

November Short-story Competition Prizewinners.

1st, Bella I. Blair, Rideau View, Ont.;
2nd, Mary M. Elliott, Pakenham, Ont.;
3rd, Ida I. Sharpe, Cranbrook, Ont.
Honorable mention: Hattie L. Sleep,
Winnie Mann, Velma Beaman, William
Stainton, Nellie Gray, "A Temiskaming
Lassie," Janet McNab, Norman Ward-
law, Fawcett Eaton, Lena E. Oswald,
Mary Morris, Hilda Baldwin, Herbert
Bull, Clara Greenwood, Lilian New
Love, Madeline Noad, Marjorie Head-
ley, Margaret Veale, Ethel Granberg,
Effie M. Nelson, William Carr, Rachel
Carr (Eng.), Pearl Lev.

Sacrificing Pussy.

Marjory pressed her little hand tight against her puckered brow, while the other hand gently stroked a snow-white kitten which lay in her lap. "You see, Pussy Kittens," she murmured, "I am most sure mamma would have said I had been very, very naughty, but that red pencil of Dottie's did look so like the one I lost. And now," she continued, as a great tear splashed upon Kittie's head, "now I have found my red pencil, Pussy, just where I left it upon the window-seat in Papa's study." There was a pause; another tear fell on Pussy's tiny pink nose, at which she gave a little inquiring, "Mew!" Its little mistress took her hand from her forehead, and put both hands about her pretty pet. "Yes, Pussy mine," she said, "it'll have to be done. I wouldn't have thought of it if mamma hadn't always said I should give the very thing I loved best of all my playthings to any of my little friends I had hurt by my naughtiness, and I guess I hurt Dottie pretty bad when I said that about the pencil, and then I love you, Kittie, best of all the playthings I ever had. Oh, dear! It was a sad little sigh, but still Pussy was gathered up in the dainty white apron and carried down stairs and out into the street.

Marjory stood at last on Elm Street corner, before a small white house with a yellow door, her apron gathered up in a queer little bundle and held tightly by her left hand, while her right was giving one last rub to her wet eyelashes. Then she rushed for the door, and was trying to ring the door-bell, when a little maiden of about her own age, with a neatly-patched gingham apron and long golden curls, came around the corner. She stopped short at the sight of the girl on the steps. She gave a little start, and cried, "Marjory!" Marjory turned around, and, jumping down the steps two at a time, cried, "Oh! Dottie, Dottie, I am so sorry I found my pencil just where I left it myself. You will forgive me, won't you, Dottie, and—take this little Angora kitten to show how sorry I am?" Dottie had been peering between the folds of the apron at the little ball of long white fur, as this little speech burst forth from trembling little lips. She now gasped out: "For me! Oh thanks." But just then she lifted her head and saw the two red eyes of her companion. Dottie's kind eyes filled with tears. "I wouldn't take it for anything," she said. "Oh! you must, you must," interrupted Marjory. "No, Marjory, we will own it together, and you shall keep it at your place, for you know it would be lonesome here," said the wise little Dottie, with a shake of her golden head.

"And you can call every morning on your way to school and see it," cried the delighted Marjory. It was settled. There came a call from within, of "Dorothy!" There was a pleasant "good-bye" on the doorstep, and the plain little maiden with the long golden curls ran around the corner, while the sweet-faced Marjory walked slowly up the street, caressing her kitten joyfully.

(The End.)

Dear Cousin Dorothy,—This essay may be too long to be counted "a short story," but it is truly the work of my own imagination. If it makes no difference, I would rather you did not print my name and address.

BELLA I. BLAIR (aged 15).
Rideau View, Ont.



Buried in the Snow.

"Such a lovely Christmas Eve it's going to be!" cried Ursula, looking gleefully at Hans and Lisbeth, and then at the wood-cupboard, where their mother had hidden the Christmas-tree.

The Maiers' cottage was high up among the Tyrolean Mountains, and deep snow covered the steep slopes. Often the children in the dwellings dotted about the heights had to stay indoors for weeks. It was a region of toymakers: even the little ones learned to carve. The Maiers made wooden dolls, which Franz, the father, carried down once a week to St. Ulrich. He was gone now with a great basketful on his back.

Frau Maier was preparing dinner, and the children were making dolls' arms, when the stillness was broken by a noise like muffled thunder. Louder it grew, and they all clung together in terror. "Tis an avalanche coming!" cried Hans, and the house shook and rocked, as if some heavy weight had fallen upon it.

It was terribly alarming, and they expected to be swept away, for an avalanche carries rocks, stones, houses, everything along with it.

But the moments passed; the dreadful roar grew less, and at last died away. "Thank God, it has spared us," said Frau Maier, fervently.

Hans rushed to the window, and then to the door, and cried, wildly: "But, see, the snow is all around us; we can't get out."

It was only too true. Part of the avalanche had broken off, and a mass of snow had rolled down and completely covered the cottage. Those inside it could do nothing, and Frau Maier turned very pale, as she thought that unless help came in a few hours they would all perish for want of air.

It was Christmas Eve too—the joyful day when all through the land Christmas-trees were lighted up, and all children were happy.

"Courage! Father will call the neighbors and dig us out," said Frau Maier, bravely.

She lighted the lamp, turning it very low. Time dragged on; it seemed like night, and the air began to feel strangely heavy.

Frau Maier's secret fear was lest her husband should have been swept down by the avalanche.

"Will Father come soon?" whispered Ursula, drowsily.

"We will ask God to send him," said her mother. She repeated a prayer, and then sang to the children.

Hans was restless, but Lisbeth said her head ached, and lay down on the hearth-rug. It was very still; not a sound could penetrate the stifling mantle of snow.

"It is Christmas Eve," said Hans at last. "Mother, do let us have the tree."

"Without Father?" exclaimed Lisbeth. "Perhaps he will come in time to see it," said Frau Maier. "You may fetch it, Hans."

Although only a tiny one, decorated with cheap ornaments, the tree looked very pretty. At the top was a wax angel, and there was a present for each child. Hans lighted the candles, and Frau Maier sang. "Quiet night, holy night," which is a German carol.

"It's lovely," whispered Lisbeth, and lay down on the floor again.

It was so hot and close. Oh! for a breath of fresh mountain air!

"Blow out the candles now," said Frau Maier, in a drowsy tone.

"But, don't you think Father will come at all?" asked Hans, anxiously.

"We are in God's hands," said his mother, gently.

Slowly the boy blew out the colored tapers.

"I will count twenty, and then put out the last," he thought. "One, two, three, four," but before the last candle went into darkness, Hans gave a cry.

"Mother, Lisbeth, I can hear voices."

they are digging us out! Father has come in time."

"For the Christmas-tree," murmured Ursula, sleepily.

Who can describe the joy of the wood-carver at finding his wife and children alive? It was the greatest wonder the cottage escaped. A kind neighbor took the family in, and, as the Christmas-tree went too, they had a happy time after all, and thanked God with grateful hearts for their timely deliverance.—[From the Child's Own Magazine.

MARY MARGUERITE ELLIOTT.
Pakenham, Ont.

The Grocer's Test.

"What I want," said Mr. Philpotts, leaning over the counter of his own grocery in a confidential sort of way, "is a good, thoroughly dependable sort of a boy. He must be careful and obliging, accurate and quick at figures. Got any boys like that?"

It was the village schoolmaster to whom the grocer was speaking.

"Two of them," came the reply. "There they go now," and he looked across to the other side of the street, where Jack Willis and Charlie Crawford were sauntering on together.

"I don't need two," said Mr. Philpotts. "D'ye reckon I could get one of these fellows without the other?"

"They aren't quite so inseparable as that," the schoolmaster said, laughing. "Either of them will suit you. Jack is the quickest at figures, but you'll be safe in choosing either," he added, turning to go.

Mr. Philpotts scratched his head. "Now, how am I to know which one I want?" he said, in perplexity. "If he'd just recommended one of them, there wouldn't have been any trouble. So Jack's the quickest at figures? That's one thing in favor of Jack, but let me see."

Mr. Philpotts must have been in a brown study for as much as a minute. I'll be glad to see him get it. Then he went and weighed out fifty pounds of granulated sugar and twenty pounds of bacon for an out-of-town customer. He chuckled while he was doing it, and it was evident that he had hit upon a plan.

"And as sure as you live, sir," he said to himself, rubbing his hands together, "if I find they both do, I'll hire 'em, sir; I'll hire 'em both."

He did not trouble himself about the possibility of not being able to get either boy. The privilege of clerking for Mr. Philpotts during the vacation was too eagerly coveted by the schoolboys to render it likely that he would fail to secure the lad he chose.

But it was with a little thrill of excitement that Charlie replied to Mr. Philpotts' query that evening, as he went into the store on an errand for his mother.

"Are you in a hurry, Charlie?" he asked.

"Mother needs these things for supper," he replied, "and I promised to hurry back. Was there something you wanted of me, Mr. Philpotts?"

He could not keep the eagerness out of his voice, and Mr. Philpotts understood.

"Only to ask you about something," he answered, indifferently. "Drop in some time when you are passing, it isn't too much trouble."

"I'll come this evening," as he hurried out.

"He wanted to stay," Mr. Philpotts mused; "but he was faithful to his mother's errand. That's one for Charlie. But Jack's quicker at figures, and that's one for Jack."

As luck would have it, it was not many minutes before Jack entered also on an errand for his mother.

"Are you in a hurry, Jack?" said the grocer, weighing out the pound of tea which Jack had asked for.

"Not particularly," Jack answered.

"Doesn't your mother want this tea right away?" queried Mr. Philpotts, sharply.

"Oh, I guess not, not for a little while anyway. Did you want something?"

"I wanted a little talk with you," the grocer began. "To tell you the truth," he went on, "I wanted to ask you about Charlie Crawford. I've been thinking about having him in the store with me this summer, and I thought I'd ask you if you could recommend him. I know I'm a queer old duffer, but I'd rather have your opinion than the schoolmaster's; you know Charlie better. Now, what can you say for your friend?"

It looked very much as if Jack could not say anything. How was he to know that Mr. Philpotts was saying over to himself: "Faithful to his promise, and that's one for Charlie. But Jack's quicker at figures, and that's one for Jack. Maybe Jack's mother didn't tell him to hurry, so I won't call this delay one against Jack."

"Is Charlie neat and careful, and courteous and trustworthy?" asked he.

"Oh, yes," Jack at last found his voice, "he's all that."

Someway his words didn't sound one bit enthusiastic. He wanted that place so much for himself.

"And quick at figures?" the grocer pursued. "I'm very particular about that."

"He's fair," admitted Jack. "He isn't the best in the class."

"Never knew him to cheat at games, or do any mean little thing like that, did you?"

"No," Jack replied, you would have thought reluctantly.

"Anything else you think I ought to know?" queried the grocer.

"N—no," stammered Jack. "Charlie's a good fellow, but—"

"But I see you don't want to tell me," Mr. Philpotts said suddenly. "You are too loyal to your friend to finish that 'but.' I am obliged to you, Jack. I'll make further inquiries."

Jack did not feel very happy, although he hoped that the "further inquiries" would turn Mr. Philpotts' attention to himself.

That evening Charlie called on the grocer. Perhaps he was disappointed when that individual began to inquire about Jack Willis; but, if so, he had conquered his chagrin before it came his turn to speak. "I'm sure Jack would suit you, Mr. Philpotts," he said, and although his voice was quiet, it was quite enthusiastic still. "Everybody likes Jack, and he is so bright and quick. And he's a splendid scholar—the best in the class."

Mr. Philpotts went on with his searching questions, but Charlie became only still more spirited in his admiration of his friend. There was no faint praise in his voice or words. At last, the grocer asked him suddenly:

"Wouldn't you like the place yourself, Charlie?"

Charlie hesitated. Then he spoke the truth.

"Yes, Mr. Philpotts, but I wouldn't stand in Jack's way a minute. I'd be glad to see him get it."

"The place is yours, Charlie. I was only testing you. I didn't have the faintest notion of hiring Jack."

Charlie demurred a little.

"It will be you, or some other boy, not Jack. I have my reasons. 'Quick at figures, that's one for Jack. Not true to his friend, that's one against him; one from one leaves nothing. Faithful to his friend, and to his promise, that's two for Charlie. Two against none is a pretty fair score. I guess I can wait a little longer for him to do his figuring, if he's as loyal to my interests as he's shown himself to be to others to-night."

Copied by IDA I. SHARPE (aged 15).
Cranbrook, Ont.

One of the stories attributed to Bishop Potter, says the New York Times, concerns a young and inexperienced clergyman who had just been called to a city charge. At the end of the first month his salary was paid by a check, and he took it to the bank and passed it in at the paying teller's window. That official looked at it and then passed it back.

"It's perfectly good," he said, "but I will have to ask you to indorse it."

The young clergyman took his pen and wrote across the face of the check, "I respectfully subscribe to the sentiments herein expressed."