

BOYS AND GIRLS PAGE

EDITED BY DAVID WALKER



A NIGHT WITH A GRIZZLY.

It was a winter afternoon up in the Sierras, said Uncle Ben, "when I left my log cabin in search of fresh meat. I had been snowed in for a fortnight, but the snow had melted enough for me to open the door. With my gun in my grasp, I felt ready for any sort of game. Judge of my astonishment when, not 100 yards from the door, I saw a large grizzly bear sitting upon his haunches.

"When I started I did not expect to find a grizzly with my life seemed at stake I realized that I never before had felt what a poor shot I might be. But, being in for it, I took careful aim at Mr. Grizzly and pulled the trigger. The bear did not go off. Neither did the bear stir. He seemed to be willing to give me another shot. I threw open the lock of the gun. There was no cartridge in the gun. Here I was, face to face with a fierce grizzly, and without any effective weapon.

Mr. Bear now lost his patience; or perhaps he smelled the food in my nostrils. He started in my direction, and a lively race for the cabin door took place. We went through the door neck and neck. I threw myself upon the bear, and he crawled out of the window at the best. Mr. Bear did not know what to make of this, but as he growled every time that I moved I had to give up reaching for the cartridges. After he had watched me curiously for awhile he lay down upon a rug in front of the bed and went to sleep.

"Then I once more thought to get the cartridges, to take a shot at the brute at short range. But he knew too much for me. His eyes opened and he growled whenever I moved. There was nothing left for it but to remain quiet. A white darkness came and with it a driving snowstorm. The door of the cabin was open. The wind whirled the snow in through the door. Mr. Bear crawled out of the window, in one corner of the cabin, and possibly went to sleep again. But I was afraid to move, for the breathing of my unwelcome neighbor was light. He was not sleeping very soundly at the best. I have never passed through a night like that. The chill of the air and the nervous state I was in, owing to the knowledge that, sooner or later, the bear would eat me unless I could get indoors to the rescue, made my teeth chatter. The bear did not know what to think of the noise. He walked to the bed softly, but I could hear him coming. His paw touched my face, and then he licked my hands. I thought it best to pretend to be dead, and therefore played possum to the best of my ability, and to my success in that direction I probably owe my life.

"The night was not so dark but that I could see the open doorway. Once Mr. Bear's huge bulk was outlined against that space and he seemed to be about to go out for fresh air. But the wind blew in a perfect cloud of snow and he turned back and crouched in a dark corner and I could not see him. All the time he could watch and undoubtedly did watch me. Every hour seemed an age long and I felt that day would never come.

"It was nearing 3 o'clock when I heard a noise outside of the cabin; voices and the tramping of a horse. Some foolish persons had lost their way in the mountains and had kept in motion during the night, fearing that if they should lie down they would freeze. Mr. Bear heard the noise and went out. I jumped up and seized my cartridge belt, with fingers numb and trembling with the cold, loaded my gun and ran to the cabin door.

"There sat the bear, near the door, upon his hind legs, waiting for the strangers to come up the grade.

"Stand back," I shouted, as I took aim. "Stand back, strangers, for I am about to shoot a bear."

"The strangers, lost and half-frozen as they were, laughed at this strange remark coming out of the darkness, and evidently wondered what it could mean. But they heard the rifle go off, and, as good luck would have it, the bear was so badly hurt that his only thought was to get away. He dragged himself down the trail as the strangers came up, nearly crowding them over a precipice and astonishing them greatly.

"The strangers were old acquaintances, Tom Nelson of San Francisco and Edward Martin of Santa Barbara. I made the cabin comfortable for them and we all slept until daylight, with a securely barred door between us and the bear. We found Mr. Bear in an ugly mood and ready to show fight, and it took four shots to finish him. By the time we had finished the bear, the heaviest snowstorm I have ever seen in the Sierras set in.

"We were close prisoners for a full fortnight. During that period we did very well and were jolly, having enough to eat and drink, and the wood pile in one corner of the cabin proved to be sufficient to carry us through the storm. My newly found friends had passed through many adventures, of which I must tell you later."

JOSEFA AND HER DOLLY.

JOSEFA JIMENEZ was eight years old, when her father, a Cuban patriot, was taken away from his humble home by Spanish soldiers. Three, four, five days passed and he did not return. Little Josefa saw the pitying eyes and noticed the softened manners of the neighbors, who at once adopted her as their own.

"Where is papa?" she asked one day of Senorita Morales.

"How should I know?" answered the Senorita, turning her face away.

"I know," said the child after a pause, "he is dead, and has gone to heaven. He often told me that mamma was there waiting for him."

"But you, Josefa?" asked the Senorita.

"I will be a good girl, and a brave girl, and a Cuban patriot, and, by and by, I will go to meet them."

Senorita Morales did not contradict Josefa. Not did she weep. The dread which was in Josefa's eyes always overshadowed the sorrow of the day among the Cubans. For it was known that General Weyler was about to burn the homes of the women and children into the "reconcentrado" camps, to die of starvation.

A few days later the Spanish troopers came, fierce, grimy, with cruel swords, cruel hearts, cruel spears. The villagers were speedily huddled together, and a dreary march toward the reconcentrado camp began. Their homes were burned; their crops destroyed, even their churches were fired by the torch. Before them was only suffering; behind, as they turned to look back, only ruin. But their eyes rested lovingly upon the hills that shut in their native valley as they passed out of it never to return.

And at the very head of the line of captives walked little Josefa Jimenez. In her arms she carried a little dolly, which her mother had given her, when, as she naively said, "I was a little girl, only six years old." It was two years since her mother went to heaven.

Josefa's head was bare. Upon it was a wealth of shining black curls, which crept down and seemed to caress her plump little olive cheeks. Around her neck was her mother's gold chain. Before her hung the symbol of the crucifixion. Her little brown feet were bare, but she trod the dusty and flinty road without complaint; and her chief sorrow was over a sickly little girl named when, as she naively said, "I was a little girl, only six years old." It was two years since her mother went to heaven.

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CHIQUITA, THE SPANISH COLONEL'S LITTLE GIRL, PLAYING IN HER GARDEN AMONG THE FLOWERS.

he was a good man, and I know that you were kind to him. Here, take my dolly. She is my best friend now. Take her for being good to my papa."

The colonel's eyes were fixed. He saw before him a dusty plain and a fortress, as he had seen them only a few days before. Then there had stood upright, fearless and proud, a Cuban whose features were like Josefa's.

"Cuba libre; Cuba libre forever," this day after day the number of Cubans

mercy. They colonel told her of Chiquita and promised to take Josefa home to Spain to play with her "when she had placed in his hands, back to her."

Early one morning Josefa was awakened by hearing rifle shots. That was no new sound to her for she was used to the noises of war. But now she started up and ran from the colonel's tent with her dolly in her arms. Some blind fate led her directly to where there stood a grim line of Spanish soldiers. Before them, at a distance of some yards, were Cuban young men and two were lads, one an acquaintance of Josefa. Forward darted the little girl, understanding the meaning of the scene at once.

"Emanuel, Emanuel!" she cried, "I will save you."

But the sword of a Spanish officer upon horseback had fallen. At the signal the rifles had volleyed once more. Prone upon the ground was the form of a little girl. Portentously, military rank, discipline, the officer was beside the child in an instant.

"Josefa, Josefa," he said, brokenly.

"Dear friend," she said, "second dear papa, I am glad you have come. Here is my dolly. I shall not want it any more. Be good to it and give it to your dear Chiquita and tell her to keep it always and always for me. Good-by. Here is a kiss for Chiquita."

More than a year had passed since Josefa's own Chiquita. The colonel took the dolly up with a strange sensation. There was a red streak upon the white and blue of the dress.

D. H. W.

CHILDREN in the San Bernardino public schools, so writes Mrs. Margaret M. Morgeau, superintendent for San Bernardino County, "to whom I have read the best stories on the boys' page and the girls' page, without telling whether they were written by boys or girls, have expressed a preference, in seven out of ten schools, for the boys' stories. That has been the voice of the majority. Where honors were given to girls the masculine element was not so many. This experiment proves to me that literary merit is often lost sight of where the subject is a live one, such as war, Indians, wrecked trains, daring balloon ascensions, etc.

"The girls' touch most tenderly a sympathetic chord in the human heart when they write about 'dear little baby boys,' beautiful fairies, the aerial form, love, and marriage. In variety of subject, logical treatment, variety of phraseology, taste, style and correctness as to technicalities, the girls have, in my opinion, beaten their brothers. Paradoxical as it may seem, I think the boys' stories are more interesting, but a greater amount of ability is shown on the girls' page.

"Thomas J. Kirk, Superintendent for Fresno County, writes: 'I have read the boys' and girls' pages carefully, though somewhat hurriedly. The girls' page seems to me better than the boys', both in invention and in delicacy of expression. I am reminded of Dr. Holland's statement, that 'the false is fairer than the true,' and in these stories the rational idealism of the girls surpasses the rough realism of the boys."

"And yet I am skeptical and hesitate to draw a conclusion regarding the literary superiority of either sex, even on the assumption that conditions, environment and heredity in these young writers are the same or equivalent. It is no easy matter to determine the relative eminence as literators of Harriet Beecher Stowe and her brother, Henry Ward Beecher. Had the compositor omitted the names and pied the stories of the young authors, how many critics of differentiation of style could distinguish whether the writers were girls or boys?"

"Why not have a sort of masquerade ball for the little novelists and let the literati guess boy or girl?"

A visitor who was trotting 4-year-old Freddie upon his knee remarked to the little fellow's mother: "Do you know, there is something in this young man I like?" "Say," exclaimed the precocious youngster, "he told you that I swallowed a penny?"

PRUE AND THE WINTER BIRD.

BY EDITH LAWSON, SAN FRANCISCO.

Prue couldn't go out because it was raining. She sat in a rocking chair close to the window, her nose pressing against the window-pane.

"How nice it would be to see a pretty white bird fly up to the window, and it said: 'Good afternoon, Prue.' Prue started up, because she had never heard a bird talk before. Then she said: 'Good afternoon, white bird. Are you not cold this snowy afternoon?'"

"Oh, no," said the bird. "This is the happiest time in my life, for I am a winter bird."

"Is that so? But pray, where did you come from?" said Prue.

"From my Majesty, the Fairy Queen," replied the bird.

"How very queer! But why did you come?"

"I came, for the Queen is going to take a trip to Sunnyside. She has told me to come here into your People World to see if any little girl would like to take her place while she is away. And I thought you might like to; would you?"

"Oh, yes," said Prue, "I would truly very much, then. Come along; just take a seat on my back."

"But am I not just a little too heavy?"

"Of course not," said the bird. "I am twice as strong as you, although I am small."

"How is that?" said Prue.

"Why, don't you see? Fairies and fairy birds are always twice as strong as people up here in People World."

"All right," said Prue, "I will if I can get through this glass."

"That's easy enough," said the bird, and he lifted his white wing, and the first thing Prue knew the window had melted away and she was sitting safely on the bird's back.

As they flew along Prue saw lovely things. The bird set her nose against the Queen's palace. Indeed, Prue thought it was for flowers, and grass, and snow, and houses, trees and grass the same. Then she wanted to know where they were going, and the bird said: "To Snowy Fairy Land."

"It must be very grand," said Prue. "Is everything made of snow? Excuse me for asking so many questions, but it is very puzzling."

"I will excuse you," said the bird, "but things are not puzzling when you get used to them. Can't you explain now, though, for here we are."

Prue looked up and saw little ice houses where fairies as small as your finger were sitting down on very small chairs to their tea. And in the middle of the tiny ice-courses was one little girl, and that rest, which was the Fairy Queen's palace.

The bird flew to the ground and told Prue to walk into the palace.

But Prue said: "I am too large; I can't get in."

The bird said, as he brought from under his wing a small snow candle, "Eat this and you will be small enough."

And sure enough after Prue had eaten the candy she was as small as the bird himself.

So the bird led Prue into the castle, where Prue saw a tiny ice throne glittering with diamonds, and Prue said: "This is a beautiful person. She shall be Queen always."

Prue was not very excited, but just then she heard a well-known voice saying "Prue, wake up and come to dinner."

She opened her eyes and came down to dinner. And so it was all a dream.

A CHANCE TO GUESS.

WHO has the best little boy or girl? Every mother answers at once, "I have." The answer is correct. They are all good; so much more generous, truth-



ers that it is no wonder that each discerning mother and father believe that their children are the best.

The purpose of this is not to bring about a discussion as to where the best little one lives or what is its name and who are its parents, but to see how many will correctly guess who is represented by the picture which is published with this. Two persons have the real answer already—the father and mother—and very likely there are little children who can make a shrewd guess.

It would be worth a journey to Oakland this morning to see their faces.

THE MEN WHO BOW.

BY CHARLES A. KEELER.

Of all polite people, what ones, can you guess. Except their fellows in spite of their dress? Not a Chinese mogul nor a prince of Bombay. Knows better the arts of politeness than they. For morning and evening they stand face to face. In two little rows, and without changing place. The bow and they bow, and they never get through— This very considerate handcar crew!

A little girl of four had learned the Bible text, "Love one another," at Sunday school. She repeated it after returning home, and her mother asked her if she knew what it meant. "Why, of course I do," she replied. "It means that I must love you and you must love me; I'm one and you're another."



THE BUMPKINS FIND WHAT THEY SUPPOSED TO BE THE "SPANISH SPY" WHO DISTURBED THE PEACE OF CAMP HARDTACK.