

BOYS AND GIRLS

Three Things.

Three things to love—courage, gentleness, and affection.

Three things to admire—intellect, dignity, and gracefulness.

Three things to hate—cruelty, arrogance, and ingratitude.

Three things to delight in—beauty, frankness, and freedom.

Three things to wish for—health, friends, and a contented spirit.

Three things to like—cordiality, good-humor, and cheerfulness.

Three things to avoid—idleness, loquacity, and flippant jesting.

Three things to cultivate—good books, good friends, and good humor.

Three things to contend for—honor, country, and friends.

Three things to govern—temper, tongue, and conduct.

Three things to cherish—virtue, good-humor, and wisdom.

Three things to do—think, live, act.

Three things to think of—life, death, and eternity.—'The Voice.'

Mattie's Hero.

(By Mabel King, in 'The British Congregationalist'.)

To begin with he had not the slightest idea that he was anybody's hero. He was a tall commanding personage, with a calm and steadfast sort of face, from which clear, grey eyes looked thoughtfully upon the world in general. A business man, a man who was the head of an influential firm, and who bore with dignity the heavy responsibilities that were his.

He had come across Mattie as he was hurrying to the station for his train; he was on the outlook for an 'Evening News,' and seeing a girl on the other side of the street with a small stack of them under her arm, he held up a finger, and smiled the next moment at the way in which the city child darted across the street, regardless of cabs, carts and horses, so intent was she on 'trade.'

Theodore Malton was naturally a quick observer, and as the child with eager trembling hands drew out a 'News' he noted the thin, unchild-like face, with its look of care and anxiety, and he felt saddened, because he was thus brought face to face with one of the darkest problems of our city life.

'Trade good, little one?' he asked; he spoke just because his was a kindly nature, and because it struck him as pitiful that a child—moreover a delicate child—should have to sell papers in that driving rain. The day had been depressing in the extreme, and now in the murky dusk there was something in the appearance of this child that gave him pause, so while he felt in his pocket for a coin he spoke to the child, studying the thin face as he spoke. 'Trade good, little one?' he asked, and Mattie stared in incredulous wonder. After a brief stare she replied, 'It's awful,' she said. 'I've only sold three papers, yet, and I'm wet to the skin.'

She was wet, there was no doubt about it. Poor child! She was not only wet, but hungry, and tired, and wretched. Alas! that such children are to be found in our cities!

'You'd better run home, child,' Mr. Malton remarked kindly. 'It's such a fearful night, you'd better give up selling your papers for to-night, and go home.' Mattie's eyes nearly started out of her head. 'Go 'ome!' she cried. 'Lors! what hever do yer mean? Go 'ome! Why I shan't go 'ome till them papers is sold! Bless yer! we've six to keep, and three of 'em b'ys that wear their things out shameful! Yer can't afford to giv in for a drop of rain when the rent 'as to be got, let alone a bite to eat.'

The pitiless rain came with such a sudden burst that Theodore Malton reflected that he could not stand questioning the child in it any longer, besides if he did he would lose his train, so with careless generosity he put a sixpence into the grimy little hand, and said, 'There, child, go and get yourself "a bite to eat" at any rate'; and before Mattie could recover from the ecstatic delight his gift gave her, he had sped on his way.

He felt sorry enough; he felt, as so many

have done, the burden laid upon a nation when such a state of things is possible. Children, who ought to know nothing of care, facing life's responsibilities in this way. He sighed, but in a few moments was engrossed in reading of a big mercantile failure, and the little news-girl passed out of his thoughts.

The next day, however, she was brought back to them in a forcible way. He was hurrying down to the station again, when a shrill little voice cried 'Evening News!' 'Evening News!' and, mechanically, he was putting out his hand for one, when he became aware of some undue excitement. As his hand was extended to take the paper the child he was about to take it from was pounced upon by a girl, whom he recognized as his vendor of the previous night. 'Get hout!' she cried fiercely. 'What do yer mean by axin' 'im?' 'E's mine, 'e is! Keep to yer own customers, and leave mine alone!' The next instant her tone changed, and she said pleadingly, 'Evenin' News,' sir?' holding out one as she spoke.

Theodore Malton was perplexed. 'Little girl,' he said quietly, 'you should not be so rough; you have made that other child very unhappy; besides you had no right to try to prevent me buying from her.'

Mattie looked up in dismay, and her face began to work and Theodore Malton bending his head caught the murmured words: 'Yer was the fust as hever was good to me! Yer giv me sixpence and spoke kind, yer did, and I'll let anybody know as tries to take yer from me.'

'What's your name, little girl?' he asked. 'And how old are you?'

'My name's Mattie,' she answered, and I'm 12. I'm goin' in 13, but I'm not much bigger than our Polly, and she's only 10. Mother says, as not 'avin' enough to eat and not 'avin' sleep enough keeps me small.'

Mattie was evidently loquacious, and there was a certain quaintness in her speech that amused Theodore Malton, and made him feel more interest in the child.

'Look here, Mattie!' he said in his tone of authority, which would creep into his words in spite of himself. 'Look here! I can have nothing to do with you if you do as you did. I don't mean to encourage you to fight about my evening paper. Promise

me that you won't do that sort of thing again, and I'll make an agreement with you.'

'What is it?' she asked cautiously, looking at him with her pitiful shrewdness.

'Promise me that you will never fight about me again, then I'll promise you that I will buy my paper from you every day,' Theodore Malton said quietly.

'Oh!' cried Mattie, and her thin little face flushed crimson with the sudden delight, 'Do yer mean it? 'Onest Injun?'

He smiled pityingly. 'Yes, Mattie,' he said, 'I do mean it. Be at the corner we have just passed every evening about this time, and wait for me; I'm not often later than this. Is it a bargain?'

'Yes!' she cried, 'I'd do a deal for a reglar! I shan't mind 'er tryin' to sell, now that I knows yer won't buy from 'er. I'll be 'ere for certain; yer'll tak one now, sir?'

He smiled and took one, then he thrust a penny into her hand. 'Now Mattie,' he said, 'every night that you can look me in the face, and say you haven't fought anyone, you shall have a penny for your paper! That will be a little bit of genuine profit. We'll start to-night, because you have given me your promise.' Mattie looked after the tall, erect figure with wondering admiration.

'Blest if 'e musn't be a millionaire,' she ejaculated. 'A penny every night for a 'alf-penny paper! My word! I'll leave that kid alone! I never 'ad a reglar afore, and this one's a reglar anyone 'd be proud to 'ave.'

The compact thus curiously entered into was faithfully kept. Every evening Mattie was waiting with an 'Evening News' in her hand, when Theodore Malton appeared, and every evening he gave her the promised penny, and hurried on his way. He gave her more than the penny, though, for he always gave her a pleasant smile and a cheerful word. It was, 'Is trade brisk, Mattie?' or 'I hope you'll sell all your papers to-night, Mattie,' to which Mattie would reply, 'But poor, sir,' or 'I 'opes so, sir,' as the case might be.

Every night Mattie felt cheered and helped; she thought with wondrous gratitude of her 'reglar,' and Theodore Malton would have opened his honest eyes in amazement if he had ever been told what he was to that poor, neglected, careworn child. He was, in fact, her hero. In Mattie's eyes Theodore Malton was simply the best, and wisest, and kindest man that there was in that big city. One night, about six months after the compact between them had been made, as Theodore Malton drew near he became aware that something unusual had happened. Mattie was fairly trembling with excitement, and her eyes were almost dazzling in their unusual brightness.

'Well, child,' he remarked pleasantly, 'you look as if you had found a fortune! Have you got another "reglar," Mattie?'

'No,' she said soberly, then her voice changed. 'Oh, sir!' she cried, 'I'm that 'appy as my 'ead's turned! A lady what comes into our street a-seein' as yer washes yer-selves, and as the babies is fed proper, said as she'd give me a ticket to go the seaside, with a lot of others. It's to-morrow. It won't cost me nothin', for they gives yer a breakfast when yer gets there and a tea afore yer comes back, but I shall miss bringin' yer paper for yer, sir. I felt as if I'd better stop at 'ome rather than miss yer, but my mother says as it's the chance of a lifetime and I'd be a soft to miss it. We shall be in a bit of a 'ole if I miss a day, but I've never 'ad a 'oliday afore, and my mother says as I may never 'ave another, so I'd better make the most of it.'

Poor Mattie! In her excitement and eagerness she would have gone on talking for hours. Theodore Malton looked at the thin, eager little face with fresh pity, as he heard the unchildlike phrase 'May never 'ave another.' Poor child! Even if he lost his train he must help to make this one holiday pleasant.

'Why, Mattie,' he remarked kindly, 'this is wonderful news! I hope you'll have a very good time! It was very kind of the lady to give you a ticket. Now, my child, here's a shilling for you; take it, and spend it in donkey rides, or chocolate, or anything you'd like. I hope you'll have it fine, and I

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