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A CHRISTMAS CAROL.

IN PROSE. A STORY OF CHRISTMAS.

BY CHARLES DICKENS.

STAYE II.

THE FIRST OF THE THREE SPIRITS.

When Scrooge awoke, it was so dark, that, looking out of bed, he could scarcely distinguish the transparent window from the opaque wall of his chamber. He was endeavoring to pierce the darkness with his ferret eyes, when the chimera of a neighborly church struck the four quarters. So he listened for the hour.

To his great astonishment the heavy bell went on from six and seven, and from seven to eight, and regularly up to twelve: then stopped. Twelve! It was past two when he went to bed. The clock was wrong. An idle must have got into the works.

He touched the spring of his repeater, to correct this most preposterous clock. Its rapid little pulse beat twelve, and stopped.

"Why is it possible," said Scrooge, "that I can have slept through a whole day and far into another night? It isn't possible that any thing has happened to the sun, and this is twelve at noon!"

Thinking of an arm's length, he scrambled out of bed, and groped his way to the window. He was obliged to rub the frost off with the sleeve of his dressing-gown before he could see any thing; and could see very little then. All he could make out was, that it was still very foggy and extremely cold, and that there was no noise of people running to and fro, and making a great stir, as there unquestionably would have been if night had been so bright day, and taken possession of the world. This was a great relief, because "Three days after night of this first of Exchange" may to Mr. Ebenezer Scrooge or his old "red" and so forth, would have become a mere nominal security if there were no days to count by.

Scrooge went to bed again, and thought, and thought, and thought it over and over, and could make nothing of it. The more he thought, the more perplexed he was; and the more he endeavored not to think, the more he thought.

Marley's Ghost bothered him exceedingly. Every time he resolved within himself, after mature inquiry, that it was all a dream, his mind flew back again, like a strong spring released, to its first position, and presented the same problem to be worked all through, "Was it a dream or not?"

Scrooge lay in this state until the chime had gone three quarters more, when he remembered, on a sudden, that the Ghost had warned him of a visitation when the bell tolled one. He resolved to lie awake until the hour was passed; and, considering that he could no more go to sleep than go to heaven, this was perhaps the wisest resolution in his power.

The quarter was so long, that he was more than once convinced he must have sunk into a dose unconsciously, and missed the clock. At length it broke upon his listening ear.

"Ding, dong!"

"A quarter past," said Scrooge, counting.

"Ding, dong!"

"Half-past!" said Scrooge.

"Ding, dong!"

"A quarter to it," said Scrooge.

"Ding, dong!"

"The hour itself," said Scrooge triumphantly, "and nothing else!"

He spoke before the hour bell sounded, which it now did with a deep, dull, hollow, melancholy ONE. Light flashed up in the room upon the instant, and the curtains of his bed were drawn.

The curtains of his bed were drawn aside, I tell you, by a hand. Not the curtain at his feet, nor the curtain at his back, but those to which his face was addressed, and Scrooge, starting up into a half-recumbent attitude, found himself face to face with the unearthly visitor who drew them: as close to it as I am to you, and I am standing in the spirit to your elbow.

It was a strange figure—like a child; yet not so much like a child as like an old man, viewed through some supernatural medium, which gave him the appearance of having been trodden on the heels, and having dimpled into a child's proportions. His hair, which hung about his neck and down his back, was white as if with age; yet the face had not a wrinkle in it, and the tenderest bloom was on the skin. The arms were very long and muscular; the hands the same, as if it held were of uncommon strength. Its legs and feet, most delicately formed, were, like the upper members, bare. It wore a tunic of the purest white, and round its waist was bound a lustrous belt, the sheen of which was beautiful. It held a branch of fresh green holly in its hand; and, in singular contravention of that wintry emblem, had its dress trimmed with summer flowers. "But the strangest thing about it was, that from the crown of its head there sprang a bright clear jet of light, by which all this was visible: and which was doubtless the occasion of its using, in its dullest moments, a great extinguisher for a cap, which it now held under its arm.

Even this, though, when Scrooge looked at it with increasing awe, was not its strangest quality. For as its belt sparkled and glittered now in one part and now in another, and what was light one instant, at another time was dark, so the figure itself fluctuated in its distinctness: being now a plump young man, now with one leg, now a head, now a head without a body:

of which dissolving parts, as Scrooge would be visible in the dense gloom wherein they melted away. And in the very wonder of it, it would be itself again; distinct and clear as ever.

"Are you the Spirit, sir, whose coming was foretold to me?" asked Scrooge.

"I am."

The voice was soft and gentle. Singularly low, as if instead of being so close beside him, it were at a distance.

"Who and what are you?" Scrooge demanded.

"I am the Ghost of Christmas Past."

"Long Past?" inquired Scrooge; observing the ball, to a door at the back of the house.

It opened before them, and disclosed a long, bare, melancholy room, made bare still by lines of plain deal forms and desks. At one of these a lonely boy was reading near a feeble fire; and Scrooge sat down upon a form, and wept to see his poor forgotten self as he had used to be.

Not a latent echo in the house, not a squeak and scuffle from the mice behind the panelling, not a drip from the half-thawed water-spout in the dull yard behind, not a sigh among the leafless boughs of one despondent poplar, not the idle swing of an empty storehouse door, no, not a clinking in the fire, but fell upon the heart of Scrooge with softening influence, and gave a freer passage to his tears.

The Spirit touched him on the arm, and pointed to his younger self, intent upon his reading. Suddenly a man in foreign garments: wonderfully real and distinct to look at: stood outside the window, with an axe stuck in his belt, and leaning by the bridge an ass laden with wood.

"Why, it's Ali Baba!" Scrooge exclaimed in ecstasy. "It's dear old honest Ali Baba! Yes, yes, I know. One Christmas time, when yonder solitary child was left here all alone, he did come, for the first time, just like that. Poor boy! And Valentine," said Scrooge, "and his wild brother, Orson;—there they go! And what's his name, who was put down in his drawers, asleep, at the gate of Damascus; do you see him! And the Sultan's Groom turned upside down by the Genii: there he is on his head! Served him right. I'm glad of it. What business had he to be married to the Princess?"

To hear Scrooge expending all the earnestness of his nature on such subjects, in a most extraordinary voice between laughing and crying; and to see his heightened and excited face, would have been a surprise to his business friends in the city, indeed.

"There's the Parrot!" cried Scrooge. Green-bird and yellow-tail, with a thing like a lettuce growing out of the top of his head; there he is! Poor Robin Crusoe, he called him, when he came home—again after sailing round the island. "Poor Robin in Crusoe, where have you been, Robin Crusoe? The man thought he was dreaming, but he wasn't. It was the Parrot you know. There goes Friday, running for his life to the little creek! Halloo! Hoop! Halloo!"

Then with a rapidity of transition, very foreign to his usual character, he said, in reply to his former self, "Poor boy!" and cried again.

"I wish," Scrooge muttered, putting his hand in his pocket, and looking about him, after drying his eyes with his cuff: "but it's too late now."

"What is the matter?" asked the Spirit.

"Nothing," said Scrooge. "Nothing."

There was a boy singing a Christmas Carol at my door last night. I should like to have given him something; that's all."

The Ghost smiled thoughtfully, and waved its hand, saying as it did so, "Let us see another Christmas!"

Scrooge's former self grew larger at the words, and the room became a little darker and more dirty. The panelling shrunk, the windows cracked; fragments of plaster fell off the ceiling, and the naked laths were shown instead; but how all this was brought about, Scrooge knew no more than you do. He only knew that it was quite correct: that every thing had happened so; that there he was, alone again, when all the other boys had gone home for the jolly holidays.

He was not reading now, but walking up and down despairingly. Scrooge looked at the Ghost, and with a mournful shaking of his head, glanced anxiously towards the door.

It opened; and a little girl much younger than the boy, came darting in, and putting her arms about his neck, and often kissing him, addressed him as her "Dear, dear brother."

"I have come to bring you home, dear brother!" said the child, clapping her tiny hands, and bending down to laugh. "To bring you home, home, home!"

"Home, little Fan?" returned the boy.

"Yes," said the child, blushing of gloom. "Home for good and all. Home for ever and ever. Father is so much kinder than he used to be: that home's like Heaven! He spoke so gently to me one dear night when I was going to bed, that I was not afraid to ask him once more if you might come home; and he said Yes, you should; and sent me in a coach to bring you. And you're to be a man!" said the child, opening her eyes; "and are a never to come back here; but first, we're to be together all the Christmas long, and have the merriest time in all the world."

"You are quite a woman, little Fan!" exclaimed the boy.

She clasped her hands and laughed, and tried to touch his head; but being too little, laughed again, and stood on tiptoe to embrace him. Then she began to drag him, in her childish eagerness, towards the door; and he nothing loth to go, accompanied her.

A terrible voice in the hall cried, "Bring down Master Scrooge's box, there!" In the hall appeared the schoolmaster himself, who glared on Master Scrooge with a ferocious condescension, and threw him in to a dreadful state of mind by shaking hands with him. He then conveyed him and his sister into the veriest old well of a shivering best-parlor that ever was seen, where the maple upon the wall, and the celestial and terrestrial globes in the windows, were waxy with cold. Here he produced

decanter of curiously light wine, and a block of curiously heavy cake, and administered instalments of those dainties to the young people: at the same time, sending out a meagre servant to offer a glass of "something" to the postboy, who answered that he thanked the gentleman, but if it was the same tap as he had tasted before, he had rather not. Master Scrooge's trunk being by this time tied on to the top of the chair, the children bade the schoolmaster good-bye right willingly; and getting into it, drove gaily down the garden-sweep; the quick wheels dashing down the hoarfrost and snow from off the dark leaves of the evergreens like spray.

"Always a delicate creature, whom a breath might have withered," said the Ghost. "But she had a large heart!"

"So she had," cried Scrooge. "You're right. I will not gainsay it, Spirit. God forbid!"

"She died a woman," said the Ghost. "And had, as I think, children."

"One child," Scrooge returned.

"True," said the Ghost. "Your nephew."

Scrooge seemed uneasy in his mind; and answered briefly, "Yes."

Although they had but that moment left the school behind them, they were now in the busy thoroughfares of a city where shadows, passengers passed and repassed; where shadowy coaches battled for the way, and all the strife and tumult of a real city were. It was made plain enough, by the dressing of the shops, that here too it was Christmas time again; but it was evening, and the streets were lighted up.

(To be continued.)

We examined the soil and found unmistakable proof that a very large portion of the roots, certainly nine-tenths of them were imbedded in the soil within three inches of the surface, while but a small part was found below some were found as low as twelve inches; thus showing conclusively that in a dry time a large portion of the roots forming a complete network were imbedded in the soil near the surface, to seize upon the fertilizers in the soil and in the small rains and dews from the atmosphere and the moisture brought up from below by the least surface of the ground for the support of the plants, and thereby prevented evaporation. We observed the soil had been turned up in ploughing the corn; this was thought to be not good policy by the farmers accompanying us, as it exposed the soil more to the sun and increased evaporation. Experience teaches them that the ground should be ploughed deep enough in the spring to give a mellow surface above the soil to work in while tending the corn. A depth of four or five inches will enable them to do this. If the feeding roots of corn run near the surface of the ground in a dry time, there can be no doubt but they seek food and moisture there in a wet time.

We visited next the farm of Allen Wallace, four miles northward, in Pilesgrove, near Woodstown. This gentleman has been a member of both branches of New Jersey Legislature. He has made wonderful improvement in the productiveness of his land. This corn was good and green down to the roots, with but little rolling. He informed us he began thirty-five years ago with raising only seven bushels of sound corn per acre, of less than 200 bushels on 30 acres. The next year 10 per acre, and by 1840 he had increased his crop from less than 200 to 600 or 700 bushels. The farm was then divided, he retaining one-third, and has since raised much more on that third than he did before the division, on all. His corn crop has been for the last fifteen or twenty years past from two and a half to four loads of ears per acre, according to the season, of 25 bushels shelled corn each. He gave it as his experience that he succeeded better by ploughing rather than tilling over five inches deep, having tried both. His improvements have been made with manure applied to the surface once in five years principally and with lime moderately and applying the manure made on the farm, in connection with good farming.

We then passed through the farm of Aaron Jirpincott, another successful farmer, who has raised his lands from a low state of cultivation to the highest productiveness, and whom it has been said, after he gathered his grass crop, there was more left on the ground than the former occupant ever raised on the same ground. On his farm last year your committee saw a field of corn of most magnificent growth, and on the same field this year, the best field of stalk-ground corn we have seen. He says he never succeeded well with corn until his man plowed a field for corn only four inches deep, from which he gathered his first good crop, says that he does not want land plowed more than four inches deep for him.

Your committee learned that Josiah Engle, near Sharpstown, had part of a field of stiff-shoulder plowed very shallow for corn while he was from home. On his return, he feared that when dry weather came on it would burn or dry up. But when dry weather did set in, after the middle of summer, it remained green and flourishing, while in much that was plowed deeper the corn rolled badly. It was not plowed three inches deep, and they had to scrape up the grass roots to get dirt to cover the corn.

We were informed by Richard M. Acton, that some years ago, when Salem County had an agricultural society in successful operation, a committee was appointed (he being one) to report on the advantages of deep ploughing and subsoiling, and that the committee reported that they could not learn that any beneficial results had been derived from deep ploughing. Of nine farmers who had tried this experiment of subsoiling when so much in fashion, not one has ever since used the subsoil plow. David Pitt, who plowed twenty acres for corn, leaving a row wide; the corn on that row was the best. Since that experiment he has never subsoiled. In the afternoon we traveled over another district of highly cultivated country five miles to Elisha Bassett's. He was found the best field of corn in our travels. This farm is in a very high state of cultivation. A successful farmer; has had 700 bushels of potatoes on two acres. Had one year 200 bushels on banked meadow which were sold for \$1.50 per bushel, amounting to \$300 per acre. Plows about five inches deep. The greatest difficulty with him now in raising a wheat crop is to get it to stand up so as to fill.

We next went four miles to the farm of George Abbott, near Salem, and visited with him his banked meadow now in hard grass. He had just finished mowing fifty acres of this hard grass, producing from two to two-and-a-half tons per acre. He had some of his banked meadow planted with potatoes, the vines looking most luxuriantly. These were not affected by the drought. Owing to the large crops of grass cut and foddered on his farm for more than fifty years past, he plows six inches and raises good crops. The reason he gives us for plowing so deep as six inches was to make room for manure. He does not want this meadow plowed more than two or three inches deep, just enough to cover the soil; by so doing he succeeds best, although the rich deposits in several feet deep. These tide meadows, when dry, produced the heartiest crops of corn and potatoes, and with lime only, heavy wheat. C. Harmer, of Lower Penn's Neck, gathered from 100 acres only limited, 370 bushels of wheat.

Dr. Trimble read the following report: Mr. Chairman:—It will be remembered that deep ploughing has been frequently urged by members of this Club.

One gentleman who often honors us with his presence, and who has world-wide fame as one of the most profound thinkers and ablest journalists of the age has on many occasions been very strenuous on this point; so much so that practical farmers, whose experience has taught them to take different views on this subject, have been fearful that such teachings might lead the inexperienced to try a system of ploughing, not only laborious and expensive, but which on many soils would prove quite injurious.

One such farmer, David Pitt, of Salem County, N. J., who lives in the midst of a large community of the most intelligent, pains-taking and successful farmers of our whole country, send us a communication so boldly controverting this theory, and supporting the contrary view by so much experience of himself and neighbors, that a committee was appointed to visit that section, and report as to the truth of his communication.

That committee made a visit to Salem County soon after its appointment, but have delayed reporting till now, so as to be better able to judge of crops not then matured.

On the 30th of July, Samuel Abbott, David Pitt, Jonathan Ingham, and others, drove us on a tour of over twenty miles through parts of Marmington and Pilesgrove townships, Salem County, N. J.

In all this trip we found that but one farmer who was in the habit of ploughing as deep as six inches, some five, most four, but a few only three or even two and a half inches.

We were too late in the season to see the grass and wheat crops growing under this system of shallow ploughing—but we were informed by all the farmers that both had been very luxuriant. The hay crop generally reported at two and a half tons to the acre: while the wheat was often so rank in straw to lodge. In such cases the grain is more or less imperfect, and the general report was about an average crop of wheat, or rather less than such a large crop of wheat would indicate.

The weather in the spring and early summer had been wet and cold, as with us; but for six weeks previous to our visit there had been almost no rain during twelve weeks upon the farms we visited.

This local drought should be borne in mind during this discussion.

And now we come to the consideration of the great agricultural problem,—which is best? Deep ploughing and subsoiling, or shallow ploughing?

Which is most profitable as to immediate returns?

Which system will enable crops to withstand the most dry weather?

In what part of the soil or subsoil do the roots of plants seek food and moisture?

The following narration of what we saw will be our answers to these questions, so far as farming on the soil of Salem County can settle them.

We traveled over a district of country in Marmington, well cultivated for a distance of seven miles to a field of corn of about thirty acres, planted on a soil, on a farm of Dr. Dickinson, worked by his tenant Mr. Dubois, said to have been and we believe was upon examination, ploughed in the spring only three inches deep. The corn was of a good size for the season, mostly from eight to ten feet high the tassels being full grown from ten to twelve feet; some was in silk. The drought and heat at this time was extreme, but the corn blades were not curled or rolling, but remained green down to the roots, and had not suffered any apparently from the dry weather, while a clover field adjoining, of the second crop, was suffering severely

is difficult to lime this tide-meadow so heavy as to injure it. W. G. Woodcut applied 1,000 bushels of slacked lime to one-third of an acre with the view of mixing with the soil for compost, but was induced to plant it with corn, and the result in the large growth of corn was astonishing. The account was published with the proceedings of the Farmers' Club of Salem County.

Green sand marl of the West Jersey Marl Company, and other marls of the same strata and composition applied to the surface of poor land, on young clover, ten tons to the acre, early in the spring, with a moderately wet season, sometimes causes such a wonderful growth of clover, that it falls long before mowing time.

The advocates for deep ploughing say clover roots run deep into the subsoil for food and moisture; therefore the soil should be deepened to supply its wants. Here we see the marl—the fertilizer applied—not in the soil, or near the top roots, but on the surface, causes in a short time a wonderful growth on a large top-rooted plant, quite as large as that from the richest land highly manured and trenched, and that too with but little depth of soil and comparatively little expense, showing conclusively that it is not absolutely necessary to apply the fertilizers to the top roots, but that the lateral roots—the principal feeders of these plants—like all other plants, run near the surface and there seek food from the surface and the gases brought down by the dews and rains from above. Under these circumstances we can see no valid reason for deep ploughing and trenching for field crops.

On viewing the appearance of the growing crops in Salem County during our late visit there, and during the spell of protracted dry weather then existing, we can say we know of no section of country under any system of culture where the growing crop would be more flourishing under like circumstances than that witnessed by us when there. And we believe from what we saw, and from corroborating evidence of others, that this land ploughed five inches deep, or under, will withstand the dry weather quite as effectively as that ploughed deeper. The reason is, all soils contain certain amounts of fertilizing matter, and the more these fertilizers, this vegetable matter, is kept together, the richer the soil must be; and as vegetables, mould is the best material to retain moisture—or retard evaporation, and as it is proven that the feeders of all plants run near the surface, therefore, the more this vegetable mould is contracted and kept near the surface, the better it will withstand dry weather and support food to the plants.

All soils are considered as originally merely disintegrated rock and exclusively mineral, or a mineral basis in combination with oxygen. All plants have more or less of mineral constituents. Silica or sand, is a necessity in the maturing or strengthening of the straw of wheat. Lime will often double the crops of oats or peas, &c. &c. But no land would pay for cultivation that was exclusively mineral. It must contain humus—or vegetable mould—and the more the better, provided there are also the minute portions of mineral ingredients that plants require. The humus is the residuum of decaying plants since the creation; and judging from the depth of the soil as found in primitive forests, some kinds of mineral soils are better than others. Where all is land we find stunted pines, and the humus or leaf mould is but a mere crust. In districts where the timber is heavy the soil will be five or six inches in depth. The depth of the virgin soil in that portion of Salem County we saw, is generally from three to four inches. By good farming and free fertilizers that soil has been made to produce seventy, eighty, and even one hundred bushels of shelled corn to the acre, without ploughing deeper than this native soil. Your committee will not say that the limit of productiveness in Salem County has been reached—that would be a hazardous assertion. But where we see a whole neighborhood of such intelligent farmers, producing such superb crops, by shallow ploughing, and the most of them lessening the depth by increased experience, we feel that we may cite their example as a caution against the indiscriminate adoption of a deep system of tillage. A part of our committee subsequently visited portions of Delaware and Chester Counties in Pennsylvania. We saw many of the celebrated grazing farms of the Brandywine hills. In Salem the staple crop was corn, and that crop had then increased just in proportion as they had diminished the depth of ploughing. Upon the Brandywine farms the staple was beef, and the best pasture fields there were those that had never been ploughed at all. It is what is usually called the soil that is to produce the crop. Take that off, as is done in making roads, and whether you plough deep or shallow, your crops will not be worth the planting till you make another soil. In the best portions of New Jersey and Pennsylvania through which we traveled, the natural soil of the uplands (and two to four inches in depth, as shown by the backs along the roads; in some concave spots where leaves had accumulated during the ages of forests, we may sometimes see a depth of five or six inches. This is the primitive or virgin soil. It is dark colored; the line of demarcation between it and the subsoil is usually distinct. It is the decayed vegetable matter it contains that in a great measure makes it productive. Now suppose you use a plough running a foot deep, your three or four inches of soil will be covered with eight or nine inches of subsoil. The farmer who can prove that such ploughing is best, must prove that the feeding roots of plants prefer to burrow down to such a depth. Dr. Thom-

son, of Salem, told us he wished to make his garden more productive, and had "trenched half of it trenched." That portion, for the time being, he considers "ruined." Good corn produced little; spindle-spinning stalks; and absolutely no ears. He says there is nothing to be done now, except to manure and manure until he makes all the "wretched ground he has brought to the surface as rich as that he buried. If you have a superabundance of manure, do as George Abbott does—plough deeper, so as to make room for it. If you want great crops of corn as they do in Salem—have nothing grow upon the ground but corn at the same time, no weeds, no grass—cultivate and cultivate the surface, whether the season is wet or dry, but more often when dry. As to the hospitality with which we were treated, and the proofs of refinement and high civilization that we saw during the trip, we have only to remark, that wherever it shall become necessary to send any other committee to Salem each one of us wishes to be considered a candidate for appointment.

I. P. TAYLOR,
J. V. SMITH,
J. B. LYMAN,
A. B. CHANDLER,
E. O. PETERS.

A young parson of the Universalist faith, many years since when the Union party, Universalism was preached, started westward to attend a convention of his brethren in the faith. He took the precaution to carry a vial of cayenne in his pocket, to sprinkle his food with, as a preventive to fever and ague. The convention met; and at dinner a tall Hoosier observed the parson as he seasoned his meat, and addressed him thus:

"Stranger, I'll thank you for a little of that, for I'm kind o' curious to try it."

"Certainly," returned the parson; "but you will find it very powerful; be careful how you use it."

The Hoosier took the proffered vial, and feeling himself proof against any quantity of raw whisky, thought that he could stand the "red salt" with impunity, and accordingly sprinkled a junk of beef rather bountifully with it, and forthwith introduced it into his capacious mouth. It soon began to take hold. He shut his eyes, and his features began to writhe, denoting a very inharmonious condition physically. Finally he could stand it no longer. He opened his mouth and screamed, "fire!"

"Take a drink of cold water from the jug," said the parson.

"Will that put it out?" asked the martyr, sending the action to the world. In a short time the unfortunate man began to recover, and turning to the parson, his eyes yet swimming in water, exclaimed:

"Stranger, you call yourself a 'Universalist, I believe?'"

"I do," mildly answered the parson.

"Well, I want to know if you think it consistent with your belief to go about with hell-fire in your breeches pockets?"

"CLING CLOSE TO THE ROCK."—A long train of cars, fourteen or fifteen, were recently passing over the Allegheny mountains, on their way eastward. They were crowded with passengers. As the train began to descend and needed no power to bend them down with terrific swiftness. Just as the passengers began to realize their situation they came to a short curve out of the solid rock jutting on each side. Suddenly the steam whistle screamed as if in great agony, "put on the brakes, put on the brakes," but with no apparent slackening of the cars. Every window flew open and every head that could be was thrust out to see what the danger was, and every one rose up in their places, fearing sudden destruction. What was the trouble?

Just as the engine began to turn the curve, the engineer saw a little girl and her baby brother playing on the track. In a moment the cars would be on them. The shriek of the whistle startled the little girl, and everyone looking over could see them. Close to the track in the upright rock was a little niche out of which a piece of rock had been blasted. In an instant the baby was thrust into this niche, and as the cars came thundering by, the passengers holding their breath, heard the clear voice of the little sister, on the other side of the cars, ring out, "cling close to the rock, Johnny, cling close to the rock!" And the little creature struggled in and put his head as close to the corner of the rock as possible, while the heavy cars whirled past him. And many were the moist eyes that gazed, and a silent thanksgiving went up to Heaven.

FISHING FOR MICK.—There are several ways of catching rats and mice, but in these days, when there is a rage for almost everything new, perhaps the following anecdote, related by a country correspondent, may furnish the hint of an original mode of capturing these animals.

Several years since my cousin, Miss —, used to keep a dairy school. Among those who attended it was a little boy of, perhaps, four years of age, but too young to speak plainly. One day, while the others were at their studies, he got possession of a pin and a string. He bent the pin into the form of a fish-hook, tied the string to it, and put on a small piece of cheese. He had seen a mouse come up through a hole in a corner of the board, and set himself to bait for it as if it were a fish. He was observed and asked by my cousin what he was doing. "Fishing for mice," was his reply. As this method was not allowed in school hours, the teacher, by way of punishment, ordered him to continue baiting for the mice for a week, but the little fellow gave up as a judge, looking away, until soon the mouse took a strong hold of the cheese, and the giving a strong pull, sprang into the middle of the room, and swinging the mouse around his head, approached the whole school with the mouse fastened to his hand.

I think, I have, I've got him.

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