

# Joe and the Weather Cock

A Story for Boys and Girls

By Elizabeth M. Perkins

ONCE there was a boy named Joe whose greatest ambition was to climb the church steeple and sit astride the wooden rooster which perched on top and told which way the wind was blowing. He could not have told why he wanted to do this, but every time he passed the church he looked up at that rooster and thought what fun it would be to sit astride of him. So one Saturday afternoon when no one was about, he fastened ice-creepers to his shoes, climbed out on the roof of the church, and by clinging with all his might with hands and feet, managed to shim up the stobby little steeple and to reach the coveted height where the big rooster swung and creaked in the breeze. That was a proud moment for Joe. He ung one leg over the rooster's back and seated himself firmly, and then took off his hat and swung it in the air in triumph.

Unfortunately there was no one to see his triumph, which spoiled the fun and after he had sat up there a few minutes he began to wonder if it was really worth the trouble of the climb after all. And while he was wondering, there came a puff of wind and the steeple around and faced the south, and at that Joe was delighted, for he said, "If the old bird can turn around with me on his back like that he is plenty strong enough to fly with me, and fly he shall, I shall see foreign parts."

So he dug his heels into the sides of the rooster and said "Git-up." The rooster did not like that at all, and he flapped his wings and made an effort to fly, and as he was facing south at the time, that was the direction in which he started.

"Hurray," said Joe, "We're off for old Mexico. I should dearly love to see a bull-fight. Maybe they'll let me be a matador myself."

BUT the rooster did not fly far before he met another breeze which turned his head east. It was really too bad when Joe had just made up his mind for a bull-fight, but he was glad enough to go anywhere, and was quite willing that it should be Europe instead of Mexico. "They have jolly big cathedrals over there" he said to himself, "not at all like our little wooden church. They have statues on them and they are big enough for a whole city to get into them at once, and then I shall see London Tower, where they used to cut off people's heads, and London Bridge, and all the castles on the Rhine, where they used to keep beautiful maidens in prison until knights came to rescue them. Oh, Eu-

rope will be worth while, if this old rooster only holds out to get there."

That last "if" was an important one, for the rooster showed signs of fatigue already, and when a very light breeze came along from the south it was quite sufficient to turn his head in a northerly direction, and poor Joe had to give up his European trip. "You can't mean that you are going to discover the north pole!" he exclaimed. "Oh, dear rooster, do turn back, for I didn't bring my ear muffs and it will be mortal cold I'm afraid. I should like to see an iceberg and a few polar bears, but another day will do just as well for that, so if you don't mind, I should like to go back."

The rooster was willing enough to go back, and headed south once more, but had not proceeded long on this course before another little wind started him west. Joe's spirits had risen again, for it occurred to him that there would be some fun in a trip to the Philippines, and so he offered no objections to the rooster's plans, but hugged him tightly about the neck and fell to dreaming of the Moros and their snug little canoes, and the dusky Visayan girls in their gauzy pina-foch dresses, until he had about made up his mind that this would be better than Europe. When whirr, with a rush of wind in his ears he found himself going east again.

"Oh, dear rooster," he said, "Don't you know where you want to go to? We'll never get anywhere at all at this rate."

THE rooster answered never a word, but went straight on east for nearly ten minutes, without turning a feather, and then, all of a sudden swerved about north once more.

Joe was in despair. "Let me down," he cried, "you're making me dizzy and I don't want to go with you any more. I like people who know their own minds."

"Very well, down you go," snapped the rooster viciously, and sure enough, he found he was going down, and presently he bumped pretty hard on the roof of the church, and saw stars for a few minutes. But he was not seriously hurt, and after a while he got up and sneaked down the stairs and home again.

When the people came to church the next day and saw the wooden rooster lying on its side in the street they wondered very much and remarked that they had not noticed that the wind was so strong on Saturday, but Joe never said a word to anybody. What he thought was, "It serves him right. We would have had a fine time if he had only known his own mind."

# The Last Half of the Ninth

By Anton F. Kliakner

IT was the last half of the ninth! The score stood 4 and 3 in favor of the Island Tigers.

The Northern Lights were batting for the last time and hoped to win the game or at least tie the score.

Brady was pitching for the Tigers and the first ball he threw he bursted a blood vessel in his arm.

Manager Davis was chagrined, for Brady had pitched an excellent game, and with a substitute in the box he was afraid the visitors would defeat him.

He cast his eye over the bunch of available "subs" and "Skinney" Lafferty, who sat near "Pap" Wilson, the official scorer, felt a funny sensation in the region of his heart.

Maybe they would let him pitch. Davis was a good friend of "Skinney's" and had often promised him he would give him a chance when the proper time came.

"Skinney's" heart thumped as Davis met his, but somehow he felt as limp as a dishrag when Davis came over and asked "Hemp" Quinn if he would finish out the game.

Davis went with "Hemp's" sister, so "Skinney" swallowed his grief and concluded that Davis meant to "be right," but couldn't ignore "Hemp" for certain grave reasons.

The crowd was keyed up to the highest pitch of anticipation, and when "Hemp" tossed up a ball and one of the Northern Lights got to first on it the crowd shouted, "Get a new pitcher."

Then Frank McCormick, the big hardware merchant, the greatest baseball fan in Huttonville and the financial backer of the Tigers, cried:

"Let 'Skinney' Lafferty pitch."

"Yes, let 'Skinney' pitch," came a lusty second to the motion.

"Skinney, Skinney!" the crowd yelled. And so with a look of pity in his eyes Davis motioned for "Hemp" to come in and "Skinney" walked out to the box.

A little, puny, wily fellow was "Skinney." He was the best pitcher in his class in the town and those who were supposed to know prophesied great things of "Skinney."

But "Skinney" was left-handed. At school the teacher licked him for writing with his left hand, and at home he was scolded plenty for using his left rather than his right hand when eating.

The heat was intense, and as "Skinney" rolled up his shirt sleeve and spit on his hand the crowd grew quiet.

"One strike," the umpire said.

"Two strikes."

"Three strikes and out!"

The bleachers roared. Big Frank McCormick slapped his leg and turned to Porter Filten, the banker, and said: "Didn't I tell you that 'Skinney' could 'deliver the goods'?"

"Skinney" fanned the second man. His heart was up in his mouth as he sent the leather sphere over the plate.

The runner that took a "safe" from "Hemp" was on second.

"Skinney" had put two strikes over the base.

Everybody was standing on their feet, breathless with excitement.

"Skinney" threw the ball.

Louis, the star batter for the Northern Lights smashed the ball away out into left field.

Rubrick ran for it, caught it and stumbled as the man on second ran home.

The umpire ran out to the tall grass to watch the play.

Without a word, but stung with the ignominy of defeat, "Skinney" jumped on his bicycle and rode for town as fast as he could go.

Some one yelled for him to come back, but he kept on heedless of their entreaties.

He could hear the yelling and his heart was full of the woe that only a defeated boy can feel.

His dog came across the field to meet him.

"Skinney" didn't go home. He couldn't face his sister now. Not after losing the chance of his life.

# Warm Weather Reading

THERE is delightful hot weather reading in this issue of our Literary Magazine section—short stories that are really short stories, and yet provided with good plots and strong in their interest. This issue is the kind you'll enjoy of a Sunday afternoon—it will appeal to you in spite of the usual summer physical discomforts. That is the way we plan to make all of our summer issues—interesting in spite of the heat, and worth while when you throw most all other reading matter aside.

IF you are married, or if you know anybody who is married, you will take especial delight in a short humorous story in this issue, entitled "The Man and the Woman Of It—A Parable." The author, Clifford Howard, has touched upon a theme that is familiar and he has portrayed his characters with such fidelity to human nature that every one who reads will recognize them. Although Mr. Howard holds up the little shortcomings—probably idiosyncrasies might sound better—of men and women, he does it with utmost good nature.

IN the story entitled "The Regeneses of Huckins" you will find a happy love story written—by whom do you suppose? A man of war—Capt. M. B. Stewart of the U. S. Army. But it is a strong, sturdy love story—the sort that appeals to real men and women. Its hero is a young "jackie" who finds himself utterly lost on land after his term of enlistment ends. He ultimately makes his way to New York, where he "ships" with a department store. There he meets the heroine—a sensible young woman, wise to the ways of mankind, yet wholesome and interesting. How John Edward Huckins finally won this young woman and also made his way to the "quarter deck" of the big store makes a charming romance of common life.

THERE is no let-up to the interest in "The Nation's Pawn." The story moves along briskly and nears the close of the first book. The second book is even stronger than the first and it gives the inside story of the mysterious happenings that are now puzzling the readers of Roy Norton's great novel.

INCIDENTALLY, it isn't too early to announce that we have closed for the purchase of a new serial story to follow "The Nation's Pawn." It is a story of mystery and is written by an author who made a wide reputation two years ago with one of his novels, and who has since regularly struck fire. But further announcement will be withheld for the present.

THIS issue contains a unique detective story in "From An Upper Window." It is altogether different and suggests interesting possibilities in bank robberies.

## "BASEBALL IN THE OLDEN DAYS"

Rev. "Billy" Sunday, one of the brilliant stars of the old Chicago White Sox, will discuss plays and players of his time in

## NEXT WEEK'S LITERARY MAGAZINE.

"Billy" Sunday is now the leading evangelist of the country, but he is still a baseball fan at heart and his reminiscences are interesting.