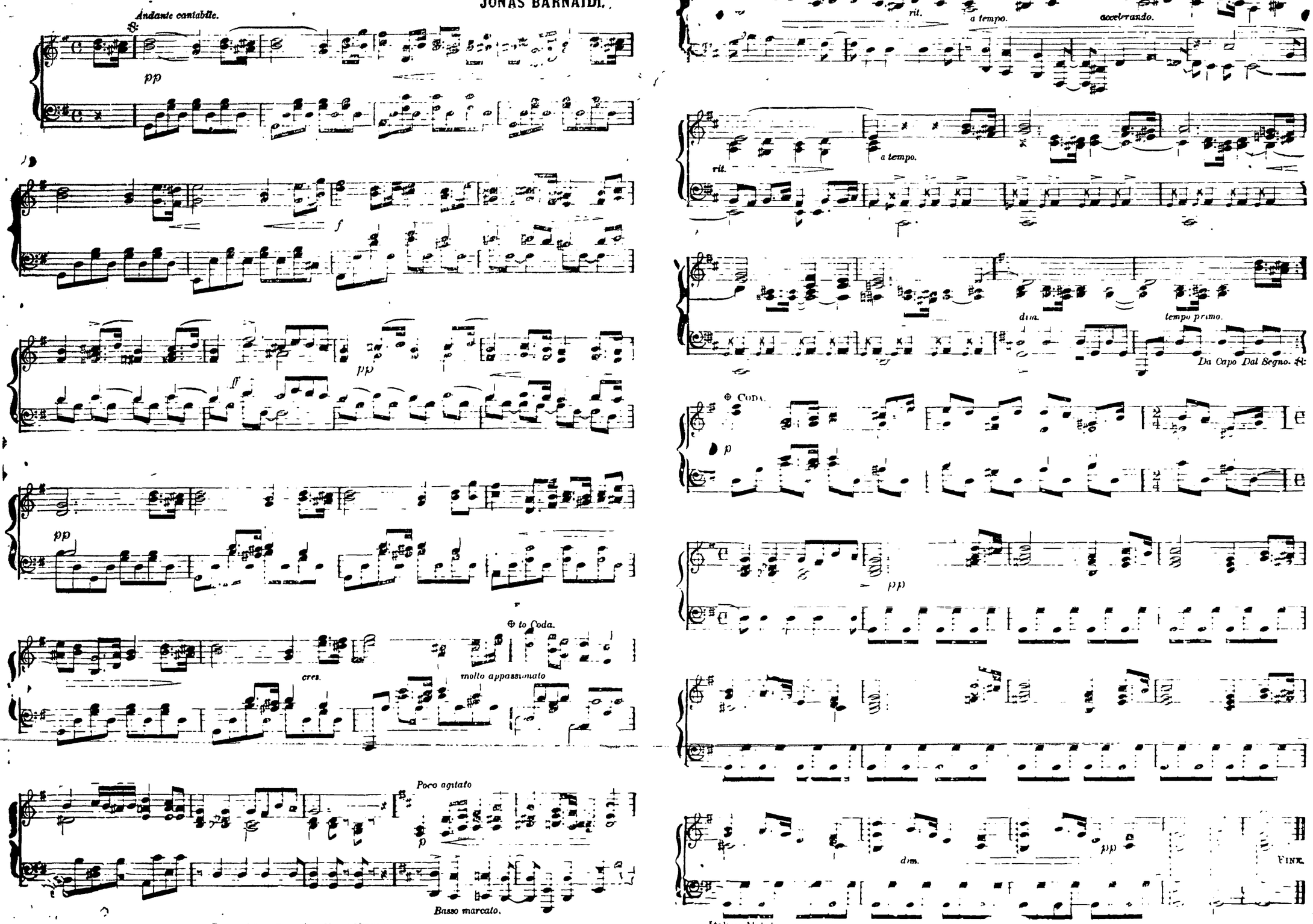
ITALIAN MELODY.

JONAS BARNAIDI.



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Three Fierce Puppies.

Three cunning little puppy dogs
In suits of glossy brown,
Who tried their squeaky little barks
At every one in town.
One morning, on her way to school,
Spied little Lucy Blair,
A pretty little brown eyed girl
With silky curling hair

"Let's bark at her!" they cried at once,
"'Twill be such jolly fun
To see her drop her reading books
And scream and turn and run!"
"You darling, darling little dogs!"
Cried Lucy in delight
But puppies don't know English well,
They thought her in great fright

Just then some raindrops, cold and bright,
Came slowly dripping down,
And her umbrella Lucy raised,
So big and black and round,
And each brave puppy turned about
And hung his little head
And scampered home in wondrous haste
And tumbled into bed.

—Little Folks.

TWO LITTLE KNIGHTS IN KNICKERBOCKERS

Thirty-five long, slender, plump headed cattails—one apiece for 30 boys, and five over, in case of accidents or extra boys. They had been gathered in exactly the right stage of greenness, tied in a neat bundle and placed carefully, heads up, in one corner of the attic, where it was dry, but not too dry. Tommy stood gazing at them with an anxious wrinkle between his eyes.

There was a similar bundle—yes, even a larger bundle—in one corner of the Rawson boys' attic, and Tommy would have given a good deal to know which bundle would finally be used. It was something that nobody could predict, and it meant much to Tommy. It also meant a great deal to the Rawson boys, but Tommy was not thinking of that just then.

The next evening Tommy burst into the house, after school, with a radiant face.

"Oh, mamma, mamma!" he cried. "We've beat! We've beat! Our candidate's elected! Hurrah, hurrah, hurrah!"

In two minutes, more or less, the 35 cattails were standing on their heads in an old water bucket filled with kerosene.

Soon after supper a crowd of noisy boys gathered around Tommy's gate, and by the time the cattails were distributed it had grown quite dark.

"Now, then, are you fellows all ready?" asked Tommy, with an important air.

The boys looked around.

"Hello!" said Willie Wilson, spying a small figure leaning against the gatepost. "There's Paul. Paul hasn't a torch. Give Paul a torch!"

"I'm on the other side," said Paul sadly but firmly. Paul was the little orphan cousin who lived with Tommy's people, and his dead father had been on "the other side."

If it had been any other boy in Smithville, this bold statement would have been received with sneers and jeers from the excited lads, but there was something about quiet, resolute, gentlemanly little Paul that had won the respect and affection of the older and rougher boys.

"Oh, say, come on anyway, Paul," said Willie, with gruff kindness. "It's dark, and nobody will see you."

"I can't," said Paul, turning and walking away around the house.

"Why, of course he can't," said Bob Evans indignantly. "Would you?"

Tommy was very quiet. He was living over again that moment of suspense and anxiety in the attic yesterday. He was thinking of the big bunch of cattails that was still standing in a dark corner of the Rawson boys' attic. He ran his hand up and down the polished stem of his own torch, remembering that it might have been in the attic yet. In that case Tommy himself would have been lying face down in the barn loft, with his head burled in the hay to drown the Rawson boys' exultant cries.

"I say, fellows," he said, "we'll have our procession, of course, but we won't holler."

There was a short of disgust from the excited boys.

"'Twon't be any fun at all," shouted Ted Andrews, who had a voice like a trumpet and enjoyed using it.

"They'll think we don't care," said Harry Lee.

"Huh!" said Tommy, brandishing his unlighted torch. "I guess this'll speak for itself. They know where we stand, and we know, and they can think what they like. You can holler inside all you want to, and tomorrow will be the men's procession, and you can holler then, but not tonight."

Tommy was born to be a leader of men and was therefore a born leader of boys, so he won them over. Presently there was a scratching of matches, and one by one the little torches

flared up, and the procession formed and marched silently but sturdily up the street.

A few blocks up lived the Jenkins boys. They were on "the other side," and they sat on the fence and made scornful remarks.

"Don't you fellows say a word," muttered Tommy, with a martyrlike air, and the little band marched on in dead silence.

A little farther on lived the Rawson boys, but they were not to be seen.

"In the barn loft," thought Tommy, with a pang of pity.

Not they. The older Rawson boy was crouched behind the fence, clutching the nozzle of a hose, and he was looking with puzzled eyes at the dancing lights. Behind him knelt the younger Rawson boy.

"Now! Now they're near enough! Turn it on! Turn it on!" whispered Johnny Rawson excitedly, but the puzzled look in Ted's eyes deepened.

"'Tisn't the fellows," he muttered. "They'd be yelling like Comanche Indians."

"'Tis too! Turn it on, I tell you," growled Johnny.

"'Tisn't the fellows," Ted repeated doggedly.

"Turn it on, I tell you," said Johnny, reaching frantically for the hose. He saw a brilliant opportunity passing rapidly beyond his reach.

Then the Rawson boys rolled over and over, becoming every moment more and more tangled in the hose as each struggled for the possession of it. At last Johnny succeeded in wresting the nozzle from Ted and in turning the water on, but the only living thing in range was old Tom, the cat, who was

THEN THE RAWSON BOYS ROLLED OVER AND OVER.

sitting on the top step, glaring at the bobbing lights. He fled, spitting and squalling, to the barn and hid himself, vowing that he never, never would have anything more to do with mysterious moving lights which suddenly belched forth streams of icy water, and he never did. Forever after the sight of a lantern bobbing up the street would send him flying to a place of safety.

By the time the Rawson boys had untangled themselves from the hose and Johnny had it properly aimed the procession had turned the corner and was marching down the next street.

"You're a pretty fellow!" cried Johnny to Ted.

"I don't care," said Ted to Johnny. "I'm not sure yet that it was the fellows."

But deep down in his heart he was pretty sure it was, and he was pretty sure he knew why they were so quiet, and he was quite sure that it was a very fine thing to do.

"I wouldn't have turned it on if I had been sure it was the fellows," he said to himself as they coiled up the hose and put it back into its winter quarters.—Mary M. Parks.

Dog Saves a Child's Life.

From Saunders county, Neb., comes a story of the remarkable fidelity and almost human forethought of a shepherd dog which for 19 hours guarded a wandering babe which was out all night in a terrific rain and wind storm.

The 2½-year-old child of Fred Baltz, Jr., wandered away from the farmhouse, and when Mrs. Baltz missed the child she hitched up an old horse to a sulky and drove rapidly to the field where her husband was thrashing. The whole force of thrashers immediately volunteered to join in the search. Mr. Baltz sent the men to a neighbor's and asked their assistance. Everybody responded, and as the searching party spread out each member of it requested aid of every man he met, so that by midnight there were more than 50 men searching hills and dales in the neighborhood of the Baltz farm. All night long, during which at intervals the fury of the storm seemed to baffle the efforts of strong men, the search was continued, but the little one eluded every member of the party.

Not until 1 o'clock the next day was the search for the child rewarded. Sitting up against the sheltering bank of a creek, wet, shivering and bedraggled, the child was found. By its side stood a shepherd dog who for a year or more had attended the flocks on Baltz's farm. The faithful animal could not be induced to leave the child at the request of the man who first approached, who was a stranger to the dog, and for a few minutes he contested the right of the man to touch the child. After a careful survey he saw that the child had been dragged from an exposed point near the creek up under a small overhanging bank of the stream which formed something of a natural shelter. He is convinced that the dog must have dragged the child up to this sheltering rock and by so doing saved its life. The dog is about 4 years old. It is needless to say that hereafter the noble animal will feed on the fat of the land.

CURIOUS TREES.

Some Whistle, Some Sting, Some Furnish Cloth and Others Give Milk.

The "whistling tree," or acacia fistula, is found in Nubia and the Sudan. The Arabs call it "soffar," or pipe, because of the whistling sound that it produces, and the specific name of "fistula," a word also meaning pipe or flute, has been given it for the same reason. Insects infest the tree and deposit their eggs in its shoots. A gall-like excrescence about an inch and a half in diameter is produced at the base of the shoots, and when the larvæ have emerged from circular holes in the sides of the shoots the holes, played upon by the wind, produce a whistling sound equal to that produced by a sweet toned flute.

The "cow tree" is so called because it yields an abundant supply of milk. To obtain the milk deep incisions are made in the tree, from which the fluid flows into vessels placed ready to receive it. This vegetable milk is white, somewhat viscid and has an agreeable flavor, and an analysis of it shows that it is very much like the milk of a cow in its composition. The cow tree grows on the slope of the mountain chain bordering on Venezuela.

The "cloth tree" is found at Otaheite, in the south sea. The bark is taken off in long strips and put to soak overnight in running water. The soaking softens it, so that the inner fiber may be easily separated from the rest of the bark. The fibers are put together in lengths of about 11 or 12 yards, and the lengths are placed side by side until they are at least 12 inches in width, and two or three layers of fiber are put one upon another. The fibers adhere together in one piece, and the material thus formed is beaten upon a smooth piece of wood until it becomes as thin as muslin. It is then bleached in the air for a time, when it is ready to be made up into clothing.

The "stinging tree" of Queensland is pleasing to the eye, but dangerous to the touch. Its effects are curious. It causes great pain to the person or animal that has the misfortune to get stung by it, but it leaves no wound, no mark of any kind. And for months afterward the part stung is painful in rainy weather or when in any way it gets wet. Frequently it is necessary to shoot horses and dogs that have been stung by the tree, so maddening are its effects upon them.

The "angry tree" grows in Nevada, eastern California and Arizona. When in the least disturbed, this highly sensitive tree shows its anger by ruffling up its leaves and emitting a disagreeable odor.

Can Ants Hear?

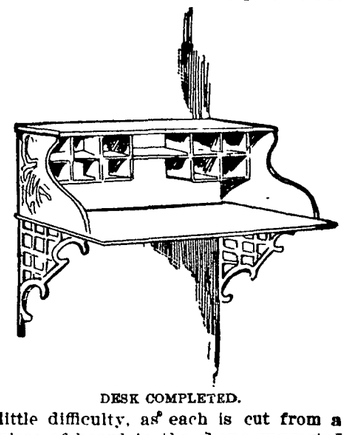
Naturalists have generally accepted the opinion that ants are not able to perceive any sounds that are audible to human ears. Professor Weld of the Iowa State university controverts this opinion. He describes in Science careful experiments made by him with four species of American ants, from which he deduces the conclusion that these species, at least, are able to perceive sounds, but whether they do it by means of organs of hearing or through the sense of touch being excited by atmospheric vibrations he is unable to say with certainty. He inclines to the opinion that they do really hear, as some individuals showed a perception of the direction of the sound, such as that of a shrill whistle, and others which were not disturbed when violently shaken in their glass prisons seemed to be "driven nearly frantic" by shrill sounds.

There are many persons who think Sunday is a sponge with which to wipe out the sins of the week.

One of the great battles that we have to fight in this world—for 20 great battles have to be fought all at once and in one—is the battle with appearances.

A Boy's Writing Desk.

A roll top desk is out of the reach of a great many boys, but this neat and attractive substitute is certainly within the constructive skill of a very great many boys. A broad shelf cut from a single board forms the foundation. This is supported by two very stout bronze brackets that may be had at the hardware store. The ends present but



DESK COMPLETED.

little difficulty, as each is cut from a piece of board in the shape suggested and screwed to the shelf by screws from beneath the latter. The top and back are plain strips of board, the back being of pine or whitewood, while the shelf, ends and top should be of some wood having a handsome grain, as oak, ash or chestnut. The pigeonholes should be made from whitewood three-eighths of an inch in thickness. The shelf and top of this desk should have the front edge and the ends rounded and the whole surface rubbed down smooth with sandpaper. The wood can then be oiled and rubbed to a polish with a flannel cloth.—Cincinnati Commercial Gazette.