

For the Little Folks.

WITTS EASTER EGGS.

I am not disposed to pry into or meddle with affairs with which I have no business, yet this much I saw and heard, as leaning over our balcony I had an uninterrupted view of my neighbor's yard just beneath me.

Soon a lady answered his rap. Off went his black cap, and the hearty "Good morning, Aunt," invoked a smile of real welcome, which the most studied politeness of after years may fail to win for him.

"Well, Witt! come in," won't you?" "No, Aunt, I just want to ask you something. You know your speckled hen, old Jerusha?"

"Yes! What of her?" "Don't she lay every day now?" "I think so."

"That kind of hens are good layers." Aunt, twitched her lips knowingly at this bit of information, but said nothing. Witt continued:

"Easter's most here. My! but some of the boys have lots of eggs. Jim Duncan's aunt Christie gave him three dozen."

"And you want me to follow her example, Witt, is that it?" "No, Aunt, I wouldn't be bothered with so many at once; but I tho', may-be you'd give me one of the speckled hen's eggs."

"Why, what a moderate request. Of course I will," and directly a light yellow egg lay in his hand.

"This will fetch 'em," said Witt, tapping it against his teeth to test its firmness; then producing from his pocket the small egg of a Guinea fowl, he laid both in his hand as admiringly as the Duke of Brunswick would two diamonds of similar size.

"They are splendid fellows, Aunt, I wish there was some way of making them harder yet."

"Then you couldn't break them, Witt."

"Break them, Aunt!" said Witt, looking up in surprise. "Why you're—Oh, I didn't mean that, (clapping his hand to his mouth,) but you're so funny. I don't want to break them. Why, I swapped a knife that had one good blade in it, just for this little Guinea egg; because the shell is so tough and hard. There aren't two more like it in town."

"Do you intend to swallow them whole, Witt, since they're not to be broken?"

He frowned a little impatiently at his Aunt's pretended ignorance may-be, but answered respectfully, "No, ma'am, I want them for pickers. I bet I can win my cap full with these fellows."

"But I'll save you that trouble, dear; I'll give it to you full for nothing."

"Lal! Aunt, it won't be no trouble with these; I'll just win 'em as easy as a pin."

"Why do you want to win them, when I can give them to you?" "Oh! just for the fun of it."

"Do you think it is fun for the boys who lose their eggs to you?" "That's their lookout, not mine."

"Suppose by some accident you lose, then where's the fun?"

Witt was getting a little fidgetty. He didn't fancy such close questioning, but answered carelessly,

"I wouldn't care a bit."

"Then if you don't care, why have you gone to such pains to get those unusually hard eggs?"

"Because—why— but the answer wouldn't come. He suddenly discovered that it was near nine o'clock, and time for school; so with a hurried "Good bye, Aunt," he turned away, but she laid her hand on his shoulder, and while adjusting his neck-ribbon, asked, "What is the eighth commandment, Witt, do you know?"

"Yes, ma'am; 'Thou shalt not steal.'"

"Who made that commandment?" "God."

"Was he in earnest?" "Yes, Aunt," Witt wondered at such a question, so his answer was in a very serious tone.

"Why did God permit you to live last night?" She laid his hand on his heart. "Do you feel that little pump, how it is working inside of you—it goes day and night, opening and shutting more than sixty times every minute that you live. If it should stop for five minutes you'd be dead. Why does God keep it going?"

"I don't know, but I guess because he likes 'to.'"

"I guess because he loves you. Witt, and wants you to be of some use to him. Now our first duty is to obey Him, and God expects boys

to do it, as well as men. When you win eggs by picking them with one you know to be harder and stronger than theirs, you steal, because you take that for which you have given nothing in return."

TO BE CONTINUED.

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We design introducing a few new features at the commencement of the next volume. We shall continue our regular departments, and endeavor every week to give

THE NEWS OF THE STATE,

and also the general

NEWS OF THE WEEK,

and so arrange such that our readers can refer to either column at pleasure, and readily find any item.

We shall also introduce a department for

THE LITTLE FOLKS,

the articles in which will be printed in large, clear type, so that our young readers can peruse them easily. We shall take much pains with this column, as we think the children of every household ought to receive special attention. Our little readers may look out for this feature.

About the middle of September, we hope to resume the publication of

EVANGELINE,

which we have been forced to suspend for so long a time.

PART SECOND

of this story we think will exceed the portion which has already been published. We are promised some very thrilling scenes in the future chapters, which will again lift the veil from the dark chambers of treason, and reveal some of its crimes.

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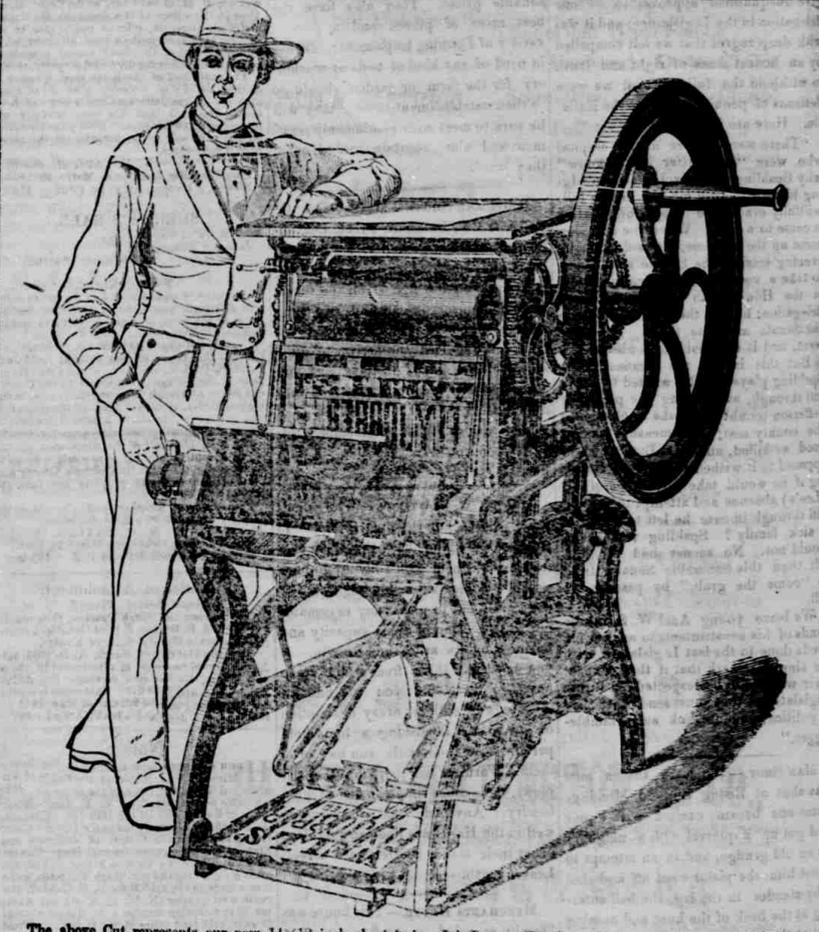
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