

# BOYS AND GIRLS

## The Lady Bird and the Ant.

The ladybird sat in the rose's heart  
And smiled with pride and scorn,  
As she saw a plainly-dressed ant go by  
With a heavy grain of corn.  
So she drew the curtain of damask round  
And adjusted her silken vest,  
Making her mirror a drop of dew  
That lay in the rose's breast.  
Then she laughed so loud that the ant looked  
up,  
And, seeing her haughty face,  
Took no more notice, but travelled on,  
At the same industrious pace.  
But a sudden blast of autumn came  
And rudely swept the ground,  
And down the rose with the ladybird went  
And scattered its leaves around.  
Then the houseless lady was much amazed,  
For she knew not where to go,  
And rough November's early blast  
Had brought with it rain and snow.  
Her wings were chilled and her feet were cold,  
And she wished for the ant's warm cell,  
And what she did in the wintry storm  
I am sure I cannot tell.

—Lydia Huntley Sigourney.

## Dorothy's Spend Box.

(Hilda Richmond, in the 'Presbyterian  
Banner'.)

'No thank you, dear,' said Aunt Maude, shaking her head when Dorothy presented her with a fat chocolate. 'I am afraid your mamma would say you are eating too much candy for a little girl if she could see you.'

'Then you had better help me eat these,' laughed Dorothy, putting the brown candy on the tip of her pink tongue. 'Uncle Charley gave me five cents to spend this afternoon, and I only got six of these big ones for it. I have candy sometimes at home.'

'I think fruit is better,' said Aunt Maude, 'and the next time any one gives you money you had better buy a ripe peach of a nice pear. By the way, I wish you would tell me whenever you have a penny to spend while you are here. I want to do something that will be a secret till you go home and then you may know.'

So every time the little girl spent a penny she told Auntie Maude, and that young lady only smiled when her little niece begged to know about the money. When a girl is visiting in a house where there are two uncles, a grandma, a grandpa and an aunt, the pennies and nickles have to be spent very quickly unless one wants to put them in a bank, and Dorothy thought it was not polite to do that away from home. She had fine peaches, delicious pears, and all sorts of good things every day till the very last one of her visit, and still Aunt Maude would not tell what the great secret was.

'You will find a box in your trunk when you get home,' said Aunt Maude when she kissed Dorothy good-bye, 'and in it is a little note I wish you would read. Good-bye, dearie,' and then the train carried Dorothy swiftly away.

The little girl could scarcely wait till the big trunk was unpacked, and when mamma lifted out a box tied up with gay red ribbons she fairly danced with impatience. 'Dorothy's Spend Box' was in big letters on the lid, and

when it was opened mamma took out a pink note which Dorothy read aloud. 'Dear Dorothy,' said the note. 'Every time you spent any money I bought a little gift for the same amount and put it in the spend box. I thought it would be nice to show you how many things you could get for the mission tree that you said your Sunday school gave every year to poor children if you saved your pennies. I know a penny seems a very little thing, but lots of the things in this box only cost that much. Please write to me and tell me how you like your spend box.'

And what do you suppose Dorothy found in the queer little bundles? It took a long time to untie the bright ribbons and unroll the tissue paper, but when it was all done her lap was full of the nicest things you could think of. There were marbles and pencils and hair ribbons and handkerchiefs and cards and tiny fans and picture books and so many pretty gifts I cannot tell you about them all. At the very bottom of the box was a lovely doll dressed in a white frock with a dear little hat and white slippers.

'I know just what day auntie bought that,' said Dorothy, holding up the doll. 'Uncle Charley gave me a whole dollar to spend and I went down town with five little girls to get ice cream soda. Just think, mamma, we ate up a lovely doll like this in about ten minutes.'

'You didn't eat or drink a dollar's worth of ice cream soda, did you?' cried Mrs. Nelson, in surprise. 'I never thought my little girl would do such a thing as that.'

'Well, we didn't just then,' said Dorothy, 'but we spent all the money. We bought some fruit to take home, and in a little while all the money was gone. Aunt Maude made this dress out of a piece of her dress that she wore to the concert. I saw her making it and the hat, too, but she wouldn't tell who they were for.'

'What are you going to say to auntie when you write?' asked Mrs. Nelson, as Dorothy soberly wrapped the pretty things up again.

'I'm going to tell her that it is the very nicest thing she could have done, but I am sorry I didn't know it in time to put something in myself. Oh, mamma, do you think she meant I should fill the box by saving from this on till Christmas?'

'It would not surprise me in the least if she had that in mind when she started the box. I wonder who will get the pennies now, the candy man or the spend box.'

'The spend box,' said Dorothy, with emphasis. 'I intend to have it running over with pretty things for the Christmas tree.' And she kept her word.

## The Next Thing.

When we cannot get at the very thing we wish, never to take up with the next best in degree to it, that's pitiful beyond description.—Sterne.

## All Wrong.

A Brooklyn physician tells, in the New York 'Times,' an amusing incident that happened at his summer house in New Hampshire.

His small daughter was asked by her grandmother to bring an egg from the hennery. After several minutes the little girl returned with her apron full of eggs. While yet a distance away the grandmother asked:

'Well, did you break any eggs on the way?'  
'No, grandma,' was the prompt answer, 'but the shells came off a few.'

## Willie Holt, the Boy Martyr.

A friend in India has sent me the following touching story, which I have rewritten for our young readers. If it touches your hearts as it has mine I am sure it will do you good. This general in the Indian service says:

I had in my regiment a little bugler. His father and mother had died and he was left alone. He was not always treated kindly by the rough soldiers, yet he remained an out and out Christian. He was trained by his Christian mother, and among the rough soldiers he showed that his conversion was a reality by his beautiful life.

One morning it was reported that the targets were thrown down during the night, and the usual practice could not take place. The act was traced to the tent in which our little Christian, Willie Holt, slept, with perhaps a half a dozen more. The whole lot was put under arrest, and it was proven by court martial that one or more of the prisoners were guilty of the offence. The general in command then turned to the prisoners, and said: 'If one of you who slept in No. 4 last night will come forward and take the punishment, the rest will get off free, but if not, each one of you will receive ten strokes with the cat-o'-nine-tails.' Silence followed, then Willie Holt stepped forward.

His face was as pale as death, and he said, 'I will take the punishment for the rest.' I turned to the prisoners and said: 'Will you let this delicate boy take the punishment for your sins? He is guiltless; you know as well as I do.' I knew my military word must stand, and the boy knew it, too, as he said, 'I am ready, sir.'

It made me sick at heart to think of having the innocent boy lashed with the cruel whip. At the fourth blow, Jim Sykes, the black sheep of the regiment, seized the cruel whip and shouted out: 'General, stop it, and tie me up instead! He did not do it; I did,' and he flung his arms around the boy.

Fainting and almost speechless, Willie lifted his eyes to the man's face and smiled. 'No, Jim,' he whispered; 'you are safe now; the general's word will stand.' His head fell forward—he had fainted.

The next day as I went into the hospital, I asked how the lad was getting on. 'He is sinking, general,' said the doctor. 'The shock of yesterday was too much. He is more fit for heaven than earth.' The tears stood in his eyes.

In one corner of the room I saw the lad propped upon some pillows, and kneeling by his side was Jim Sykes. I saw drops of sweat standing on his brow, and heard him say, 'Why did you do it, Willie?' 'Because I wanted to take it for you; I thought it might help you to understand a little bit why Christ died for you.'

'What do you mean, Willie?'

'I mean that he died for you because he loved you, as I do, Jim; only Christ loved you much more. I only suffered for one of your sins, but Christ suffered for all the sins you ever committed. The punishment was death, and Jim, Christ suffered that death for you.'

'I'm one of the bad 'uns; Christ never cared anything for me.'

'But he died to save the bad ones. His words were, 'I came not to call the righteous, but sinners. Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be like snow, though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.' "Dear Jim," he added, "shall the Lord have died in