

# POLLY EVANS' STORY PAGE FOR BOYS AND GIRLS

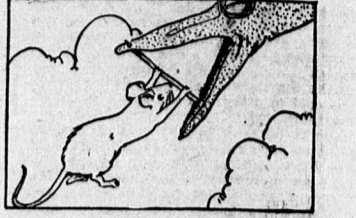
## Moving On: The Tale of a Boy Tramp

### WATER RAT'S ENEMY

FOR ever so long a time Mr. Water Rat dwelt peacefully in the dam. A comfortable home in the bank had been a snug little hole that sheltered him nicely.

When he desired a sun bath he swam forth and lolled upon a broad lily pad. And when the nights were warm he nestled among the cool petals of the lily. Then other occasions he would use for a boat the empty sardine can left by a fisherman. It also was fine sport to climb up the reeds from the tops of the dam.

Indeed, a happy life Mr. Water Rat was leading, until the Pike came into it.



The Pike was a bad enemy to have. He wished to eat the Water Rat. Yes, sir; he really did. Not once, but many times he entered the Pike's mind that Mr. Water Rat possibly wouldn't care to be made a meal of.

But Mr. Water Rat vowed that he wasn't going to be eaten. So he at once set about trying to rid himself of this troublesome fish. This is how he went about it.

First, Mr. Water Rat discovered a long, sharp nail. Then, with this weapon clutched in his paws, he sought the fierce Pike.

The Pike soon was found. He was hungry, and as he saw the Rat he chuckled to himself.

"Aha! The little fellow yonder will taste mighty good for luncheon."



Mr. Water Rat did not attempt to flee. Instead, right into the jaws of Mr. Pike he swam. With all his strength he wedged the nail between the wide-open jaws of the fish. The Pike didn't have Mr. Water Rat for lunch that day. As a matter of fact, the Pike had no luncheon at all, nor did he have dinner nor even breakfast on the following day.

Next morning, when Mr. Pike was fed the quite faint from hunger, the Water Rat swam to the bottom of the pond, where he hid his gunny sacking and pushing the fish upward through the water toward the mill upon a hook dropped into the pond by a man who was fishing. A quick heave there was upon the bank, and Mr. Pike lay squirming on the bank.

The big Pike was no more. Back to his hole again Mr. Water Rat, hugely delighted that he could again live in peace.

### Cure for Restiveness

ALL-GAGA-BEN-MOISTAPPA, owner of a magnificent horse, unfortunately, however, this animal was very much afraid of firearms.

So All-Gaga took his horse to a famous veterinarian, who in the space of a minute cured the horse of his foolish fear.

The owner was amazed. He would pay 100 pieces of silver to know this remarkable remedy, said he.

The doctor, after pocketing the silver, calmly pulled a roll of cotton from each of the horse's ears.

### Policemen as Good Fairies



PERHAPS it will be hard for many of you to imagine a fairy with a big helmet, a blue coat and a policeman's truncheon. Polly Evans knows some mischief-loving boys who would be very cautious about trusting such a creature at first.

But nobody could possibly help liking every one of the policemen at Brighton, England. And they deserve to be liked, for each has played the part of a fairy godmother many times. You won't say, "Poor little beggars!" but now they have seen about giving good clothes to little people in distress, just as the fairy godmother gave Cinderella a ball dress to take the place of her rags.

Formerly when the big-hearted policemen saw the poor boys and girls huddled under their rags they could only say, "Poor little beggars!" but now they call, "Hi, Tommy" or "Hi, Mary, what are your name and where do you live?" And pretty soon Tommy or Mary is dressed in good clothes.

These policemen have collected as much as \$200 in three months. About one-third of this sum was raised by means of a public entertainment of some kind. All of the money is used to purchase clothing.

The distribution of clothes takes place in the police gymnasium, an arched room on the beach, built under an eucalyptus tree. To the poor children it seems like an Aladdin's cave.

A dozen or more big policemen are on duty there, but the duty is sheer pleasure. Their honest faces beam over with good humor, and they are like foster fathers to the little folk.

Outside the room in the archway the boys and girls are drawn up in lines. The girls in the morning, the boys in the afternoon, and on the steps of the bathing machines on the beach their mothers wait to see the joyful change which will take place.

Here and there are little ones wearing bits of broken leather which cannot by any stretch of imagination be called shoes. Their feet are almost naked upon the ground, not only of what has disappeared, but the feet of what once had been stockings. But, although the weather be cold, they stand there for a little while, very patiently and happily, until the doors are drawn back and a jolly policeman calls, "Now, then, my dears, come along."

and the children go with sparkling eyes through the archway.

Inside the room there are long tables piled with garments, behind which are a number of ladies and rows of benches upon which the children take their seats. Each girl receives a card which entitles her to her outfit, and when these have been distributed the girls have a little feast before the clothing is given. It is delightful to see the Brighton police waiting on the little ones, and the little ones waiting on the police. Afterward, when the girls and boys are well fed, the children are left to the ladies. Half an hour later the doors are opened again, and out comes the first Cinderella.

What a change! This little girl had gone in looking very much like a scarecrow, in her bundle of rags. She comes out in a cloth, tam-o'-shanter, a nice little dress of blue cloth covered with a clean, dainty pin-fine, and a neat little cap which will keep her warm for a twelvemonth in the wind and rain. Cinderella has been transformed, and give shrill cries of delight, and the little girl's eyes are bright with joy. Then one by one the other ladies come and check up the new garments, and the policemen are the heroes. At a word of command out go the ragged jackets and rattered overcoats and the rags that are called shirts and the bits of string that are called braces. And then the big policeman brings out the new garments and put real shirts on the poor children, and good, good clothing and breeches of good cloth, and big hands do up the little buttons and fasten the braces and the girls' bodies into small coats. No nursery maids could be more deft or kind than these busy men.

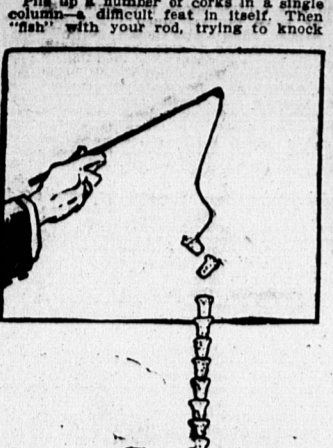
And the boys are not afraid of these policemen. The old idea of most boys that the policeman is a dreadful bogey-man, who is lying in wait to drag bad boys to prison, is no longer possible in Brighton. These boys and girls, once upon the policemen as their best friends.

"THE POLICEMEN ARE THEIR BEST FRIENDS"

### PLAY WITH CORKS

THIS picture shows a little cork "stand" that seems quite simple. To one end of a piece of string is tied a cork and to the other end is attached a rod.

Pile up a number of corks in a single column—difficult feat in itself. Then "knock" with your rod, trying to knock



one cork at a time from the column without disturbing the balance of the other corks in the heap.

It takes a skillful person to do this trick successfully.

### Vain Little Butterfly

THE Blue Butterfly had grown very conceited, and because the birds and the flowers told her so many times a day how delightful she looked with her daintily marked wings, she began to think of nothing else but her own beauty.

One day, when she was idly flitting about in the sunshine, a little boy came running out into the garden.

"Oh, what a pretty butterfly!" he cried.

The Blue Butterfly was delighted, and flew close to let him see her pretty wings.

"Be careful! Be careful!" whispered the Wind. "He'll catch you if he can!"

But the Butterfly took no notice. She only thought how nice it was to be admired by a real boy, as well as by the birds and flowers. She flitted gracefully about, but suddenly she happened to look up, and oh! what was happening!

The boy had taken off his cap and was bringing it down sharply over her. It came so swiftly that she could not escape.

How dark and hot and dreadful it was under the cap! The poor Butterfly fluttered about, but saw no way of escape. Stay! The Wind was blowing a corner of the cap so that it rose a little from the ground.

"Come along! He's gone for a match-box to put you in," he whispered.

The Butterfly crept out, then away she flew to rest and recover on a friendly flower.

"Oh, thank you, thank you, dear Wind," she said. "You've saved my life, and I've learned a lesson, too—I shall never be so vain again!"



COMMANDS THE DOG TO STAY HOME.

### CHAPTER I THE DECREE OF THE MYSTIC CIRCLE

ALL eyes were fixed upon the Most High Judge as he arose majestically and arranged his black robe so that it fell in graceful folds. Then he pushed upward the mask, which showed a disposition to slip down over his mouth. The head of every black robed and masked figure in the room bent toward the judge, when, after a dignified silence, he delivered the following verdict:

"Conrad Burgess, the Court of the Mystic Circle of Those Who Dare has most carefully sought a mission for you, and, by unanimous vote, you are to journey to San Francisco and return within six months."

The jurymen grinned delightedly at the blank look of astonishment that came over Conrad Burgess' face. But it was the jury's turn to be astonished when Conrad made the firm reply:

"I, Conrad Burgess, will attempt the mission upon which the court has been pleased to send me, and should I fail, will resign from the Mystic Circle, according to the law set forth."

In spite of themselves, a low whistle escaped from the body of jurymen. The strict rule of the order, however, forbade speaking, and it was not until the members were packing away their costumes in the adjoining room that the

years. Each week the whole circle came upon a mission for one of their voted upon. Any member who failed in the mission selected for him was to be expelled from the order and was to be branded a coward by the other members during the rest of their lives. All kinds of crazy pranks about the neighborhood could be credited to the Mystic Circle. But no matter how difficult the feat required, no member of the Mystic Circle of Those Who Dare had yet been expelled.

Of course, the club did not imagine for a moment that Conrad would accept the mission. They realized that it was unreasonable to ask of him, and they had agreed not to expel him, but to give him an easier errand. Now that their comrade had declared himself ready to undertake the jaunt, however, they were curious to see how he would keep his word.

Meanwhile, Conrad was plodding homeward in a very sober frame of mind. It seemed to him a very great disgrace to be banished from the Mystic Circle and to be scorned as a coward for all time to come. It wasn't fair, he thought, that the jury should give him such an exceedingly difficult task, when all Tom Honsall had to do last week was to tie the Marshall's cat to the steeple of the Lutheran church. But the trip must be accomplished. This much he had determined. How to do it was another matter.

"Why do you look so worried, Conrad?" asked his mother, as he sat down to dinner.

Conrad replied that nothing was the matter, but Mr. Burgess, after glancing at the boy's face, said with decision:

"I think we will have to send you away upon a vacation, Conrad; you aren't looking well."

To this remark the lad wished to answer that he would appreciate a trip to San Francisco; but, even if Mr. Burgess could have afforded such a vacation for the boy at the time, no member of the Mystic Circle was permitted to accept outside aid in this sort of undertaking.

Conrad was fearful to do something that might be planned for him that would

make it difficult to carry out his own scheme of action. He made up his mind quickly. That evening he wrote a note to his parents telling them that he was going away upon a little vacation. He himself had planned, and that they were not to worry about him during the six months or more he probably would be absent. Then he tied together a few belongings and sat down upon the edge of his bed to wait for the passing of time.

Promptly at midnight the boy climbed out of his window and lowered himself to the ground by the lightning rod. Bruno, Conrad's favorite pet, pleaded to be taken along, but the boy commanded the dog to "stay home," and then, with a heavy heart, he passed through the

garden gate out into the road.

He traversed a distance of fully ten miles before he decided it safe to rest. Flinging himself down amid a grove of trees, he sank into sleep. The sun was shining brightly when he was aroused by a harsh voice, saying:

"Hste to rouna yuh, bo, yuh look so durned comfortable, but I'm a-thinkin' there might be somethin' with cutn' in that bag under your head, an' I'm ready fer any table d'hote whatever."

Conrad cheerfully invited the tramp—for no one could mistake the gentleman for other than a friend to share the food he had brought with him.

"Sure," said the tramp, without hesitation.

(TO BE CONTINUED NEXT WEEK.)

## Story Time for Dolly



LATE afternoons, when rays of sunshine creep through window pane, And pretty colored pictures show upon the play-room floor, There comes a time—a story time—and Dolly hears again The fairy stories mother told to me the night before.

All morning Dolly works to keep her house so neat and clean, And 'cause she is so 'dustrious the time for lunch comes soon; She has a time for calling, one for dining, but between There's always time for stories, in the sunny afternoon.

### Flight of the Curious Cockatoo



### In the Jungle



"KILLS THE GIANT SPIDERS"

"I HAVE hit it!" cried Akmea, as her arrow quivered in the tree bough for which she had aimed.

Her brother whirled a slingshot immediately, loosed the pebble and uphappily: "So have I, announced triumphantly. Hadji moved toward the tree with the intention of swinging himself up by the vines and reclaiming the arrow. But it was such a warm day that he was tempted not to exert himself. He paused and absent-mindedly placed a stone in his sling.

"Suppose we take a walk in the jungle; it is cool there," suggested the girl. Without more ado, the pair strode forward, the boy hustling aside the branches and underbrush to make a path for his sister. They advanced slowly, for the passage was difficult. However, in the luxuriant foliage and found much to interest them. So enjoyable did they find their occupation until Hadji exclaimed:

"We have never been here before!" Akmea gazed anxiously around. She thought it time to retract her steps. Her brother agreed with her, and together they searched for the path by which they had come. But this was no easy matter. The more they hunted the more confused they became. At last Akmea murmured dolefully: "We are lost, brother; I know it."

Hadji bade her be of stout heart, telling her that soon they would find a way home. Nevertheless, when darkness suddenly came, after but a few minutes of twilight, the two were still wandering in this dense Indian forest.

Then, to make their plight worse, a noise as of some savage beast approaching was heard. Akmea crept closer to her brother and whispered frightfully: "Wild animals will eat us!"

The boy tried to comfort her, but he himself found it hard to keep courage when four red eyes glowed in the underbrush only a few yards distant.

"Run! Run for your life!" exclaimed Hadji.

ened to move. For an instg, she stood scarcely breathing, until Hadji grabbed her by the arm and dragged her away. Through the bush they stumbled, buffeted by low-hanging branches and scratched by bambuses. The ground was ill-chosen for rapid flight. Not more than a rod had been covered when a "Yip" tripped them and they tumbled headlong.

Both were stunned by the fall. Akmea recovered consciousness first, but the sight that met her eyes caused her almost to swoon again. Right before her were the four gleaming balls of fire. And those flaming lights came nearer and nearer, until the little girl could see that they were eyes belonging to giant spiders.

Of course, Akmea knew that she might save herself by running away. She hadn't the least intention, however, of leaving Hadji. Desperately resolved was she to defend him with all her strength.

Looking about for a weapon, she discovered the slingshot still resting upon the ground. Quick as a flash she seized it and lashed madly at the monster in front of her. There was a thud; then the spider ceased to move. Through fortunate chance, the stone carelessly placed in the sling by Hadji had remained there.

Akmea drew a pause. Blow after blow she rained upon the other horrible creature, until it, too, was killed.

"Here we sat upon the beasts," faintly asked Hadji, looking about him in a dazed fashion.

For reply, Akmea pointed to the bodies of the monstrous spiders she had slain.

"Brave little sister!" cried the boy, embracing Akmea; "I surely owe my life to you!"

Happily, no other misadventure befell them during the long night. The next morning they found their way out of the jungle, and, reaching home, re-mother, who greatly feared that the beasts of the forest had eaten the child. Neither Hadji nor Akmea needed a warning about exploring far into the jungle thereafter. One experience is