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JORDAN KNAPP, TRADER

By HENRY C. ROWLAND

"BETTER chuck your duds into your kit and come along with us," said Knapp.

"Go with you where?" I asked in surprise.

"Knapp has anticipated me as usual," said the doctor. "It's like this, Mr. Brown. We've got a tight little schooner that we picked up at quite a bargain, and we've just finished fitting out for a trading cruise around the Philippine archipelago. I have done a good deal of that sort of thing, and understand the business, and we are both old sailormen.

Knapp nodded. "Yes," he said, "and of you want to take a little share in the venture, just to give you an interest in the game, why we're perfectly agreeable—but do just as you please about that."

I looked from one to the other in much perplexity and doubt.

"Gentlemen," said I, "this is a very generous proposition, but it is so unexpected that I don't just know how to regard it—"

"Well," drawled Knapp, "let's put it on a business basis, then you can tell better how you stand. Boles and I have got this schooner, and we're going to run over to Manila and get our trading stuff, and then take a cruise around the open ports of the southern islands in the group, on the lookout for a cargo of hemp, which is way up just now—tobacco, coffee, copra, curios, pearls, silks, pino, or any darn thing we can lay hands on at a reasonable bargain. Some of the time we'll both want to go ashore, and as we don't want to leave the vessel with only the natives aboard we want another white man to take charge when we're away. Or perhaps we might want him to attend to something ashore. Afloat you can take your trick or not—just as you choose. And, as I said, if you want to take a little share in the thing, why go ahead. The rest of the time you can paint and sketch, and potter around to your heart's content."

"It sounds very attractive," said I. "Do you mind if I think it over and let you know tomorrow?"

"Not a bit; rather you would, in fact. We expect to clear in three days."

"Very well," said I; "then I'll leave you now, and meet you here in the morning."

"All right—and mind you make your plans to come," said Knapp. "Good-by!"

I left them in rather a dazed condition, and went back to my studio. At first I had no idea whatever of accepting the proposition; first, because I knew nothing of the men, but chiefly because I am of an esthetic rather than adventurous disposition, and the thought of crossing the China sea and cruising for an indefinite period in unknown waters, and amid hostile and savage people, was rather terrifying.

The next morning all of my misgivings returned, and a lot of new ones besides. By the time that I reached the hotel I had finally made up my mind to call the thing off. Boles met me on the veranda.

"Good morning!" he said cheerily. "Well, I see you have decided to go with us."

"Eh—yes," said I; "I've decided to go," and then I felt much better. Although I had known these two men but a day, I instinctively gave them my confidence.

Knapp came in shortly, and when he learned that I had made up my mind to go, held out his hand, but I had learned better than to put my own into that jaw trap, so we went in and had a drink instead. Of course I had no desire to take any share in the enterprise, as I have as much money as I am ever likely to need, but I stocked our lockers well up with the best bottled hardware there was to be had in Yokohama.

The fourth day out we sighted some of the Loo Choo islands, and from that time on sighted some land almost every day. Five days later the coast of Luzon loomed up early in the morning on our port bow. From there on we had variable winds, and not until four days later did we sight Merivalles mountain, which lies at the entrance to Manila bay, and which, for some reason or other, Boles cursed heartily. Knapp and I were glad to see it. We ran past Corregidor and up to the city, dropping our anchor behind the breakwater, and Boles immediately went in with his papers to report to the captain of the port.

Everything was all right, so the next day we had our trading stuff towed out to us in a casco, and also stocked up our commissary again, so that by evening we were ready for sea. I very much wanted to spend a few days in the place, both on account of its historic interest, and also to make a few sketches, but, of course, all delay was a matter of dollars and cents to Knapp and Boles. The latter was ashore until after dark, and when he came off I saw that he had heard something of interest.

"Come below," he said to Knapp and me. "I have just got wind of a good thing."

We went down into the cabin, and Boles hauled some charts out of his locker and spread them on the table.

"I have just learned from a friend of mine ashore, who is in a good position to know all about these things, that there is a fine, fat cargo of hemp waiting for the first comer at Mayongong, a little place in the south of Samar—ah, here it is. It seems that the port has not been opened yet, but there will be no difficulty in our getting the stuff if we can only manage to reach there before a little brigantine that left here yesterday on the same errand. There is a handsome commission on it if we win out, and not much lost if we don't. Now, what do you say? Shall we have a go at it? Strictly speaking, it's against the law; but the offense is only a technical one."

I looked at Knapp, who grinned.

"That seems to be our specialty, doc—to correct these fool regulations. Let's have a go at it. It'll be easy enough to pick up a little more somewheres else and change the figures on the manifest."

"No," said Boles, "we can't do that exactly, but I think I know how we can arrange it all right. Well, on the jump, boys—we're cleared and can't afford to waste any time. These little coasting coffins are slow as death, and nothing like as sure, but a day's a big start, and it's only a matter of 500 miles or so. We'll have our chin when we get under way."

We rounded the end of the breakwater, and, slacking our sheets, stood away toward Corregidor, and soon the myriad lights of the Luneta twinkled dim and indistinct. Our topsails and staysail were quickly set, and the slap-slap of the little waves under her forefoot grew faster and faster as she gathered way. Soon the lights of the city faded, and by midnight we were drawing into the channel to the southeast of Corregidor.

It was not until the sixth day after we left Manila that we entered San Pedro bay and drew near to our destination. I was down in the cabin shaving, because I always like to keep well "policed," as Boles calls it, even at sea, when a bellow of rage from Knapp brought me flying up the companionway, under the impression that some calamity had occurred. And apparently it had.

We were rounding the point, and there, just off the village, lay a schooner very much like our own!

It was certainly discouraging. To have worked and worried as we had, won our race through dangerous and unknown waters, and then to find an unlooked for rival already on the ground was enough to make one swear. Knapp evidently thought so.

We held a little conference, and it was decided that Knapp and I should go ashore and see how the ground lay, while Boles remained on the schooner as a sort of reserve. Here I was able to be of some service to my mates, as I had spent several years studying in Europe, and could speak Spanish like a native. Boles could speak good Spanish, too, but Knapp, when speaking to any foreigner, simply raised his voice to a shout, making up in volume what he lacked in intelligibility.

We dropped into our dinghy and pulled ashore in some uncertainty. A few natives came down to the beach to see us land, and seemed quiet and friendly. One of them showed us to the presidente's house. He told us on the way that the presidente was in conversation with the senors from the other vessel, which had just arrived that morning from Cebu.

As we drew near we heard the quick patter of voices raised in argument, and occasionally a staccato laugh. Then we were discovered, for the voices ceased, and the presidente himself came out to greet us.

I wished him "good day," and for a while we talked in a circle, exchanging compliments and felicitations. He was a rather good looking Spanish Visayan mestizo, and seemed a person of breeding and poise. Soon I introduced Knapp, who crumpled his paw, and I explained that we were Englishmen and on a little trading cruise, and hearing so much of the wealth and resource of his well known city, as well as of the great personal charm of its presidente, we had put in while passing, to give ourselves the pleasure of paying our respects and making his acquaintance, and casually to see if, perhaps, he might happen to have a few bags of coffee, a little tobacco, or possibly some hemp, which just now was of little value owing to the cursed Americanos.

He threw both hands above his head with a gesture of despair.

"Ah, amigo, why did not the blessed Virgin send you an hour earlier! It is true that the storehouse yonder is full of hemp which I have been saving for the rise in price that I thought was sure to come as a result of the interruption of the industry by these cursed Americanos. But at last I am obliged to let it go, for how otherwise can my son Emilio pursue his studies in Paris, where he has gone to become a famous artist?"

"Alas!" said I, "I can indeed feel for your anxiety as a parent, which does you infinite credit, also your solicitude concerning your son's career. I also am an artist in a poor way," and I showed him my half filled sketch book. He turned the leaves in great delight.

"San Diego!—but the senor is a great master. Seldom has it been my fortune to gaze upon such work."

"It grieves me, senor," said I, "that Emilio might have to be disappointed in the amount of his remittance. Rather than have that happen would it not be well, perhaps, to let us have this hemp at a little higher price?"

"Ah, the English senor is indeed my friend, but it is impossible. These men are old acquaintances of mine—and desperate characters. If I were to play them false, who knows? It is possible that they might burn my village!"

I held a short conference with Knapp, in which I told him what I had learned. His mouth puckered, and he drew his great brows together in thought. Then his face expressed a sudden inspiration.

"Ask him when he's got to deliver the cargo," he said. I did so.

"Tonight," replied the Spaniard, "as soon as the coolies can bring the cases down the river, which will be about 10 o'clock."

"Ask him if he minds telling you how much he is getting for his darn hemp," Knapp said again.

The senor hesitated a moment, but thinking no doubt that it really made no difference since the stuff was as good as sold, told me. The price was, indeed, ridiculously small. In confirmation he showed me a roughly drafted contract from the owners of the schooner to pay the money down as soon as the hemp should be delivered on board. This I showed to Knapp, who studied it carefully.

"I Showed Him Half Filled Sketch Book"

"Now, kid," he said at length excitedly, "is the chance for you to get in your fine work. Tell this old greaser that, although disappointed in getting our cargo, we bear no ill will, and invite him and these other greasers out aboard to lunch. Tell 'em we've got a bully cook, and the best booze that money can buy. They'll come—or greasers are a lot different in this part of the world than they are anywhere else. Then we'll go back aboard and talk to Boles. I've got a plan—just listen to that!" A roar of boisterous laughter came from the house. "Said they'd burn his village, did he? We'll teach 'em—the bloodthirsty pirates."

I failed utterly to follow his train of thought, but did as he told me. The presidente was apparently delighted.

"The senor honors me; it would afford me the greatest pleasure. And if the senors will condescend to enter my poor house we will have a flask of Madeira, and you shall meet these others—the ladrones that they are. But you must not be offended if they are somewhat noisy, for they have just finished two bottles of my best."

When we were walking back to our boat I turned, my voice trembling with suppressed anger.

"Now, for heaven's sake, will you tell me why you want that slime out on our schooner? If that kind of thing is to be my job you'd better look around for a new boy right off."

He grinned and patted me on the shoulder.

"Don't you worry, sonny, you'll have a chance to get even before you're many hours older. Your Uncle Jordan's got a plan, a little scheme to teach these gents a lesson, and get that hemp at the same time, just by way of illustration. It'll be a sort of illustrated lecture on the folly of intemperance." He laughed softly.

He didn't speak again until we got out aboard. Then we went below and told Boles of all that had happened. Before I had finished a light came into his eye and he began to grin, as Knapp was doing. But it was a grin that showed his teeth a bit.

"Savvy?" said Knapp, when I had finished.

"I think so," said Boles, "but it's a slightly dangerous game, and we've got no right to mix Brown up in it without his permission." He turned to me.

"Knapp's scheme is this, Brown: to get these two scoundrels off here and lay the keel for a jag—a seagoing jag—that will last for twelve hours or so. Then, when they're well sewed up, to take' em back aboard their schooner and leave them. In the meantime we'll do a little financiering with the presidente, and make it worth his while to have his shipping clerk, or whoever has charge of the loading, being foully deceived by us, mistake our schooner for the Spaniards' and deliver the stuff to us. The presidente's agent will receive from me the sum agreed upon, for which he will receipt. In case there is any delay in loading, or getting out of this hole tomorrow morning, it is easily possible that we may have a little fight on our hands. Now what do you say?"

"As far as I'm concerned, go ahead," said I; "entertaining's my long suit, and if I can't beat that hairy gorilla to death as I'd like to, perhaps I can drink him to death, or into 'D. T.'s.'"

I dodged the slap of the shoulder that I saw coming from Knapp.

"That's the talk, youngster. We'll make a roaring buccaneer of you yet. Now let's unlimber for the fray."

A little after 12 we saw our guests making their way uproariously down to the beach, and a few minutes later their outrigger was alongside.

Our Chinese cook gave us a very good dinner indeed, and, from the way those two swine laid into the "chow," I began to doubt of the capture of the hemp would pay for the hole they made in the stores.

We went rather easy on the drink, as it would not do to put them out of commission too early in the day. After eight bells, however, Boles rose and told them that, as a proof of the ineffable joy it gave him to meet three such distinguished men and charming companions, he was going to give himself the great pleasure of compounding a "British Navy punch" in their honor. With that he raked out a bowl and a bottle of about every different kind of liquor we had in our wine locker, and set to work.

What he put in that foul decoction I know, because I know about what we had, but the proportion will always remain a dark secret. When finished it was a rather pleasant and harmless enough tasting prescription, but, as Knapp afterward said, "It was sighted for 5,000 yards, and 10 drops was a dose for an adult." Boles served it out in long whisky and soda goblets. Of course, if Knapp and I had had any sense we would have gotten rid of ours over the side, but, somehow, that struck me as unsportsmanlike, and he afterward said that he felt the same way. As for Boles himself, nothing short of sulphuric acid could have ever put his steady head on the bias.

We stuck at it, drink for drink, for about four rounds, and then the blow fell. We seemed suddenly to have run into a fog bank—then it cleared a bit and I saw the two Spaniards dancing furiously up and down, locked in one another's arms—and wondered how they ever managed to do it with the schooner on her beam ends. Thereupon I was lost in admiration for their cleverness, and wanted to go over and embrace them, as they weren't such bad fellows after all! But when I got up, a swell must have gotten under her, for the deck rose with me.

I dimly overheard Boles saying to the presidente: "And then Emilio might take a course at Juliens—"

When I awoke it seemed to me that I had just gone over Niagara Falls, and was about to enter the rapids. I rose suddenly upright, and it did not need the thump that I gave my head on the deck above to remind me that I had one. Knapp was standing beside my bunk with a grin on his face and an empty bucket in his hand. Behind was Boles, wearing a worried look.

"How do you feel?" he asked anxiously.

"Oh, not so bad; I'm more used to this kind of hardship," said I, beginning to "take notice." "What time is it?"

"Six o'clock."

"Morning or evening?"

"Morning," he answered with a bit of a smile. "Getting your bearings?"

"Yes," said I, thinking a bit. "We had a time, didn't we? How about the hemp?"

"Come on deck if you feel able," said he. "It's interesting up there."

I got to my feet, very dizzy and sick and sore. But it was always my curse to feel no after effects to speak of; if I had, it would have been much better for me, I suppose. I never yet knew of a man with a weak stomach getting "D. T.'s." The companionway was a stiff proposition, but, once up, the cool air revived me.

The schooner was still at anchor, but her main and foresails were set, and the anchor hove short up. The decks were covered with long, golden yellow hemp fibres, seeing which my eyes came open wider still.

"For the Lord's sake—" I began in amazement, but Boles tapped me on the shoulder.

"Oh, never mind that," he added. "Look over there!"

I looked, and what I saw sobered me up like a cold plunge. Just under our stern lay the schooner of our rivals, and astern of her, not a cable's length away, there lay a newcomer. Her boat lay alongside the schooner, but no one was in sight. I looked aloft, then on all sides. Not a breath of air was stirring.

"The plot thickens," said I, turning to Boles.

"Well, rather. There are four white men on that new chap, and I don't know how many natives. The worst of it is that we were taking on the last of that hemp when the brig came in. Otherwise we might slip out before they got wind of what was up."

"What's to be done?" I asked.

"It's rather hard to say, but I shouldn't wonder if Knapp had the right idea."

I looked around, and there sat Knapp on the edge of the hatch cleaning a rifle.

A noise astern of us caught our ears. We looked back and saw four men come up the aftercompanion of the schooner. Boles leveled his glass.

"There are our friends of yesterday," he remarked, "and they act as if they were vexed about something."

My ear was caught by a little flapping noise aloft. Looking up I saw the mainsail gently stirred. Outside a dark blue streak appeared on the horizon. A puff of air caught my cheek.

"Hooray!" I exclaimed, "there comes the breeze!"

"Yes," said Knapp, "and here come the greasers."

Boles waved his hand aloft, and the next moment we heard the iron rings of the jib scraping along the forestay. Slowly the schooner began to pay off. But the boat was now close alongside, and coming on as if they meant to board us. In the stern sat our gorilla like friend and his evil looking mate. The sight of them sent little shivers through me and down my spine, but I think that it was excitement rather than fear.

Boles hailed the boat and waved them back with his hand.

"Go back, my friends," he shouted, "we cannot receive you, as we are going out. Adios."

"Stop, senors!" called Boles again. "I say we cannot receive you. Another stroke at your peril!"

The boat still kept on.

"Shoot high, boys," said Boles, "about a foot over their heads. Let them feel the wind!"

Our rifles rang out, and the boat immediately held water. The gorilla rose to his feet.

"But why is this, amigo?" he called reproachfully. "I do not understand. We have but come to bid adios to our kind hosts."

"Then for what purpose are the weapons which I saw but a moment ago in the stern of the boat?" Boles replied.

The face of the gorilla underwent a change. His brows came down and his lips curled up with an expression of malignant ferocity.

"Ah—Dios!—pigs of Englishmen, you have stolen our cargo, first having poisoned us with your vile decoction."

"They're not the only ones," I said to myself.

"The senor is surely in error," answered Boles politely. "It is true that we have taken on a few bales of very poor hemp—but for all of it we have paid a good price and received a receipt. As we were stowing the last of it I learned with deep regret that our schooner had been mistaken for yours, and it is probable that the mistake has not yet been discovered. But what would you have? Business is business, and a man must look after his own interests—is it not so?"

"Yes," replied the Spaniard, "and for that reason I will inform the senor that unless he delivers over the cargo to us we will come and take it by force." He smiled and his yellow teeth gleamed through his bristling mustache.

"What does he say?" demanded Knapp impatiently. "What's all this jawing about, anyway? Why don't you ask 'em what they're going to do about it?"

"He's just told us," said I. "He says that we've got to give up the hemp."

Knapp scowled. "How do you say 'go to hell' in Spanish?" he asked.

"Shut up!" I answered; "I want to hear what Boles says."

"Brown, get our boat over and tow us out a bit to clear that schooner—quick! Knapp, you keep those scoundrels covered, and if one of them reaches for a gun, nail him!"

I jumped to my feet and, running forward, hustled our Japs to the boat falls, which consisted simply of a couple of light tackles and a jig hook, rigged from both mast heads. Boles was haranguing the Spaniards with honeyed words, and they seemed a little undecided as to what course to pursue. Then suddenly I saw the gorilla snatch a rifle from the thwart and throw it to his shoulder. Two reports came simultaneously. Boles staggered a little against the wheel, but the Spaniard fell with a crash across the gunwale of the boat, which promptly capsized, throwing all hands into the bay.

"Hurry up with that boat," sang out Boles. I started aft to get my rifle, when Boles hailed me.

"Stand by to cut that bow line when I give the word—then get aft here as quick as you can to repel boarders! Now stand by to slack your jib sheet! —Leggo your jib sheet!" I cast it off the pin and let it run. The brig was not a cable's length away and coming with a fresh puff of the breeze in her topsails. A knot of men were gathered in her eyes.

"Cut the bow line—hard a lee!—tumble aft here! Don't shoot—knock 'em overboard!"

The brig was almost on us as we luffed, and if they had guessed our design they could have easily jammed their helm down and fouled us, but as she was still paying off, and being a clumsy craft, we swung across their bows before they knew it. They tried to swing in after us, but it was too late. Her starboard run struck our port quarter a glancing blow, and, as it did so, four of the men leaped down on our deck. The first, a Spaniard, fired a pistol almost in Boles' face as he jumped, but at the same moment the bowsprit of the brig fouled the main tipping lift, though Boles had let the mainsheet run. The rope snapped, but the strain suddenly tautened the mainsheet, which flew up, knocking our captain over backward into the lee scuppers. The next moment Knapp had seized the man in both of his great hands and hurled him back against the next, a half breed, knocking both men off their feet. I had brought the capstan brake aft with me, and, slipping past Knapp, I drove the butt of it into the next man's face.

By that time Boles had climbed to his feet, and, jumping across the deck, grabbed the wheel and clawed the spokes toward him as fast as he could work his arms. At the same time Knapp had gripped the Filipino who came last by the waist and swung him up over his head. The man screamed like a rabbit, thinking, no doubt, that he was about to be dashed lifeless on the deck, but the next moment a mighty heave sent him flying over the rail into the bay.

I was standing over the other three, swearing in Spanish at the top of my lungs, and brandishing my capstan brake. One of them, lying almost under the wheel, started to get to his feet, but when he was almost up Boles let drive with his fist and stretched him out again.

Just then our little sailors came running aft, and, under Knapp's direction, bound our prisoners' hands behind their backs. The face of my antagonist was a mass of blood, but he was conscious and swearing vigorously.

The brig was astern of us, drifting aimlessly. A boat had put off from the schooner and had picked up the capsized party, who, from the maledictions that came up to us against the wind, were far from showing the gratitude that they should have felt. I could make out the gorilla nursing one arm in the stern. Knapp afterward told me that he had shot him through the shoulder.

Knapp looked all around him, then threw back his head and laughed.

"If that lubber hadn't upset that outfit we might have been in bad shape," said he.

"Yes," I answered, "we'd not only have had them to look after, but the chap that went after them from the schooner. What if—"

I broke off, horror stricken, and looked at Boles. He had fallen face downward across the wheel. On the deck beneath him was a great pool of blood. Knapp was beside him in one great stride.

"Boles!" he gasped—"old fellow! Oh, my God!"

As if he had been a child he picked him up in his great arms and carried him below. I put one of the Japs at the wheel, motioned to the cook to watch the prisoners and followed him.

Boles was shot in two places—one a glancing ball along the side of the head, and the other a bullet clean through the lungs. When Knapp realized that his own shot had been too late to save his friend his grief and self-reproach were pitiful to see. But it was all unnecessary, for the doctor made a good recovery from both wounds.

When we got off the end of the point, safe from all pursuit, Knapp hove the schooner up and set the prisoners ashore, as we had no earthly use for them. I suppose they made their way back along the beach. We had made Boles as comfortable as possible, and after he came out of his faint he calmly superintended our rough attempts at a surgical dressing. Strange to say, the hole through his chest healed almost immediately, but he told me that this was very apt to be the case in wounds of this description.

Knapp was a poor hand at navigation, but under Boles' direction we managed to find Manila again in about a week. We stopped at one little place on the way and got a little more hemp and some tobacco.

When we got back to Manila I found that I really had no desire to leave the schooner, and as they were very anxious to have me stay with them, and Knapp even offered to pay me an even share, I decided to remain for a while longer. Of course I declined, in fact, absolutely refused to accept any of the money profits of the enterprise, considering myself to be more than amply repaid in the benefit of my health and the grand impetus given to my work. For a man may study, sketch, and read; but until he has laid his naked life in the hollow of the hand of the great ocean god on his own domain, he has yet to feel the spirit of the sea.

Prize Story Department for Children

THIS department is conducted for the school children of the Northwest, and the sole object is to encourage the writing of stories and poems by the children. The column is open to all children of school age. All children, whether their parents are subscribers of The Globe or not, are invited to contribute.

All contributions of merit will be printed providing the following rules are observed:

FIRST—Write plainly.

SECOND—Write on one side of the paper only.

THIRD—Stories or poems must not be more than 150 words in length.

FOURTH—Give your name, address, age and school you attend.

As the young readers of The Globe and their friends have become interested in the Children's Page, it is necessary at times to delay the publication of some contributions received.

Prizes will be awarded each week for the three best stories, as follows:

FIRST—Scholar's Twentieth Century Dictionary, 1904 edition.

SECOND—Fourteen carat gold fountain pen.

THIRD—Book of poems.

Call at 603 Ernst Building for your prize.

Address all communications to Editor Children's Short Story Page, The Globe, St. Paul, Minn.

FIRST PRIZE

My Visit to South Dakota

The most interesting thing that I saw in South Dakota was the prairie dogs. When they bark they stand on their hind legs and wiggle their tails. They are no larger than a small kitten, and as might be expected, are very shy. My cousin wanted to get a picture of them, but they would scamper to their holes. The fur is light brown. We saw a badger as large as a puppy run across our path. The prairie dogs burrow. They cover 1,200 acres and are a pest to the farmers, because they spoil their crops.

—Doris Barwise.

262 East Congress street; Hendricks school, grade A fifth; age 11 years.

The Dogs of Porto Rico

At the time when the first ancient book was published at Amsterdam, 1678, the only mammals found in Porto Rico were the agouti and armadillo, but the Spaniards introduced horses, cattle, hogs and dogs and nearly all of them ran wild on the island. The dogs brought over by the Spaniards were of a savage and cruel disposition, and it is asserted by all the reliable historians that they were imported for the purpose of aiding the conquerors in exterminating the natives. The dogs increased rapidly, and being deserted by their masters or left to shift for themselves, they soon infested the mountainous regions and became a source of dread and danger to those who had intended them for a very different purpose. In this island of Porto Rico there are still a number of these wild dogs. These destroy yearly multitudes of all sorts of cattle.

—Daniel Donahue.

Fort Snelling, Minn.; Cretin high school, age 10 years.

SECOND PRIZE

My Wax Doll

When I was 3 years old I got a wax doll from my aunt for Christmas, and one summer day I was playing in the yard with my dolly, so one of my little friends called me to play in her yard. I hurried to her, but never thought of my dolly that was left all afternoon in the sun and at the night we had a terrible shower. In my sleep I woke up and thought of my dolly that was left in the yard, so in the morning I ran to get dolly. But I was terribly shocked to see my dolly with such a face and I cried very hard.

—Bernadette Lalende.

123 Winnepeg avenue; Whittier school, grade B fourth; age 9 years.

The Squirrels

Squirrels are interesting little animals. I like to watch them going here and there storing nuts in holes and crevices for the winter. They eat twigs, berries, mushrooms, buds in summer.

Squirrels have several homes, which show they like a change. Some are of old crows' nests, but their winter or principal home is built entirely new of grass and leaves woven together. It is placed in forks of long branches or in hollows of decayed trees. The home has two openings, the smaller one for escape and near the trunk, the larger for general use.

The homes are chosen in woodland on high ground, as they do not like low swampy places.

Squirrels can always tell when a storm is approaching, as their five senses—hearing, tasting, seeing, feeling and smelling—are very accurate.

They are also very clean animals.

—Lillie Schulenburg.

Preston public school, Preston, Minn.; grade A sixth; age 12 years.

THIRD PRIZE

An Accident

Once upon a time a friend and I went buggy riding. We rode very nicely until we came to the car line. The horse became suddenly frightened and ran into a car. At last he broke loose and ran away from us. My friend fell out of the buggy, broke her arm and hurt her leg, but I didn't receive any injury whatever. The buggy was broken almost to kindling wood. We were afraid to go home, as we had taken the horse out while mother was away from home. But what did she care for either horse or buggy just so her little girl was not hurt.

—Lillie Holmstrom.

777 Wells street, St. Paul, Minn; Cleveland school, grade A third; age 10 years.

On a Farm

When I was 8 years old my mother sent me out in the country where my cousins live. As she was getting my clothes ready I was feeling so happy wishing I was on the farm in the hay and playing with all the birds and cattle in the country, wishing all the time that the time would soon come. So when she had my clothes ready my mother and I went down to the depot and as we were waiting for the train mother told me to be a good boy on the farm and only stay two months, and help on the farm and learn to be very polite. And she told me to come home when she wrote a letter. Just then the train came and I went on, took goodby of my mother and the train moved off with me on. When I reached the country my cousins were there to meet me, and we rode to the country in a farm wagon. My cousins were very kind to me and I had a good time on the farm. And I went home when my mother wrote to me.

—Fred Johnson.

785 Jessamine street; Cleveland school, grade B fourth; age 11 years.

A Wolf Hunt

Thomas and William, or Bill, as he was called, were two boys who lived out in the country two or three miles from any other human habitation.

During the winter the wolves had been very troublesome, sometimes coming up to the barnyard and carrying off sheep. One day Tom and Bill thought they would go on a little wolf hunt, little dreaming that they themselves would be hunted. They walked around all day until they were quite a distance from home without ever seeing a wolf. Night came on before they knew it. So they started for home.

It was now quite dark and all at once they heard a howl, answered by several others in rapid succession. The two boys started on a run, but the wolves came nearer and nearer. They were badly frightened, and at last climbed a tree. The wolves kept howling all night. Several times during the night the boys dozed off to sleep and awoke to find that they had nearly fallen out of the tree. In the morning they heard the sound of a gun, and their father and several other men appeared. That was the first and last wolf hunt for Tom and Bill.

—John McEneany.

416 Carroll street; Cretin school, grade first commercial; age 14 years.

Hans Christian Andersen

Hans Christian Andersen was born in Odense, Denmark, April 2, 1905. His father was a poor shoemaker and died while Hans was young. Hans was first sent to school and then to a factory, but ran away, as the boys laughed at him because he was so awkward. His mother wanted him to be a tailor, but Hans had higher notions. He wanted to be an actor, but he was too tall and lean. He next wanted to be a singer, but just as he was about successful his voice failed him.

Hans never married.

He was very tall and stooped much when he walked. He wore very old fashioned clothes that were too large for him. He died Aug. 4, 1875, in Copenhagen at the age of 70 years mourned by all.

—Florence Jacobsen.

108 Valley street; Franklin school, grade B seventh; age 12 years.

A Dog's Bravery

Rover was a large and handsome spaniel. He was a great favorite with his young master Willie, who used to enjoy taking the dog along with him when he went hunting ducks.

One day while Willie and his brother Ben were out hunting ducks they went into the creek after two birds they had winged. In the meantime Rover was off hunting on his own account. As Willie was in reach of one of the ducks a piercing cry was heard from Ben, who was up to his neck in water. On looking around Willie saw a large snake approaching his brother, but the snake did not have it all his own way, for at this critical moment Rover suddenly appeared, sprang into the water, seized the reptile and swam to the shore. The snake bit the dog in several places, but he would not drop his burden until the boys were safe. He then showed the boys by his playfulness the joy he felt at saving their lives.

The faithful dog was treated for snake bite, but he died in a few days, to the regret of all the family, and especially of his young master Willie.

—Lawrence J. Erbert.

165 Carroll street; Cretin school, grade first commercial; age 14 years.

The Clothes We Wear

A little boy named Charley asked his mamma what are my shoes made of? His mamma said they are made of leather, and that is made of the hide or skin of a beast; the small nails are of iron, which is dug from the earth, while the strips on the other sides are of rubber, a gum that runs from a tree. Charley thought that was strange. He then asked what his shirt was made of? His mamma said it is partly made of cotton, which comes out of the pods of a shrub, and partly of linen from the stalk of the flax plant. The little buttons are of mother of pearl, from the shell of an oyster. Charley said to his mamma to tell him something of his other clothes. His mamma said the jacket which keeps you so warm is made from the soft wool or fleece of a sheep.

—Charley Tierney.

378 North Franklin street; Cretin high school, grade B second; age 8 years.

Tim's Pet

One day a little boy named Tim Ray was picking berries in a field and he found a dove with a broken wing. He took it home and tied the wing close to the dove's side with a linen band. Soon the wing was well again and the dove could fly, but it did not want to fly away from Tim. Tim was glad to have it stay, for he had no pets nor toys. When he went to pick berries the dove would go too and sit on his shoulder. Tim named it Fairy. At night the dove would sometimes roost on the head of Tim's bed.

The next winter Tim's mother took sick. There was no one to nurse her but Tim. When she grew worse every day Tim called a doctor to come and see her. He said that she would get well if she had some good food. She must have some chicken broth. Tim had no money to buy meat, for his mother was very poor. But he knew that his dove would make good broth. So he took his dove and went to the nearest neighbor and said: "Please kill my dove and make my mother some broth, for she is so sick and has nothing to eat." Then he ran home very fast, so as not to think of his poor dove. In an hour the neighbor brought some good hot broth and when Tim's mother had taken it she felt almost well again. She said: "You shall have some more tomorrow. I will make broth for you till you are quite well." Then Tim told her that he had no more doves and that he did not know how to get meat for her broth. But before the lady could speak there was a rustle of wings and in flew Fairy and lighted on Tim's shoulder. Then the lady told Tim that she did not kill his dove, but one of her chickens, and that she had plenty at home. You are a good boy and willing to give up your pet dove to make some broth for your mother. Tim was very happy. His mother did not know how near she came to eating Fairy. Yours truly.

—Cassie E. Cheadle.

Holloway school; age 12 years.

A Day at the Lake

One morning about 6 o'clock my father, sister, a few friends and myself started for Gervais lake to fish. It was about five miles, and as there was no car line we had to walk. We all had old clothes on and wide straw hats.

We reached there about 8 o'clock and hired a boat. We found a good camping place and landed. My father and the other men went out and caught some fish, while we built a fire. We spread an oilcloth on the ground and put our food on that, then ate. After dinner we had a fishing contest. My sister and father were to take the boat and go out for half an hour, then Mr. Thompson, our friend, and I were to do the same and see who got the most fish. They caught seven, but just as we got six my hat fell into the water and we had to fish for that. By the time we got the hat our time was up, so we lost. When we got home about 6 o'clock we were all sunburned, but we had a good day's fishing.

—Clara Stevens.

348 East Thirteenth street; Franklin school, grade A sixth; age 11 years.