

POLLY EVANS' STORY PAGE FOR BOYS AND GIRLS

Julia's Commencement Dress



"THESE caramels are delicious; who made them?" queried Peggy. Sitting tailor-wise on her cushion, she munched with evident delight.

"Why, Julia, of course," replied Beth; "Julia always makes the best candy."

Whereupon Flora observed, as she reached for a wafer made also by Julia:

"I do wish she would come and share in the refreshments. Here she's been bobbing around for the last fifteen minutes and hasn't had a bite."

"Julia is foraging for more tencaps," drawled Peggy. Looking severely toward Flora, who was carefully balancing a cup on her fingertips, she added: "And if you attempt juggling, fests there'll be more cups to replace. No wonder Julia never has time for anything. She's always busy attending to you harum-scurum girls and keeping your straight."

"Please be just and include yourself among those who need a responsible guardian," Flora remarked pertly. "But I do think I don't know what we'd do without her."

Conversation was interrupted at this point by the arrival of Julia, who tripped and tumbled as she waved a cracked and battered tencap.

"Sit down," commanded Beth, "and eat some of your super-excellent caramels before Peggy robbles them all."

Soon every one was talking glibly about "commencement." For all were seniors at Hopewell School, and the following week they were to graduate.

"Well, girls," said Julia, merrily, "I'll be sorry to spoil the fine effect, but I don't see how it can be avoided. You know how dreadfully poor folks are. They can't help it, I suppose—anyhow, I can't—so there's no use worrying. I'm by no means proud of being poor, but neither am I ashamed of it, and as long as you girls don't seem to care a very great deal, why, I suppose I can stand it. But I'm sure mother can't afford me a handsome dress. In fact, I won't permit her to get one, therefore, you will doubtless see your charming fellow-graduates in the plainest of plain gowns."

"You're the only poor person I ever liked," Julia said Peggy, frankly. "Peggy's family was very wealthy, and she herself quite aristocratic. But Julia treated poverty as though it were the greatest joke, so that Peggy, who had an idea that all poor people should be mild and subdued, always making apology for their lack of money, unconsciously found herself admiring Julia, who seemed to be sad or woful or ashamed because she wasn't wealthy."

A CLEVER MANDARIN

GRATEFULLY alarmed with Koo-Fi-Gaun, the great ruler of China, News had come by special messenger that a fierce maharajah of India was sailing in a fleet of pirate ships, and with a vast army of bandits, to invade the Chinese empire and rob its monarch of his treasure.

In his distress the emperor turned to his ministers for counsel. But all were at loss for advice, until a very old and wise courtier bent low, so that his queue touched the ground, and said:

"Master of the universe, thy unworthy slave believes he has found a way to keep the Indian barbarians from thy sacred dominions. Dost give a him full leave to carry out his plan?"

"Do as thou wilt," replied the monarch, "only rid me of this pest."

Thereupon the old mandarin outfitted a vessel, placing therein for cargo a number of large boxes, in each one of which was planted a Chinese tree, and many casks of old rusty nails. In his crew were only aged sailors, toothless and wrinkled.

Away from the shores of China sailed the ship. In two days it met the vanguard of the Indian fleet. Pirates at once boarded the Chinese junk.

"You are from China?" asked a blood-thirsty Indian captain.

"We are," replied the mandarin.

"Then tell us," commanded the pirate, "how far we are from land."

Very little was known about China by the people of India at this time, and the mandarin felt safe in testing his plan. He made answer in this wise:

"Observe how old each member of my crew is. We were all young when first we started to sail westward from the shores of China. Gaze upon these palms, when we began our voyage we carried rusty nails. You now see sprouted and grown into trees. Look at these boxes, and you may reckon for yourself the distance we have sailed from our native land."

The pirate captain marvelled. Straightly he reported the mandarin's story to the maharajah, who became disconcerted, fearing that a conquest of China would take much too long a time. Therefore he turned back with his army to the distance that Koo-Fi-Gaun's empire was saved by the crafty mandarin.

Too Good a Hiding Place



"WON'T oo please det my Dolly Wosey?" Roxey wailed.

"What's happened to 'er now?" sternly demanded Jack. It was Roxie's habit to lose at least one plaything a day and then call upon her brother to find it for her. Jack now spoke sharply, not because he was out of patience, but for the reason that his 4 years gave him great authority over Roxie, who was only 4.

The little girl struggled for some little while with her tears before she could answer, between sobs:

"She's fell down big hole in P'syhouse Tree, Bruvver, Jack."

"All right, I'll get 'er out in a minute," returned her brother, without pausing in his work of fixing a toy cart. "Thoroughly satisfied that her lost doll would be recovered, Roxie tripped joyfully away to impart the tidings to her second-best doll, Marigold. Jack finally secured the loose cart wheel and then, remembering his promise, started upon the rescue of "Dolly Wosey."

The Playhouse Tree was so called because it provided the most delightful "root" for girls and boys. It stood by the edge of a brook, over which its limbs extended. The trunk did not spring vertically from the ground, but slanted gradually, and was so broad and easy to climb that the smallest lad or lassie could easily crawl up to the great limbs above, where one could

choose a number of comfortable seats. At the branching place of the lowest bough, however, there was an immense cavity leading down to a great hollow in the trunk below. Into this "hole" poor "Dolly Wosey" had been tumbled by her careless mistress.

Running lightly up the trunk Jack leaned over the edge of the hole and peered about. No doll was in sight. Jack thrust his head and shoulders further into the opening. All at once he lost his balance, sliding and falling down the hollow of the trunk.

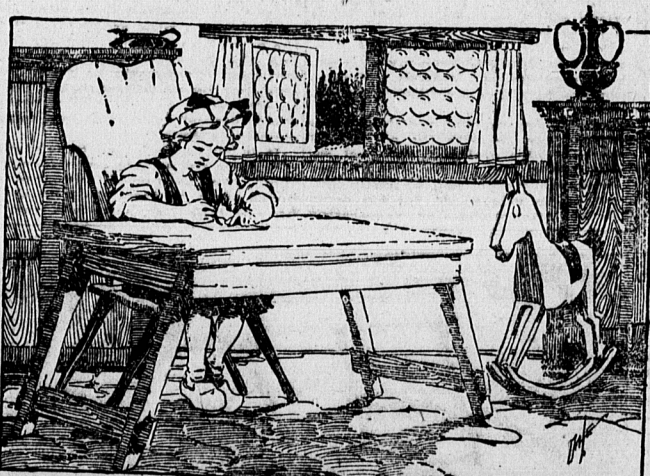
By this time the lad had forgotten all about the doll. His one thought was to escape from his uncomfortable position. But the more he squirmed the tighter he seemed to be wedged himself. Now Jack was really frightened. He screamed with all his might. The cries were muffled by the trunk, however, and he concluded to devote himself to getting out. A succession of earnest wriggles finally brought him up to an almost upright position. But he still remained fast.

An hour passed and then another. Jack remained a prisoner. His shouts brought no response. And then, in spite of his sturdy resolution not to be a "cry-baby," the tears began to flow, coursing in dust and bits of decayed wood.

Meanwhile dinner time arrived. When Roxie made an appearance at the table she was questioned about her brother. She didn't know where Jack was; indeed, she couldn't even "dow." But she remembered he had gone promised to do so, which didn't always mean the same thing.

A search resulted and the unfortunate little boy who had attempted the rescue of Dolly Rose was himself rescued by father from a very miserable plight. You will be glad to know that Dolly was found, also. Nor was she ever afterward lost in such a manner, inasmuch as father carefully nailed a board across the big opening in order that "little boys and dolls might not try to find too good a hiding place in a hollow trunk."

The Rocking Horse Bears Gretel's Message



GRETEL WRITES A MESSAGE TO THE LAD ACROSS THE SEA

DISCONTENT of the worst kind had seized firm hold of Arthur. But it is hard to be cheerful when you are ill; and it is very, very hard to be cheerful when you are ALMOST well, but not well enough to go out and play. The doctor had said Arthur would be entirely recovered in three or four days, but the time of freedom seemed ever so far away.

"I wish I were in Hall's," exclaimed Arthur, savagely. "Or rather," he added, after a moment's reflection, "I wish I were over in the Black Forest of Germany, where we spent last summer. Auntie, do you remember the distance we took north from the Rhine, through the Lollental Pass?"

"Yes," replied Aunt Helen, "and I remember how delighted you were when you found a playmate in that cozy, cheeched little girl with the faxe, hair, who lived in the quaint cottage we came across up in the mountains."

Arthur colored, for that was the very person he was thinking of. But, having the disdain of a 10-year-old lad, he said, indignantly: "Oh, please! girl, I haven't of much account to play with. But say, couldn't her father make dandy wooden clocks? And I remember the fine rocking-horses her big brother made."

Then he sighed so piteously that Aunt Helen suggested a walk, in spite of the fact that she knew the doctor would object.

"Outdoors isn't as pleasant here as the city as among the fir and pine as the Black Forest, but you will at least, for the exercise," observed she, pleasantly.

Down the main street walked the boy. Presently they came in front of a shop, in the window of which stood a big rockinghorse. Now, Arthur had long thought, it possibly might have been the thought of the tiny cottage in the mountains that made him say, so impulsively:

"Let's go in and look around, Auntie."

Aunt Helen was glad that something had been found to interest the boy, so indoors she accompanied him. While they were walking amid rows and heaps of playthings and toys of all sorts, Arthur absent-mindedly stroked the fingers of another rockinghorse. His fingers encountered a slip of paper, which he discovered that a sheet of paper had been folded and stuck with mucklage in the machine, so that it was hidden in a most ingenious way. He had unfolded it and was gazing intently upon sprawling characters written thereon.

"Read it, please, Auntie," he pleaded. "I can't, because it's in German."

A look of astonishment passed over Aunt Helen's face, and then her eyes twinkled mischievously as she read:

"I am a little girl living near to Stuttgart, in the Black Forest. My father makes clocks and my brother makes all kinds of toys. But I am a lonely little girl. I am sending this note by the rockinghorse, and I hope it will reach the little boy who played with me one day last summer. He could not talk German very much, but was a very nice boy to play with, Gretel."

Playing Gives an Appetite



OFTEN young Monk had been told not to hobnob with strangers. But Mr. Leopard proved so charming, so agreeable, that forgetting this warning of elders, the monkey consented to go dining.

Then they played leapfrog, for, as Mr. Leopard observed afterward, while resting, it is well to take exercise before dining.

"Playing gives one an appetite," young Monk agreed.

"Now," exclaimed Mr. Leopard, "my stomach tells me that it is almost noon when I must dine."

Thereupon the monkey replied: "I am ready to return."

But, unfortunately, noon arrived before Mr. Leopard could reach home, and as he always dined precisely at noon he was forced to make his meal of poor young Monk!

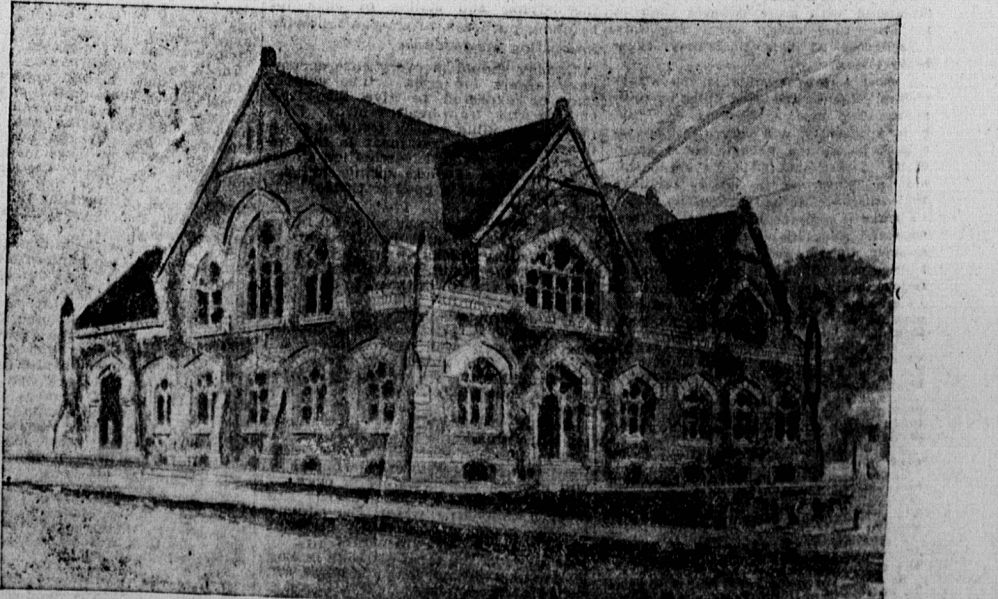
When Fairies Dance



THEY ain't no real fairies— They never was, I s'pose! But, oh, the fun pretendin'! No grown-up reely knows How gran' it is to watch the flowers Before they open wide And 'magine that some fairies is All cuddled up inside. Some teenty weenty faeries With spangled dresses bright, And gauzy wings, and wans, of course, All waitin' till it's night, So they can fly down on the ground! Soon as the moon rises out; For that's the time the fairies dance— When reel folks ain't about.

Why, often, when I go to bed, The moon shines on the wall, And then she says, "They're gettin' ready For the Fairies' Ball!" But pretty soon I'm fast asleep, And then the Fairy Queen Flies straight into my bedroom, a-r-r-r! Right through the window-pane.

And says, "No reely folks can't come. But little girls—oh, well, And quick as I can get 'em, We're dancin' all together. For 'freshments we drink dew. Of course, it's only dream, but nem, It's 'mos' as good as true. —S. VIRGINIA LEVIE.



The pride of Charlottetown.