

BOYS AND GIRLS

The Immortal Flower.

(Frank Dempster Sherman, in the
'Congregationalist'.)

Lord, in whose hands I am but dust
Make Thou of me a vessel whole,
Worthy to guard the precious soul
Thou givest me in trust.

Keep me unmarred by strife and sin
Throughout my little span of years;
Let Joy's bright sun and Sorrow's tear
Keep pure the flower therein.

Grant if Thou wilt mine eyes to see
It grow to beauty at Thy feet,—
To find at last the blossoms sweet
Of immortality.

And when this body that is mine,—
This mortal shape which Thou hast made,—
Is dust and with the earth-dust laid,
Lord, take the flower for Thine!

Two to See.

'Why did you not pocket some of those pears?' said one boy to another; 'nobody was there to see you.'

'Yes, there was; I was there to see myself, and I don't mean ever to see myself do such things.'

I looked at the boy who made this noble answer. He was poorly clad, but he had a noble face; and I thought how there were always two to see your sins, yourself and your God; one accuses and the other judges—Selected.

Courage and Courage.

Glenn Forester and Chester Burnham were friends.

They had been in India for three years. Whenever the pressure of business permitted they took a few days' outing in the forests and jungles nearby, and many were the thrilling tales of adventure which they brought back from these hunting excursions.

Chester was venturesome. 'I know the jungles and the mode of hunting as well as the natives,' he said, 'and I am going to be free.'

One day Glenn followed him as he struck into the dense undergrowth.

Chester looked back, noted his pale face, and smilingly said: 'I won't lead you far to-day.'

They had not been walking over half an hour when a flock of birds in great commotion in the tree-tops attracted Glenn's attention. He paused to watch them. Chester strode on. But he had not gone many rods when he too, was attracted by a similar disturbance among the feathered denizens above his head.

He stopped beside an immense tree, and gazed inquiringly upward.

Such a piping and chirping and scolding he had never before heard.

'A serpent has scared them,' he mused with a frown.

In interested silence he watched and listened for many minutes. Then a slight rustle just ahead of him drew his eyes from the tree-tops to the ground.

For one second his heart stood still. There, not more than fifty feet away, stood a tiger. He was the finest creature of his kind Chester had ever seen.

The beast had not seen the young man until an involuntary backward step snapped a dead twig beneath his feet. The animal's quick ear caught the sound. The next instant his crouching figure, such as one notes when a cat is creeping upon a bird, showed that he was alert and alive to the fact that tempting prey was before him.

The young man saw that he was lank and gaunt.

'He is half-starved or he would not think of attacking me in daylight,' he thought.

His nerves grew quiet, and his muscles became as tense as bands of steel. Then there was a flash, a report and the tiger rolled up-

on his side. Chester's bullet had pierced his brain.

He advanced a few steps and sent another shot through the splendid head. He did not care to risk an unfinished job.

'Glenn's face was like ashes as he came up.

'I thought you were a dead man,' he said, with a faint smile, as he looked upon the animal's quiet form. 'Suppose you had missed him?'

Chester laughed. 'You would have come to my rescue. Aren't you sorry I did not give you a chance?'

'I am afraid my hands would have been too shaky to hold my rifle. See how I am trembling,' and again he smiled faintly.

Poor Glenn! What a coward you are. I would not be built upon your plan for a million pounds.

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Three months later these young men were dining with their employer. Mr. Rockman was a man of vast wealth and influence. It meant a great deal to stand well with him. Both Chester and Glenn were well aware that their presence at the banquet showed that they had won the great man's respect and confidence.

And each anticipated, away down in his heart, that the promotion for which he had long waited was about to come. An important office was left vacant by a recent death, and each hoped that he might be the fortunate one chosen to fill it.

Glenn was especially hopeful.

Was not Agnes Mason, the sweetest and noblest maiden in England, waiting for such a promotion to become his wife? They had talked of marriage upon his present slender salary, but her parents had objected, and all were waiting with eager hope for the promotion which should enable him to surround her with the comforts her station demanded.

Never had Glenn talked so well as he had to-day. He was conscious that his host's eyes dwelt upon him in pleased recognition of the fact that his ready words and flashes of wit helped make the dinner a success.

The ladies withdrew, and the men were left to their wine and cigars.

Glenn's glass was empty, and not only so, but it was turned down beside the place where his plate had been.

A word from Mr. Rockman sent a servant to the young man's side.

'I never drink wine,' was his reply to the man's attempt to fill his glass.

Glenn was firm in his refusal, although a shadow came into his eyes as he noticed his host's displeased brow.

Chester gaily tossed off two sparkling glasses, and selected a cigar from the box passed him. He was soon puffing away with the others, and inwardly calling Glenn an idiot for parading his temperance principles amid their present surroundings.

As the guests were about to pass from the room, Mr. Rockman came up to Glenn and said:

'Would you mind telling me why you touch neither wine nor cigars?'

'Not at all,' was the young man's reply, although a slight flush mantled his face. 'When I was about eighteen, I was quite wild. Afterwards I gave my heart to Christ, and I then pledged myself never again to touch anything that could intoxicate, never to play another game of cards, or smoke a cigar. That vow is more sacred to me than my life.'

Chester had drawn near, and was listening to his friend's words. Their host turned to him, and smilingly said:

'I suppose you have never sown any wild oats, nor had occasion to take the vows which bind Mr. Forester?'

Chester hesitated, and then lightly answered:

'Oh, I sowed a pretty good crop when Forester did, and I turned around at the same time. But I don't think it harms a man to take a glass of wine upon certain occasions and a cigar now and then helps digestion.'

'Did you take the same pledge that your friend did?' Mr. Rockman questioned, and his

keen eye rested searchingly upon Chester's handsome face.

'I did,' was the young man's low answer. 'To-day is the first time I have ever broken it. I felt that respect to you demanded I should break its narrow limits this once.'

Nothing more was said, and the guests withdrew.

Three days later Glenn Forester received the promotion for which he longed. With it came these words:

'I, myself, am not a Christian; but I respect a man who is, and I like to have men about me who are not afraid to stick to their principles, and who dare run up their flags when shot and shell are flying.'

Moral courage is not always thus swiftly rewarded, but it always pays in the end.

God never forgets those who are loyal to Him under the stress of a great temptation. Sometimes His recognition seems slow, but sooner or later his approving smile will come.—'Christian Observer.'

At the Receiving Desk.

(John T. Faris, in the 'Sunday School
Messenger'.)

A dozen patrons of the public library were laughing and talking as they stood at the receiving desk, waiting to return their books. Schoolgirls talked gayly of their sport, boys discussed plans for their summer holiday, mothers spoke of their children and their homes. Everybody seemed happy.

'Yes, everybody else is happy, and I am miserable,' thought Seiden Vance, as he stood apart, unwilling to approach his acquaintances. 'Their lives are full of pleasure, and mine is full of misfortune. I wonder if Tom Harris or Freda Dover would laugh so much if they had lost everything and had to give up college? Would Mrs. Turner be chattering like that if she had my outlook on life? Would any of them ever smile again if they had to stand in my shoes? No opportunities, no future, no hope! I might as well be dead.'

So his thoughts ran on as, one by one, the patrons passed to the issuing desk. He did not observe that he was alone until Mrs. Redman called to him from her seat behind the railing.

'Yes, I have a book to return, Mrs. Redman,' he greeted her. 'But please do not ask me to read any more books like this. I know you gave it to me because you thought it would help me. But it did not do me one particle of good. These men who write do not seem to know what life is. I don't believe that the author of this book'—he laid it contemptuously on the table—'ever knew what it was to be really disappointed, or discouraged, or hopeless. I could tell him a thing or two. I thought I was going to like it at first when I read about the young fellow whose back was injured when the three fell on him. Those pages which told of the months when he thought of his ruined life were about right. I know just how he felt. But I lost patience when he began to study wood-carving. And when he began to enjoy his work so that he laughed as he used to do before his accident, I wanted to put the book down. It was only a novel. Don't tell me that when a man is in his fix he can be of any use in the world! No, thank you! I guess I won't take any book this week. Books are so unsatisfactory. My life is real enough to occupy my mind without reading any such trash as that author wrote. When he can point me to a man in a fix like mine who has actually done something to make life worth living, I'll listen to him.'

Mrs. Redman listened sympathetically. Suddenly there came into her mind a bit of biography she had read in the morning paper. That might help him.

'I know of a man who really lived, Seiden, who was able to succeed in spite of grave misfortune,' she began. 'He lives only a hundred miles from here, too. As a boy he declared he would be a railway man, and that he would not be content to remain in a minor position. He became a locomotive fireman. His work brought him to the attention of his superiors, and they were about to make him