

Gnats on the Wheel.

A certain gnat, Esop tells us, happening to alight on the wheel of a chariot, became dizzy with the elevation, and cried aloud: "Behold how furiously I drive the world! See how I fill the heaven with dust!" Very likely Esop in this story only meant to give a sly dig at some little great man in the Lydian court whom he did not like; it may be the purple-headed Cressus himself. The hunchback slave was not likely to be dazzled by the money of Cressus or the splendor of his Persian conqueror. Humps on the back, a slave's collar, an empty pocket, or like ugly gifts of fate, usually open our eyes very wide to the insignificance of our more lucky neighbors. Esop, outside of the palace gates, telling his feigning stories to the mob, could see plainly that the rich Cressus and the mighty Cyrus were nothing but gnats which had lighted for a moment on the great wheel of life. His savage, true laugh of scorn at them has echoed down through thousands of years. But if Esop himself had been a fat, handsome, magnificent courtier, he too would have been *de la mouton* with his elevation and have flapped his tiny wings on the top of the wheel, crying, "See how furiously I drive the world around!" Of course we can all see how nearly the story fitted those pompous fellows two thousand years ago. The great wheel was turned and turned inexorably age after age; and down and under they went, Cressus and Cyrus, and even the empires and the myriads of people whom they ruled, crushed out of sight like gnats; dead after one summer day. They drive the world! We can see now that they could neither help nor hinder its slow, steady progress, any more than the beating of an insect's wing could check the wheel. We are far enough removed from them to see how insignificant they were in the slow-moving progress of the countless multitudes of human beings.

But it is quite different with ourselves. Almost every one of us is convinced that the wheel of life has very nearly stopped turning nowadays, and that it depends a good deal upon us whether it shall keep moving or not. Whatever our pursuit or hobby, we are sure that it, and we behind it, are driving the world. It is not only men who handle great religious or philosophic truths who are filled with this singular inflation. Any hobby or pursuit, no matter how insignificant, furnishes wings for the gnat. Such men honestly believe that the discovery of a passage through the Arctic seas is the only object now before mankind which makes life worth the living; others that humanity has nothing better to do than to listen to music, or accumulate rare editions or old china. All these things have their uses; but the world is big and full and old, and book-binding and pottery are not among its primal forces. A beautiful landscape or figure or a fine bit of drapery is a pleasant factor in the universe, and so is the successful imitation of them with paint on squares of canvas; the harmonious toning of colors in a man's coat and trousers or the set of a woman's skirts may also be very useful things to understand, even if one is not a tailor; but really, we must doubt whether they are "the Secret of Life." It is the tendency of modern society to exaggerate all of its trivial discoveries or successes. The man who fancies he has advanced an inch beyond his fellows in the training of his eye or ear is not satisfied with announcing his little discovery, but becomes the founder of a school, and poses before groups of prostrate admirers. "Behold," they cry, "how furiously he drives the world and fills heaven with the dust!" The smaller the success, too, the more the poor human gnat capers and exults. The height of aristocratic arrogance and complacency is probably touched by the women who rule the fashionable clique in any town—way down laws as to the trimming of a gown or the courses of a meal. The great Wheel turns and the gnats buzz and buzz and disappear. Can there be any sermon truer than this which Esop preached for us ages ago?—*N. Y. Tribune.*

Hindoo Philosophy.

That there are more ways than one of seeing everything is shown in the parable of the tiger and the man, who were both looking at a picture, in which the man was drawn as victorious and the beast subdued. The man says unto the tiger: "Dost thou see the bravery of the man, how he has overcome the tiger?" The tiger gave answer: "The painter was a man. If a tiger had been the painter, then the drawing would not have been in this manner!"

Roche foucauld says: "How can you expect a friend to keep your secret, when, by telling it to him you prove that you are incapable of keeping it yourself?" To beware of how you confide in your friends is given in the tale of a miser, who said to his friend: "I have now 1,000 rupees which I will bury out of the city, and I will not tell this secret to any one beside yourself. They then went out of the city and buried the money under a tree. Some days after the miser going alone to the tree to see if his money was safe, found it had disappeared. At once he suspected his friend; but he dared not question him, as he was sure that he would never confess it. So he had recourse to this stratagem. Going to him he said: "A great deal of money is come into my hands, which I want to put in the same place. If you will come to-morrow we will go together." The friend, coveting the larger sum, replaced the smaller. In the meantime the miser went and found it, and having secured his money, he determined never again to confide in a friend.

One of the Kings of Persia sent a skillful physician to the prophet Mohammed. After remaining some years in Arabia without any one making trial of his skill as a physician, he went to Mohammed, and complained, saying: "They sent me to dispense medicine to your companions, but to this day no one hath taken notice of me that I might have an opportunity of performing the service to which I had been appointed." Mohammed replied: "It is a rule with these people never to eat till they are hard pressed by hunger, and to leave off eating while they have a good appetite." The physician said: "Ay, indeed, this is the way to enjoy health." He then made his obeisance and departed.

We all know what a degrading thing avarice is—how it benumbs a man's finer instincts, and lowers and degrades

his better-nature. More especially in this case if this undue love of money has developed within a man a want of scrupulous honor as to how he comes by his money, so that he but gets it. An Eastern parable illustrates this. A Russian priest knew that a moujik, or peasant, had come upon buried treasures in the shape of a pot of money; and the priest being excessively avaricious, determined that he should get possession of this treasure. So he killed one of his own goats, and took off its skin—horns, beard, and all complete; and having pulled the skin over himself, he told his wife to bring a needle and thread and fasten it up all round, so that it might not slip off. In this guise he went to the Moujik's cottage at dead of night, and began knocking and scratching, when the peasant jumped up and cried: "Who's there?" "The evil one," replied the priest; and demanded that the Moujik should at once give him back the pot of money he had found. The peasant looked out of the window, and seeing the goat's horns and beard, he was certain that his visitor was none other than what he represented himself to be; and in great terror, he seized the pot of gold, carried it outside, and flung it on the ground. "I've lived before now without money," said he, "and now I'll go on living without it." The priest seized the money and hastened home. "Come," said he to his wife, "the money is in our hands now. Here, put it well out of sight, and take a sharp knife, cut the thread, and pull the goat's skin off me before any one sees it." She took the knife, and was beginning to cut the thread at the seam, when forth flowed blood, and the priest began to howl: "O, it hurts, it hurts! don't cut, don't cut!" She began ripping the seam out in another place, but with just the same result. The goat's skin had united with his body all round. "And all that they tried," adds the legend, "all that they did, even to taking the money back to the old man, was of no avail. The goat's skin remained clinging tight to the priest all the same. God evidently did it to punish him for his great greediness."—*Chamber's Journal.*

An Englishman's Ascent of Pike's Peak.

The ascent of Pike's Peak is usually made on horseback; for, just as in Switzerland no one rides who can walk, so in America no one walks who can ride—the guides themselves accompany the expedition on horseback. It is a curious fact that, on attaining an altitude of about 12,000 feet, the pedestrian is attacked with a feeling of extreme lassitude and oppression not experienced on the Swiss Alps even at much higher altitudes. This statement we do not make only on our own authority. We have the assurance of a very distinguished mountaineer, well acquainted with Switzerland and the ranges of Central Asia, that it was as much as he could do to struggle up to the top of Pike's Peak. Occasionally a party will announce their intention of going up the Peak on foot to see the sunrise therefrom, and will make great preparations accordingly. They will start early the previous afternoon with a goodly supply of wraps and food, carrying revolvers to intimidate the bears; but, according to the inhabitants of the signal-station before mentioned, they usually arrive somewhere about ten a. m. and are content to see the sunrise from a much lower level. Should you chance to fall in with a "sunrise" party on the mountain, you will find they are a little tetchy if you condole with them on the incomplete success of their expedition, and they will assure you with some warmth that sunrises can be seen just as well from the precise spot attained by them as from any more elevated position. After this assurance you would do well to drop the subject. The path all the way up is perfectly well defined, and no guide is needed. Whenever any reasonable doubt can arise a signpost reassures the traveler. It is practicable by moonlight, even through the forest, and a revolver is not a necessary part of the outfit, the chance of encountering a bear being remote in the extreme. The mountain buck, a species of wild ram much affected by the sportsman, is not infrequently met with. Towards the top the path becomes bare and uninteresting, but for most of the way the scenery is picturesque, bold and diversified. From the stony plateau on which the weather-signal station is built one can see about one hundred and fifty miles over the prairie, and on the opposite side a long range of mountains is visible. The station is a substantial building, containing three or four rooms, in which the two permanent inhabitants contrive to look very cheerful. The furniture of the principal chamber in this highest inhabited house in the world—14,150 feet above the sea-level—consists of an elaborate writing-desk, a large wooden bed, a few book-shelves, well-filled, a stove, a table, and a few chairs. One of the signal men, an ex-first Lieutenant in the American army, dispenses hospitality for a consideration. A cup of coffee with condensed milk costs twenty-five cents, or one shilling, and the charge is the same for a glass of lemonade. The gallant officer is much pleased with his quarters, in spite of the low winter temperatures, the mercury, or rather the spirit thermometer, having been known to recede to forty-seven degrees below zero. He affirms that he never had a good night's rest till he attained his present elevation, having previously suffered from asthma. The number of signalmen attached to the station is three, of whom two are always there. Their experience of climate changes must be interesting, as furious thunder storms take place with short notice, and heavy gales come on quite suddenly in a clear sky, blowing off without a drop of rain, on which occasions the dust is intolerable.—*Saturday Review.*

—Since 1610, 523 theaters have been burnt down in the Old and New World, 460 disasters of this kind having taken place within the last 100 years (up to 1878), while from 1871-8 the average rate was thirteen theaters per annum. In the list of localities, London, with twenty-one, is at the head; Paris, with twenty-nine, follows next; the youthful city of New York has twenty-six, and the yet younger San Francisco twenty-one.

—Thomas T. Henry has been admitted to the bar in Philadelphia, the first colored candidate to pass the examining board in that city.

A Lesson on Potatoes.

The almost universal failure of the early planting of potatoes leads one to inquire if there be no means whereby we can increase the probabilities of a crop. Potatoes have come to be considered a most uncertain crop. Here and there we find a farmer with a choice piece of light clay land, who uniformly produces a paying crop of potatoes. The reason for the success in such cases is believed to be in the good soil, rather than in peculiar merits of culture. If we find one in the past season who has made a good crop, it is fair to conclude that his method of planting and cultivating must have credit.

There is good reason for suspecting that where potatoes are not planted more than two or three inches deep, they will fail in a dry season. We made four plantings last spring. The first two, of Early Rose, were made the same day, as soon in April as the garden ground would work well. The soil of our garden is clay, and the soil rich and deep. Five rows were planted in the usual manner, in furrows three feet apart and covered three or four inches deep. Alongside of these we planted five rows, the same way in every respect, and then covered them with half-rotted straw to the depth of six or eight inches. Now as to the result:

The first planting made a good half crop of medium-sized potatoes. The second five rows, planted same day and the same way, except covered with straw, made a crop of large smooth potatoes and very few small ones. The vines on the first planting dried up a month sooner than on those planted and covered with straw.

About the 25th of April we planted on bottom land, in the spaces in our wheat where the shock corn had stood. The ground was in perfect order, loose and rich from the trash and ashes left after burning the rakings of the corn stubble taken off the spaces between the shock rows. We planted eight bushels of good seed cut to two eyes in shallow furrows and covered with the straw, confidently expecting a splendid crop. The potatoes were cultivated the same as the other plantings. The crop amounted to about twenty-five bushels of very small potatoes, and many of them having dry black rot at one end.

Alongside of these we planted three rows, forty rods long, in shallow furrows covered lightly with a hoe, and then a foot deep with the remains of an old straw stack. The result was—no potatoes worth digging, since we could not plow them out on account of the straw. The weather turned dry soon after this planting and the ground had become quite dry before the covering of straw had been put on. Not enough rain came for about ten weeks to wet the straw, and the weather became intensely hot and dry. The potatoes under the straw were as dry as a bone, two months after planting. When the time for digging came we found an occasional hill that had two or three smooth potatoes. In such places the straw had been very wet when put on; where the straw had been very dry when put on the potatoes had done no good, not more than half of them even coming up.

From these four plantings the best and poorest crops came from under the straw. Had we planted a month earlier and got the straw on before the ground over the potatoes had become dry, we should have had a good crop, where by planting late and covering the dry ground with straw, so it never was dampened by the three showers which came between the time of planting and digging, the tubers lacked moisture. Potatoes require more moisture and a lower temperature than was possible under the conditions of our crop. At the State Fair we noticed the finest lot of potatoes on exhibition, shown by a farmer who was kind enough to tell us, rose bona, the secret of that lot of Early Rose being so much larger, smoother and brighter than any others exhibited. He planted early and covered at once with straw, six or eight inches deep. He claims that he never fails to raise a good crop under straw, and seldom fails in his main crop of field culture. He advocates deep planting, and early.

This lesson in potato planting is, not that potatoes under straw are a failure, but that in a dry season, if potatoes are planted early, on good ground, and deep, and covered with straw while the ground is yet damp, a big crop of excellent potatoes may be expected. Again, we conclude that potatoes on good clay land, such as our first plantings were made in, will make a good crop in seasons and with culture that will give a complete failure on bottom land.

A cool, rich soil, not subject to sudden extremes of heat or moisture, is better for potatoes than a loose soil with a gravelly sub-soil. We yet have great faith in straw covering as an equalizer of moisture and temperature of soil about the tubers, but it must be applied before the ground becomes dry and hot. We believe it is not too early to plant potatoes in February or March, if only the ground will work well. Fall plowing will help in potato culture.—*Cor. Ohio Farmer.*

Hints to Transplanters.

The Gardener's Monthly reviews some of the many practical things brought out in experience and now confirmed as good doctrine. It says:

It is now established beyond all question that a tree or shrub taken out of a poor soil will not bear transplanting as well as one that has been well fed. For instance, if five years ago two Norway spruces were planted, both of same age and in soil just alike, but one should receive no manure for all that time and the other have a little manure every year, the chance of success in removal will be very much in favor of the well-fed tree. Numbers of trees with good roots and well planted die after removal, simply from a very weakened constitution brought about by poor culture.

Another capital fact of practical value to transplanters has been developed, which is only just now becoming well known. It has always been understood in this country that a transplanted tree is safer for being pruned, but the pruning generally consisted of shortening in all the branches, strong as well as weak. But it is now found that the tree should not be shortened in, but merely thinned out. All the weaker branches should be cut out and the strong ones left.

And there is the practice becoming now better known than others, also first

learned through our pages, that it is not possible to pound the earth too tight about the transplanted tree. It is not possible to avoid all risks in transplanting. The art will never be so perfected that some will not die; and mortality where all the conditions can be controlled, will be less than ever before.

Another thing may be remembered, that trees die in winter from drying out. Therefore give the roots all the chances you can to heal and grow before cold drying winds and frosts come. One of the best of these chances is to plant early. Plant as soon as you can after the fall rains come. It makes little difference whether the yellowed leaves have fallen or not.

Table Notes.

A table daintily arranged with food daintily cooked and served produces a more favorable impression upon guests than one overburdened with elaborate decorations and an unending variety of perhaps poorly prepared dishes, with no regard for order or appropriateness. The fashion of serving one or two articles at a time, and having a number of courses does away with a great deal of the confusion which characterized an old-fashioned dinner. Really there need not be any very great variety for a nice dinner or supper, but served separately it seems more, as longer time is consumed by the meal, and greater opportunity is afforded for sociability.

The table should be laid with the greatest care, first covered with a mat or cover of cotton flannel, which will add greatly to the appearance of the table-cloth, making it look much heavier and handsomer. Then the ornaments, knives, forks, spoons, glasses, salts, butter plates, etc., should be arranged with precision, calculating what will be needed for each course, so that when the changes are made there will be no confusion. The dishes for the several courses should be set on the sideboard or side-table, counted and piled together so that the waiter will have no trouble about them.

Dinner cards are used of great variety, from a plain card, with the name written on it, to beautiful, painted stationeries in the shape of little fans, tambourines, etc. Some of the novelties are apples, oranges and lemons, tied around with narrow ribbon, which is first passed through two ends in the end of a small, narrow, gilt-edged card. These seem more appropriate for breakfast parties. A fancy clothes-pin is sometimes employed to hold a card.

Fruit and flower decorations are lower than formerly, and for several reasons are more desirable. It is quite in order to remove the outside from oranges and bananas, and have the oranges divided into quarters, or even into smaller parts, and the bananas cut into several pieces. They are then interspersed with grapes and candied fruits of different kinds.

In order to have a meal served elegantly, and without confusion, it is of the utmost importance that every detail should be attended to beforehand, and that the servants know just exactly what they are expected to do. Then the servants should not be called to do other things when they are passing a certain course. Nothing creates more confusion and disorder and changes the even tenor of a meal more than to have some one come in late. It disarranges everything. There is an obligation on the part of the guests as well as the hostess, and whether invited to a dinner or visiting at a friend's, it is a breach of etiquette to be late to a meal, especially so if there are others invited. Invitations to dinner or tea should always be accepted or declined so that a hostess may know for what number to arrange her table.—*Cleveland Leader.*

How to Distinguish Small-Pox.

When the passengers in a Third Avenue elevated railroad car yesterday caught sight of the face of a man who got in at Ninth Street, some of them moved into other cars, and all the others except one went to the other end of the car and sat close together there. The face of the man who caused this commotion was covered with big pimples. He would have had the end of the car to himself but for another passenger who remained close to him, and then resumed the reading of a newspaper. The other passengers looked at this couple curiously. One of them signaled the man with the newspaper, and he, too, moved to the crowded end of the coach.

"That man you say appears to have the small-pox, and I thought you might like to know it," said the man who had signaled to the newspaper reader.

"No, he hasn't," said the other. "I had been looking at him when you beckoned. He has got acne, that's all."

"Are you a physician?"

"I am a surgeon."

"What is acne?"

"Acne is merely a cutaneous disease, producing an eruption like what you see on his face. Small-pox does not look like that at all."

"How does it look?"

"Well, whenever you see pimples depressed in the center you may take that as a sign of small-pox. Small-pox pustules appear first on the face, then on the neck and hands, and afterward on the body. At first they are the size and have the solidity of small shot, but a layman would not be able to judge of them until on and after the fourth day, when they become depressed in the center and surrounded by a circle of pink that turns a dark crimson. The pimples are often so thick that they run together. There is an odor accompanying the disease that, once noticed, cannot be forgotten. I am sorry I can't tell you more, but I must get off here."

The passengers were interested in what the surgeon said, and disappointed when his short lecture was ended.—*N. Y. Sun.*

—Allen Dodworth, the teacher of dancing to aristocratic New Yorkers, is an old gentleman of fine figure, with snowy white hair and beard, sharply cut features, bright black eyes, and the courtly manner of an old school gentleman. He has traveled all over the world, picking up not only much general information, but suggestions for new compositions in the national dances of different countries.

—Demetrius Papanicolas and Athanasius Andrichas are two Chicagoans who on last Sunday beat a rival candy peddler for interfering with their sales.

For Young Readers.

OH! WHAT A GREEDY BOY!

(Written by him after spending the holidays at Grandmamma's.)

You may talk about your groves,
Where you wander with your loves,
You may talk about your moonlit waves that fall and flow,
Something fairer far than these,
I can show you if you please:
Tis the charming little cupboard where the jam-pots grow.

CHORUS.
Where the jam-pots grow,
Where the jam-pots grow,
Where the jelly jolly, jelly jolly jam-pots grow!

Tis the dearest spot to me
On the land or on the sea,
Is the charming little cupboard where the jam-pots grow.

There the golden peaches shine,
In their sirup clear and fine;
And the raspberries are blushing with a dusky glow.
And the cherries and the plum
Seem to beckon me to come
To the charming little cupboard where the jam-pots grow.

CHORUS.—Where the jam-pots grow, etc.

There the sprightly pickles stand,
With the crisp close at hand,
And the marmalades and jellies in a goodly row.

And the quinces ruddy fire
Would an anchorite inspire,
To seek the little cupboard where the jam-pots grow.

CHORUS.—Where the jam-pots grow, etc.

Never tell me of your bowers
That are full of bugs and flowers!
Never tell me of your meadows where the breezes blow!
But sing me, if you will,
Of the house beneath the hill,
And the darling little cupboard where the jam-pots grow.

CHORUS.—Where the jam-pots grow, etc.
—Laura E. Richards, in *Youth's Companion.*

QUEER COMPANY HOME.

The oak fire burned briskly in the polished stove, and puffs of delicious air came in with the opening of the door, making the lamps burn bright, while the girls pored and clipped the golden pumpkin rind, and Mother Forrest told us a story of her own childhood.

None so ready for a new country as an old pioneer; and this woman with the bright black eyes and hair, contented with her children and grandchildren on the new prairie farm, was brought up on the mountain-sides of West Pennsylvania when it was the home of panthers and bears, who were very sociably frequent and familiar. Her father moved from Delaware County, New York, when she was a little girl, and she grew up as much at home in the wilderness as the catamounts. All summer long she roamed the woods with her brothers and sisters after berries and flowers and fun; the woods their playgrounds from the time sap flowed in sugar-making till hazel-nuts were hidden by the snow. The mountains were a free, breezy, sunny home for them; and though there were plenty of "creatures," that is, wild ones, the children were wild and fearless, and brought up to take care of themselves.

"I wasn't a mite afraid of animals," said the smart, comely woman, who never would grow old. "Only one thing scared me, and that was men. If I saw or heard of a man outen the woods, I would cut and run like a deer. It was a rough, hard set got loose among the mountains in those times. But I had the queerest comp'ny home one time ever you heard of, or any'd' else so far as heard from. The fall I was fourteen, my next youngest brother, and sister and me, father took us down to the island, 'bout eight miles from our place, to pick apples on shares. Our trees hadn't got to bearin' yet, and we was mighty glad to get 'em this way, pickin' two baskets for the farm-folks and keepin' the third for our own. We went Wednesday, and were goin' to stay three days, and father was coming with a team for us and the apples we gathered. We slept at the farmhouse, and had plenty of provision along, and the folks gave us all the bread and milk and cheese we wanted, and we had a roarin' time. By Saturday we were good ready to go home and see mother. We waited till near sundown when my next oldest brother came for us and said father couldn't take the team off that day and we were to walk home, and he would send for the apples next week. We had between seven and eight barrels picked, enough to do us all winter. How them Pennsylvania orchards did bear those times! Bill had been started after us early in the forenoon, but he played along the way and took a swim, and hunted a woodchuck, and picked berries, till, instid of gettin' there 'bout two o'clock and givin' us plenty of time to get home in, it was most night. The folks told us we'd better stay over night, but we was so anxious to see mother and get home, it seemed we couldn't stay over Sunday nobow. So we took some apples in a basket and started just a little while before sundown.

"The road went along the mountain, with the steep bank like a wall on one hand, goin' down just as steep to the bed of the river on the other, and it was woods nearly all the way. We was so glad the thought of gettin' home and seein' mother by ten o'clock that we was just as full as we could be. We sang, and ran, and whooped, and joked about wolves and bears, and those first two miles didn't take very long to get over. But then it was fairly dark, and the woods darker than a pocket, so dark you couldn't make out anything, and we was glad to hear something come along pit-pat, and find the old dog from the farm had come after us. We could just see his form and each other—spots darker than the dark. We couldn't lose the road, for it was the only one, and cut among the thick trees, and all we had to do was to follow our noses over the mountain straight home. By way of keepin' our spirits up, we began to train.

We mocked every creature we knew. We hooted like owls, and screeched like cats, 'n howled like wolves, and sang and hollered at the top of our voices, and we wa'n't weak lunged either. And that sober old dog trotted 'long side of us, never changin' his gait or gettin' ahead, but allers keepin' up with us. I was awful glad of his comin', for I didn't like the idee of walkin' six miles through the woods black as darkness 't had never been skinned. The walk was nothin', for we could go six miles any time after huckleberries, but I didn't know what we might meet before we got through.

We called to the dog and tried to stir him up, but he kept the same trot just behind us, and wouldn't take any notice of our frolics. We called him,

"Hy, Rover! good Rover! good old fellow! but he wasn't to be turned from his stiddy path. Billy began to say he didn't believe the dog knew his own name, or he'd got changed in the dark, and by that time we began to feel a little creepy and exert ourselves to keep our spirits up. We sang and hollered, and we set on the dog, and called him all the names we could lay our tongues to: 'Old Jack-of-the-woods,' 'old Tread-on-his-tail,' 'old Blackin'.' Seems's if I never heard a regiment c'd make quite so much noise's we children did out on the mountain that night.

"There was one clearin', less'n a three miles from our house, and we felt most home when we came in range o' that. It was a lonesome cabin standin' by itself in the middle of a field. We were gettin' skeery by this time, 'n we 'greed not to go any further, but stop over night with the folks whom we knew, and go home next mornin' before breakfast. We didn't like the idee of facin' the dark any further through the woods. As we started for shelter, our courage began to run out at elbows when we heard a voice—some'thin' 't we know—and we piled over the rail fence and put for the house, where a light was burnin' as tight as we could peep.

"And what do you think we heard from our mild companion I've been tellin' you 'bout?"

"That beast 't had been with us, it give a jump and lit on the top rail as light as a cat, and gave one long, awful screech that just lifted us. 'Twant no dog in this world, but a painter, 't had been trottin' with us all that evenin' when it was so dark we couldn't make him out. How we stumbled along over the rough plowed ground I can't tell ye. Seemed as if we never could get to the house, and our hearts burstin' our breasts, and throats chokin', we was so scared. Seemed 's if I was all insides for that one burnin' mifit we were gettin' over that field! The woman in the house was alone that night, sittin' up ironin', and she heard the panther's scream, and she was scairt to death, and just had time to drag her husband's tool-chist against the door, when we ran up, too out of breath to call, and just came bounce against it. She thought it was the panther, and was nearly dead with fright. We screamed out to her to let us in, and she pulled the door open just wide enough to let us tumble in, the last one beggin' and cryin' for fear the panther would claw him before he could get in, and the chist was dragged back and the door fast before we had sense to know we were safe.

"There was a bright fire on the hearth, and it shone out of the windows, and we knew the panther wouldn't be likely to come very close, creatures are so 'fraid of fire. The woman, alone with her baby and children asleep, was dretful glad to have us with her that night. We put all the loose boards in the loft-chamber up to the windows, for fear that thing might try to get in, and we sat up hearin' 't screech round the house fit to tear itself in pieces, it was so mad to think we'd got away. The fire burned down and there was no more wood in the house, and we didn't dare to stir out for a stick, for all the pile of brush lay close to the door. But by and by the screams died away, and after watchin' an hour more we were glad to go to bed. Next mornin' we found the earth all clawed up round that back doorstep, and the bark scratched off the logs round the window where we'd fastened the cellar door up for a shutter, right at the foot of the bed. It must have come smellin' round after we thought it had gone off, and done that mischief.

"We never could tell why it hadn't attacked us in the road, unless it was actually scared of us, we showed so little fear and kept up such a racket. Little say panthers like singin', and that may have kept it quiet, or it may have been a young one, or not hungry."

"Next mornin' father and the boys drove up bright and early to ask if anything had been seen of us. After my brother Billy started the day before, they heard from a neighbor out huntin' that a big panther had been round the places up the mountain, stealin' shoots out of the pen, and it had carried a sheep off day before. Mother had been dreadfully uneasy when we didn't get home at sundown, and father began to worry about us when we didn't come by bed-time. He had been out to meet us, and then started with the team as soon as it was light enough to see. Father said it was well we hadn't gone any further, for the woods was wilder and wanted to make acquaintance with us. We was a little shy a good while after that about being 't late after dark."

"I should thought you'd been afraid," said Ruth, drawing a deep breath as she took up her knife again to attack a pumpkin.

"'Fraid, child, 'fraid? We wasn't 'fraid neither, only most scairt to death," was all the confession the old lady would make. There was evidently a decided difference with her between sudden panic and cowardly fear. Don't you think there is, too?—*Wide Awake.*

—A very sad incident occurred in Hoboken, N. J., the other night. A man, whose wife was so badly afflicted with the esthetic craze that she had recently given a party to which only those of esthetic tastes were invited, came home in a state of intoxication, greatly to the astonishment of his better-half, who had never seen him in that condition before. "How dare you appear before me in such a condition, sir?" she exclaimed. "It's esthetic," he replied. "What do you mean, sir?" asked the wife. "You gave a little blow-out the other evening, didn't you, that you said was a very consummate affair?" "I did," she replied, "but what has that to do with your drunken orgies?" "Well," said the man, "I've been having a little too, too."

—In Rockville Center, N. Y., sixteen baby graves standing in a row, each mound about three feet long, show the affliction to which Mr. and Mrs. Furman Abrams have been subjected. Their seventeenth child is living.

—At Erie, Pa., Wm. Ross and wife held a protracted discussion of the question of the omnipresence of the Holy Ghost, until the debate ended with the insanity of both and their confinement in an asylum.