

And when they were weary of play, Eva's great log was laid upon the fire, and then Harry's papa gathered the little ones about him, and told them stories of adventure, and funny stories, and other stories, that made you cry as well as smile.

And all the while the dry wood crackled like happy laughter, and the ruddy light danced on the faces of the children till all declared that little Eva's gift was among the very best of the contributions that had been made to this highly successful party of Harry and Co.

### The Children's Gift.

Earle and Daisy were two dear little children of seven and nine who lived on a farm with plenty of chickens, cows, sheep, and horses, but they never thought much how nice all these things were as they fed the chickens and ran errands for the family or played merrily about on the grass that formed a green carpet under the trees during the warm summer days.

'To-morrow is mamma's birthday,' said papa one morning at the breakfast table. 'I think we must have a chicken-pie in honor of the day.'

'And a birthday cake, too,' said little Earle, as he remembered the nice one he had when he was seven years old.

Mamma smiled as she looked at the earnest face of the little one.

Next morning as papa was going away to his work, Daisy asked, 'Papa, can't Earle and I do something to earn some pennies?'

After thinking a moment he said, 'Why, yes, old Brindle has lost her bell in the wood pasture, and if you can find it I will give you five cents each.'

'Let us go, Earle,' cried the little girl, and away they ran eager to begin the search. It was no easy task, for there were so many thickets in the pasture, that it took a long time to look into each one, but the children ran hither and thither, peering into this place and that in hope of soon earning the promised reward. When they were nearly tired out Earle spied the bell in some bushes, where the strap had caught. Wearied and hungry after their morning's work they trudged homeward, and in a little while were rejoicing over their ten bright pennies.

Mamma asked, 'What are you going to buy with your money? for I suppose you will spend it when you go for the mail this afternoon.'

'It's a secret, mamma,' they replied, as they smiled at each other. 'Wait until we come home.'

Every little while during the afternoon Daisy or Earle would run into the house and ask if it were not time to go to the village.

At last their mother said, 'It is three o'clock now, and you can go if you wish.'

She watched them running down the road holding each other's hands and wondered what they intended to purchase with their pennies, for they usually told her all their plans. In an hour she could hear through the open window their happy voices and shouts of fun as they ran across the porch.

'See, mamma,' they called as they ran into the room, and Daisy held up a pretty white handkerchief, 'see what we bought for you, a birthday present,' and they smiled radiantly through the dust that covered their flushed little faces. 'Isn't it lovely?'

'Why, it's beautiful, my darlings,' said mamma, with a sudden tugging at her heart, as she gathered each little form into a loving embrace.

Her appreciation of their gift filled the children with delight and Daisy remarked with a sigh of contentment, 'I think birthdays are lovely.'—*Michigan Advocate.*

### John Howard.

More than a hundred and fifty years ago, a young man named John Howard sailed from England to travel in France and Italy. France and England were then at war.

The boat in which Howard started was quickly captured by a French vessel, and Howard and all the others on his boat were kept without anything to eat or drink for nearly two days. Then they were thrown into a dark dungeon without food or water. How they suffered? Howard learned then how cruelly prisoners could be treated. In after years he went about from prison to prison, seeing the sufferings of many prisoners, and telling the world what he had seen—dark, damp dungeons, only unclean straw for beds, bad food. The prisoners were bad men, but

governors and rulers were shocked that even bad men should be treated worse than animals, and they ordered great changes. So John Howard will always be known as the prisoners' friend.

### The Violet.

A violet hid 'neath its shady green leaves.

"I'm weary", it said, as it swayed in the breeze,

"I've been nodding and playing and smiling so long;

I'll sleep, for the robin has sung its last song,

And has gone to the south where the winds warmly blow,

And the flowers bloom brightly nor fear cold and snow."

So it lay down to sleep with a soft little sigh,

While the friendly wind whistled a shrill lullaby.

And, as it lay snug in its soft, mossy bed,

The leaves, a warm blanket did over her spread.

The snow then fell gently, a white coverlid,

Making spotless the place where the sweet flower hid.

And thus did she sleep the long winter through,

Down under the snow where the violets grew,

Till the sun shone out brightly and melted the snow,

And the balmy south zephyrs began to blow,

Till the buds burst forth upon every tree,

And the robins came back warbling songs of glee,

And the frog croaked again by the babbling stream,

While the grass on the hillsides and valleys grew green.

When the violet awoke from her long winter sleep,

And out of her blanket of leaves took a peep,

A little girl saw her, and gladly did sing.

"Oh, mother dear, see! 'tis the first flower of spring!"

MARY TROTTER, (age 14.)