



—'Band of Mercy.'

PLEASANT WEATHER FOR GEESE, BUT NOT SO PLEASANT FOR THEIR MISTRESS.



be sure of getting him to change; but I can be sure of trying. When a person once starts out to be a neighbor by profession he might just as well make up his mind that it is not always going to be a pampering process.' And so Phil put out the light and went to bed.

The next morning before school Murray Craig hailed him with enthusiasm. 'Isn't this a glorious spell of weather? To-day is even better than Saturday. We must make the most of it before the thaw comes and spoils it all.'

Phil said 'Yes' rather abstractedly. He was looking around the yard for Gilbert. 'For I'd better burn my bridges quickly or I might run,' he thought. He tried to speak to Gilbert as though the rebuff of yesterday

had never been, and he succeeded partially.

'Why do you never come down to the brook these moonlight nights and skate?' he asked.

'I don't know how to skate,' Gilbert answered, not ungraciously.

'Don't know how!' echoed Phil, finding the statement so surprising that it made him natural for the moment. 'What have you done all your life? Oh, yes, I remember. Your home is in Florida.'

'I live there; it isn't much of a home,' said Gilbert, his dark face clouding.

If Phil had dared to be sympathetic he would not have known how. 'You ought to learn,' was all he said. 'I suppose you haven't any skates.'

'I could get some,' answered Gilbert. And now his eagerness was unmistakable.

'Then do,' said Phil, 'and I will teach you. I am a great teacher. I taught my sister and my little brother, and they do well.'

Gilbert's black eyes scrutinized him. At that minute Phil had forgotten everything but that it was not much of a home where Gilbert lived.

'You'd better not offer unless you are ready to be taken up,' said Gilbert, breaking into a smile which made him look like another boy.

'But he isn't,' Phil reminded himself, when they had agreed that instructions should begin that night and he was at his desk waiting for school to open. 'He is not another boy.'