

OUR SUNDAY-SCHOOL PRAISE HYMN

On this happy day we gather,
Mid the sunshine and the flowers,
All around us joys and blessings
Fall like soft, refreshing showers.

Our young hearts are full of gladness,
Our young lips are full of praise,
We have come to thank thee, Father,
For the love that crowns our days.

For this Christian land we praise thee,
Stretching out to east and west;
For the precious open Bible,
For the holy Sabbath rest.

And for Jesus Christ, our Saviour,
Better than all gifts beside;
For the blessed Holy Spirit,
Sent our timid steps to guide.

Thanks for all, dear Lord, we bring thee,
As we gather here to-day;
And may every one departing
Some sweet blessing bear away!

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THE BIG BROTHER.

There are many things which nobody at home can do half so well as the big brother. For one thing, he can keep the peace. If there is a dispute between two of the little ones, or a general row in the nursery, the big brother has only to say the word, and the belligerents will cease their strife. Belligerent is a long word, but the boys who are reading Cæsar may tell the others that it is made up of two Latin words, one of which means war, and the other waging or carrying on, so that when two children are quarrelling and saying cross words, which may presently cause blows, they are properly called belligerents. Mother is a happy woman if she can trust her big boy to be her right-

hand, man to settle all that goes wrong and set a good example.

Nobody equals a big brother in taking the children's part when they are attacked, whether it is by a savage dog, an occasional bull in the meadow, or the bad boys from the next street. How safe they feel when brother Tom advances boldly to the rescue, and how proud they are of him, with reason, too! for is he not strong and brave and quick to act, knowing just what to do and just how to do it? I never yet heard of a cowardly big brother; did you?

ASHAMED OF FATHER.

With a wreny face and tired manner, an old man entered a store on Broadway, and looking around in a wishful way, said to the first person he met: "I've stopped for my little girl. I thought she wouldn't want to walk home alone, and it's about time to close, ain't it?"

"Yes, it's time to close," replied the floor-walker; "but who is your little girl, and where is she?"

"My little girl is Sally—Sally Denham, and she's here somewhere; can't you please tell me where? I'm a little near-sighted, or I could find her easy enough."

"There is no such girl in our employ," said the floor-walker decidedly; "you must be labouring under a mistake, sir."

"This is Rathbone's, ain't it?" the old man asked.

"Certainly."

"Then she's here."
"I am quite sure, as I told you before, sir, that there is no girl by that name in our employ."

"Is there another store kept by a man named Rathbone?" he asked wearily.

"Yes, I believe there is"—without much interest—"three blocks further down, I think."

The old man went out, and a young girl who had heard the conversation between him and the floor-walker, breathed a sigh of relief. She was a new clerk, and her name had been registered with other new ones, but not as Sally Denham (although it was Sally); it read Maud Elliot. No one in the store knew her, she reasoned, so why should she not call herself Maud, if she wanted to, instead of that plebeian Sally? And to think her father should come after her! Her face flushed hotly as she wondered what those proud girl clerks all around her would say if they should find out that the shabbily-dressed old man was her father. The girls were starting for their homes, she put on her jacket and went out.

"I will give father a piece of my mind," she said to herself, undutifully. "I shall ask him never to stop for me again. I'm quite old enough to go home alone I think."

She took a roundabout way home. It was a pleasure to walk along the street now, for she was dressed in a very neat and becoming suit, the hard-earned gift of the dear, loving old father of whom she was ashamed.

But what was the matter at home? She was startled as she reached her door, and heard the commotion within.

"Your father's killed, Sally!" was the abrupt explanation of a small boy outside. "He was alookin' of you an' couldn't find you."

The frightened girl darted past him into the house, where she found her mother nearly wild with grief.

"Mother," she sobbed, "it isn't true, is it, that father is dead?"

"Yes; he was killed—was knocked over by runaway horses while looking for you. He died just after reaching home. His last words were 'Tell my little Sally father tried to find her; tell her to find her Father in heaven. He'll watch over her to the end.' Where were you, Sally?"

But Sally did not answer; she simply could not. She was down on her knees beside her father's dead body, sobbing out her agony of grief and remorse.

"It's my fault—all mine," her tormented soul moaned. "He wouldn't be lying here cold and still if I hadn't been ashamed of him."

A year has passed since then, and Sally Denham is still a clerk at Rathbone's. But there has never been an evening since her father's death that, as the time for closing the store arrived, she has not heard a voice say, "I've stopped for my little girl. I thought she wouldn't want to walk home alone."

CHARLIE'S PLANS

"Well, my bonnie Charlie, upon what is that curly head of yours so busily pondering now?"

"I'm just thinking, Sis, what I shall do when I am quite grown up. I mean to be a soldier like father, and wear a big sword and a cap on the side of my head—and— And then I shall marry some nice, pretty lady with lots of money and grand dresses, and live in a fine, beautiful home, and—"

Here Charlie paused for breath. Sis had much ado to keep from laughing, but she answered gravely:

"What then?"

"Why, then," and a shadow crept over "bonnie Charlie's" face, "I shall grow old, I suppose, and have to die; but I don't want to think about that."

"But, Charlie dear, you must think about it. You may live to enjoy your grand wishes, or God may call you away while you are young; but, sooner or later, death will come, and then—"

Charlie was silent, so she went on:

"Dear little one, then comes the judgment, when the small as well as great must stand before God to answer for all their forgetfulness of him and naughty ways. Think of that, Charlie. There no one can help you—no one shield you but him whom you have left out of all your plans—the Lord Jesus. Oh, seek him first, the knowledge of him as your Saviour; that's the one thing needful—for your happiness now, your safety hereafter."