



The soldier tried to treat the matter as a jest. Then he grew angry and said in an undertone, "One can surely do what he pleases with his own."

"For shame!" cried the judge. "Has the horse not served you for many years? And has he not saved your life? You must build a good shelter for him, and give him the best grain and the best pasture. Take the horse home and be as true to him as he has been to you."

The soldier hung his head in shame and led the horse away. The people shouted and applauded.

"Great is King John," they cried, "and great the bell of Atri!"

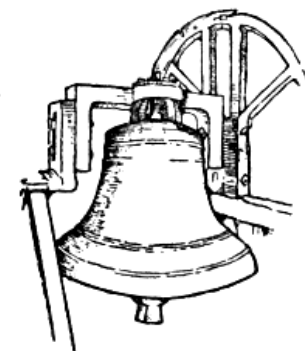
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1. (True/False) King John cared about the people in his kingdom, even the children.
2. (True/False) King John did not care about the horse's "call" for justice.
3. What great thing did the horse do for the soldier?  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. What did the soldier feel as he led his horse away? \_\_\_\_\_

## THE BELL OF ATRI

### I

Good King John of Atri loved his people very much and wished to see them happy. He knew, however, that some were not; he knew that many suffered wrongs which were not righted. This made him sad.



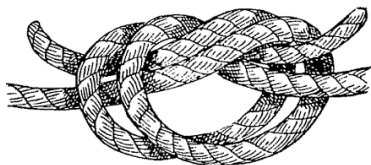
One day the king thought of a way to help his people. He had a great bell hung in a tower in the market place. He had the rope made so long that a child could reach it.

Then the king sent heralds through the streets to tell the people why he had put the bell in the market place. The heralds blew their trumpets long and loud, and the people came from their homes to hear the message.

"Know ye," cried a herald, "that whenever a wrong is done to any man, he has but to ring the great bell in the square. A judge will go to the tower to hear the complaint, and he will see that justice is done."

"Long live our good king!" shouted the people. "Now our wrongs shall be righted."

And so it was. Whenever anyone was wronged, he rang the bell in the tower. The judge put on his rich robes and went there. He listened to the complaint, and the guilty were punished.



The people in Atri were now very happy, and the days went swiftly by. The bell hung in its place year after year, and it was rung many times. By and by the rope became so worn that one could scarcely reach it.

The king said, "Why, a child could not reach the rope now, and a wrong might not be righted. I must put in a new one."

So he ordered a rope from a distant town. In those days it took a long time to travel from one town to another. What should they do if somebody wished to ring the bell before the new rope came?

"We must mend the rope in some way," said a man.

"Here," said another; "take this piece of grapevine and fasten it to the rope. Then it will be long enough for any one to reach."

This was done, and for some time the bell was rung in that way.

## II

One hot summer noon everything was very still. All the people were indoors taking their noonday rest.

Suddenly they were awakened by the arousing bell. The judge started from a deep sleep, turned on his couch, and listened. Could it be the bell of

justice?

Again the sound came. It was the bell of justice. The judge put on his rich robes and, panting, hurried to the market place.

There he saw a strange sight: a poor steed, starved and thin, tugging at the vines which were fastened to the bell. A great crowd had gathered around.

"Whose horse is this?" the judge asked.

"It is the horse of the rich soldier who lives in the castle," said a man. "He has served his master long and well, and has saved his life many times. Now that the horse is too old to work, the master turns him out. He wanders through the lanes and fields, picking up such food as can be found."

"His call for justice shall be heard," said the judge. "Bring the soldier to me."

