

BOYS AND GIRLS

A Mother's Love.

Some day,
When others braid your thick brown hair,
And drape your form in silk and lace,
When others call you 'dear' and 'fair,'
And hold your hands and kiss your face,
You'll not forget that far above
All other is a mother's love.

Some day,
When you must feel love's heavy loss,
You will remember other years,
When I, too, bent beneath the cross,
And mix my memory with thy tears,
In such dark hours be not afraid,
Within their shadow I have prayed.

Some day,
A flower, a song, a word may be
A link between us strong and sweet;
Ah, then, dear child, remember me!
And let your heart to 'mother' beat,
My love is with you everywhere,
You can not get beyond my prayer.

Some day,
At longest, it cannot be long,
I shall with glad impatience wait,
Amid the glory and the song,
For you before the Golden Gate,
After earth's parting and earth's pain,
Never to part! Never again!
—Selected.

The Home Going of Jessie Ellerton.

A TRUE STORY.

(Mary Hoge Wardlaw, in the 'Christian Observer.')

They had reached the end of the lane leading from the Ellertons' shabby little abode and their car was in sight before either of them uttered a word. Mr. Cary was the first to speak.

'If something isn't done for that poor woman, and done soon,' said he, 'she will scarcely live to get home.'

"Hame," you mean," corrected his wife, in an unsteady voice. 'Did you ever hear anything more pathetic than the way she says it? I am sure I saw you whisk away a tear when she said, in those heartfelt Scotch tones of hers, "I'm just wearying for hame."'

'She has wearied too long,' replied the missionary. 'We must find out what is to be done, and set about it at once.'

In those days—twenty years ago—the city of F. contained so few English-speaking residents who might assist in benevolent enterprises that the project of transporting a family from one hemisphere to another struck Mrs. Cary as a most stupendous undertaking. Nothing more was said at the time, however, for their car met them at the corner, and they rolled homeward, silently pondering over ways and means.

A bonny, tidy, happy-hearted young woman was Jessie Ellerton, when she and her 'man' Stephen, with little Polly and baby Steenie began life, three years before, in this prosperous Brazilian capital. He had a respectable position in the gas works, with a fair prospect of promotion. Jessie was a 'thrifty body,' energetic, industrious and contented.

Their rather unpromising dwelling near the beach soon took on the indescribable charm of home. Her clever fingers worked wonders with a few odd yards of flowered cretonne,

bits of silk or velvet, remnants of white muslin. The bright draperies, comfortable cushions and home-made rugs, her snowy table-covers and 'green things growing' made one forget the brick floor, unfinished walls and meagre furnishings. The best point about his 'lass,' thought Stephen, when he crossed the threshold of his little home at the close of his day's work, was her art of setting a tea-table. It may have been the spotless look of the cloth, the quaint plates and 'joogs' brought from across the seas, or the fresh posy that she always found time to put in the green glass bowl; at any rate, there was something about it which appealed to a tired and hungry man. This appeal was emphasized by the fragrance that escaped from the little black tea pot when the green embroidered 'tea-cosy' was lifted off; by the crisp and curly lettuce; the thin bread and butter, and occasionally by the hot scones or oat cakes prepared as a surprise. The children, who had flourished in the new climate, and prattled away in Portuguese to the detriment of their Scotch-English, sat in their chairs with clean pinafores and well-scrubbed faces. Jessie herself, as fresh as a rose, and as neat as a new pin—I am quoting Stephen—waited upon them all with patient good-humor. The sun was always near its setting when they began their supper, and it glanced about, enlivening the dull things and touching up the bright ones, like Steenie's yellow curls and Jack Horner's yellow plumage. How he sang, how he trilled, how he fluttered his wings and shook his pretty head, that sparkling Belgian canary! As little as the group around the table did he consider himself an exile in that land of fadeless foliage and sapphire skies. Bird and babies, wife and husband, they made music and happiness and home for one another.

For a year or more they rejoiced in the sunshine. Then came a shadow, lurking steadily at first, in hidden corners, dimming the radiance of Jessie's brave blue eyes, dimming—who knows how deeply—the radiance of her heart. The children played as merrily as before, Jack Horner warbled as blithely; yet the shadow crept onward.

Another year, and the whole fair scene was swept by its blackness. Why do we find them in a house so small and dingy, so bereft of its cozy adornments? Why is Polly clad in that scant and faded frock, and why is Steenie's pinafore so full of patches? Where is Jessie's rosininess and roundness, and what means that smile which saddens the beholder like tears?

Stephen Ellerton had lost his position—lost it by yielding to the deadliest, the most insidious, of foes. Love of drink had driven away self-respect, usurped the love of home, overthrown, it often seemed, his love of wife and children.

With the loss of his place, he had forfeited the right to a passage home for himself and family at the expiration of three years, should he decide not to renew his contract.

The irregular employment that he obtained when sober, provided them shelter. Jessie's deft fingers fashioned for other people's children the dainty garments she used to make for her own. There were times when this was all that stood between them and starvation. Sometimes, but not often, Polly and Steenie cried from hunger. It is likely that Jessie knew only too often what it was to be hungry, but she was not one to tell.

Thus matters stood at the beginning of this

story. The missionaries, who had just returned from an absence of several months in another corner of their field, were shocked at the changes they perceived. The sitting-room showed for what it was—a place with a rough brick floor and dingy walls. The gay draperies and bright cushions had worn out, and there had been no money to replace them—no heart, either, perhaps. The children's faces had begun to wear that pathetic look of patience characteristic of the children of the poor. They crept about, playing in a half-hearted way, and shrank back when spoken to. But the saddest change was in Jessie herself. Her wan cheeks and big, hollow eyes haunted Mrs. Cary all night.

The next day she searched through her stores, and brought to light yards upon yards of dark calico, blue and white striped, red and white checked. These would furnish four suits apiece for the little ones. With the calico she laid its equivalent in white 'domestic,' supplementing both with tape, buttons and thread.

'That will do for a beginning,' she thought. 'Whether they go or stay, they must have clothes, and Mrs. Ellerton will enjoy sewing for her own little folks again.'

She watched impatiently for her husband's return, and ran to meet him. But one glance at his face dispelled her hopes.

'Mr. Richards says he can do nothing,' he said presently. 'Ellerton broke his part of the contract, and the company is powerless.'

'But as an individual he can do a great deal!' she cried. 'As a man, as an Englishman, as a—Christian, won't he help at all?'

'He gave me a half promise; he said he had a personal dislike to Ellerton, but for the sake of the poor wife he will join in, if the others contribute.'

'And I had counted on him to head the subscription with something handsome! I am so disappointed!'

'Don't give up yet; I am going to see one or two others this afternoon.'

A few days later Mrs. Cary felt justified in taking her bundle to Jessie Ellerton, and in disclosing to her as cautiously as possible, that there was hope of her one day returning to her native land.

'It is far from being a certainty,' she said, 'as yet. But we are counting on it; we are praying for it.'

Jessie did not understand at first, and Mrs. Cary repeated the good news.

'Is it hame, ye mean? My ain hame and my mither? Bairnies, bairnies, we're maybe to gang awa' hame!'

She fell to sobbing, and then to laughing; the long repression had been too much for her. Soon, however, her practical nature won the day, and the women began to plan the little garments, while their future wearers all capered about, and Jack Horner burst into an ecstatic flow of melody.

A month went by, and the fund was still inadequate. Jessie worked early and late to have things in readiness, and Stephen, his better nature aroused by the interest others were taking in his family, let liquor alone, found regular employment, and persevered in it.

'If only Stephen keeps straight,' Jessie confided to Mrs. Cary, 'I can bide here and be verra weel content. 'Tis a gude country, ye ken, and bonnie. But it was cruel hard to think our chance to get hame was lost, and things ganging waur every day.'

But Jessie's friends were unwilling for the