

BOYS AND GIRLS

An End.

A little girl went counting on,
To one—two hundred, say,
'Is there no end to it?' she asked,
In quite a puzzled way.
I told her no—she had begun,
She might go on all day.
'There is an end to it—this end,'
She cried with laughter gay;
And back she counted, back to one,
And ended so her play.
—'Little Folks.'

Mrs. Maloney's Adventure.

'Arrah, Mrs. Malony, dear, aren't your arms achin' from that big creel ov turf you're carryin'?'
'Well, indeed, they are, Biddy, but sure it's well I have it to carry. Won't it sarve me well in the could winter that's comin'?'
'Ye're right there, ma'am; there's nothin' like the good turf, and plenty of it, to keep the heat in your ould bones. Thank the Lord we've a fine day to gather it; not a drop of rain, and the sky as clear as glass.'

Mrs. Malony was the widow of a sergeant in the army, and had a pension. She was much looked up to by her neighbors, and was always addressed by them as 'ma'am.' To add to her importance, she had a son in the Connaught Rangers, who always sent her presents at Christmas.

'Sure, the last time what was it he sint me from India all the way,' she said, 'but a tay-pot? The grandest one that ever you'd see, with figures all over it. Sure, it's too good for anything but show, and I just have it safe on the shelf, and I look at it every night afore I go to my bed, and I pray for my poor boy across the salt say to come home to me.'

Mrs. Malony's hair was as white as snow, but she had a bright color in her withered cheeks, and a pleasant smile on her face that did one good to see.

'I've the best of health, thank God,' she said; 'and there's no one that hasn't the kind word for me.'

'About a mile from the group of cottages, or cabins—as they are called in Ireland—in which Mrs. Malony and her friends, Biddy Fitzhenry and her sister, lived, was a large brown bog. Here it was that they all went to gather turf. In the summer, the turf was cut out of the bog, and piled in long rows to dry, and about September it was dry enough to be gathered in creels or baskets, and taken home to be stacked. The creels are strapped round the shoulders by rope made of long grass.'

Mrs. Martin, a farmer's wife who lived near the bog, had lent her white pony, Surefoot, and her car, to carry the baskets, and Mrs. Malony, too, if she got tired. Mrs. Martin's little daughter, Carrie, could drive Surefoot quite well, and was very fond of him. The two old women were very happy together, talking and knitting stockings in the intervals of their turf-gathering. Just as twilight was closing in they began to think of going home.

'For sure, this is the lonesome place whin it gets dark,' said Biddy Fitzhenry, looking round; 'there's nothing all round but the mountains and the say (sea).'

They had not gone far on their homeward way when Mrs. Malony, looking down on her hand, gave a faint cry.

'Ah, thin, what's the matter at all, Mrs. Malony, dear?' asked her friend.

'It's my wedding ring, woman, sure, I've lost it: it must have slipped off my finger when I was filling my creel.'

'Maybe it's beyant in the bog,' suggested little Carrie. 'Shall I go see?'

'No, no, my dear, I'll go myself,' said Mrs. Malony. 'I know best the spot where I was.'

So off she got, and hobbled fast away back to the bog. There was a path across it, which, if one kept to it, was dry enough. All along by the path, however, were deep pools—bog-holes they are called—full of brown water, into which it is dangerous to slip. Mrs. Malony, however, picked her way safely towards the

long lines of piled-up turf, and, to her great joy and relief, she spied, after some searching, her wedding-ring, as it sparkled on the ground. She slipped it on her finger, and was hurrying back to the others when, in the darkness, her foot tripped, and down she fell into a deep bog-hole. It was a treacherous hole, too; much deeper than anyone could imagine. She was up to her waist in water, and seemed to be slipping deeper and deeper every minute. Mrs. Malony was what might be called an ignorant woman, but she had strong faith in God.

'Sure, He's niver forsaken me yet, and He's not going to do it now,' she thought. 'I'll just put my hand into His, and say, "Lord, help me!" He won't forget poor ould Molly, I'll go bail for that.'

As she put her feeble old hand into God's hand she heard a girlish voice crying, 'Mrs. Malony, Mrs. Malony, dear, are you there?'

It was all Mrs. Malony could do to answer; but Carrie heard her, and with the help of the two Fitzhenry's, she was dragged out of the hole, before her strength was quite exhausted. And then Surefoot took them all safely home.

'I knew, I knew,' said Mrs. Malony as she sat by her bright turf fire, 'that the Lord would never forsake me. I've tried Him too often for that!'

So we, too, may join in the words of Isaiah, and say, 'Trust ye in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength.'—Friendly Greetings.

Recognition.

'Don't be anxious about being recognized,' says a recent writer, 'be more anxious about being worth recognition.' In the long run, every one will be duly recognized. The poet sang of the gems which lie unnoticed in the unfathomed caves of the ocean. Perhaps so, but while they may be true of crystals it is not true of men. No; the world does not always applaud its worthies, but none will ever go without true recognition, for God will see to it that every life receives its due. Perhaps we are more anxious to be recognized than to be worth recognition. He who seeks honor from men is likely to miss it, while he who seeks to be worthy will never fail of God's owning. It is a good thing to work quietly and wait patiently. In due time the honor which is your due will come to your door. But do not seek honor—seek to be worthy!—Selected.

Ministering Unto Him.

(By the late Dr. T. J. Barnardo.)

It was a murky evening at the close of September, and the outlook was drab and dreary. A few slushy drops of rain fell occasionally, and the muddy streets were most unpleasant for pedestrians. Truly, an uninviting night in which to be abroad!

I had been attending the board meeting of a society in which I was interested, and I was absorbed in thinking over some points of the business transacted. I hardly noticed, therefore, that as I left Moorgate St. Station a timid little voice began to assail my ears. 'Matches, sir,' it said in a curious persistent whine. I walked steadily on, but the voice followed, challenging my attention. The speaker must have been a diminutive little match-seller, for the sound was near the ground. Again he repeated earnestly: 'Two a ha'penny! Two boxes a ha'penny! Buy 'em, sir!' Then after a pause, he resumed: 'Could give yer three, but there ain't much profit!'

That curious chant with its quaint comment at length checked my progress. My thoughts were effectually broken into. I stopped, and at a glance took in the scene and the speaker at once. I saw a sight, common enough, alas, in London; a little street-vendor; shoeless and stockingless, his bare feet well mudded, his trousers ragged, his jacket torn. Trousers and jacket were all he had to cover him from the drizzling rain and shivering fog. A queer little old patched cap

was perched on one side of his head in a knowing fashion, pathetically at variance with the sad lines of his face. The child looked to me about eight years of age; but I guessed him to be nine, for he was of stunted growth.

'Sold much to-day?' I inquired. He shook his head.

'Six boxes ain't much—only t'ree a'pence for the lot.'

'Who sent you out?'

'Mother.'

'And why does mother send out a little chap like you?'

'She can't help it; she's werry bad.'

'Where is she?'

'Home.'

'Anybody else there?'

'Sissy.'

'How old is she?'

'Oh, she don't count! She's littler than me—lots littler!'

'Do you make much money?'

'Sometimes, if I'm lucky.'

'Are you often lucky?'

'Not 'xactly often; I wor in real luck yesterday.'

'How's that?'

'Such a nice gemman kem along, and says he, "You are a pore little chap;" and he gev me a bob. Oh! he wor a nice gemman, he wor!'

My young companion had wasted no words, and now, when such emphasis was laid upon this particular gentleman, I felt he was being held up for imitation!

'Why don't you go home with your three ha'pence?' I continued.

'Tain't no use,' said the boy. 'Tain't no use going home with littler nor a tanner, sir!'

'Must you always have "a tanner"?''

The little head was nodded quickly and emphatically. Clearly sixpence was the irreducible minimum!

'Well, now,' I said, 'tell me where your mother lives.'

'Thirteen, Plough Court, Banner St., St. Lukes's,' was the prompt answer.

I knew Banner St.; the place was not more than ten minutes' walk away. 'Come on with me,' I said, 'and I will see your mother. I am a doctor, you know, and perhaps, I can do her some good.'

Without more ado the little chap gave himself up to the new idea, and trotted off by my side, his tongue wagging briskly the while. Here was an adventure, or at least, an event! He managed to keep up a never-failing stream of small talk which, I could not help observing, always came round, often by very sharp angles, to the 'nice gemman!'

We soon reached Banner St. A few minutes then brought us to the corner of a dingy, pestilential-looking court, lined on each side by tumble-down two-story houses, houses that looked as if they had been out of repair for many years back. They were noisome in the extreme, foetid, reeking of slime and neglect. No. 13 presented a set of creaky and very filthy stairs. My guide hooked his small hand firmly into mine, and without delay we began to climb up and up and up, until at last we reached a back room on the top floor. The boy ran in first, while I waited outside. Only a minute elapsed, when the door was opened, and in response to a muffled 'Come in, sir,' I entered.

The room was literally devoid of furniture. There was no chair to sit down on; no table to fill up the bare floor space. Yet there was a marvellous air of peace and even of comfort in that empty garret! All, for instance, was wondrously clean. And one felt that there was a decent and gracious air about the place that spoke well for its human occupants.

It was some time before my eyes could take in my surroundings. But presently I saw a figure lying near the window on the floor, on a heap of rags. It was that of a poor, decent-looking woman. A few words of sympathy and explanation, and I learned her simple story. The woman was a widow of about forty-five. She had injured her leg, and the wound, instead of healing, had apparently festered. A large, unwholesome ulcer was exposed to view as I examined it. She had gone twice as an out-patient to the nearest