

A Fiery Steed.

For once May gave promise of being a May worthy of the many beautiful songs which have been sung in her praise. She came dancing along after her sister April—who had just left in a shower of tears—with a bright smile on her lips, and a wondrous rainbow halo about her head.

Along a pleasant, winding, lonely country road, with splendid great apple and pear trees standing on either side, and the spring flowers dotted the green carpet so thickly that the green is almost hidden, comes slowly, on this May-day, a diminutive, old odd-looking white horse, drawing a small market wagon filled with household furniture, accompanied by an enormous shaggy Newfoundland dog and as pretty a country maid as ever milked a cow or made a pat of golden butter.

The broad-brimmed straw hat that she wears shades her low brow to which cling babyish rings of hair the color of the glossy, satin smooth buttercups, a pair of innocently roguish eyes, cheeks brown with an underlying tinge of rose, a charming red-tipped mouth, and a firm, round chin.

Across the brow, however, at this moment flits the shadow of a frown, and a look of comic perplexity comes into the sweet young face. The odd-looking horse has stopped in the middle of the road, and remaining perfectly motionless, staring directly before him, save when he bends his head to take a nibble at the flower-thick grass, as though suddenly oblivious of every thing under the sun except the tranquility of the June-like May afternoon.

"Oh, Charley! Charley! go on—don't that's a dear!" coaxes the young girl, coming to his side and gently patting his head with her little brown unclowed hand; but Charley merely whisks a too-familiar fly away with his forlorn old tail, and makes no further sign.

"Charley, good horse, Charley—oh! why didn't I bring some carrots with me?—Charley, you bad, bad fellow, if you don't go on, I'll whip you as sure as you stand there. Come, be a darling." And thus she alternately begs and threatens, Lion assisting in dog language, with an occasional dash at the heels of his obstinate equine friend; but Charley refuses to "be a darling," plants his feet more firmly than ever, and never stirs; and at last, with an air of resignation, she goes back to the path, seats herself on a rude seat formed by nature of the gnarled roots of a misshapen old tree, and waits patiently for at least ten minutes.

At the end of that time Charley looks about with a just waking-up expression in his eyes, as who should say: "Dear! dear! I quite forgot there was work to be done," and starts off with quick steps that gradually become slower.

With a sigh of relief the young girl arises and follows—Lion, bounding back from the wood, where he has been making hasty explorations, having it in his mind that his mistress is not to be left without his protection for more than two minutes at a time, takes his place at her side—and the perplexed look fades away into a smile that brings to light two rows of pearl-white teeth.

But, alas! the smile is premature. In another ten minutes, again overcome by the beauty and peacefulness of the day, Charley falls into a reverie, stops once more, and once more refuses most decidedly to "go on."

And in this manner does that dreadful horse behave for a whole hour, making short progresses and long pauses, until finally coming to the conclusion that there had been quite enough of this sort of thing, he deliberately drags the wagon on the side of the road, takes up his station beneath a wide-spreading oak, and proceeds to munch the young grass at his feet, with a look in his eyes that says as plainly as words: "From this spot move me if you can."

"Oh, Charley! Charley! how can you?" begins the young girl, loudly and indignantly, following him with small brown hands clasped beseechingly. "Oh, you, wicked, wicked Charley!"

"Did you call me?" asked a masculine voice, to her great astonishment; and as with a slight start she turns in the direction of the voice she sees a young man walking rapidly toward her, the sound of his approaching footsteps having been completely lost in the inquiring bow-woos of her canine guardian. "Did you call me?" he repeats.

"No, sir," she replies, blushing prettily, and looking at him with frank, child-like eyes. "I was speaking to the horse. Be still, Lion."

"Beg pardon, I thought for an instant you were speaking to me. It seems I have the honor of being a namesake of your fiery steed. But you are in trouble. What is the matter? Can I help you in any way?"

"There's nothing very serious the matter," she says, with a smile. "We are moving to-day, and father went on ahead a long while ago, having some business to settle with our new landlord, and he must be at this very moment waiting for me at the new house, and wondering what in the world has become of me. You see, we have no boys in our family, and the other girls are younger than myself, and father and mother both thought—this being a very quiet road—that Lion and I could look after Charley and the furniture, but Charley, who generally behaves very well for a few moments, and has stopped every few moments, and the consequence is we have been already two hours on a journey that should have taken us but one, and there's just as long a distance to go yet; and with Charley—oh, you wicked horse!—standing under that tree, I don't know how we are ever to get to Grasstown."

"It's almost as bad a plight as the old woman was in with her pig, when he wouldn't go under the stile, and she was afraid she couldn't get home that night," laughs the young man—a nice-looking fellow he is, with gentleman stamped on

every feature of his handsome face. But suppose I cut you a switch? Perhaps that used with discretion, might have some influence on the fiery steed."

"Oh, no, that would never do!" she says, shaking her head emphatically. "Charley was never whipped in his life. He'd be so scared at the very sight of a switch that I believe he'd run away."

"Wouldn't that be a desirable thing under the circumstances?" asks the young man, with a broad smile, the idea of the old horse, whose principal desire appeared to be not to move at all, running away, striking him as inexpressibly comic and thinking, "bless her kind little heart!" he continues. "Well, since you refuse the switch, I will try how a command in the masculine voice will affect him," he commanded, "G'long, Charley!"

Charley started, turned his head toward the speaker, recognized a maser, backed away from the oak, and went off on a quick walk.

"Well the idea!" exclaimed his young mistress.

"And, now, with your permission, I'll walk with you to the end of your journey, for I'm sure if I leave you, Charley will note my absence immediately, and stop under the next tree."

"Oh, no, indeed! you must not," says the pretty country maid. "You were going in an entirely different direction. I could not think of taking you so far out of your way. Many thanks for your kind offer, but indeed, sir, I couldn't. Charley will behave well now. Won't you, Charley?"

"Good heavens! I never knew my name was so musical before," thinks the young man, and then explains: "I was going in an entirely different direction because I missed my train at the last station, and, if I had waited, would have had to wait two hours for another; but being rather impatient by nature, and tempted by the fine day, I set out to walk, my destination being the next village."

And now if I return with you I shall have a much pleasanter walk, catch the next train, and lose no time after all. Lion approves of my plan. Don't you, Lion?" And Lion, usually very suspicious of strangers, comes and lays his startlingly cold nose in his new friend's hand.

And so the two young people walk along side by side, crushing the pretty flowers under their feet as they go, and Charley, looking back every now and then out of the corner of his right eye to see if the masculine voice is still there, never falters, but keeps steadily on his winding way. After a few moments' silence the innocent little maid raises her blue eyes—they have been hidden by the long lashes—and says, in a shy voice:

"You said your way was going to Daisyville. I have lived there all my life."

"Not a very long time," says the young man, with a smile.

"Seventeen years. I was born and my three sisters were born in the same little farm house we are leaving now." And a tear trembles on the long lashes and rolls down the round rosy cheek.

The young man looks at the tear with pitying wonder.

"And were you happy there?" he asks.

"So happy," replies the girl, "that we fear we never will be half as happy anywhere else. And"—a sudden light breaking over her face—"I believe that is what ails Charley. He knows it isn't right that we should be going to a strange place, and does his best, poor fellow, to prevent our going."

"Undoubtedly," gravely assents her companion. "But why, if you will permit me to ask, are you bidding farewell to Daisyville? G'long, Charley," as Charley evinces a desire to listen to the conversation.

"Father didn't own the place. He had it on a long lease, which ran out that very week (a month ago) our old landlady died, and her heir—a nephew—and his mother are coming to take possession of the estate, and they want our farm-house for their gardener. When Mrs. Marks was alive, her gardener had rooms over the stable, and very comfortable rooms they were too, and the kitchen-garden was just back of the big house. But I suppose the new people are more stylish than the old ones, and want their kitchen-garden larger and father away than Mrs. Mark's was, and so they take us from our home, and we are obliged to move to Grasstown."

"And are your father and mother as much attached to Daisyville as you and your sisters are?" he asks.

"Even more attached to it," she answers, "if that be possible. It almost breaks my heart to see mother's sad face. But I must try to make my new home as bright for them as I can—that is if ever I get there. Oh, dear! how very unfortunate that Charley should have taken it into his head to be so naughty this day of all others!"

"On the contrary, I think, Miss Gray"—it has transpired that her name is Bessie Gray—"that it is the most fortunate thing that could have happened."

Her blue eyes and red mouth open in wonder.

"Because"—answered the look—"if Charley had behaved well instead of badly, you would have been at Grasstown long before this, and I should not have had the pleasure of meeting you. And now I am about proposing something which will seem extremely absurd to you although in reality the wisest thing that could be done under the circumstances. Suppose we turn Charley's head in the direction of his old home, and see what speed he will make then?"

"But," looking at him half frightened as a Lion bounds forward with a loud joyful bark to meet a stalwart old man who comes suddenly around a corner, his hat in one hand and a red silk handkerchief in the other, and who shoots the moment he catches sight of her.

"Why, girl, where have you been? What on earth's the matter?"

Bessie leaves unfinished the "But"—

begun speech, and runs laughingly to him, and taking the hat out from his hand, fans him energetically while she explains, "Charley was the matter, father. You can't think how aggravating he's been. He wouldn't go until this gentleman"—with another pretty blush—"was kind enough to make him go."

The old man looked keenly at the young one. "And pray where did you come from, and who may you be?" he asked, sharply.

"I will tell you where I came from, and how I happened to meet your daughter, at some future time. Meanwhile you will learn from this who I am"—handing a card to the old farmer, on which was engraved, "Charles Marks, Jun."

"Our old landlady's nephew and heir?"

"The same, at your service; and having no desire, in spite of my agent's arrangements to the contrary, to begin my life in Daisyville by turning so worthy a tenant" (in his heart he added, "with so pretty a daughter") "out of the house he has occupied so many years, I was just proposing to Miss Gray as you made your appearance that Charley should be stopped in his mad career, and once for all be turned towards his old home."

"Are you quite in earnest, sir?"

"Never more so in my life. Whoo, Charley, poor old boy!" and around went horse and wagon, and off started the fiery steed so fast that they could no longer follow him, Lion, "leaping a yard in the air" in the exuberance of his delight, galloping by his side.

"He's all right," said the old man, his face beaming with happiness. And won't mother look wonderfully surprised when she sees him coming up the lane. I don't know how to thank you sir."

"Don't thank me. I deserve no thanks," says Charles Marks, holding aside a low-hanging tree branch that Bessie may pass under.

"And the new gardener?" asks Bessie, looking back at him.

"Will have the rooms over the stable. You know you said they were 'very comfortable.'"

"But your train?" persisted Bessie, with the first gleam of coquetry that ever sparkled in her blue eyes.

"I'd much rather walk," says Mr. Marks.

When next the blossoms are on the orchard trees and the spring flowers are running wild through the grass there is a new mistress at the big house in Daisyville—a pretty little thing, with lovely blue eyes, bright golden hair, and a sweet cheerful voice. Her name is Bessie, and she is the idol of her husband, and, strange as it may appear, the beloved of her mother-in-law.

And in the stable, as well, nay, better, cared for than the handsome ponies and the splendid chestnut, is an old, white, odd-looking horse, called Charley, his days of toil are over, and all his ways are ways of pleasantness, and all his paths are paths of peace.—Harper's Weekly.

For the Young People.

The Pretty Kittens.

A long time ago, not many years after the old revolutionary war, there lived in the northern part of South Carolina a Mr. Williams.

The country was not at that time very thickly settled, and bears, wolves and such like neighbors were not so rare in the forests as they are now.

This Mr. Williams had two little boys, Robert and Samuel, about ten and eight years old.

One day these little boys had been to the field, a considerable distance from the house, to carry their father's dinner to him, and coming back concluded to go round through the woods.

There was a beautiful little brook running through a deep shaded glen, where they played a long time, then climbing over the steep hillside, they came upon a hole in the rock like the mouth of a cave this was quite a discovery, and they scrambled into it with loud exclamations of delight.

They were still wondering and admiring, when from a bed of leaves, that seemed to have been driven by the wind into one corner, they heard a strange weak cry, as of some young animal. Fearless little country boys that they were they hastened to the spot, and—

"O what beautiful little kittens," they both exclaimed. "Let's carry them home, they will die here. Where could they have come from?"

There were just two, so each took one in his arms and started homeward eager to show their treasures. The little creatures seemed to be very wild and fierce, and the boys laughed heartily at the way they snapped and snarled at them, but held on to them with determined kindness.

They had gotten out of the woods and were crossing a large open field, when they heard some one shouting to them.

"Robert! Sam! run for your lives!" They looked around, and there, not far behind them, was a large wolf following their track.

Clutching their pretty kittens more tightly than ever, they did run with all their might, but their enemy was gaining on them every moment. Now the house was in sight; but they were so tired, would they ever get there? Already they could hear the quick tread of the wolf close behind them; and something else was coming up on one side. Could it be another wolf? They dared not stop to look. Poor Sam, his little tired legs almost refused to carry him, but there was never a thought of letting go the kittens for the cruel wolf to eat.

A step or two more, and there was the quick report of a gun, a furious howl, and they turned to see their enemy rolling on the ground and their father, coming rapidly toward them. It was he who had given them warning. Crossing from one part to another of his farm, he had seen their danger, but the chance of

reaching them seemed hopeless; yet happening to pass a hunter, he snatched his gun and so succeeded in intercepting the raging animal and saving his sons.

And what do you think the kittens were that they had been carrying so carefully in their arms at the risk of their lives? They were young wolves. No wonder the mother-wolf pursued the boys with such fierce haste! But the little boys were greatly distressed when their father insisted upon having their rough little pets killed.

HOUSE AND FARM.

The Parable of the Lark.

Two wedded larks were safely hid
Below the waving wheat,
Where in the summer-time they made
Their nest with grasses sweet.

And from the eggs the mother warmed
Beneath her downy breast,
Out peeped a brood of pretty birds
To make their parents blest.

Built in the furrow of a plow,
The nest was well concealed,
And all around this happy home
Stretched out the golden field.

One dewy morn the father's wing
Was soaring to the sky,
As with his strong-voiced notes he held
His jubilee on high.

The gentle mother heard his song,
And knew love filled his breast;
But in her heart were anxious thoughts,
As she sat near the nest.

"My little darlings," then she said,
"I charge you listen well
To all the farmer says to-day,
That you each word may tell."

The glittering scythe will reap the wheat
Which bends with golden weight,
And if it touch my pretty brood,
'T would leave me desolate!"

The faithful mother sought for food
In fields both far and near,
Oft wondering, as she homeward flew,
What news would greet her ear.

Five little throats were opened wide,
To give the instant warning,
That all the neighbors had been called
To reap the field that morning.

"My heart's relieved," the mother said:
"I surely need not fear;
For neighbors will not cut the grain,
And we may linger here."

Listen again," the old bird said,
As from the nest she flew,
"And tell me what the farmer says
To-morrow he will do."

At night the fluttering wings expressed
Great terror and alarm;
"We heard," they said, "the master's friends
Invited to the farm."

The mother-lark was peaceful still;
Her little ones she fed;
And many a time she whispered soft,
"His friends I do not dread."

Once more returned from errands sweet
The lark inquired the news;
"He'll reap his field himself," he says,
"And not a wheat-car lose!"

"Make haste! make haste!" the mother cried,
Stretch out your tiny wings:
The brave intent to work himself
No disappointment brings.

"The farmer's work will now be done,
He trusts no more his friends;
And surely he's the wisest man
Who on himself depends."

Experiments With Fertilizers.

The following directions for conducting experiments with fertilizers are given by Wolff, the leading European authority on this subject:

"It is of the greatest importance to the farmer to find out which of the more important ingredients of plant food his soil in its actual condition fails to supply in sufficient quantity for the production of the largest possible crops, and which, when directly added, would therefore exercise an especially favorable and powerful influence. This can be done practically only by properly conducted fertilizing experiments. With this in view, it would be well, first, to arrange some trials in which the separate elements of plant food are employed, each by itself alone, in the form of a definite salt as pure as possible. I propose for this end trials with the following articles:

1. Phosphoric acid in superphosphate, from Baker Guano or Mejillones guano, which contains little nitrogen (in lack of this, good superphosphate from phosphate or bone black).

2. Nitrogen in Chili saltpetre (nitrate of soda) or crude sulphate of ammonia.

3. Potash in fivefold concentrated potash salt, which is the same as sold in this country as "muriate of potash" of 80-84 per cent. (or high grade sulphate of potash).

4. Magnesia, in epsom salts (crude sulphate of magnesia).

5. Plaster.

6. Burnt lime.

The trials need not, by any means, extend over very large lots. Often small plots of five and a half square rods each will suffice. But the whole ground under experiment should, by all means be of uniform quality, and two or three plots must always be left unmanured for comparison.

The arrangement and order of the plots if the quality of the soil is uniform, can be planned as is most convenient, just as the lay of the land and the kind of preparation make desirable; for instance, as follows:

1. Unmanured. 2. Superphosphate. 3. Epsom salts. 4. Potash salt. 5. Unmanured. 6. Chili saltpetre. 7. Plaster. 8. Quick lime. 9. Unmanured.

The separate materials should be applied in such proportions as about correspond to an average manuring. For instance:—for each five rods, 10 lbs. each of superphosphate, epsom salts and plaster; 6 lbs. each of potash salt, Chili saltpetre, or sulphate of ammonia, and 25 lbs. of quick lime. The latter may be sown in the line, powdery condition which results from careful slacking with water or gradual disintegration in the air. The plaster should be applied in finely ground condition. The other materials should be mixed before spreading with

once or twice their bulk of good earth rich in vegetable matter, or with tolerably moist sawdust, in order to insure more thorough and even distribution.

The spreading should be done a considerable time before the planting. It will be well to even off the ground first with a light harrow, spread the fertilizers, and then work them into the soil with a strong harrow in the usual way. It is still better to turn the fertilizers under by shallow ploughing, and then proceed with the preparation and planting of the field as usual. If the separate plots are once accurately staked off, and the fertilizers carefully distributed in their appropriate divisions, the plough and harrow may be passed freely from one plot to another without fear of any considerable shifting of the fertilizers, especially when unmanured spaces two feet wide are left between the plots, and, after planting, left as paths. The trials should be made on land which is exhausted, in the agricultural sense of the word, and would, in ordinary practice, have been again dressed with stable manure. They should be repeated for at least three to six years in succession, in the same manner, with the same quantity of fertilizers on the same plots, each year, only changing the crops to be raised, as the course of rotation requires."

The Origin of Vaccination.

All honor to the name of the immortal Jenner, who sleeps in his quiet grave on the green cliffs of Folkestone. What a glorious morning "for England, home and beauty" was that of the 14th of May, 1796, the birthday of vaccination! On that day matter was taken from the hand of Sarah Nelmes, who had been infected while milking her master's cow, and this matter was inserted by two superficial incisions into the arms of James Phipps, a healthy boy of about eighteen years of age. He went through the disease in a regular and satisfactory manner; but the most agitating part of the trial still remained to be tried. It was needful to ascertain whether he was free from contagion of small pox. This point, so full of anxiety to Dr. Jenner, was fairly put to issue on the first of the following July. Small pox pustule, was carefully inserted by several incisions, but no disease followed. Now, by this simple and brave experiment upon the lad James Phipps, Dr. Jenner established a law which the experience of millions upon millions of human beings, in generations since, has only served to strengthen. It is wonderful, too, to think that there can be a single individual in these islands who cannot see, at a glance, the simplicity, beauty and truth of this law. There is no contagion in the world so certain and sure as the contagion of small pox—not even that of hydrophobia or rabies in the dog. The very emanations or exhalations from the body of any one sick of the small pox, if breathed by a healthy person, are, in many instances, sufficient to induce the disorder; and yet there is this healthy young boy, James Phipps, who receives the small pox matter into his very blood, and still he does not take the disorder.—Cassell's Magazine.

A Household Convenience.

Get a dry-goods box the size you want, have some one put plain strips on the corners and around the edge of the cover. Then paint it black or dark brown; have it as smooth as you can make it by rubbing with sand-paper. Have some pressed flat autumn leaves, flowers and ferns, also some small pictures that are painted; cut them out, have birds, flowers, and butterflies, glue these all over the box; when dry, varnish two or three times. If you like you can have the top covered with a cushion, also have some handles on each end, and castors under the bottom. For the inside you can have a pocket on the lid in the shape of an envelope. Then at each end have a narrow box fastened towards the top for holding balls of yarn, stockings, or anything and everything that gathers in a mother's basket. This is pretty enough for any one's sitting-room.

Soft Soap.

There is a good deal of discussion about the use of soft soap for killing insects on plants. One farmer recommends its use even for killing earth worms. Another says it effectually kills the green fly on rose leaves. We have personally tried hard soap for killing scales on plants, finding that it loosens the scale so that it can be removed by rubbing with a cloth. But what is it that kills the insect? The alkali. Then why will not ashes applied directly, without the intervention of grease, be more economical? Lime water will kill earth worms in flower pots. It will kill the green fly. We wish some of our farmer readers would tell us their experience in this direction. Lye has been experimented with and its results have been given, but our farmers need urging to try for themselves. Let us see what effect lye will have.

Weeds as Food Plants.

Among our common weeds are to be found many that are occasionally used as food. The tender stalks of burdock some people eat as asparagus. Cheekweed, boiled, in the spring, is considered as remarkably good greens. Shepherd's purse has a taste, when boiled, approaching that of cabbage. Lamb's lettuce, or pig-weed, is sometimes boiled and eaten as spinach. The common nettle is esteemed in Scotland, Poland, and Germany, a good substitute for spinach. The willow-herb has tender shoots in the spring, which may be eaten as asparagus. Purslane is eaten by many as greens, and is much liked. The ox-eye daisy produces in spring succulent, tender leaves, which are used in Italy as salads.

Pure Water.—To prevent cistern water from becoming offensive and impure, have the supply pipe run nearly to the bottom of the well, where the supply of purest water is always to be obtained.