BOYS AND GIRLS

a Pause in the Day's Occupation.

A QUEER SCHOOL.

There was once a school
Where the mistress, Miss Rule,
Taught a number of misses that vexed her.
Poor little Miss Hap
Spilled the ink in her lap,
And Miss Fortune fell under the table.
Miss Conduct they all
Did Miss Creant call,
But Miss State declared this a fable.

Miss Lay lost her book
And Miss Lead undertook
To show her the place where to find it.
But upon the wrong nail
Had Miss Place hung her veil,
And Miss Deed hung the book safe hind it.

They went on very well,
As I have heard tell,
Till Miss Take brought in Miss Understanding;
Miss Conjecture then guessed
Evil things of the rest,
And Miss Counsel advised their disbanding.

"THANK YOU."

Several winters ago a woman was coming out from some public building when the heavy door swung back and made the egress somewhat difficult. A little street urchin sprang to the rescue, and as he held open the door she said "Thank you" and passed on.

"D'ye hear that?" said the boy to a companion.

"No; what?"

"Why, that lady said 'Thank ye' to the likes o' me."

Amused at the conversation, which she could not help overhearing, the lady turned round and said to the boy:

"It always pays to be polite, my boy; remember that."

Years passed away; and last December, when doing her Christmas shopping, this same lady received an exceptional courtesy from a clerk in Boston, whom she thanked.

"Pardon me, madam, but you gave me my first lesson in politeness a few years ago."

The lady looked at him in amazement, while he related the little forgotten incident, and told her that that simple "Thank you" awakened his first ambition to be something in the world. He went the next morning and applied for a situation as office boy in the establishment where he was now an honored and trusted clerk.

Only two words, dropped in the treasury of a street conversation, but they yielded returns of a certain kind more satisfactory than investments, stocks and bonds.

ONE MILLIONAIRE.

"He's a millionaire, that boy is."

The boy I was walking with looked across the way at the lad of whom my words were spoken. There was certainly nothing about the latter to suggest his wealth.

"You don't say so? It can't be really so, he looks almost shabby."

"No matter for that, I live in the same block and I know. But I did not say he was worth a million of money."

"Oh!"

The boy who was listening looked rather disappointed. Still, he was anxious to know what the other one might have, anyhow, so he asked, "What then?"

"He is what is called a 'millionaire of cheerfulness.' He is merry and bright the whole day long, not alone when all is sweetness and light, and when it isn't. He has such pluck and spirit, and such unfailing good nature, that he must have a million to draw upon, though he pays no taxes upon his capital. You never see him scowling or hear him whining. So he scatters his blessings all about and is a blessing to the neighborhood. I wish there were more millionaires of cheerfulness. There might be, if everybody gathered up all the sunshine to be had and give it out as royally as Rob, who goes whistling yonder."

Then I went on, leaving Dick to wonder whether he were as rich as Rob, and if not, why not.

KING PENGUIN LAND.

CHAPTER IX.—Continued.

Lessons went on till half-past twelve, when books were put away, and, if it were fine, the young people went out for a walk or ride till three, when they dined; or if it was wet, played at games indoors, or performed wonderful feats of carpentering in the workshop with Gordon, who came in at one o'clock from his morning studies, and would turn charming things for them with the lathe, and allow them to assist with paint, glue and hammer to their hearts' content.

After dinner there was another half hour's recreation and romp with the little ones, and then a couple of hours given to music and preparing lessons for next day. Tea was at six, and after it came one of the things Hilda resented—half an hour of "useful sewing" for the girls; which was really a sewing lesson and one she very much needed, for though she could crochet nicely and make wool-work mats and embroidered book-markers, she did not know how to mend her gloves, or darn a stocking, or even run tucks and hem seams as neatly as many National school children of nine years old. Mrs. Burnett took great pains to teach her, assuring her that there is no sort of needlework a lady ought not to know how to do, if only for the sake of helping and instructing others: and Hilda, who had much neater fingers and more natural taste for needlework than Molly, was quite surprised to find how easy it was to learn. What she did not like, however, was that it was "mending old clothes," which (because it had been done by her mother's maid at home) she chose to consider "servants' work" and beneath her. She did not indeed venture to tell her aunt so, or to refuse to do the task given her, but she came to it each day sullenly and unwillingly: and she complained of it piteously, as well as of the fact that she was actually expected to turn down her own bed, fold her own night-dress, and open her bedroom window before coming downstairs of a morning; and in addition she had been given the duty of dusting and keeping in order the study bookshelves and her uncle's writing-table as her share of the household labors: all of which very terrible grievances were poured out in the long letter which she wrote to her Uncle Herbert by the first mail after her arrival.

And yet Hilda felt rather dissatisfied with herself after she had written it! It was "all true," of course, and it was not even a breach of confidence like her chatterings to Meta; for Uncle Herbert had told her to write to him about everything concerning her new life; but it seemed rather mean to be making all these complaints just when Charlie was calling to her through the window to "hurry up with that stupid letter" and come out and see her new pony, which Gordon (with one of his mother's skirts on) was exercising in the field, and when her aunt—who was amusing Sintram and Tottie in another part of the room—came and stroked her hair so kindly, saying she must not be interrupted, and that Gordon should exercise the poney for her another time. Molly, too, ran in just then, looking as cheerful as possible from her daily duty of dusting the drawing-room books and ornaments and saying—

"Mother dear, do let me amuse Sintram now. Nurse told me you had taken him from her, so that she might write her letter home; but she didn't like to give him to you because he had kept you awake so much last night with his teeth; and you know you are looking dreadfully tired."

"Well, dear, we must all help one another in this world, you know," said Mrs. Burnett smilingly, though her pleasant face did look pale and weary, "and the Baddeen's teeth make him so troublesome that I knew if I did not relieve poor nurse of him a little, her daughter in England would have to go without her letter at all this mail. However, you shall take him now if you will, and thank you, love. You are a thoughtful little daughter;" and Mrs. Burnett went away, leaving Molly coloring with pleasure at her mother's praise, and Hilda more dissatisfied with herself (though she scarcely knew why) than before.

She had to console herself with the remembrance of Meta's sympathy with her wrongs, and assurances that she was never made to do any of the things of which Hilda complained, and that it was a great shame to use her friend so; for "mamma and Mrs. Brown said that the Burnetts must be quite rich enough to employ as many servants and teachers as they wanted, only Mrs. Burnett was so dreadfully saving and so proud of being tremendously clever and such a good housekeeper and all that—as, of course, she was, you know—that she liked to show off how much she and her girls could do.

"They don't mind; at least Molly doesn't; but then, though Molly's very good, she's not like you, Hilda darling," said shabby little Meta; "and though papa calls them all prodigies and wants me to be like them, mamma says that's nonsense, and she doesn't care a bit about my being a prodigy. She never does anything in the house."

Which was quite true; for though Captain Crawford was a poor man, and could only afford to keep one servant to do everything, his wife spent nearly all her time running from one neighbor's house to another and lying on the sofa reading novels; and his house was in consequence the most slovenly, ill kept, and uncomfortable in the whole settlement.

Even Hilda could not help seeing this for herself and feeling the contrast between the comfortable well-served meals and neat bright orderliness of her uncle's house and the dirt and untidiness, the littered rooms and dinners so badly cooked as to be almost uneatable, of the Crawfords, about which poor Captain Crawford was always complaining; and for all of which the one dirty, untaught, overworked servant girl was supposed to be responsible. Indeed, her natural fastidiousness made her more quick to notice things than some other girls might have been; and she was as much disgusted at having to eat a slice of half-raw mutton off a plate all black with coal dust as shocked at the sight of Meta, who looked so smart and dainty out of doors, wearing in the house a dirty pinafore, torn all up the front, and going about half the morning with her hair in curl-papers, because "Jane" was too busy to take them out and mamma was breakfasting in bed.

Yet to have Aunt Mary put forward as "wonderfully clever" and "such a good housekeeper" was certainly a new view to Miss Hilda after the ideas with which she had come out to the Falklands; and the worst of it was that she was too honest not to own to herself that it was a true view, and to feel an almost unwilling respect and admiration for her aunt in consequence.

Meta's excuse, however, for all the short-comings in her own home was that they were not "colonials" like the Burnetts. They were going back to England in another year, when, of course, they would have everything nice and charming about them; she would be sent to a fashionable school; and perhaps, if Hilda wrote and told her Uncle Herbert how unhappy and badly treated she was, he might allow her to come home with them to live with him again, or even to go to school with Meta herself.

It was with this hope, therefore, that Hilda wrote her letter; and then came the dreadful doubt, would she be allowed to send it? That terrible aunt in "The Wide, Wide World," used to read poor Ellen's letters and keep them back, even though they were to her mother; and certainly if Aunt Mary saw all that was in this, she might not like it to go; while on her side Hilda felt equally certain that she would not like it to be seen. Rather than that, indeed, she would have preferred to keep it back herself; and having finished and fastened up the letter in its envelope, she was sitting with it in her hand wondering what she should do about it, when she happened to look up and see through the open door that the post-bag was lying on the hall table with the key in it.

For a moment the temptation came to her to slip out, pop the letter into it, and lock it up. She knew that it only wanted an hour to mail-time, and that everyone who had letters to write was writing them. Even her aunt, unless she saw the letter, was not likely to have time to think about it till too late, and then would let it go unread. Still, there did seem something sly and underhand about the proceeding; and, whatever faults Hilda might have, slyness was not one of them; so, instead of giving away to the temptation, she turned round to Molly and asked her—

"Does Aunt Mary make you show her your letters before you send them, Molly?"

Molly looked puzzled.

"She doesn't make us, I think," she said, "but we always do—all of us. Then she can see that they are spelt rightly, and all that, you know, and tell us if we have said anything we oughtn't."

"I don't want to show her mine," said Hilda. "She's not my mamma or even quite my real aunt, like Aunt Lily; and I don't think she has any right to make me. Besides, I know how to spell. I shall put my letter into the bag myself."

Hilda spoke very defiantly, but she was not quite prepared for her aunt having come into the room meanwhile, and answering for herself.

"My dear little girl," Mrs. Burnett said very gently, "we do not talk about 'rights' here; there is no need to do so. Be quite sure that no one wishes to look at your letters home unless you were to ask them to do so;" and then, as Hilda sat blushing and too much confused to speak, she stooped and kissed the girl's forehead, adding, "I came to tell you that as I was writing a few lines to your Uncle Herbert, you could put your letter in my envelope; but now I will give you mine to enclose in yours instead, and here is a stamp for it. Letters put in the bag must be stamped first, you know."

She put her note in Hilda's hand as she spoke, folded simply but not fastened, and went away; and for once Hilda felt so ashamed that, but for Molly's being there, she would have liked to run after her aunt, beg her pardon, and then tear up the complaining letter and write a different one.

But then Molly was there; and if the letter didn't go, what was to become of Meta's plan as to her recall, and all the hopes they had built on it?

She posted it, therefore, but her mind was not easy; and her aunt noticed that for some days afterwards she seemed more anxious to please and obey her, and more affectionate in her manner than she had ever shown herself before.

CHAPTER X.—A PENGUIN HUNT ON TUSSOCK ISLAND.

The promised visit to a penguin rookery did not come off very soon, because Uncle Charles's "leisure days" were apt to be few and far between; especially in the summer, when there was more coming and going of vessels to take up his time; besides sheering of sheep, branding of cattle and "rodéos," or musters for the purpose of separating the wild horses or cattle, which roam over the lonely hills and peat-bogs in the interior of the Falklands, from the tame or partially tamed ones belonging to the company and other people; and all this naturally entailed a large amount of work on the manager as well as on the men whom he employed, and who, Hilda found to her surprise, were nearly all Spaniards brought over from the South American continent.

At times, indeed, Mr. Burnett almost seemed to live in the saddle; being now and then absent from home for two or three days at a time, and obliged to camp out at night by the side of a diddledee fire; an experience which Charlie always envied him greatly, and looked on as the most delightful imaginable. His father, however, assured him that if he had to try it himself some bleak winter's night on the edge of a frozen peat-bog, with an icy wind sweeping off the snow-covered mountains around him, no shelter but the tiny tent carried on his pack-horse, and which was only just big enough for him and his man to squeeze into, and perhaps nothing to eat or drink but hard ship's biscuits, and coffee boiled in a tin pot over the fire, he might not find the experience quite as delightful as he expected.

All the children rode well and fearlessly, however, the four elders having each their own pony, to which Hilda's now added a fifth; while Tottie and even baby Sintram had been taken for many a canter in front of their father or old Domenico the grey-haired "gaucho" (herdsman) who had the special care of his young masters and mistresses when out riding, and delighted in nothing so much.

Hilda, never having been on a saddle before, was naturally timid at first, and much provoked Charlie's mirth by the way in which she would clutch the pommel and hold on, as if for life or death, directly her pony attempted to break into the gentlest little trot; but perhaps because she greatly disliked being laughed at, or because both her uncle and Domenico took great pains in teaching her, she very soon learnt to ride fairly well, and even to dispense with a leading rein, which had been another subject of Charlie's ridicule; but which, in a land of peat bogs, stone runs, and no roads, was a very necessary safeguard for an inexperienced young horsewoman.

Charlie was the only one of the family who laughed at and teased Hilda. He really seemed to delight in making fun of and playing tricks on both her and Meta, (to whom, ever since his cousin's arrival, he appeared to have taken an extraordinary dislike), and not even Molly's entreaties, and, now and then, a very well-deserved scolding from his mother could avail to cure him; while the curious part was that he would never give any excuse for it, except that "he didn't care a bit about cousin Hilda or Meta Crawford either, let them think ever so much of themselves, and dear old Polly was worth a dozen of them;" a speech which was not likely to make Hilda feel any more affectionately towards the cousin with whom she was compared. She took it into her head that it was Molly who secretly put him up to his rude ways, out of jealousy of Meta's preference; and one day, when she was very angry, she told Molly so, adding that "Meta thought so too;" and though Molly denied the accusation most earnestly, and, indeed, cried so bitterly over it in her room afterwards that Hilda, seeing her red eyes and pale face at tea, felt rather ashamed of herself, and was very much afraid her aunt would ask questions, it did look somewhat odd that after that Master Charlie's tricks should begin to abate, and his manner towards his cousin to show a decided improvement.

With Gordon, on the other hand, Hilda soon became very friendly indeed. She thought him the handsomest and cleverest boy she had ever known, and used to wish he was her brother, delighting to get at his side out walking, and to run his errands; and even offering to mend his gloves and socks for him, to the exclusion of Molly, who had always been his most devoted slave and comrade from the time she could toddle till now. Gordon, however, was a very loyal fellow, and wouldn't allow his favorite sister to be ousted from her place if he was aware of it. He liked Hilda, and used to say, condescendingly, that she wasn't "half bad, and had got some sense in her; her fingers weren't all thumbs like those of some people;" but if Hilda, after assisting him with some delicate piece of carpentry, over which poor Molly's fingers had come to grief the previous day, ventured to say—

"I can fit the edges together and help you with these things better than Molly, can't I, Gordon?" he would look cross, and answer quite roughly—

"Well, if you can, you needn't be so cocky about it. Polly can do twenty million things you can't, and never brags of them, either. I don't like braggers."

As a rule the children went out riding either with Gordon or Domenico, and generally with the latter; for Gordon was working very hard at present with his studies, preparing for the school to which he was to be sent home in the following winter: a prospect the bare mention of which brought tears into Molly's eyes, and made even her mother's calm voice tremble a little but now and then Mr. Burnett would take them out himself on some Saturday half-holiday when he had time to spare, and on one of these occasions Hilda had the delight of assisting at the capture of a king penguin, greatly to her pride and satisfaction.

They had gone down to a small dairy farm belonging to the Company, and situated on a narrow peninsula separating Stanley Harbor from the outer roads; and while Mr. Burnett was transacting his business at the dairy the ponies were tethered out, and the younger members of the party, consisting of Gordon, Molly and Hilda, went down to the beach, where a flock of pretty pink-breasted gulls were dabbling in the shallow pools left by the waves among the sands; and where Gordon eagerly pointed out "Tussock Island" to Hilda, assuring her that it was a regular fairy-land for playing in, and for hide-and-seek in particular, and the loveliest hunting ground for penguins imaginable.

(To be continued.)

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Contracted a severe cold. Rheumatism followed and the sharp pains took me so often and were so severe that I had to take to bed. For several months I could get no relief, until I started to take "Gin Pills." In five days I was up and around the house. My pains are gone and I have not had a return of the old trouble since. I wish also to say that "Gin Pills" gave me the first painless passage of urine I have had in two years.

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