

## For Girls and Boys.

## A GIRL IN BLUE.

This was just the way Helen looked when her Cousin Carrie peeped in at her from the crack in the door that led to the dining room. And this was much the way Carrie talked to herself about it.

"There she sits in her elegant new morning dress, nothing in the world to do but amuse herself, and I must stain my hands paring potatoes and onions and I don't know what for dinner. A dress with a train, and she only sixteen! only two years and a few months older than I am! How would I look in a train? I never expect to have such an elegant dress as she has on this minute, and it is only her morning dress. To-night she will wear the lovely garnet silk trimmed with white lace. Think of me in my old blue flannel! It is all I have to wear. I don't see why there should be such a difference between cousins! I wish Helen had stayed in New York. Why she wanted to come to see the country in the winter is more than I can understand. She isn't homesick a bit. I just think I'll stay at home to-night. Almost all the girls wear new dresses, and my old one will look older than ever beside Helen's grand one."

"Carrie," called that young lady's mother, and Carrie went to the kitchen.

There she gave her hands to the potatoes and her thoughts to the discouragement around her. At last she spoke of them aloud:

"Mother, I don't believe I'll go to-night after all."

"Not go to Kate's party! Why, what has happened? Is the child sick?"

"No'm, I am not sick, only discouraged. I don't want to go and wear that old blue dress, and that's the truth. I shall look different from any of the others, and seeing me with Helen will make everybody notice it more."

"My child, Helen's father is worth a million, and your father isn't worth a thousand dollars besides what it takes to support his family."

"I know it, ma'am, I am not finding fault only I don't want to go and be looked at, that's all."

The mother looked very sober, and something beside the steam that puffed out of the pudding dish made her eyes moist. Carrie split a large potato savagely in two, and looked gloomy. Then the mother said, speaking low:

"Won't you disappoint a good many people to-night, daughter? Isn't Kate depending on you to help with the charades and the music?"

"I can't help it, mother. People must not depend upon me. Most every girl has a new dress for to-night, and I can't be going there just to help other people have a good time when I know I shall feel mortified all the evening."

"Can't you? Why, daughter, even Christ pleased not himself."

After that, not another word was said in that kitchen for nearly an hour. Carrie finished the potatoes and ran away. Where she went, or what she did, mother did not know; but when she came to set the table her face was pleasant to look at, and she stopped on her way to the pantry to kiss her mother.

"I'm going, mother, and I'll have as nice a time as I can, and not grumble a bit."

She looked very pretty in her blue dress, with its deep lace collar and bright ribbons in her hair. At least her mother thought so, though when Helen came down in all the glory of her garnet silk and gold bracelets, there was certainly a difference.

It wasn't a young people's party entirely. In fact it was a sort of a family gathering, to which all the city aunts and uncles and cousins had come, and there were some elegant dresses there, and Carrie in her old blue one, did really feel a good deal alone. Yet she went cheerfully through the evening, helping with the charades and the music—helping in a dozen quiet little ways that nobody knew about, and yet trying to keep out of notice as much as possible.

Cousin Helen played and sang, and did both very nicely, while Carrie only played accompaniments for others to sing.

Later in the evening there was a whispering between two of the city cousins and presently it became known that Mr. Ames, who was Uncle Howard's college friend, was a wonderful singer

and would entertain the company if anybody could be found who would play for him.

"I wish he would sing 'The Storm King,' for us," said Aunt Alice; "it is the most wonderful thing! I would like to hear it. Helen, couldn't you play it for him?"

"I! No, indeed, his music is all awful hard, and he is awfully particular, and that piece I don't know, anyway."

But Aunt Alice was determined that her mother should hear "The Storm King." She talked with Mr. Ames, and then she moved among the guests trying to find one who was willing to play the accompaniment. Not a cousin could be found. They were all afraid of the great singer and the difficult music. At last the girl in blue got ashamed of herself.

"Aunt Alice, I will play it," she said, coming from the corner.

"You?" said Aunt Alice in surprise, for Carrie was one of the youngest of the cousins. "Do you know it?"

"No, ma'am, I don't know it, but I can play from the notes."

Then did Helen look at her young cousin in respectful astonishment.

"Can you play pieces that you do not know?" she asked her.

"Why, yes," said Carrie laughing. "I can if they are not very hard. I ought to. I have taken lessons steadily for three years."

"Well, but I have taken lessons for almost five years, and I can't do it."

And Carrie played the accompaniment, which really was difficult, and played it so well that Mr. Ames, the great singer, told her he had never had a player who pleased him better.

And don't you think she forgot all about her blue dress, until her attention was called to it in a very strange way.

"She not only plays remarkably well," said Mr. Ames to his wife, "but she is the best dressed young girl in the room."

"Yes," said Mrs. Ames, "I noticed that, all the rest of the young people are over-dressed. She must have a sensible mother."

They did not know that Carrie stood behind them and heard it all. But really I think it did her good, just as honest compliments often do good. It made her realize that there two sides to the question of the dresses.—*The Pansy.*

## Our Casket.

## BITS OF TINSEL.

School Board Officer—"You see my good woman, your children must be educated." Mrs. Flanagan—"Faix, I see nothin or the koind! You an' me hav' done well enoff widout it!"

A little boy whose sprained wrist had been relieved by bathing in whiskey, surprised his mother by asking, "Did papa sprain his throat when he was a boy?"

A guiltless girl wrote to her lover thus: "Don't come to see me any more just yet, John, for father has been having his boots half-soled, and two rows of nails around the toes."

"Well, Pat, which is the way to Burlington?" "How did ye know me name was Pat?" "Oh, I guessed it." "Then, be the powers, if ye air so good at guessing, you'd better guess the way to Burlington."

"Dear, dear!" exclaimed a nervous old lady, whose son was first mate on a coasting schooner, "Dear me! son John writes that his vessel is loaded with ice, bound South. What if the ice should melt and sink 'em all?"

"There are two ways of looking at this question," said a bank president at the temperance meeting; "which is the safe side?" "Canada," shouted a small boy in the gallery, and then the audience became lost in reflection.

"Did you pass the hat?" the pastor of a Texas congregation asked his deacon after the morning service. "Yes, I did," said the deacon, and then looking into the vacant interior of a hat that wanted nothing but lining, he added gloomily, "and so did everybody else."

"My diagnosis of your case shows me, sir," said a young physician, "that your constitution has become enfeebled through overwork. You need rest, absolute rest, to bring back your wasted energies to a normal and healthy condition. What business are you in?"

"My wife keeps a millinery establishment," replied the patient feebly.