



VIII—A Swimming Pool at Last

THE BOXCAR CHILDREN were so tired that they slept until ten o'clock Sunday morning.

When they woke up at last, they hurried through breakfast and went to work on the swimming pool.

"We'll make a dam across the brook," said Henry.

"Here is my cart," said Benny. "I'll cart stones and logs in it."

"Good for you," laughed Henry.

First the four children went down the brook to look at the pool Jessie had seen. The water was quiet here, and there was clean sand all around the little pool.

"It's big enough for a swimming pool," Henry remarked, "but I don't think it's deep enough."

He put a long stick in it to see how deep it was. When he looked at the wet stick, he found that the water was about a foot deep.

"The swimming pool should be three times as deep," he said. "Then it will be deep enough to swim in and won't be too

deep for Benny. We'll build the dam here with logs and stones."

While the other children started the dam, Jessie washed all their stockings.

"We won't want our stockings on while we are working in the brook," she remarked, as she rinsed them and hung them on the clothesline to dry. "So this is a good time to wash them."

It was hard work building the dam, but the children liked hard work. Henry and Jessie pulled the logs to the brook, and Violet and Benny carried the stones, with the help of the cart. Now and then Henry was called on to help with a heavy stone. But the two younger children carried most of them.

"Splash the stones right into the water," Henry told them. "But be careful to keep them in a line between these two trees."

The children watched with delighted eyes

as the wall of stones under the water began to grow higher and higher.

"The rock wall will help to hold the logs in place," said Henry.

At last it was time to lay the logs across the brook.

"Let's lay the first ones between these two trees," said Jessie. "Then the trees will hold both ends of the logs."

"Good work!" cried Henry, much pleased. "That's just what we'll do."

But when the first big log was splashed into place on top of the stone wall, the water began to run over the top of the log and around both ends.

"Oh, dear!" cried Jessie. "The water runs around the ends every time! What shall we do?"

"We'll have to put lots of logs on, with brush between them," said Henry. "We'll put on so many that the water *can't* get through."

They laid three logs across, with three more on top of them, and three more on top of those. Violet filled her arms with brush and held it in place until each log was laid. Benny filled the holes at the ends of the logs with flat stones. Such wet children never were seen before, but the hot sun would dry them off, and no one cared.

When the three top logs were laid in place at last, the four tired children sat down to watch the pool fill. But Henry could not sit still as the water came higher and higher up the dam.

"See how deep the pool is getting!" he cried. "See how still it is!"

At last the pool was full, and the water came over the top of the dam and made another waterfall.

"Just like a mill dam!" said Henry. "Now the pool is deep enough for all of us to swim in."

"You boys can have the first swim," said Jessie. "We girls must go and get dinner. We'll ring the bell when we are ready."

The boys splashed around in the pool, while the girls made a fire and hung the kettle of brown stew over it, stirring it now and then. Violet cut the bread and then got the butter, hard and cold, out of the refrigerator.

When everything was ready, Jessie rang the dinner bell. This bell was only a tin can from the dump. Jessie had hung it on a tree with a string, and she rang it with a spoon. Then she got the ladle and began ladling out the stew.

"That's the dinner bell," said Benny. "I know it is. Come, Watch. Don't you want some dinner?"

Watch had had a swim, too. He came out of the water and shook himself. The two boys put on their dry clothes and went to Sunday dinner.

"Let me ring the bell again," said Benny.

"I like stew even better today," said Henry, eating hungrily.

"That's because we worked so hard," remarked Jessie. "Let's go for a walk in the woods this afternoon."

"Oh, let's!" cried Violet. "Let's go exploring again."

The children washed the dishes and then started on their walk.

As they went along, Watch began to bark. At first the explorers were frightened.

"Oh, what is it?" cried Violet.

"Maybe it's a rabbit," said Henry.

Then they saw a hen running away



through the woods. Watch ran after her, but Henry called him back.

"Don't run after the poor hen," he said.

"The hen had a nest," remarked Benny.

"What?" asked Jessie.

"She had some eggs in it," said Benny.

"Come here and see."

Jessie looked on the ground where Benny was pointing and saw a nest with five eggs in it.

"A runaway hen!" said Jessie. "She wanted to hide her nest so she would have some chickens. We'll have the eggs for supper. I know how to cook eggs."

The eggs made a delicious supper. Jessie put them in a bowl, with a little salt, and Violet took a spoon and stirred them as hard as she could.

"Put in some milk, Violet," said Jessie, "and stir them some more."

Henry started up the fire. The big kettle

was hung over the fire, and Jessie put in some butter. She watched the butter until it was nice and brown, and then she put in the eggs.



“Sit down,” she said. “Be all ready to eat when the eggs are done.”

Violet put the blue tablecloth on the ground. She got the bread and butter and the plates and spoons, and the children all sat ready for supper.

“Here I come!” cried Jessie. “Hold out your plates.”

“Oh, Jessie!” cried Benny. “This is the best meal I ever ate. I found the eggs, and you cooked them.”

"Yes, you did, Benny," said Henry.
"Thank you for a fine meal."

"Tomorrow we'll have to eat bread and milk," said Jessie.

But when tomorrow came, the children had more than bread and milk, as you will soon see.





IX—Fun in the Cherry Orchard

THE NEXT MORNING Henry thought and thought about taking the other children to pick cherries with him.

At last he told his sisters about it as they ate bread and milk for breakfast.

"Dr. Moore said he wanted more children to help. Do you think all of us ought to go, Jessie?"

"Well," said Jessie, "I don't know. You see, there are four of us. If Grandfather is looking for us, it would be easier to see four than one."

"Yes, that's so," answered Henry. "But we can go down the hill and through the streets two by two. I'll take Benny and go ahead. Then in a little while you and Violet can come with the dog."

"Good!" said Jessie. "Watch can tell where you go."

The children took down the clothesline and shut the door of the car. Everything was in order. Then they started out.

When they arrived at the orchard, they soon saw that they were not the only work-

ers. The doctor was there, and the cook, and two men carrying ladders and baskets.

"Good morning, Henry," said Mrs. Moore. "Can you work today?"

"Oh, yes," said Henry. "These are my sisters, Jessie and Violet. They can pick cherries, too. Benny is too young to climb trees, but we had to bring him."

"Maybe he can carry baskets," said Dr. Moore, smiling at Benny. "You see, this is a big cherry year, and we have to work fast, once we begin. Maybe he can help fill the little baskets from the big ones."

"Eat all you want," said Mrs. Moore. "The cherries are beautiful this year."

The children didn't eat all they wanted, but every now and then a big red cherry went into someone's mouth.

Henry and the girls went up the ladders and began to pick cherries. Watch barked for awhile. He did not like to have Jessie

climbing the ladder. Then he sat down and looked at her up in the tree.

Benny hurried here and there, carrying baskets to the pickers and eating all the cherries he wanted. Everyone in the orchard liked Benny. The doctor laughed delightedly at him, and sweet Mrs. Moore fell in love with him at once. By and by he sat down beside her and carefully filled small baskets with cherries from the big baskets.

The men laughed at the funny things Benny said, and Watch barked happily. By and by the doctor left the orchard to make some calls.

At last Mrs. Moore said, "I never had such happy cherry pickers before. You are having such a good time out here that I don't want to go in the house." She smiled.

Mary, the cook, seemed to think the same thing, for she came again and again into the orchard.

After awhile the cook went in to get dinner, but the children still picked cherries. At noon Dr. Moore came home.

"You must stay to dinner," he said to the children. "We can eat here in the orchard under the trees. Will your mother be watching for you?" When he asked this, he looked at Henry in a queer way.

Henry did not know what to say. But at last Jessie said, "No. Our mother and father are dead."

"Then you must stay," said Mrs. Moore. "Here comes Mary."

The cook put a table under the trees, and they all sat around it and ate a delicious dinner. Then Mary went into the house and came out again with big bowls of cherry dumplings.

"I can smell something good!" cried Benny. "Is it cherries?"

"Yes, my little dear," said Mary. "Cherry

dumplings. The cherries are cooked in the dumplings.”

Benny ate his cherry dumpling and then went to sleep with the dog for a pillow. But Henry and Jessie and Violet began to work again. Mrs. Moore looked out of the window at them.

“Just see how those children work,” she said to Dr. Moore. “And they are so polite, too. I wonder who they are.”

Dr. Moore said nothing. After awhile he went out to the orchard. “You have worked long enough,” he said.

He gave them four dollars and all the cherries they could carry.

“That is too much,” said Henry.

“No,” said Dr. Moore, “it is just right. You see, you are better than most workers, because you are so happy. Come again.”

“I’ll come every day,” said Benny.

They all laughed.

Dr. Moore saw that the children did not all leave the orchard at the same time, but started down the street two by two.

"I wish I knew who they are," he said to himself.

When the cherry pickers got back to their little home, they looked everything over carefully. But things were just as they had left them. The door was still closed, and the milk and butter were in the refrigerator. The children made a happy supper of bread and butter and cherries and then went to bed in the boxcar.

That same night Dr. Moore sat reading the paper. All at once he saw the word LOST and began to read.

"LOST. Four children, two boys and two girls. Somewhere around Greenfield or Silver City. Five thousand dollars to anyone who can find them.

James Henry Alden."

Dr. Moore sat up. "Five thousand dollars!" he said. "James Henry Alden! Oh, my! Oh, my!"

He sat still for a long time, thinking and laughing to himself.

"The four children are living in a boxcar, but I shall not tell Mr. Alden that they are his grandchildren," he said.



X—Henry and the Free-for-All

JAMES HENRY ALDEN was a very rich man. His big mills stood just between Greenfield and Silver City.

Now J. H. Alden liked boys. He liked to see them running and jumping and playing. So each year, with three other rich men, he gave a Field Day to the town of Silver City. And even the mills were closed on Field Day.

Every year the boys were in training for the races. And not only boys, but men also, thin and fat, and girls trained for Field Day.

There were prizes for all kinds of races—running and swimming and jumping.

But the best one was a foot race, called a free-for-all, because anyone could run in it. Mr. Alden gave a prize of twenty-five dollars and a silver cup to the winner of the free-for-all. Sometimes a boy won the race, sometimes a girl. Once a fat man had won it.

On Field Day Henry was cutting the grass for Dr. Moore. Suddenly the doctor stopped his car in the street and called to Henry.

"Hop in," he said. "Today is Field Day, and I want you to see the races."

Henry hopped in, and the doctor started the car.

"I'm sorry I can't go," said Dr. Moore, "and I want to know all about it. I want you to tell me who wins each race."

Soon Henry found himself sitting on the bleachers. By and by a small boy climbed up the bleachers and sat beside him. Then a man called, "Free-for-all! Come and get ready!"

"What is that?" asked Henry. "A free-for-all?"

"Don't you know?" asked the small boy. "Didn't you see the one last year?"

"No," said Henry.

The boy laughed. "That was a funny one," he said. "There were two fat men in it, and some girls and boys. That boy over there won it. You should have seen him.

He ran so fast you could hardly see his legs at all!"

Henry looked at the winner of last year's race. He was smaller than Henry, but he was older. Suddenly Henry stood up and quietly left the bleachers. He went to the room where the boys were getting ready for the race.

"Do you want to run in the race?" a man asked him.

"Yes, I do," replied Henry.

The man gave him some track clothes to put on.

"Where did you train?" he asked.

"I never was trained," said Henry.

"These boys have been training all year," remarked the man.

"Oh, I don't think I'll win," answered Henry. "But I like to run. It's lots of fun, you know."

"So it is," said the man. "So it is."

Henry could hardly wait for the race to begin. He loved to run. But at last the race was called. It was time to start. Henry was Number 4.

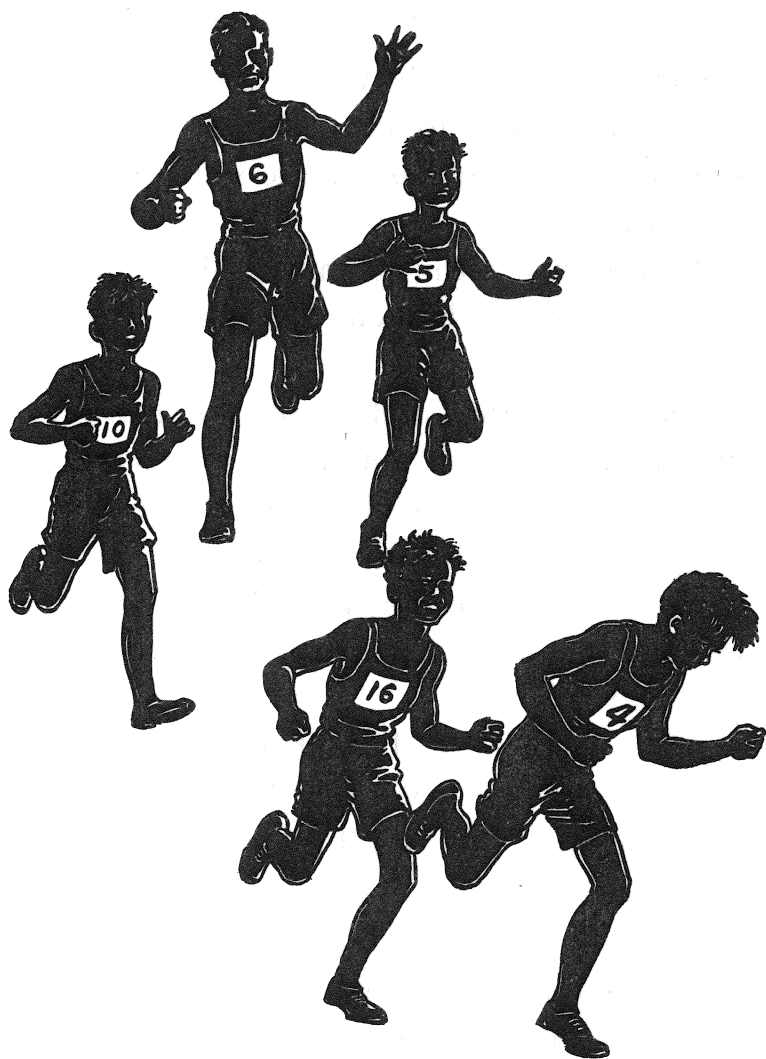
Now Henry began to think. "It's a long race," he said to himself. "I must go easy at first."

The bell rang. Off went the runners down the track. In almost no time Henry was far behind most of the other runners. But he did not seem to mind this.

"It's fun to run, anyway," he said again to himself. And he tried to see how easily he could run.

All at once he had another thought. "I have tried to see how easily I can run," he said to himself. "Now I'll try to see how fast I can run."

Then all the people began to see how fast Henry could run. He ran faster and faster, and soon he passed the two girls ahead of



him. Then he passed a fat man and a little boy.

The people began to shout, "Number 4! Number 4!" Here was the kind of race they loved!

"Faster, faster!" cried Henry to himself. "I can run faster than this."

He could. He passed Number 25 and Number 6. Then he passed Number 5 and Number 10. Only one runner was ahead of Henry now. It was Number 16. Then Henry began to think of winning the race. He knew how much the twenty-five-dollar prize would mean to Jessie and the rest of the children.

"I am going to win this race!" he said to himself "I must pass Number 16."

He ran still faster. He could see the line at the end of the race.

"Number 4! Number 4!" shouted the people. "He is going to win!"

When Henry was near Number 16, he put his head down and ran as fast as he could. He passed Number 16 and went across the line! He had won!

The people shouted and shouted. Some men held Henry up high and carried him to Mr. Alden for the prize.

Then a man asked, "What is your name, boy?"

Henry did not know what to say. He did not want to tell his name. So he answered, "Henry James." Now this was Henry's name, but it was not all of his name.

At once the big sign said,

HENRY JAMES, NUMBER 4
WINNER OF FREE-FOR-ALL

"Here is the prize, Henry James," said Mr. Alden. "You can run well, my boy. I like to see you run."

He gave Henry a silver cup and the

twenty-five dollars. Then he shook hands with him.

Just then Dr. Moore came along and climbed up in the bleachers, but Henry did not see him. The doctor laughed to himself as Henry James shook hands with James Henry.

At last Henry got away from the people and started back to Dr. Moore's. He had the twenty-five-dollar prize in his pocket. When Dr. Moore came home and found Henry cutting the grass, he laughed quietly to himself.

"I just got home," said Henry. "I will tell you who won all the races."

Dr. Moore did not tell Henry that he had been up in the bleachers. He let Henry tell him about the races.

"And who won the free-for-all?" he asked.

"I did," said Henry.

"You did?" cried Dr. Moore. "Good for

you! What are you going to do with the money?"

"I'll give it to Jessie," answered Henry.

"Good," said the doctor again.

When Henry arrived at the boxcar with the twenty-five dollars, he found dinner ready. Jessie had boiled the rest of the vegetables and put butter on top. The children began to eat, but, hungry as they were, they stopped when Henry told them about the race and showed them the silver cup. They were so excited that they couldn't eat.

"You won the race, Henry?" cried Jessie, delighted. "Oh, I'm so glad!"

"You can run fast, Henry," said Benny. "I'm glad you won the race, too." He looked at the silver cup.

"I said my name was Henry James," said Henry.

"That's right," said Jessie. "So it is. You didn't have to change it."

"Are we rich now, Henry?" asked Benny.

"No, not very," said Henry, laughing. "By the way, I bought something for supper."

Jessie looked in the bag. There were some fat brown potatoes in it.

"Oh, I know how to cook these!" cried Jessie, happily. "They will be good. You just wait."

"I can't wait," said Henry, laughing. Then he went back to work.

After dinner, Benny played around with the dog.

"Benny," Jessie said suddenly, as she hung her dishtowels up to dry. "It's high time you learned to read."

"No," said Benny. "No school now."

Jessie laughed. "No," she said, "you can't go to school, but I can help you. I wish I had a book."

"We could make a book," said Violet. "We have all the papers left from bundles."

"So we could," replied Jessie. "But what could we use to make the words?"

"We could use a burned stick out of the fire," said Violet.

So Jessie put the end of a long stick into the fire and burned it black. Then she used the burned end to make words.

"Won't Henry be glad when he finds Benny can read?" cried Violet.

Now Benny did not want to learn to read. But he liked to watch the girls make the book. Jessie made the words SEE ME in the book. She called Benny. But he could not tell *see* from *me*.

"Don't you see, Benny?" said Jessie. "This one has an s. It says *see*. This one has *m*. It says *me*."

But Benny did not see.

"It is too hard for me," he said.

"I'll tell you, Jessie," said Violet at last. "Let's make *see* on one paper and *me* on

the other. That's the way they do in school. Then have him point to *see*."

The girls did this. They called Benny, and Jessie showed him again very carefully the word that said *see*. Then she put the two words down on the ground.

"Now, Benny, point to *see*," said Jessie.

Benny looked at the two words. He could not tell.

But Watch barked and put his paw on *see*.



Now Watch did not know one word from the other, but Benny thought he did. Was he going to let a dog get ahead of him? Not Benny! He looked at the words and learned them almost at once.

“Good old Watch!” said Jessie.

“It isn’t hard at all,” said Benny. “Is it, Watch?”

Before supper Benny could read,

“See me.

See me run.

I can run.

Can you run?”

“Good boy,” said Jessie. “Now I must get supper.”

The children started up the fire and washed the potatoes in the brook. Then Jessie put wet papers around them and put them in the fire under the hot stones.

“Are you going to burn them up, Jessie?” asked Benny.

"Oh, no, Benny," said Jessie. "You wait and see."

When Henry came home, he found Jessie rolling the potatoes out of the fire. They were very black.

"Oh, did you burn them up?" asked Henry.

"No, indeed," said Jessie. "Come and see." She gave three black potatoes to each one.

"They are very hot," said Violet. "Look out!"

"Open them," said Jessie, "and take out the potato with a spoon. Then put butter on top and some salt. I will get Benny's out. Well, how are they?"

"Oh!" cried Benny. "They are delicious!"

"What did I tell you?" said Jessie. "Have some milk!"

"Milk and potatoes make a very good supper," said Henry.

"I can read," remarked Benny.

"What!" said Henry.

"Yes, he can," said Violet. "He learned this afternoon. Go and get your book, Benny."

Benny liked to read now. "It is not hard," he said. "Watch can read, too."

"Oh, can he?" laughed Henry. "Let's see him."

"Watch is too tired now," said Benny. "I will read to you."

Benny read out of his new book.

"Good old Benny," said Henry. "Come to bed now. You must be tired with all that work, and I am tired, too."



XI—The Doctor Takes a Hand

THE DAYS WENT BY happily for the boxcar children. They found more treasures in the dump, and Henry worked every day for Dr. Moore.

One noon Henry came home with some new stockings for Benny. Benny was very happy about them and made everyone admire them. And when Jessie looked at the new stockings, she had a happy thought.

She carefully washed Benny's old stockings and hung them up to dry. That afternoon she and Violet sat down, with the workbag between them, to make a bear for Benny.

"You must make a tail, too, Jessie," begged Benny, watching her put on the arms and legs and head.

"Bears don't have tails," said Jessie. "Your old bear didn't have a tail."

"But this bear must have a tail," replied Benny, knowing that Jessie would put on two tails if he asked her to.

"What kind of tail?" asked Jessie at last.

"Long and thin," said Benny happily, "so I can pull it."

"Benny!" cried Jessie, laughing.

But she made a tail, long and thin, just as Benny had ordered.

"What's his name, Jessie?" asked Benny, when at last the bear was handed over to him.

"I haven't thought about a name," replied Jessie. "Why don't you think up a nice name for him?"

"Well, you made him out of my old stockings. Let's name him Stockings."

"All right, Stockings it is," agreed Jessie, trying not to laugh.

And from that day on, the bear's name was Stockings as long as he lived. And he lived to be a very old bear, indeed.

One afternoon Jessie saw how long Benny's hair was getting, and she cut it with Violet's scissors. Benny stood quietly while she did it.

But while his sisters were getting supper, he said to himself, "Jessie cut my hair. I'll

get Violet's scissors and cut Watch's hair. He will look better."

He found Violet's scissors and made Watch lie down on his side. Then he began to cut the hair off.



Benny said, "Good dog, Watch. You are Jessie's dog, and so I will cut a J in your hair. Hold still now."

Watch lay still, and Benny began to cut a J. It was not a very good J, but it looked a little like one.

Soon Benny had cut off all the hair on one side, with a J in the middle. He stood admiring his work, and just then Jessie came to see what he was doing.

"Benny!" she cried. "What are you doing?" Then she began to laugh.

"Oh, Violet, come and see!" she called. "Watch looks so funny."

Jessie laughed and laughed until she almost cried. Violet laughed until she did cry.

Then she could not stop crying. She cried and cried. At last Jessie made up her mind that Violet was really sick.

"You must go to bed, Violet," she said. She helped her carefully into the boxcar and put pine needles all around her and under her. Then she wet a handkerchief in the cold water of the brook and laid it on her little sister's hot head.

"I wish Henry would come home!" said Jessie. "What shall we do?"

When Henry came at last, he looked at Violet and said that maybe she had a cold. "Maybe she sat too long by the brook," he said.

"If Violet is very sick, she ought to go to the hospital," said Jessie.

"Yes, I know that," said Henry. "And we don't want her to go to a hospital if we can help it. We should have to tell her name."

"Yes," said Jessie. "Then Grandfather could find us."

The two older children sat up with Violet. They put cold water on her head. But after dark Violet shook all over, and Jessie was frightened. She covered Violet all over with pine needles, but still she shook. They could not get her warm.

"I'm going to get Dr. Moore," said Henry. "I'm afraid Violet is very sick."

Then Henry started to run. He ran even faster than he had run in the race. Down the

hill into the town he ran, until he came to Dr. Moore's house.

"Please come!" he cried. "Violet is very sick!"

The doctor said, "Come and get into my car."

He did not ask Henry which way to go, but the car went up the right road. When they came to the woods, he said to Henry, "Stay here in the car."

He ran alone up the hill to the boxcar. It seemed like magic that he knew where to go.

When Dr. Moore came back, he was carrying Violet in his arms. Jessie and Benny and Watch came, too. They all got into the car.

"Are you going to take her to a hospital?" asked Henry.

"No," said Dr. Moore. "I'm taking her to my house."

When they stopped at last, Dr. Moore car-

ried Violet into the house and said to his mother, "Violet is very sick. We must put her to bed."

Mrs. Moore hurried around, opening beds and bringing pillows, and Mary came from the kitchen with hot-water bottles. After awhile Violet began to get warm.

Then Mrs. Moore came to get the other children. "You must stay here all night," she said.

She gave Henry and Benny a big bed, and Jessie slept in a little one. But Violet was so sick that the doctor did not go to bed all night. He would not leave her. He sat by her side until ten o'clock in the morning.

Before ten o'clock a man came to see the doctor. Mary told him he could wait. So he sat down in the living-room. Soon Benny came in.

"Where *is* the doctor?" asked the man, crossly.

"He is up in Violet's room," answered Benny.

"This means five thousand dollars to him if he will come down," said the man.

"Oh, he can't come now," said Benny.

"What do you mean, boy?" asked the man.
"What is he doing?"

"He's taking care of my sister Violet," said Benny. "She is sick."

"And you mean he wouldn't leave her even if I gave him five thousand dollars?" asked the man.

"Yes," answered Benny. "That's what I mean."

Then the man said, "You see, I have lost a little boy, and I think the doctor knows where he is. My little boy is just about as old as you are."

"Well, if you don't find him, maybe you can have me," remarked Benny. "I like you."

"You do?" cried the man. "Come and get up in my lap."

Benny climbed into the man's lap. "Have you got a dog?" he asked.

"No," said the man. "He is dead now. But you can see him in my watch. Here it is."

Benny looked at the dog. "He looks like a very good dog," he said. "I have a dog, too. His name is Watch."

Just then Watch came in with Dr. Moore.

"Good morning," said Dr. Moore. "Benny, you can go and play with Watch."

Benny ran out, and the man said, "Dr. Moore, where are my grandchildren?"

"That little boy is one of them," said Dr. Moore quietly.

"That beautiful little boy!" said the man.

"Yes," said Dr. Moore. "They are all good children. But they are afraid of you. They are afraid you will find them."

"How do you know that?" asked the man.

"They have changed their name," said the doctor. He looked at the man in a queer way. "The big boy changed his name on Field Day. You saw him then."

"I saw him? What did he change his name to?" asked the man.

"Henry James," said the doctor.

"The running boy!" cried the man. "The boy who won the free-for-all! I liked that boy. So I am his grandfather."





XII—James Henry and Henry James

DR. MOORE WENT to get his mother.
“Mother,” he said, “this is Mr.
James Henry Alden. He wants to
take his grandchildren to live with him.”

"I'm afraid they won't want to go with you," said Mrs. Moore, "until they learn to like you. And they won't want to go while Violet is so sick."

"Can't I see them?" begged Mr. Alden. "I won't tell them who I am."

"That would help," agreed the doctor. "If they grow to like you before they know who you are, things will be easier."

"Yes," said Mrs. Moore. "Stay here with us for awhile. The children will learn to like you, and then we can tell them that you are their grandfather."

"Thank you," said Mr. Alden. "I will go home and get some clothes and come back. And I will give you the five thousand dollars."

But Dr. Moore would not take the money.

"I just want these children to be happy," he said.

When Mary learned that she was to cook

for Mr. Alden, she was frightened. "How can I cook for him?" she cried. "He has everything. He is a very rich man."

"You can cook for anyone," said Dr. Moore, kindly. "Just get one of your good chicken dinners and make some cherry dumplings."

At dinner Mr. Alden saw all his grandchildren but Violet. He smiled with delight when he saw Jessie come into the room in her quiet way.

"Children," said Mrs. Moore, "this is Mr. Henry."

Benny laughed. "Henry and Mr. Henry," he remarked. "That is funny."

Henry shook hands with Mr. Alden before he sat down at the table.

"Where have I seen that man before?" he thought.

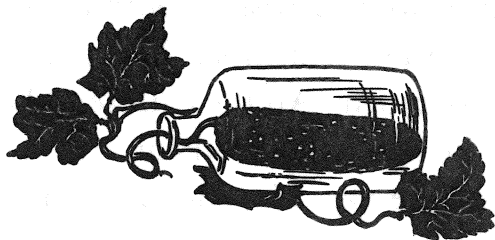
The children liked to hear Mr. Henry talk. He told them about a big cucumber in

his garden. The cucumber was growing inside a bottle, and he couldn't get it out.

"Why not?" asked Benny.

"It is too big," said Mr. Alden.

"How did it get in?" asked Benny.



"It was a little cucumber when it went in," said Mr. Alden. "A cucumber will grow just the same in a bottle. It will grow so big you can't get it out."

"I'd like to see the cucumber," said Benny, stopping in the middle of his cherry dumpling.

"Would you really?" asked Mr. Alden, delighted. "Some day you and I will go over and pick it."

"And we can bring it to Violet," said Benny.

"Yes, we'll bring it to Violet," agreed Mr. Alden.

Henry thought again, "Where have I seen that man before? I wish I could remember."

He could not remember, but he liked Mr. Alden very much. All the children liked him because he was kind to them.

At last, one day, Mr. Alden could see Violet and went softly into her room with some beautiful flowers from his garden. The children loved him when he patted Violet's dark head and told her that he was sorry she had been sick.

He told her, too, about his garden, where the flowers came from.

"I'd like to see your garden," said Violet. "I love flowers."

"How long are you going to stay, Mr. Henry?" asked Benny.

"Sh, Benny!" said Jessie.

"I want to stay here as long as I can, my boy," said Mr. Alden quietly.

Henry looked at the man again. He knew that he had heard him say "my boy" before. Now where was it? He could not remember.

After dinner Mr. Alden sat under a tree, reading. Henry was working in the flower garden in front of the house. He looked at Mr. Alden again and again.

Suddenly it came to him, as the man smiled over his book. "It is the same man who gave me the twenty-five-dollar prize and the silver cup!" he said to himself. "I didn't remember him at first because I was so excited when he shook hands with me." He took another look and said again, "It's the very same man!"

Henry sat thinking for a little while. Then he got up and went to find Dr. Moore.

"Do you know who gave me the prize on

Field Day?" he asked the doctor. "Do you know what his name was?"

"James Alden, of the mills," replied the doctor. "J. H. Alden, over at Greenfield." He did not look at Henry while he was saying it.

Poor Henry was so surprised he almost fell over! That kind man his grandfather! He went out and sat on the steps to think it over.

To begin with, this man was too young. Henry had thought of his grandfather as being an old man with white hair. And Mrs. Moore had called him "Mr. Henry." Could it be that the man knew he was their grandfather and hadn't told them?

Then he saw that Mr. Alden was getting out of his chair under the trees.

"It's now or never," thought Henry. "I have to know!"

He walked eagerly after the man, who was

going toward the garden with his back to Henry. Then the man turned around and saw how excited Henry was.

"Are you James Henry Alden of Greenfield?" Henry asked.

"I am, my boy," replied Mr. Alden, with a smile. "Does that mean *you* know that *I* know you are Henry James Alden?"

"Yes," said Henry quietly.

Then James Henry Alden shook hands again with Henry James Alden.

Jessie and Benny came across the grass just in time to hear Henry say, "But, Grandfather—"

"Grandfather?" cried Jessie. "What do you mean, Henry?"

"Yes, Jessie," said Henry eagerly. "He's the man we have been running away from all this time."

"I thought you were old," said Benny
"And cross. Jessie said so."

"I didn't know, Benny," said Jessie. Her face was red. To think of running away from this kind man!

But her grandfather did not seem to mind. He patted her on the head and said, "Let's go up and see Violet."

There was no stopping Benny. He hurried into Violet's room, holding Mr. Alden by the hand and shouting, "It's Grandfather, Violet! And he isn't cross after all!"

"What do you mean?" asked Violet. "Isn't he Mr. Henry?"

"My name is James Henry Alden," replied her grandfather.

"And my name is Henry James Alden," cried Henry.

"Well, well!" said Dr. Moore.

Violet held on to her grandfather's hand and listened to the rest talking excitedly.

"Where have you been living?" asked Mr. Alden at last.

They all looked at each other, even Dr. Moore and his mother. Then they all laughed as if they never would stop.

"You just ought to see!" said Dr. Moore.

"What!" cried all the children at once. "You never saw it in the daytime."

"Is that so?" laughed the doctor. "I have seen it many times in the daytime."

"Seen what?" asked Mr. Alden.

"Our house," said Jessie. "We have been living in a boxcar in the woods."

Then they all began to tell him about the dump and the dishes and the brook and the swimming pool.

"They have four beds of pine needles in the car," said Dr. Moore.

"How do you know?" asked Jessie.

"Well," said Dr. Moore, "the first day Henry worked for me, I walked after him as far as the hill."

"Why did you do that?" asked Mr. Alden.

"I liked him. I saw he was a fine boy, and I wanted to see where he lived."

"But you can't see the boxcar from the hill," said Jessie.

"No, but I came back that night and looked around," said Dr. Moore.

"About ten o'clock!" cried Jessie.

"Yes," said the doctor. "I stepped on a stick, and you heard me."

"Our rabbit!" cried Jessie and Henry.
"Watch barked."



"Yes, I heard the dog bark. So I knew you were in the boxcar. Then I went home."

"But you came back?" asked Jessie.

"Oh, yes. When you were picking cher-

ries, I went up to see your house. I wanted to see if you had enough to eat and enough dishes."

"Why didn't you tell me?" asked Mr. Alden. "Didn't you know they were my grandchildren?"

The doctor laughed. "Yes, I did. But they were having such a fine time that I didn't want to tell. They got along very well until Violet got sick. Then I told you."

"I'm glad you did," said Mr. Alden.

"I have seen your house, too," said Mrs. Moore. "I went up one day and saw all your dishes. I liked your big pitcher and teapot."

"All of you have seen it but me!" said Mr. Alden.

"We'll show it to you!" cried Benny. "I'll show you my cart made out of wheels, and my pink cup."

"Good for you, Benny," said his grandfather, much pleased. "When Violet gets

well, we'll all go up there. If you will show me your house, I'll show you my house."

"Do you have a house?" asked Benny in surprise.

"Yes. You can live there with me if you like it. I have been looking for you children for a long time."

Violet was soon well again, and one afternoon they all started out to see the boxcar. The doctor took them in his car. Many people looked out of their windows to watch Mr. Alden and his grandchildren. They were glad that the children had found such a kind grandfather at last.

When they arrived at their old home, they ran around, all talking excitedly. Watch sniffed and sniffed all around, looking for the bone he had buried. Everything was the same.

"Here is the dam for the pool," said Henry to his grandfather.

"See our 'building'!" shouted Benny, for that was what he called the fireplace. "It really burns, too. And this is the refrigerator in the waterfall, and here is my pink cup!"

They all stepped on the stump and climbed into the car. They looked at the four beds and the dishes.

"Here is the same old pitcher and teapot," said Jessie, laughing.

They found the blue tablecloth, and they all sat down by the brook and ate chicken and bread and butter and cookies. Benny drank milk from his pink cup.

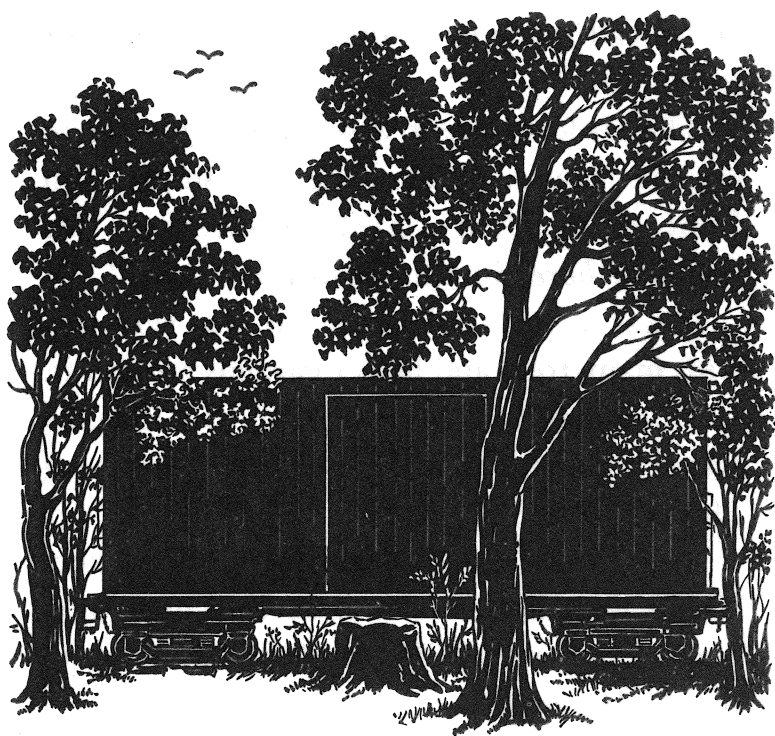


"Come, we ought to go now," said Dr. Moore at last. "The sun is going down. I don't want Violet to take any more cold."

They closed the boxcar door and said good-by. But they were all sorry to go.

"Tomorrow," said Mr. Alden, "will all of you come to see my house?"

"Oh, yes," cried the children happily. They did not know what a beautiful house it was and what good times they were going to have in it.



XIII—A New Home for the Boxcar

THE CHILDREN's grandfather wanted them to like his house. He wanted them to live with him all the time.

So he had made over some of the rooms just for them.

The children went with him in his car to see the house. When the car stopped in front of it, Henry cried in surprise, "Do you live *here*, in this beautiful house?"

It was a beautiful house. It was very big, with many trees and flower gardens around it.

"You may live here, too, if you like my house," remarked his grandfather, watching Henry's face.

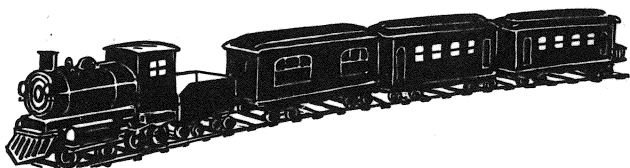
The house was beautiful inside, too. There were flowers everywhere. There were maids everywhere. The children went up to the bedrooms.

"Oh!" cried Jessie. "This is Violet's room."

It really was Violet's room. There were violets on the wallpaper. The bed was white with a violet cover. On the table were flowers.

“What a beautiful room!” cried Violet, sitting down in a soft, pretty chair.

All the children shouted when they saw Benny’s room. The wallpaper was blue and covered with big rabbits and dogs and bears. There were a rocking horse and a tool box and little tables and chairs. And an engine stood on a track, with cars almost as big as the little boy himself. Benny ran over to the engine.



“Can I run this train all day?” he asked. He sat down on the floor by the engine.

“Oh, no,” said Henry. “You are going to school as soon as it begins.”

His grandfather laughed. "That is right, my boy. You will like school. You will learn to read."

"Oh, I can read now," said Benny.

In Jessie's room they found a bed for Watch. It was on the floor by her bed. Watch got in at once, sniffed at the pillow, turned around three times, and lay down.

"He likes it," said Jessie. "He will sleep by me."

Just then the children heard a doorbell ring. A maid came up to find Mr. Alden.

"A man to see you," she said, "about the dog."

Now when Jessie heard the word *dog*, she was frightened. She was afraid it was about Watch.

"They won't take Watch away?" she whispered to Henry.

"No, indeed!" said Henry. "We'll never, *never* give him up."

Henry and Jessie and the other children went down with their grandfather to see the man, and Jessie was more frightened than ever. Watch did not growl at the man. He jumped up on him delightedly.

"You see, he was my dog," said the man. "But I sold him to a lady, and he ran away from her that very day. I have to turn him over to the lady I sold him to."

"How do you know he is the same dog?" asked Mr. Alden.

"Oh, he is my dog," said the man. "You see he knows me, and he has a small black spot on this foot. But someone has cut his hair on one side."

Benny looked. He found the black spot on Watch's foot.

"I never saw that spot before," said Henry.

"I will give you what you want for the dog," said Mr. Alden. "The children love him. They want to keep him."

"But I sold him to a lady," said the man.
"I must take the dog to her."

Then Henry said, "Maybe she will want to change to another dog when she sees his hair. If she will agree to take another dog, will you let my grandfather have this one?"

"Yes, I will," said the man.

"Let's go and ask her, Grandfather," said Benny. "She will let Jessie have Watch. He is her dog. She took the thorn out of his foot."



The man told Mr. Alden where the lady lived, and they all started out to find her.

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She was a very pretty young lady, and she asked them to sit down.

But Benny could not wait. He said, "Please let us keep Watch! I want him, and Jessie wants him, and we didn't know he was your dog."

"What do you mean?" asked the lady, laughing. "Who is Watch?"

"This dog is Watch," answered Henry. "A man came to Grandfather's house today and told us that he had sold the dog to you. When Watch ran away from you, the day you bought him, he came to us. He had a thorn in his foot, and Jessie took it out."

Watch looked up at the lady and wagged his tail. When she looked at him, she began to laugh.

"Look at his side!" she said. "Who cut his hair?"

"I'm sorry," said Henry. "Benny did that one day with Violet's scissors."

"I am not sorry," said the lady, laughing. "He looks so funny. And you want to keep him? Is that it?"

"Oh, yes," said Jessie eagerly. "The man will let us have him, if you will take another dog."

"Don't be afraid," said the young lady. "You may keep the dog. I can change to another one."

"Oh, thank you! You are nice!" cried Benny.

He ran to the lady and climbed up in her lap before anyone could stop him.

"I'd like to keep you, Benny, in place of the dog," laughed the lady, putting her arms around him.

How happy the children were to have Watch to keep! Mr. Alden gave the money to the man at once.

Four happy children sat with their grandfather around the Alden dinner table that

night. The maids smiled in the kitchen to hear the children laugh. And the children laughed because Watch had a chair at the table beside Jessie and was really waited on by a maid.

Would you ever think that four children could be homesick in such a beautiful house? Jessie was the first one to wish for the old boxcar.

One day she said, "Oh, Grandfather, I'd like to cook something once more in the dear old kettle in the woods."

"Go out in the kitchen, my dear," said her grandfather. "The maids will help you. You can cook all you want to."

Jessie liked this, but it was not like the old days in the boxcar.

Then one day Benny said, "Grandfather, I wish I could drink my milk out of my dear old pink cup."

His grandfather began to think. He had

some pink cups, but they were not so dear to Benny as his old cracked one.

At last Mr. Alden said, "I am going to give you children a surprise."

"Is it very nice?" asked Benny.

"No, not very," laughed his grandfather. "It is not pretty at all."

"When will it come?" asked Benny.

"It will come today. You children must all go over to Dr. Moore's and stay, until the surprise comes."

"What can it be?" wondered Violet.

Her grandfather laughed. "I hope you will like it," he said. "It is very heavy."

The children were glad to see sweet Mrs. Moore and the kind doctor again. They stayed until Mr. Alden said the surprise was ready. Then Dr. Moore and his mother went back with them in the big car.

Mr. Alden was as happy as a boy. He took them by the garage and through the big gar-

dens. At last they came to a garden with a fountain in the middle and trees around it. Near the fountain was the surprise. It was the old boxcar!

The children ran over to it with cries of delight, opened the door, and climbed in. All the things were in place. Even the old dead stump was there to step on.

Here was the old knife which had cut butter and bread and vegetables and firewood and string. Here was Benny's pink cup, and here was his bed. Here were the big kettle and the blue tablecloth. Here were the pitcher and the old teapot. And here was the dinner bell which the children had made from an old tin can.

Benny hung it on a tree with a string and rang it over and over again with a spoon. Watch rolled on the floor of the car and barked and barked. Then he began to sniff at everything.

"He's looking for the bone he buried," laughed Benny.

"How they love the old boxcar!" said Mrs. Moore. "I like to see them so happy."

"Thank you for the surprise, Grandfather," said Violet. "We'll never go away from you again."

"I hope not, my dear," said Mr. Alden. "We'll all live happily ever after."

And so they did.

