

They Carried it too Far.

Mr. Butterwick called in to see us the other day, and in the course of the conversation he said:

"I'm going to move. I can't stand those Thompsons next door to me any longer. They're the awfulest people to borrow I ever saw. Coffee and butter and sugar and flower I don't mind so much, although when a woman borrows high priced sugar and Java coffee, and sends back sand and chickory, a man naturally feels bilious and mad. But they've borrowed pretty near everything in the house. First it's one thing, then it's another, from morning till night, right straight along.

"Now, there's the poker. A poker is a piece of machinery that you might think anybody might go round and buy, or, if they couldn't afford it, they might use a fence paling to shake up the fire. But Mrs. Thompson seems to hanker after our poker. She borrows it fifteen or twenty times a day, and last Saturday she sent for it thirty-four times. She pays a boy \$2 a week to run over and borrow the poker, and she used it so much that it is all bent up like a corkscrew.

"Now, take chairs for instance. She asks us to lend her our chairs three times a day at every meal, and she borrows the rocking chair whenever she wants to put the baby to sleep.

"A couple of times she sent over for a sofa, and when the boy came back with it he said Mrs. Thompson was mad as thunder, and kept growling round the house all day because there were no castors on it. Last Monday she borrowed our wash boiler, and we had to put off our washing till Tuesday. She did her preserving in it, and the consequence was all our clothes were full of preserved peaches. I've got an undershirt now that I'm mighty doubtful if I'll ever get it off it's stuck to me so fast.

"Every now and then she has company, and then she borrows our hired girl and all the parlor furniture; once because I would not carry the piano over for her, and take down the chandelier, she told the girl that there were rumors about town that I was a reformed pirate.

"Perfectly scandalous! They think nothing of sending over after a couple of bedsteads or the entry carpet, and the other day Thompson says to me:—

"Butterwick, does your pump log pump up easy?"

"And when I said I thought it did, he said:—

"Well, I would like to borrow it for a few days till I can get one, for mine's all otted away."

"The only wonder to me is that he did not try to borrow the well along with it.

"And then on Tuesday Mrs. Thompson sent that boy over to see if Mrs. Butterwick wouldn't lend her our front door. She said their's was away being painted, and she was afraid the baby would catch cold. When I asked him what he supposed we were going to do to keep comfortable without any front door, he said Mrs. Thompson said she reckoned we might tack up a bed-quilt or something. And when I refused, the boy said Mrs. Thompson told him if I wouldn't send over the front door, to ask Mrs. Butterwick to lend her a pair of striped stockings and a horse-hair bustle, and to borrow the coal scuttle till Monday.

"What in the name of Moses she is going to do with a bustle and a coal scuttle I can't conceive.

"But they're the most extraordinary people! Last fourth of July the boy came over and told Mrs. Butterwick that Mrs. Thompson would be much obliged if she'd lend her the twins for a few minutes. Said Mrs. Thompson wanted them to suck off a new bottle top, because it made her baby sick to taste fresh Indiarubber! Cheeky, wasn't it? But that's her way. She don't mind it any more.

"Why, I've known her to take off our Johnny's pants when he's been playing over there with the children, and send him home bare legged to tell his mother that she borrowed them for a pattern. And on Thompson's birthday she said her house was so small for a party, that if we'd lend her our's we might come late in the evening and dance with the company, if we wouldn't let on that we lived there.

"Yes, sir; I'm going to move. I'd rather live next door to a lunatic asylum than have the maniacs pouring red hot shot into my fence every hour of the day. In-

BRER RABBIT AND THE BUTTER.

[Atlantic Constitution.]

"De anemules en de beas'esses," said Uncle Remus, shaking his coffee around in the bottom of his tin cup, in order to gather up all the sugar, "dey kep' on gittin' mo' en mo' famillious wid wunner nudder, twel bimeby, twant long 'fo' Brer Rabbit, en Brer Fox, en Brer Possum got ter sorter bunchin' de pervishions tergeader in de same house. Atter while de root sorter 'gun ter leak, en one day Brer Rabbit, en Brer Fox, en Brer Possum 'sembie fer ter see ef dey couldn't kinder patch her up. Dey had a big day's wuk in front un 'em, en den dey foseh der dinner wid um. Dey lumped de vittles up in one pile, en de butter w'at Brer Fox bring dey goes en puts in de spring-'ouse for ter keep cool, en den dey w'en ter wuk, en 'twant long 'fo' Brer Rabbit's stummuck 'gun ter sorter growl en pester 'im. Dat butter er Brer Fox's sot heavy on his mine, en his mouf water eve'y time he 'member 'bout it. Presently he say ter hisself dat he bledzd ter have a nip at dat butter, en den he lay his plans, he did. Fua news you know, w'ile dey wuz all wukkin' long, Brer Rabbit raise his head quick en fling his years forrerd en holler out:

"Here I is. W'at you want wid me?" en off he put like sump'n wuz atter 'im.

"He saild 'roun', old Brer Rabbit did, en atter he make sho dat nobody ain't foller'n 'im, inter de spring-'ouse he bounces, en dar he stays twel he git a baft er butter. Den he ranter on back en go ter wuk.

"'Whar you bin?' sez Brer Fox, sezee.

"I hear my chilluns callin' me," says Brer Rabbit, sezee, "en I hatter go see w'at dey want. My ole 'oman done gone en tuc' mighty sick," sezee.

"Dey wuk on twel bimeby de butter tas'e so good dat ole Brer Rabbit want some mo'. Den he raise up his head, he did, en holler out:

"Heyo! Wait! I'm a commin' en off he put.

"Dis time he stay right smart while, en w'en he git back Brer Fox ax him whar he bin.

"I bin ter see my ole 'oman, en she's a sinkin'," sezee.

"Dreckly Brer Rabbit hear um callin' 'im ag'in en off he goes, en dis time, bless yo' soul, he gits de butter out so clear dat he kin see hisself in de bottom er de bucket. He scrape it clean en hok it dry, en den he go back ter wuk lookin' mo' samer dan a nigger w'at de patter-rollers 'in had holt un.

"'How's yo' ole 'oman dis time?' sez Brer Fox, sezee.

"I'm obilje ter you, Brer Fox," sez Brer Rabbit sezee, "but I'm fear'd she's done gone by now," en dat sorter make Brer Fox en Brer Possum feel in moanin' wid Brer Rabbit.

"Bimeby, w'en dinner time come, dey all got out der vittles, but Brer Rabbit keep on lookin' lonesome, en Brer Fox and Brer Possum, dey sorter rustle roun' fer ter see ef dey can't make Brer Rabbit feel sorter splim-mv."

"'What is that, Uncle Remus?' asked the little boy.

"Sorter splammy, honey—sorter like he's in a crowd—sorter like his ole 'oman ain't dead ez she mouf be. You know how fokes daz w'en dey gits whar people's a moanin'."

The little boy didn't know, fortunately for him, and Uncle Remus went on:

"Brer Fox and Brer Possum rustle roun', dey did, gittin' out de vittles, en bimeby Brer Fox say, sezee:

"Brer Possum, you run down to de spring en fetch de butter, en I'll sail 'roun' yer en set de table," sezee.

"Brer Possum, he lope off atter de butter, en dreckly here he come lopin' back wid his years a trimblin' en his tongue a hangin' out. Brer Fox, he holler out:

"'W'at de matter now, Brer Possum?' sezee.

"You all better run yer, fokes," sez Brer Possum, sezee. "De las' drap er dat butter done gone."

"'Whar she gone?' sez Brer Fox, sezee. "Look like she dried up," sez Brer Possum, sezee.

Den Brer Rabbit, he look sorter wise, he did, en he up'n say, sezee:

"I speck dat butter melt in somebody's mouf," sezee.

"Den dey went down ter de spring wid Brer Possum, en sho nuff de butter wuz gone. V'ic dey wuz sputin' over der wunderment, Brer Rabbit says he see tracks all 'roun' dar, en he p'mt out dat ef dey'll all go ter sleep, he kin hetch de chap w'at stole de butter. De dey all lie down en Brer Fox en Brer Possum dey soon drapt off ter sleep, but Brer Rabbit, he stay 'wake, en w'en de time come, he rise up easy en smear Brer Possum's mouf wid de butter on his paws, en den he run off en nibble up de bes' er de dinner w'at dey lef' layin' out, en den he come back en wake up Brer Fox en show'im de butter on Brer Possum's mouf. Den dey wake Brer Possum up, en tell 'im about it, but c'ose Brer Possum 'ny it ter de las'. Brer Fox, dough he's a kinder lawyer, en he argafy dis way—dat Brer Possum wuz de fus one at de butter, en de fus one fer ter miss it, en mo'n dat, dar hung de signs on his mouf. Brer Possum see dat dey got 'im jammed up in a corader, en den he up en say dat de way fer ter ketch de man w'at stole de butter is ter bil' a big bresh-heap en set her after, en all hands try ter jump over, en de one w'at fall in, den he de chap w'at stole de butter. Brer Rabbit en Brer Fox dey hofe 'gree, dey did, en dey whiri in en b'il' de bresh heap, en dey b'il' her high en dey b'il' her wide, en den dey toth her off.

W'en she got ter bresh-heap de butter, Brer Rabbit he tuck de fus turn. He sorter step back, look 'roun' en giggle, en over he went mo' samer den a bird flyin'. Den come Brer Rex. He got back little fudder, en spit on his han's, en den lit our en made de jump en he come so nigh gittin' in dat de een' er his tail kotch after. Ain't you never see no fox, honey?" inquired Uncle Remus in a tone that implied both conciliation and information.

The little boy thought probably he had, but he wouldn't commit himself.

"Well, den," continued the old man, "nex' time you see one un um, you look right close en see ef de een' er his tail ain't white. Hit's dos like I tell you. Dey b'ars de skyar er dat bresh-heap down ter dis day. Dey er marked—dat's w'at dey is—dey er marked."

"And what about Brother Possum?" asked the boy.

"Ole Brer Possum, he tuck a runnin' start, he did, en he come lumberin' long, en he hit—kerblam!—right in de middle er de fler, en dat waz de las' er ole Brer Possum."

"But, Uncle Remus, Brother Possum didn't steal the butter after all," said the little boy, who was not at all satisfied with such summary injustice.

"Dat w'at make I say w'at I daz, honey. In dis worrul, lots er fokes is gatter suffer fer udder fokes' sins. Look like hit's mighty onwrog; but hit's des dat a way. Tribbala-shun seem like she's a waitin' roun' de cornder fer ter ketch one en all un us, honey."

A NEW YEAR'S SONNET.

1884.

(AN EXTRAVAGANZA.)

[An Old-fashioned Game with New-fashioned Players.]

THE TIME—DECEMBER 31, 1883, 12 O'CLOCK MIDNIGHT.

* * * * *

The icy, frosty glitter, of the diamond-brilliant stars,

Pate to shame the blood-red radiance of the blushing planet Mars;

The soft and mellow lustre of the moon-beams shining bright,

Gives a clear translucent beauty to the lingering winter night.

Old mother earth is shrouded in a winding sheet of snow,

While a curious sheen's reflected in the crisp and sparkling glow;

And the neighboring woodland draped with asteroidal crystals white

Lends to Erebean darkness a robe of iridescent light.

* * * * *

Such the night and such the scene 'pon which Nature, gentle Dame,

Smiles a smile of pleased approval at a quaint old-fashioned game

Which is now in happy progress, just before her earnest gaze,

Transporting her in memory to the by-gone youthful days

When her human children, blithe and gay, with merry, winsome ways,

Played the good old game of "leap-frog" in those good old-fashioned days.

* * * * *

But, hist! who are these players 'pon the sleety, sloping hill,

Who glide so swiftly by, and who play with such good will?

And who the bearded veteran who stands with smiling face

While he stoops in ready posture with a certain sturdy grace,

Waiting for some sprite-like cherubs with skates and snowy wing,

Who troop along in noisy glee that makes the welkin ring?

* * * * *

The veteran is old Father Time;

The cherubs, "fitting years" that mark the measure of life's rhyme,

Of joys, of hopes, of fears.

And so the game of "leap-frog" goes on adown the line,

Each year at hand to take his turn at his appointed time.

So on this night at twelve o'clock bold '83 goes o'er,

And for his place comes nimply on the leap year '84.

By DELTA.

December 31st, '83-'84.