

BOYS AND GIRLS

Any Port in a Storm.

"Talk about raining cats and dogs, and pitchforks down'ards! if this ain't something like it I should like to know what it is. I'm thankful I've got a stunning pair of boots on, and a proper good coat, and this old basket makes a fine umbrella on a new and improved patent ventilating principle that don't keep more of the wet off than is healthy for you. Come on, Snip, I suppose you couldn't leave go of that precious old mutton bone, if you was running away from an earthquake, eh?"

This latter remark was addressed to a little terrier dog, who, with the wet streaming from ears and tail, trotted after his master through the rain.

"Hello!" quoth Rob presently, "here comes Tim Barker. There's plenty of cracks in his jacket for the rain to get through. Ah, well, if I'd had such a father as his, I dessay I sh'd have been just the same or worse. Shall I offer him a bit of my shelter? He'll say something mean about the Band of Hope—but I will. Hi, Tim! it ain't every

I say," asked Tim, "when is your next meeting, I've half a mind to go?"

"To-night, at eight," replied Rob, promptly, "and a prime time of it, I reckon, we're going to have; singing and pieces. Will you come?"

"I rather think I will."

"That's the ticket; and won't you sign?"

"Well, if you'll be there, too—to sort of back me up and stand by me."

"Of course I will, and downright glad."

"Well, if you'll sort of be a chum to me, I'll come and sign."

That this good resolution delighted Rob I need scarcely say, and the next five minutes were spent by him in giving Tim glowing details of the numerous delights and advantages enjoyed by the members of his Band of Hope.

Tim took the pledge that night; and it led to Tim's father taking it within a month; and a new gown was soon presented to the mother by them, purchased out of the money which might have been spent by them in daily dinner beer. How radiant with mingled smiles and tears she was when she saw it,

of each other's families, although they had not met face to face for a long time. They were congenial in many ways, and yet in some respects their ideas and their characters were totally at variance.

Mrs. Ashby was one of those bright, lovely unselfish mothers, who like Froebel, live with their children. She was not only interested in all they were doing and studying, and planned the best things for them, but she entered into their lives, she talked to them of their studies, she read to and with them in well-selected books, she sat down at the piano and played and sang with them, she helped them in their little clubs and mission societies, and took them long distances to the woods for wild flowers in the spring, and for nuts and autumn leaves in the fall; in fact, she was their companion.

Mrs. Braddock, on the contrary, really knew very little of her children. Nurses had cared for them when young, teachers in school, and maids at home when they were older, while the mother gave most of her time to society, to dress and to card-parties. Her children had adjusted themselves to that sort of life, and had become quite independent of their mother. Was the question asked one of them on the street of an afternoon, by a lady who expected to call at the home, "Is your mother at home?" the reply was almost always the same, "No, she's hardly ever at home. She is shopping, or is gone to one of her clubs, I guess." And they were usually correct.

Yet, with this decided difference in their tastes, the old friends were delighted to see each other, and it was a real joy to Mrs. Braddock to welcome Mrs. Ashby to her new home.

Mrs. Ashby insisted that Mrs. Braddock, who lived some miles north of the city, while she was still farther distant on the south side, should stay and spend a good part of the day with her. To this urgent invitation the friend assented, and ordered her carriage at three o'clock.

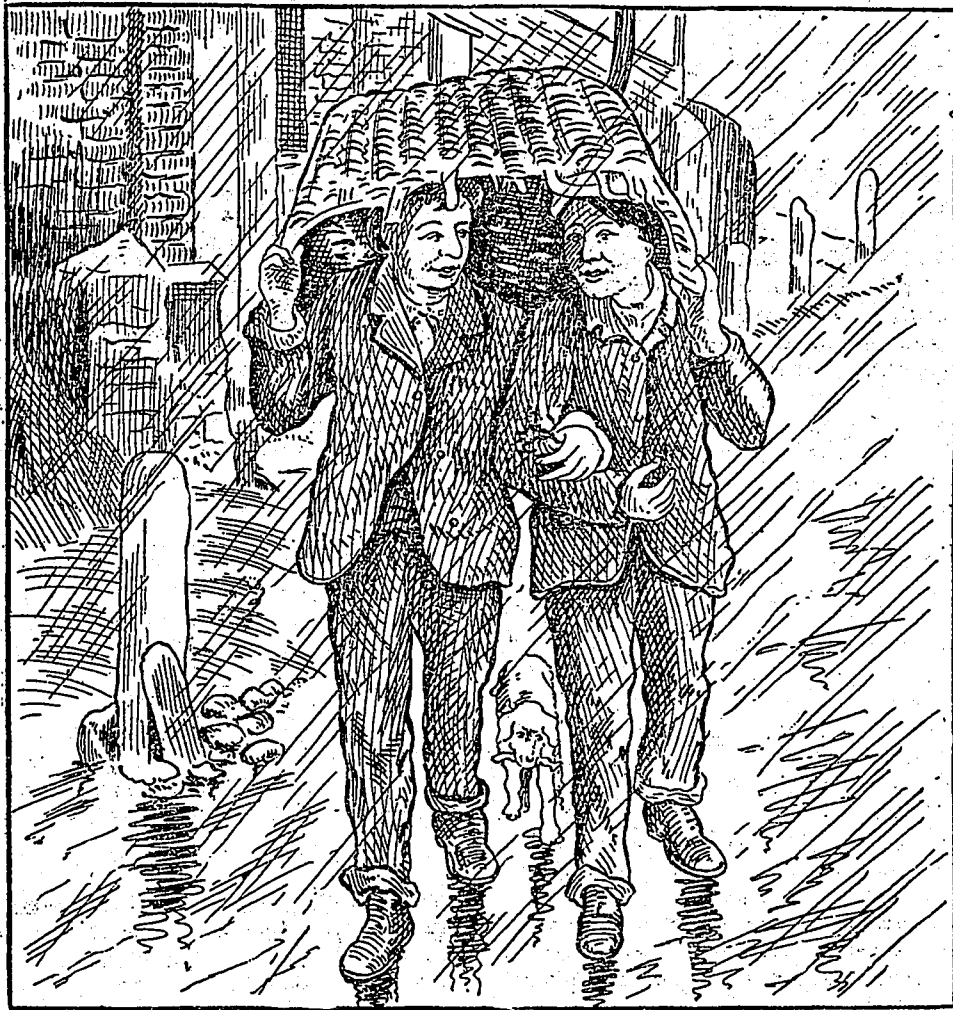
Forthwith a most entertaining conversation began, concerning their families, their friends in the East, and the new home they were making for themselves, while now and then an experience of their school days, or some information about those who were then associated with them at that time engrossed them.

As they rose from the lunch table, Mrs. Ashby said, "Come up to the third floor with me, Jennie. We have several pleasant rooms there, and two of them we have fitted up just to please our boys."

As they started upstairs, Mrs. Braddock said, "Why, do your boys care anything about their rooms?" I never pay a bit of attention to our boys. I don't believe one of them knows what is in his room, and they abuse everything so that I should never think of spending money to fit them up. I used to keep worrying over them, making myself miserable because they were so careless and so slack, but of late years I've settled down to the inevitable, and have made up my mind that they would be rough anyway, and there was no use in trying to make them different."

"I don't agree with you there, Jennie," returned Mrs. Ashby. "I think there is use in training them to neat habits. Harry was rough and careless for a long time, and did discourage me often, but I persevered, and I have been abundantly rewarded."

"Oh, how pretty!" exclaimed Mrs. Braddock, as her friend opened the door into a large, square, well-lighted room, which at the very first sight impressed one with the idea that the individual tastes of its occupant had been consulted. The inexpensive drap-



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gentleman as'll offer you the loan of a fashionable umbrella, but you're welcome to a half of mine!"

"Oh, thank ye!" responded Tim with quite a cordial grin. "Any port in a storm, an' I'm most as wet as I care to be a'ready."

Arm in arm the boys trudged along. Suddenly Tim burst out with—

"I say, Rob, I believe you're a real good fellow, that's a fact! If I'd known the sort you were I'd never plagued you about that Band of Hope of yours as I have done."

"Oh, as for that—" answered Rob, and laughed.

"When I look at you and your home, with father and mother and all of you testotalers, and then at us and our home—" A significant blank completed the sentence.

and how bonny and bright and almost young again she looked when she wore it, Tim and his father never forgot; and theirs has been a happy family ever since.

Was not this a wonderful outcome of that memorable trudge through the rain?—"Sunday Hour."

Our Boys' Rooms.

(The Standard, Chicago.)

Before Mrs. Ashby was fairly settled in her new home near Chicago, she was surprised one morning by a visit from an old school friend, now Mrs. Braddock, who had come West with her husband from Springfield, Mass., many years before. These ladies had kept up an infrequent correspondence for several years, and knew something