the way, were staring at him most rudely.

The eccentric individual had no foreboding to speak of, his head going directly back from his nose. But, though there seemed to be no place for brains, it was plain from his knowing ways that he had some.

At the tip end of his nose was a pair of nostrils that looked as if they were made by sticking in two pins side by side; and the "puckered" little mouth, come to look at it, extended around the side—from ear to ear, you might say—and had a sharp edge to the upper lip, that could bite as well as any body's teeth.

The head of our strange little guest turned one side or the other, his sharp eyes moved this way and that, and altogether he bore the appearance of a very wise old person indeed, with decided opinions regarding the present company.

Still we did not move, and little by little he opened wide his door, till we saw his neck, wrapped in what looked like a small orange and black shawl, but, when his head was thrust out, proved to be a fold of his skin.

Then we noticed two cushiony-looking objects at the side, all covered with his favorite black and orange; and slyly peeping out from behind, two broad flat feet, having five odd little toes, with a sharp black toe-nail on each.

In time the side cushions turned out to be his two fore feet, and hanging down behind was the most absurd tail, half an inch long, as straight as a new pin, and no bigger.

When the turtle had pushed out, at his leisure, all these members, the house rose on its four feet and began to move along the table. But if any one offered to touch it, behold! the comical little tail bent around one side, the four yellow-clad legs drew themselves in, the quaint old face vanished, and the door was slammed in his very face!

And now, if you please, I should like to ask a question. Why are all of you boys so fond of turtles?—Oliver Thorne Miller, in Christian Union.

Charlie in the Swing. Emma and Harry went with their mother to see their grandma, who lived in Indiana. They were in high glee when they got out of the city and saw the green fields and woods.

They took their pet rabbits and swing rope along, and grandpa made a pen for the rabbits and put the swing up in the wagonshed in the barn.

Grandpa had a horse called Charlie, and one of the children was always on his back when he was led to the well for water. One day grandpa found that Charlie had got loose, and was gone from the stable. Where do you guess he was? Fast in the swing!

He had put his head through the swing, and then his forefeet; then he tried to get out, but he could not; so he turned round and round until the rope was twisted up tight.

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