



**DENMARK AND HER ISLES.**

**JAMES HENRY'S GRANDFATHER TELLS HIM HOW THE UNITED STATES HAS GAINED NEW TERRITORY.**

"Well, grandfather," said James Henry, "I see Denmark refuses to sell her American islands to us. I think that's right, don't you? What's the use of the United States going into the real estate business?"

"It seems to me, my boy, you don't know enough on the subject to form an opinion. Do you think this the first real estate transaction that Uncle Sam has undertaken?"

"I never heard of any other."

"In 1803 the government purchased from France what was then Louisiana. We paid \$15,000,000 for a vast area of land out of which we finally made the States of Louisiana, Arkansas, Missouri, Iowa, North and South Dakota, Nebraska, Indian Territory, Oklahoma and parts of Minnesota, Kansas, Colorado, Wyoming and Montana. That was a pretty big transaction, wasn't it? And I think the government made a pretty good trade. You know the World's Fair which will be held in St. Louis next year was arranged as a celebration of the one hundredth anniversary of that real estate deal. Why, the expense connected with the celebration will be nearly as great as the price paid for the big farm, which contained 1,171,931 square miles.

"Then in 1821 we bought Florida with its 59,268 square miles, and in 1845 Texas came in with 375,239 square miles. But in order to have a clear title to what is now Uncle Sam's farm we had to buy 45,535 square miles of land in New Mexico and Arizona, from the Mexican Government, in 1853, and to show you how land in this country had advanced in value our agent, General Gadsden, paid \$10,000,000 for the strip."

"Yes, but that was all right here on our continent, but these Danish islands are far away from us; why should we want them?"

"If you had waited a moment, until I had told you of the later purchases, you would not have asked that question. In 1867 we went away beyond our own country for new territory, and purchased Alaska, which has about 570,000 square miles, for \$7,200,000. But that is not all. As a result of our war with Spain 125,000 square miles of territory in the Philippines, Porto Rico, Guam and Hawaii have been brought under the guardianship of Uncle Sam. So you see the purchase of the Danish West Indies would not have been our first venture in that class of property."

"But what do we want to do with the Danish West Indies?"

"In the first place, the islands occupy a commanding place in the Caribbean Sea. Batteries and forts there could do much toward making navigation difficult and hazardous. But aside from that, they would be valuable for what they would consume of our goods, and for what we could get from there in the way of natural products."

"How many islands are there in the group?"

"There are three—St. Croix, St. Thomas and St. John—having in all a population of about thirty-three thousand. The islands are small, all three being only 138 square miles in area."

"If we want them, and Denmark wants to sell, why have they refused to make the trade?"

"The Danes are like the child that wanted to eat the cake and have it, too. They promised to sell the three islands for \$5,000,000, and they need the money badly. But when the time came to settle the business they backed out. But they still need the money, and I should not be surprised if the question would come up again soon, and we would get the islands after all."

"What kind of people live in the Danish West Indies?"

"There are some whites, but the great major-

ity are black. The offices are filled by white and black citizens, and there are more negroes than whites engaged in business. There is a little Danish standing army there—a few hundred men—and the men who serve the term of three years are usually glad to go back home. The climate in some parts of the islands is fine, and many people think that if the United States became the owner of St. Thomas and St. Croix there would soon be beautiful pleasure resorts and thriving cities on the islands, as well as the sugar plantations now there."

**A PRIZE OF \$10 IN GOLD.**

**TWO OTHER PRIZES OF BOOKS FOR YOUNG READERS OF THE TRIBUNE.**

The Tribune will award:  
As a First Prize ..... \$10 in gold  
As a Second Prize ..... A book  
As a Third Prize ..... A book

To such of its little readers not over fifteen years old as send in the first, second or third best letter about any topic which James Henry will talk upon with his grandfather in the month of November in the Department for Little Men and Little Women in the Illustrated Supplement of The Sunday Tribune. These are the conditions of the contest:

No letter can exceed two hundred words.

All letters must be addressed to Prize Competition, Little Men and Little Women, The Tribune, New-York.

All letters must reach this office before December 1, 1902.

The writers must not be more than fifteen years old.

Each letter must be signed with the full name and address of the writer.

In awarding the prizes clear writing will count for a great deal with the judge, and preference will be given to original ideas over a repetition of ideas which have been expressed by James Henry or his grandfather.

In each contest the editor's decision will be final, and he cannot enter into correspondence with unsuccessful competitors.

**NEW OUTDOOR WINTER GAMES.**

From The Boston Globe.

A delightful game to play in the winter holidays, when the long hours drag within doors, is snow fox and geese.

A very slight snowfall will suffice for the game, but it may be played with snow a foot deep in a city back yard or in the field of the country. The game is prepared by the boys, who first, with high boots, tramp in the snow a huge circle, with six or eight diametric paths, as the size of the lot may allow. After these paths are clearly marked the fun begins. Any number may join in the sport.

It is like the old story of "The Spider and the Fly." One person stands in the centre of the circle and dashes up and down the diametric paths to seize upon the others as they fly around the circle. The players can venture into the centre if they are so daring, but if caught they become the spider, and dash for another victim. The one who is catching cannot walk around the circumference, but is confined to the central paths.

Snow baby is another funny game. A smooth patch of snow is selected, and as many holes or dens are prepared as there are players. The dens are made by scooping up a little snow to form a hollow place about as big as a two quart bowl. Each person selects a den which he calls his, and near which he stands. A circle is marked lightly in the snow around the group of dens, and all take their stand within the circle, each near his own den.

About six feet off, one person is chosen, who tosses a snowball into any one of the dens. The person into whose den it falls picks the ball up quickly and tries to hit some one of the party, who all start to run as soon as a ball lands in a den. If the one aimed at is hit he drops a stone into his den, and becomes the one to throw the ball into the den of some one else.

This is repeated until one of the players has six stones in his den, when he is declared beaten. If at any time the one throwing the ball from his den toward some one fails to hit the one he aims at, a stone is put into his den, and he becomes the one to throw the ball. Unless there is a crust on the ground, this game cannot be played in snow more than a foot deep.

**BILLY AND THE BUTTER.**

**THE RUNAWAY PONY SCATTERED THE BUTTER BALLS ALONG THE STREET.**

Billy was a beautiful bay colored pony. He was none of your heavy, slow going farm horses that have to be urged on their way. Not he! Like a swift deer he cleared the ground, and horseback riding on Billy was a delight. Every one loved him. He was so beautiful. He would toss his fine head and arch his neck in such a saucy way when being harnessed that one was sure he was only waiting impatiently to be off on a gay canter.

One morning the weekly supply of butter was needed and Arthur was asked to run over to the farmhouse for it. He was just waiting his chance to ride Billy, so he said there was not time to walk before school, so he guessed he'd ride Billy over.

Mother protested, but Arthur pleaded, and so much time was lost that mother saw that she must go without the butter or allow Arthur to ride the colt.

Billy looked very sweet and innocent of any mischievous plan as he trotted out of the yard at a very mild pace. It was the first time Arthur had ever been on his back, and he sat proudly. The only thing that made him realize that he was not a valiant knight on a prancing charger was the tin butter pail on his arm.

Arthur reached the farmhouse in good time, and the empty butter pail was exchanged for one filled with half-pound prints of delicious yellow butter.

Arthur started for home. Billy, in fine feather, was cantering along gayly. A few rods from the farm, near the road, stood a small blacksmith's shop, where several men were lounging about, waiting for the "boss" to come and set them to work.

As Arthur rode by one of the men gave a long, low whistle, which started Billy on the round run. Arthur was nearly thrown by Billy's sudden spring forward, and in his efforts to regain his seat and control the horse the pail of butter slipped further up his arm, the cover fell off and Billy and Arthur went prancing through the main street of the village, scattering balls of golden butter behind them.

Every one rushed to doors and windows at the clatter of hoofs, and soon men and women, girls, boys and babies started in a procession after the proud knight, who was scattering gold in his path as he scampered by on his proud steed.

When Billy dashed into the yard, the last print of butter lay in the road some yards behind him, and mother rushed out to find a dishevelled rider, a panting horse, and all the neighbors with all their children congregated in her backyard. But that was not the worst of it; she found an empty pail.

Arthur had to walk back to the farm for more butter, and he had plenty of company on the way, who thoughtfully pointed out the little soft yellow heaps to him, lying at intervals in the road.

"But Billy? Well, he was not a bit penitent. He only smiled when they led him in the stall and tossed his head as much as to say, "That was a fine lark, wasn't it?"

**INCOMBUSTIBLE WOOD.**

Alum and glue in equal parts are dissolved in water strongly saturated with salt. Both solutions are mixed together. Dip splinters of wood into the fluid until every part is saturated, let them dry, and repeat the process. Wood prepared in such a way will not burn. To make the trick more interesting and to avoid the suspicion that the splinters



are prepared, mix them among other unprepared splinters after marking them in a certain way. After burning a few splinters, pick out one of the prepared ones and declare that by your magic influence the splinter you hold in your hand will be-

come incombustible. Hand it over to the audience, and it is easily understood that nobody will be able to set it afire.

**BABOON AND TORTOISE.**

**HOW EACH ANIMAL PLAYED A TRICK UPON THE OTHER.**

An English missionary, writing to "The London Standard" from Africa, tells the following story, which he says is a favorite fable among the natives of the Lower Zambesi:

In the time long ago a Baboon, swinging from bough to bough in the great forest, espied on the ground a Tortoise. "Good morning, friend Tortoise," said the Baboon; "for a long time I have been wishing to make friends with you—will you come and have dinner with me today?" "With pleasure," replied the Tortoise, as his fishlike eyes blinked up at the great Baboon; "I shall be very glad to make your acquaintance."

When the Tortoise arrived at the Baboon's house, he found the food spread out upon a bamboo platform raised some two feet above the ground. "Just help yourself to whatever you like," said the Baboon, who commenced at once to eat up the good things spread before him. But the poor little Tortoise was unable to reach the food, as the platform was far above his head. The greedy Baboon was not long before he had eaten up all the food there was. Then he turned to the Tortoise with a grin, and said, "I hope you have enjoyed your dinner, friend Tortoise; you do not seem to have a very large appetite." "Thank you," replied the Tortoise. "I am satisfied. Pray come and dine with me to-morrow, and give me an opportunity of repaying your kindness." The greedy Baboon, allured with the hope of another meal, said he would come. Soon the Tortoise took his departure, and on the way home revolved in his mind a plan of revenge for the insult the Baboon had put upon him. Now, the home of the Tortoise was near the river, and the first thing he did when he got to his house was to set fire to the grass growing along the bank, so that, when the fire had spent itself, there was a long stretch of blackened stubble. On the morning, when the Baboon arrived, he found a mat spread on the ground, on which were savory articles of food. "I am so glad to see you," said the Tortoise; "dinner is quite ready, as you see. Will you just run down to the river and wash your hands before we begin to eat?"

Away ran the Baboon, his mouth watering at the thought of the good things he had seen. When he had washed his hands he started back again across the patch of burnt grass. But as he ran along on all fours, he soon found that the burnt grass made his hands as dirty as they were before. "I cannot go to dinner with black hands like these," he thought. So he returned to wash them a second time. Then again he attempted to cross the burnt grass, but with no better success than before. After washing his hands for the third time, he sat down to consider how he was to return to the Tortoise's house without getting his hands black. The only way seemed to be to follow the banks of the river until he reached the end of the burnt patch. This he set out to do, and at last, tired and hungry, reached the home of the Tortoise. When he got there he found, to his astonishment, that the Tortoise was just eating the last piece of food. "Hullo!" exclaimed his host, "where have you been all this time? I waited a long while for you; but, as you did not return, I thought that you must have been dissatisfied with the food that you saw, and so had gone back to your own home again. Now I have eaten it all myself, and have nothing left in the house to offer you. I hope you will not feel any more hungry when you get home than I did when I returned from your home yesterday." Then the Baboon went off, much annoyed that the tables had been so cleverly turned on himself.

**TROUT WELL OFF IN GLASS.**

A little boy stood in front of the brook trout exhibit at the Aquarium recently, peering intently at the speckled beauties. He turned to the fish expert who stood near him and said, "It seems a pity to keep the beautiful fish in these tanks. They would have so much more fun in a brook."

"They are much safer here," said the wise man; "especially these brook trout. Do you know that not more than one in every thousand of the brook trout created lives to be more than a mere baby? Why, the little trout no sooner takes his first peep out from the gravel where he has been gaining strength for the battle of life than all sorts of monsters attack him. Frogs, weasels, chubs, lizards, water snakes, herrings and minnows go for the little fellow, and when he has escaped these he has the larger trout to fight or run away from. To escape all these he has to remain in shallow water near the banks for a long time, and when the little beauty has learned all the tricks to save his life and has become the one in a thousand to escape the baby dangers the fisherman comes along and tempts him with a fly and gets him. Now, isn't the trout in the glass case better off?"

The boy thought he was.

**THE MILK WAS TOO BLUE.**

From Current Literature.

A certain wise youngster of my acquaintance was presented on his seventh birthday with a beautiful blue glass goblet, whereupon said goblet straightway became the indispensable meal companion of said youngster. One evening when George had received his usual allowance of milk in the blue goblet his mother became aware that he was gazing in deeply contemplative fashion at the contents of the glass. What he saw can best be imagined, for he raised his eyes suddenly and said wonderingly:

"Why, mother, this cow couldn't have been ripe!"

**HE FLED FOR LIFE, BUT IT WAS ONLY A SLIGHT MISTAKE.**



THE NEAR SIGHTED GARDENER.

THE TAILOR'S DUMMY.

THE ACCIDENT.

THE FLIGHT.

—(Chums.)