

BOYS AND GIRLS

Signatures.

What shall I sign myself,
Loving you dearly?
What words could better be
Than 'Yours sincerely'?
Yours by my gift of love
Tender and real,
Yours in all work and rest
Constant and leal;
Yours not unmeaningly,
Not for form merely.
Yours am I, heart and hand,
'Yours most sincerely.'

What shall I sign myself?
Hearts have said dumbly,
In the quaint phrase of old,
'I am, yours humbly,'
'Yours most obediently,'
'Yours to command,'
So wrote the highest
And best in the land:
Shall I not copy them,
Loyal and fervent?
Yours, for the love of you,
Ever 'Your Servant.'

What shall I sign myself?
'Faithfully yours?'
Love that is worth most
Is love that endures.
Hackneyed by common use?
Nay, but word fairest:
Faithfulness ever
Is grace that is rarest.
What can say more for me
That I intend?
'I am, yours faithfully,'
Lover and Friend.

Words in most frequent use
Well may prevail,
'Yours most respectfully'
Tells its own tale;
If I should sign myself
Only 'Yours truly,'
Would it not be enough
Put in words duly?
When, in the smallest note,
Could I be other than
Steadfast and true?

So, I will sign myself
'Yours'—what you please,
'Yours,' the inclusive word,
Meaning all these:
Yours am I evermore,
Yours at my best,
Service, and love, and life
Put to the test:
Yours, in a constancy
Time cannot sever;
Yours, as you will, my friend,
Only 'Yours Ever.'

—Marianne Farningham.

Personalities.

Keep clear of personalities in general conversation. Talk of things, objects, thoughts. The smallest minds occupy themselves with personalities. Personalities must sometimes be talked, because we have to learn and find out men's characteristics for legitimate objects; but it is to be with confidential persons. Do not needlessly report ill of others; There are times when we are compelled to say, 'I do not think Bouncer is a true and honest man.' But when there is no need to express an opinion, let poor Bouncer swagger away. Others will take his measure, no doubt, and save you the trouble of analyzing him

and instructing them, and as far as possible dwell on the good side of human beings. There are family boards where a constant process of depreciating, assigning motives, and cutting up character goes forward. They are not pleasant places. One who is healthy does not wish to dine at a dissecting table. There is evil enough in man, God knows! But it is not the mission of every young man and woman to detail and report it all. Keep the atmosphere as pure as possible, and fragrant with gentleness and charity.—'Alliance News.'

How to be Popular.

We all want it, boys as well as girls, and it's a good thing to be popular, in the best sense. Here are some good rules from an exchange:—

Be natural. People are quick to discover affectation of any kind, and have a contempt for it; so give up affectation.

Be neat. There is great charm in neatness.

Be affectionate and sympathetic, and don't be self-conscious and ashamed to show either quality.

Be home-loving and kind to all old people, poor people and children. These are both manly and womanly qualities, and all love and admire the manly boy and the womanly girl.

Don't have 'moods.' Avoid the blues. People like to know how to find a person, not to have to renew acquaintance every time they meet.

Be athletic as that means health, and then healthiness means wholesomeness.

No 3.

(Frank H. Sweet, in the 'Christian Endeavor World.')

'Can't go no furdur,' yelled Farmer Benson, curving his mittened hands to his mouth so the words would reach the mail-carrier, five or six feet on the other side of the fence. At the same time he nodded significantly toward the road a few rods farther on, where the snow had drifted entirely across, covering the fence on either side. 'Five foot deep, an' still driftin', and plenty more places on ahead jest like it. I don't see how you got this fur. Well, we'll shovel out the gate, and then you can drive in under my shed. It's three miles back to town, an' you can't return any better than you can go ahead. I never see snow fly so fast. Mebbe it'll ease up by to-morrow so we can start to plough the roads out, but 'tain't likely you'll git the mail around under two or three days, or perhaps a week. You'll drive right in.'

The last was an assertion rather than question, but the mail-carrier thrust his head from the waggon into the storm, peering forward through the small aperture left by his upturned collar and downturned cap. His eyes looked troubled. At length he nodded reluctantly, and turned his horse's head toward the snow-blocked gate.

'Have to,' he shouted, as he sprang out and began to kick the snow from his side of the gate with his heavy boots; 'the horse couldn't pull himself through that drift, let alone the waggon.'

It was bitterly cold; and, although there had been signs for an early spring, this was by far the worst storm of the season. And so far as wind and sky were concerned, there seemed little prospect of its easing up on the morrow. Rather, with the wind in its present

quarter, in this temperature, the indications were for several days' continuance.

It was trying, for this was the last day of Rural Free Delivery No. 3. The route had been started as an experiment, and had not paid, and now was to be dropped. John Holden had been one of the strongest advocates of it, and had obtained the route, leaving the oldest boy to look after the farm. The fifty dollars a month salary would enable him in a few years to stock the farm as he had wanted to stock it all his life, but had never been able to.

But it was not the pecuniary advantage alone which influenced him. He believed the route was needed, and would be a good thing for the busy farmers; and he believed that in the end it would pay. He had counted a good deal on the building of a big hotel in the mountains for substantial returns; but for some reason the opening had been postponed to another spring, and now, just when it was getting ready to be opened, the route was to be discontinued. During the six months it had been in force he had not missed a single day from his waggon, nor been an hour late.

At length the snow was cleared from sufficient space for the gate to be opened and swung back. Holden led his horse through and under the shed, then unharnessed and took him to the stable, where he fed him generously with the hay which Benson threw down from the mow. Then the two men returned to the waggon, and Holden quickly arranged his mail into a compact package.

'We'll take it right into the house,' said Benson. 'It'll be safe there till you're able to go on.'

Holden smiled, and shook his head.

'I shall go right on now,' he said. 'Mail mustn't be delayed, you know.'

'But man alive! you can't do it,' expostulated Benson incredulously. 'It's half a mile to the next house, an' that drift right ahead is up to your arm-pits, an' too soft to stand on, an' too deep to push through. You're crazy.'

'Mebbe,' laconically, 'but it's got to be done.'

All this time he had been fastening the package securely upon his shoulders. Now he straightened up, taking the broken half of a rake-handle which he saw near.

'If you don't mind, I'll take this along,' he said. 'It'll help steady me some.'

Benson placed a hand upon his shoulder.

'Look here, Holden,' he said earnestly, 'don't you try it. The thing's nothing more nor less than suicide, and you know it.'

Holden met his neighbor's look squarely, and smiled.

'I don't think so,' he answered. 'I shall try to creep along the fences where it's bad, an' stick mostly to the high, windy ground across lots, where the snow'll be less deep. I would not wonder if I could make it all right. It's only half a mile to the next house, an' not more'n that between any two places, and fourteen miles around the whole route. Then there's another thing, the main one,' his face becoming grave; 'you forget the folks who are waitin' for their mail. What will it mean to them if I don't git round? Of course, I don't know much about what's in the mail; but there's the Widow Case, livin' alone, an' he son workin' up country in a mill. She's half sick, an' he don't earn much; but most of what he earns he sends to her regular, an' it generally comes about this time of the month. I know for she often lets me have it to buy things for her at the little store just beyond where she lives. I've got a letter for her this mornin'.'