

BOYS AND GIRLS

Tid.

(By Jennie Davis Burton, in 'Youth's Companion'.)

'Do you be Mr. Kane, sir? It's Mr. Peter Tidmore Kane, in the reale estate business, I'm wantin' to see.'

The gentleman addressed looked down with some astonishment upon the sharp little freckled visage that was upturned as he replied, 'I am Mr. Kane, my boy. What do you want with me?'

'Sure, I'll be tellin' ye, but it's mighty glad I am to see you, sir. Shake, then! I'm a namesake of yours, though belike you're not knowin' it, and I'm glad that I favor you, now that I've set me two eyes on ye.'

'Favor me, indeed, you young scarecrow!'

'On the inside, I mane, and I'd be glad if it was on the outside, for it's a mighty fine-lookin' gentleman ye are, then. They do be tellin' me you have the rintin' of a-many of the houses hereabout, and it's to rint the small place at the foot of the hill I' be askin'. I'll pay you as much as fifty cents a week for it, and worruk out the rint if you say it's a bargain.'

Mr. Kane was growing interested. The small boy had a brisk, business way with him, quite out of proportion to his size, which was that of an average ten-year-old.

'It's a little out of the usual line to take work in return—'

'Oh, it will be equally satisfactory if ye pay me in cash, Mr. Kane, sir, and 'tis a good bargain ye'll have, wid me mother along wid me, and she that alger to be at rest wanst more. 'Tis the plazed woman she'll be that all's settled so well.'

'But hold on!' said Mr. Kane. 'I like to know something about my tenants. What security can you give me that I shall find you responsible?'

'Sure, I tould you that I was named after you, didn't I? It's Peter Tidmore Kane Mulligan I am, and me mother says ye'll be sure to mind Biddy Moran that was cook to ye wanst. But I'm Tid for short. We'll move in the day, and I'll just come up for me orders in the mornin', and Tid walked away as contentedly as if he carried a signed lease in his pocket.

'Biddy Moran? To be sure. She worked for us one summer a dozen or more years ago,' said Mrs. Kane, when her husband appealed to her for confirmation of the boy's story. 'Not much of a cook, very green and a little queer, as I remember her. I'm afraid they'll be a load on your hands, Tidmore.'

'Well, the old shell can't be much worse with them in it than standing empty, and I'll warn them out if they prove a nuisance. The boy will get along if he favors me "on the inside," as he says,' and Mr. Kane laughed in recollection of the sharp, little, uncouth figure as contrasted with his own well-favored person.

Sure enough, the first sight that greeted Mr. Kane the next morning was Tid, keenly examining his garden-beds, shaking his head portentously over poppies and lilies, and getting down on his knees to sniff at the tomato-vines, with a curious uncertainty, not to say contempt, that sent the garden's owner hurrying down to prevent any possible catastrophe.

'It's a fine lot of weeds ye've saved up for me, sir,' Tid greeted him, brightly, 'but I'm feared they've run over the plants entirely. Or is it a wild garden you do

be having here? Me mother tells me that you grow things small in this state, and ye do it uncommon well, I should say. Belike it has to be tuk out of you that way for the big hearts ye've got,' with a respectful deference that disarmed his employer's wrath.

'Why, you young jackanapes, where have you seen anything finer, that you should be turning up your nose at my garden, pray?'

'Faix, I think it wor in Californy,' hazarded Tid, as if he were drawing his recollections from some deep well of memory. 'The tomatuses growed on vines as high as the house, I mind, and there were ren up on step-ladders pickin' them, and the lilies and v'lets, and the poppies all

household, and was allowed to make himself useful about the place in very much his own way. This sometimes resulted in queer turns of fancy, according to the Eastern view of things, as when he was found in the early morning sweeping up grasshoppers from the lawn to feed the fowls, and carefully treasuring pocketsful of gravel while he was still new to the situation.

'Sure, it wor the lashings of 'hoppers we had out on the perraries, but never a stone to the size of a pea there. Ye have them betther distributed here, and it's a fine country, though the things do grow small,' he decided, approvingly, when the waste of his efforts was pointed out to him.

It would appear that the Mulligans had



IT'S PETER TIDMORE KANE MULLIGAN I AM.

run wild in the fields, they did, and the roses were like to smother the house, and the cucumbers were as long as I am, and a dale longer sometimes. That's the country, if it's gardenin' ye're after.'

'I wonder you left it,' remarked Mr. Kane, sarcastically.

'I'd wonder that meself, if there wor ary show for dacint Americans out there,' admitted Tid. 'The pigtails and the greasers ave it all their own way. It's quare how there's something forninst wan most iverywheres in the West. In Nebrasky it wor the 'hoppers, and in Kansas the drought. Up in Washington it aither rained all the time or the chinook blasted things, and down in Texas there wor the cattle every which way. It do be good to get home to the states,' and Tid drew a long breath of satisfaction. 'But this isn't worruk at all, and if ye'll put me to it, I'll be diggin' in.'

Mr. Kane found the boy eager to learn and tireless in his efforts to please, and although he made some blunders, by the end of the week he had won the favor of the

drifted all over the West in an aimless fashion, 'saking health and bettherment,' as Tid expressed it, till the death of the father left his mother free to return 'for the making of me,' he confided to Mr. Kane.

'Sure, a lad nades to be looking up to a good man, me mother says, and it's a power of t'achin' I'll nade to come up to me name, I do be thinkin'.'

The amusement that Mr. Kane derived from the glorified ideal upon which Tid was basing the formation of his character gave way sometimes to a fleeting wish that he had cultivated more of the virtues which Tid credited him with possessing. There are drawbacks to being held as little less than a saint by even an ignorant Irish boy. Suppose, now, that Tid could look beneath the surface and see the true state of the man within him, how would the revelation affect the lad's moral growth?

Mr. Kane shrugged his shoulders and threw off his uneasiness. It was by no choice of his that he had been held up