

Harvey ain't the chap to do such a mean trick as that. But wouldn't he be worked up, if he knew how we are enjoying ourselves without his precious company?"

"Wouldn't he!" chuckled Ned to himself.

"And wouldn't it start the old deacon," laughed Dick, "if one should tell him how we are enjoying ourselves at his expense!"

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed the whole company.

"Have you filled the bag?" demanded Frank, on the tree.

"Yes—and our stomachs too!"

"Then I am coming down to have my share!"

"Now's my time!" thought Ned.

It is impossible to describe the consternation of his treacherous friends, as he sprang upon them. Disturbed so unexpectedly and suddenly in the quiet enjoyment of the stolen fruit, they knew not where to turn, but ran against each other, knocked each other down, while the frightened Frank pitched headlong from the tree among his fallen companions.

"Here you are, are you?" cried Ned, (imitating the old deacon's voice.) "Ah you, thieving rascals!" "I've caught you at it this time, and I'll give you peaches enough!"

So saying, Ned used his heavy whip with all his force, striking the trespassers on their backs, and on their heads, and across their faces; knocking them down as fast as they got up and attempted to run. At last they scrambled away, he chased them, and hitting first one and then another, and screaming in the deacon's voice—

"Ah, you villainous whelps! I'll larn you, you good-for-nothing, ungodly, thieving wretches!"

At length, thinking he had punished them severely enough for their treachery, Ned appeared to give up the chase, while his companions hid in the corners of the fence; but instead of leaving them thus, he dropped down on his knees, and crept along towards them under the fence, in order to hear what they said.

"Bill," whispered one.

"What," muttered Bill.

"Where are you?"

"Here, in the corner of the fence with Dick."

"Ain't you dead?"

"No! but I should be, if he had hit me once more; only just once: over the head as he did."

"He almost broke my back!" said a timid voice, in another corner of the fence.

"He drew blood on my face," said Charley, "and his unmerciful sharp lash has left a ridge on my finger!"

"He made me see a whole constellation of stars!" whispered Frank. "Besides I broke my neck in as much as seven places when I fell from the tree."

"Darn his pictur," growled Dick. "His whip didn't hurt me much until he knocked me down, when I thought Satan himself had struck me."

"Who thought the old man so strong!" cried Ned D—.

"Who thought the old fellow could run so?" retorted Charley.

Harvey listened to this conversation, and much more of the same sort, until Frank, who had not the consolation of thinking he had eaten a single peach, started off, telling his companions that if they wanted the bag which they had left under the tree, they

might go and get it, provided old Newcomb hadn't already taken care of it. They declined going for it, but withdrew from the field of their defeat altogether, leaving Harvey to laugh at the joke, and enjoy a hearty meal on the peaches he had found already collected in the bag. Having satisfied his appetite on the delicious fruit, he left the bag and the remaining contents for the old man, and quietly walked home.

Ned Harvey intended to keep the affair to himself, fearing the revenge of his companions, but when the deacon reported, that he had found a bag full of peaches under one of his trees, and talked of the trespass in such a way that the trespassers knew that he had nothing to do with flogging them so soundly, their suspicions rested at once on Ned Harvey. Finding this to be the case, Ned immediately proclaimed the joke all about the neighborhood, and related the whole affair with such exaggerations, as served to show up his comrades in the most ridiculous light possible.

The traitors were emphatically 'used up.' The ridicule was worse than the punishment they suffered. Everybody twitted them, and even the old deacon, forgiving them the peaches they had eaten, chuckles over the rich joke of "Robbing a Peach Orchard."

A TEMPERANCE STORY.—Two young men, "with a humming in their heads," retired late at night, to their room in a crowded inn, in which, as they entered, were revealed two beds, but the wind extinguishing the light, they both, instead of taking, as they supposed, a bed apiece, got back to back into one, which began to sink under them, and come around at intervals in a manner very circumambient, but quite impossible of implication. Presently, one observed to the other:

"I say, Tom, somebody's in my bed."

"Is there?" said the other, "so there is in mine. Let's kick 'em out!"

The next remark was: "Tom, I've kicked my man overboard."

"Good!" said his fellow-topper, "better luck than I—my man has kicked me out, right on the floor!"

Their "relative positions" were not apparent until next morning.

#### FREAKS OF THE PEN.

(Extract from Graham's Magazine.)

Do not consider me as sneering at the ambition of man to outdo his fellows, to surpass all previous knowledge, to wrest nature from herself to fulfil his purposes—it is of the eternal law of progress. Man can no more stop, and be contented, than the worlds which are revolving in space, can rest and shine on. Each age makes a giant's stride onward. The past is strewn with theories toppled down, and with systems exploded. The monuments of philosophy, the labor of ages, are the marks now for the child's finger of scorn. The voyage of Columbus is now the work of a week. Work, did I say?—his toilsome and desolate path over the waters, is now the holyday ramble of all nations. Thought itself leaps a continent in a second, and by means of cipher, is communicated to minds thousands of miles distant, putting the speed of steam, the glory of an age just gone, to shame; accomplishing its purpose, even while the sonorous steam-whistle is but giving its note of departure. The press, in a night, performs the labor of a year, in multiplying printed thought, and a

Commonwealth, a Nation is shaken in the time requisite, formerly, to ink the rollers for Franklin's heavy edition. Who will say that man himself shall not yet be shot into the air like a rocket, and diverge at pleasure to any point of the compass, in defiance of the caprices of air-currents? That if he can now snatch from the sun a likeness of himself in an instant of time, he shall not, one day, look the sun itself in the face with unblinking eyes, take his observations from the horn of some remote planet, and return to earth to record his discoveries. "Philosophy," you will say. But how much is philosophy herself learning daily? How much of her previous knowledge is shown daily to have been worthless? The chemist, the geologist, the astronomer, torture nature continually for her secrets, but the provident Mother is chary. It is but by a step at a time that her children are allowed to enter into her mysteries, lest the full blaze of her awful truths should suddenly strike them blind.

A VILLAGE SOLOMON IN FRANCE.—Some of the inhabitants of Malicorne near Commeny complained to the mayor that their geese had been stolen by a dealer, but, as he had mixed them with a flock of his own, it was impossible to recognise them. The mayor a shrewd, hard working peasant, solemnly ordered all the geese to be placed in carts, and sent to some little distance from the village. The villagers wondered greatly what this could mean, and even ventured to mutter suspicions of the mayor's wisdom and probity. But the functionary took no notice of these remarks, and stalked solemnly off with the carts. Arriving at the spot he had indicated, he cried to the drivers to "stop!" and with great dignity added, "Now let loose the geese—those that have been stolen will make their way back to their masters' farm-yards, those that belong to the dealer will remain!" This was done, and lo! as the village Solomon had said, the stolen geese waddled gravely homeward, to the great astonishment of the simple villagers. The dishonest dealer was arrested.

PAT'S "DRAME."—Two sons of the green and glorious isle met a day or two since, and thus colloquised:

"Good morning, Pat."

"Good morning, Dennis."

Dennis—"How is it wid ye, Pat? ye saams in a quandhary."

Pat.—"Bedad but it's right ye are widout knowing it, for I'm in that same. It's a provoking drame I've had."

Dennis.—"A drame, Patrick! was it a good or a bad wan?"

Pat.—"Bad luck, but it was a little of both; I dramed I was wid the Pope, who was as grate a jintleman as ony by'e in the district; an' he axed me wad I dhrink? Thinks I, wud a duck shwim; and seeing the Innishowen and the lemons, and the shugar on the sideboard, I towld him I didn't care if I tuk a we dhrap of punch! Cowld or hot? axed the Pope. Hot, yer holiness, I replied; and be that he stepped down to the kitchen fur the bilin wather, but before he got back I wuk strait up! and it's now dishtressing me that I didn't take me hot punch cowld!"

FENCE POSTS.—A practical farmer informs the editor of the Hartford Times, that in taking up a fence that had been set fourteen