



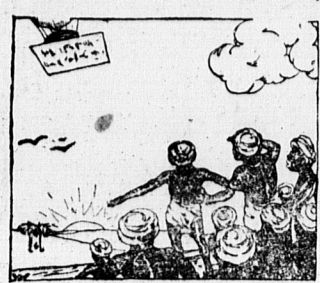
# POLLY EVANS' STORY PAGE FOR BOYS AND GIRLS



## The Magic Sign: A Legend

PROVINCES were in revolt against French rule, troops were needed badly. This was the year that caused the French army to withdraw from Algiers and to hasten by forced marches toward the scene of disturbance.

Scarcely had the soldiers crossed the frontier line than they rose up in Algeria. One Ben Gaudet, an Arab chieftain, the breadth of the land he rode, fiercely denouncing France and urging the people to take up arms against her.



SIGN SUSPENDED FROM BALLOON

Ben Gaudet's efforts to incite rebellion were so successful that when the French troops returned to Algiers they found themselves greatly outnumbered by the insurgents. In one contest, although they repulsed and killed many of the Arabs, they themselves suffered great loss.

This sort of campaign, the French general perceived, would never do. Yet he did not wish to ask for a larger army. At last he thought of a scheme to outwit the Arabs. Under a flag of truce he paid a visit to Ben Gaudet, addressing the chieftain in this fashion:

"It is useless for you to war against France. Soon or later your entire forces will be destroyed. This is bound to happen, since it is by Allah's command we rule over you. He wished to punish you for your sins, therefore he sent us to conquer you. I do not believe it," cried the Arab. The Frenchman calmly responded: "You would have a sign? Very well; watch closely the heavens tonight. There you will learn the truth."

Quickly the general returned to camp, where he immediately ordered a large transparency made, upon the bottom of which were pasted strips of red paper in the form of Arabic characters. These were securely fastened inside the frame, so that when they were burning the red letters would show plainly.

Ben Gaudet's curiosity regarding the sign was so great that he confided in others. Rapidly the news spread, and when night fell the whole Arab army was to be seen gazing intently at the sky.

They had not long to wait. Soon across the sky overhead moved brilliant letters of red flame. In them the Arabs read: "COMMAND YOU TO CEASE FIGHTING. IT IS MY DESIRE TO HAVE PEACE. RULE OVER YOU. THIS DO I PROMISE YOU."

Exclaiming aloud in terror, the Arabs threw themselves upon the ground, and the sign of Allah disappeared. They straightway made submission to the French general, who, by merely flying one of his war balloons with the transparency suspended beneath it, gained an important victory.

"Allah!" they cried, and raised their hands in prayer until the sign of Allah had disappeared. They straightway made submission to the French general, who, by merely flying one of his war balloons with the transparency suspended beneath it, gained an important victory.

MIJO RETELS THE STORIES

So impressed was Mijo with the tales that upon succeeding days he would gather his boy chums around him and tell again the stories. He could imagine well, too, so that when he concluded the tales of the story-teller, he began to construct ones of his own. They pleased the lads immensely, and they begged Mijo for more. As time went on the boy became very skilful in his art. He went to the houses of the "yose" whenever his father could take him, in order that he might learn from the masters of story-telling.

There came a day when Mijo's father could no longer pay an admittance to the houses of the "yose." Business matters had not gone well with him, and now he was very poor. Mijo was much sorer for his father and mother than he was for himself. He must try to help them in some way. But what should he do?

Best of all, he could tell stories. Yet he was only 13 years old—certainly not old enough to become a professional story-teller and earn money in that way. But people had told him his stories were quite as good as those told by the "yose." It were a pity not to make his talent pay him something.



## Stolen: Monsieur's Dunch and Judy Show

"COME, let us play leapfrog!" shouted Jules, presenting a "back" for those who cared to take advantage of the invitation.

His companions were soon vaulting lightly over him, and the line kept moving rapidly forward down the street, imperiling the safety of persons who passed by. Indeed, it so happened that as the line turned a corner, Armaud went headfirst into a portly gentleman approaching, whereupon the lady found it convenient to suddenly flee.

When Armaud paused for breath at a safe distance from any gendarme (policeman) who might be in pursuit, he found Jules at his elbow.

"Too bad," grunted Jules, "that the game had to be broken up. It's almost school time, and too late to get the fellows together again."

Armaud, who while his companion was speaking, had been absorbed in his own thoughts, now turned to Jules, saying: "You don't want to play truant from school this afternoon, do you?"

"Well, that depends," replied Jules thoughtfully. "The fact is," explained Armaud, "I've a scheme to get even with the 'professor' who runs the Punch and Judy show in the Champs Elysees. He complained to the gendarme because I threw a ball at Punch during the performance yesterday. Had an awful time getting away, too. But I have a scheme that'll fix him; only it needs two to work it."

This adventure promised excitement exactly to Jules' liking, so he was quick to answer. "All right; count me in."



"VAULTING LIGHTLY OVER"

When other boys passed into their class rooms that afternoon, Jules and Armaud were not among them. Round about the Champs Elysees the two lads wandered, their eyes gleaming with anticipation of a frolic.

Some distance from the rear seats grouped before the little theater of the Punch and Judy show, the lads stopped. They waited for the musician to pick up his violin—a signal that the performance was about to begin.

This very instant the musician raised his bow, Jules dashed away. Running swiftly toward the booth, he rapped quickly on the door at the back. Out

came the proprietor of the theater, with his sleeves rolled up, ready to manipulate the little figures. He was exceedingly angry at being interrupted at such a time. But before he had opportunity to vent his wrath, Jules burst out:

"Monsieur, a relative of yours has been seriously hurt by accident, and now lies at the chemist's shop under. He begs that you come to him immediately."

Imagining all sorts of frightful things, the proprietor rushed to the druggist's shop without donning his coat. Jules at once slipped into the booth, while Armaud, who had been cautiously drawing near, took a post where he could note the return of the owner.

Meantime the audience of boys and girls was eagerly awaiting the appearance of the characters in the Punch and Judy show. The violinist had ceased playing, and now they were calling for the mannikins to begin their performance.

STRANGE SORT OF PLAY

Suddenly the curtain flew up. A moment later the play began. But it was such a play as no boy or girl had ever seen before. Punch and Judy stood on their heads most of the time, or kicked wildly in the air. And they fought—how they fought!

Frantically the children applauded. It was splendid! But the musician was so shocked that his mouth opened wide enough to have swallowed his violin, especially when the mannikins called each other horrible names and invited the musician to come up and fight them. As for the gendarme—HE had to lean against a post for support.

Of course, Jules it was who was operating the show and doing all the mischief. He was enjoying himself immensely, too, when Armaud gave a cry of warning. The "professor" had returned.

Jules did not hear his friend. And Armaud, determined not to desert his comrade, hastily entered the booth. Then together they started to run. But it was too late. Both dived toward a dark corner of the booth and piled over themselves a heap of curtains they found there.

"Find the rogue who has tried to steal my show and who would mock me!" cried monsieur, flushed and perspiring from anger and the heat of the "wild-goose chase" upon which he had been sent.

"He was handling the puppets a moment ago," said the gendarme, "but I fear he must have escaped."

Still dreading, the "professor" shut his little theater and started for home in high dudgeon. People would laugh at him if he tried to give a play now after what had occurred.

Jules and Armaud breathed freer when they heard his departing footsteps. They were not yet out of the scrape, however. For the proprietor had locked the door of the theater before he went. Through the window there served for a stage in the front of the booth. Now could they climb out without being seen by a gendarme?

There was nothing to do but wait for darkness. Many weary hours they lay



THE STRANGE ANTICS OF PUNCH AND JUDY CAUSE MUCH EXCITEMENT

there, wondering if, after all, the joke had not turned upon themselves. Not until midnight did they dare risk dropping from the miniature stage to the ground. Then they scuttled away, secure in the belief that punishment

would await them on their arrival home. They were right. The parents of moths had were satisfied with the explanation given, and the boys received a fitting punishment.

"Next time you try to get even with the 'professor' you can do the job by yourself," Jules said frankly to Armaud when again they met. Armaud isn't so very anxious to make another attempt to get even, however.

## Story of a Baker King

A CERTAIN king of Bavaria strolled one day beyond the palace grounds, wishing to be alone.

Upon his return, he passed through the gates of the palace, the king observed that the guard there stationed failed to "present arms."

"Why do you not salute?" thundered the king. "Don't I provide your duty bread?"

Now the guard had been on duty at the palace for only a day, and he did not recognize his royal master. Naturally he did not imagine that his majesty would travel about unattended.

For some little time he pondered over upon him. Shaking his fist angrily at the monarch, he crumbled:

"Oh! it's you, is it? You're the one



THOUGHT HIM THE BAKER'S SON

of the cursed baker who gives us such villainous bread. Humph! It's you! I advise you not to come too near, or I'll show you what I think of your daily bread. I'll jab you full of holes—that's what I'll do!"

The joke was so good that the king could not take offense. Fancy a sovereign being mistaken for his baker!

Not What He Seemed

THE old gentleman who was always declaring that boys were not what they used to be stopped in front of the smart child.

"Well, Buddy," greeted the old gentleman, "how are you today?" "Very well, sir," responded the smart child, shyly.

"And do you ever think what you are going to do when you are a great big man?" "No, sir." "Children are so shiftless these times. And why don't you give it any thought?" "Because I am a little girl, sir."

Pa Answered Not. Little Willie—Say, pa? Pa—Well, my son? Little Willie—Does a mill race come under the head of aquatic sports?

## Mijo and the "Yose"

STORY-TELLING delighted Mijo more than anything else. When he was quite a tiny boy he used to listen to the men who earned their living by telling stories. This sort of story-teller sat on the street corner. There always stood about him a crowd of gaping coolies, listening with great astonishment to the wonderful tales.

And then, when Mijo grew somewhat older, his father would take him to houses where there was a better class of story-tellers—men who related tales of war and of love, often accompanying their recitations with the music of professional story-tellers of this kind formed a guild, called a "yose," and recited places of entertainment where people went to hear stories and songs.

Once, when Mijo's father was entertaining friends, a member of the "yose" had come and had told stories of the "Forty-seven Ronin," the "Three Kingdoms" and tales about the wars of the Taira and Minamoto families. The boy remembered that whenever the story-teller would say something that he regarded as being very clever, he would rap with a little slab of wood.

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## WHEN I'M AFRAID OF JOHNNY

"I shall have a little 'yose' house of my own," said Mijo determinedly. "I shall have a room set apart in my house, and there I will invite all my boy friends who like to hear my stories. But, while heretofore they have listened and have not been asked to pay anything, I shall now request them to make small donations."

From the very start Mijo's plan was a success. Although fees were never very large, and rarely in money, yet provisions and articles of all descriptions poured in from the children. Then grown folk began to hear about this wonderful story-teller who was only a little boy. They began to call upon him, leaving real money.

After a while the members of the big "yose" found that many of their best customers were going to hear the boy, who changed his stories and songs almost every day, instead of once a fortnight, according to the usual custom. Story-tellers were sent from the "yose" to speak with the boy. At last they were obliged to offer Mijo membership in the guild.

Improved Upon It

ONE of the lady teachers at an English free school was putting a junior class through the beginnings of arithmetic.

SOMETIMES I do not budge an inch When Johnny gives an awful pinch; And even when he pulls my hair I'm not afraid enough to run— Deed, I just think it's bits of fun To close with him and have a fight. Though mother says THAT isn't right.

HEROIC OBEDIENCE

RECENTLY a Dublin gentleman proposed to drive with his wife to the beautiful Glasnevin Cemetery. Calling his little son, a bright boy, about 4 years old, he told him to get ready to accompany them. The child's countenance fell and the father said, "Don't you want to go, Willie?" The little lip quivered. "Yes, papa, if you wish." The child was strangely silent during the drive, and when the carriage reached the entrance he clung to his mother's side and looked up in her face with pathetic wistfulness.

## The Hostess who wasn't Present

"OH, DAN, what in the world shall I do? Those horrid chills and fever have come on me so quickly that I haven't had time to send word to the guests that my party must be postponed. They'll all be right in and oh, dear! I—I—I—!" Nan's teeth chattered so with a "chill" at this point that she fell back upon her pillow, burying herself under a mountain of bedclothes.

Dan patted her head comfortingly. "Don't worry, Sis, I'll see that the party comes through all right. I'm most too old to entertain them myself, but I'll find a way. You spend your time getting well, and forget all about the party. There'll be a good report for you after the party is over and the chills are over, too."

When Nan's guests came from the rooms where they had deposited their wraps they were surprised to find not a single person there to receive them. Presently one of the girls rushed forward, exclaiming:

ANSWERING BEFOREHAND

IN A FISH shop in Brighton stands a glass tank filled with water, in which there is a single goldfish. Hanging on the outside of the tank is a placard, which contains the following answers to questions which the proprietor of the shop has got tired of replying to by word of mouth:

It is alive.

There is only one of it.

They read the placard

But the boys and girls weren't long in carrying out Nan's suggestion. Some knew good games seldom played, others set their wits to work to manufacture entertainment, while the rest pounced upon books and found most attractive means for pleasant pastime.

"Here's a good one!" cried a boy; "let me read it." He then read as follows:

"The game is played with soft wooden balls, the colors being in pairs—two blues, two reds, and so forth. The pairs stand opposite each other, children with blue balls having belts of blue paper. All balls having belts of air at once when a clap gives the signal. Each player tries to catch his or



her own color. A forfeit is paid for any ball found on the floor. The colors show the owners. Forfeits must also be paid for any ball caught of the wrong color."

Dan's trick box furnished the balls. Soon there was plenty of excitement and fun.

Then came the game, "Carry a Nut to London and an Apple to the Sea," in which two players sit at one side of the room, one with the letter C placed prominently over her head, the other