

BOYS AND GIRLS

Captain Cupid Haven.

(By Samuel Merwin, in the 'Youth's Companion'.)

It was after the close of 'Cupid' Haven's freshman year at the Northwestern University that the government sent on the new surf-boat, a twenty-seven-foot Beebe-McClellan self-bailer, all white and blue. There was a formal presentation, of course, at the red brick station; and the inspector stood on the porch and made a speech to the students who man the life-saving station. He mentioned the last annual report, in which the boys had been praised, recalled the time when an earlier crew had received eight congressional medals from the same porch, and talked about upholding local traditions. He also praised the new boat, gliding over its one fault. It was so broad of beam that, while practically non-capsizable, it could not, once over, be righted.

That evening the boys were on the steps. Bush, Peters, Williamson and Tommy Potts were gone; they had slipped back easily, too easily, into college history. Four sturdy youngsters lounged in the old places—Maxwell, Clark, Atwell and Baird. Clark had his banjo, and the new crowd was singing the old songs, just as they will be sung when the station shall lie crumbled beneath the flat, white sand.

Haven, No. 3, sat with his back against the bricks and looked out over the lake. The moon, big and red, was climbing over the horizon, setting off the black outlines of a tired little lumber schooner. A ribbon of crimson light wavered down the water and flapped lazily at the long, weather-blackened breakwater.

Haven was thinking. The moon worked laboriously upward, paling as it rose. Soon the porch grew lighter, and Haven drew odd diagrams on the back of an envelope. During one of the songs he slipped away and took a lantern into the boat-room; here he was fussing for an hour, climbing around the big boat, and altering his diagrams, a bit at a time.

The captain sat at his desk in the living-room, writing up his log. His seamed, brown face was twisted into a scowl. The blue eyes wavered about the room, while he chewed a stubby pencil and pulled his long, gray-streaked beard. The captain could risk his life without a thought, but writing reports was a labor of despair. Perhaps he was glad when Haven came in and laid his envelope on the log-book; at any rate, the two sat there in weighty discussion until the singers had buried their songs in dormitory pillows and the white moon looked down through the tops of the elms in the campus.

The next morning there was such a drill as never had been heard of in that life-saving district. Clad in blouses, trousers and cork jackets, the crew wheeled the new boat to the water, slid her out, and pulled out half a mile from shore. The Sheridan Road policeman hung himself over the railing and watched them lazily. Suddenly he stood erect, with popping eyes; the crew were capsizing the boat! Eight men, like dolls in the distance, were leaning out from a half-submerged gunwale. There was a splash! Specks of heads bobbed up about the round, white bottom of the boat, and then what looked like eight white turtles wriggled upon it.

The policeman rubbed his eyes and walked out upon the breakwater, where he could

sit down and swing his feet, with a kindly spile for a back rest.

Three hours later he awoke with a jump and looked up. The round, white bottom of the boat was still visible, but during the course of the morning it had drifted close to shore. The turtles had changed to haggard, panting men with blue faces, who tugged despairingly at ropes. As he looked, they threw out their weight in a last effort, and the wide hull yielded and rolled over. It drifted slowly past him, and he saw crew and captain tumbled about the boat, too weak to answer his hail. Lake water—three hours of it—has penalties of its own. That night there was more figuring about the station desk. In the morning, and for many mornings after, the new boat was rolled out to wrestle with its tamers.

In the evening, dried and poulticed, he limped off to the train, his pocket full of diagrams with which to explain the new drill to every surf crew in the district.

While dressing, he had talked long with the captain. The inspector, as the concentrated authority of a large department of the service, held ideas as to how a crew man should perform his duties. Moreover, he was interested in hearing about Haven's part in the new drill. As a result, the next boat exercise saw Haven, a sophomore, pulling stroke with a new white '1' on his coat-sleeve, while Blake and Sillsbee, juniors, sat respectively at two and three, with long faces.

It was a white Thanksgiving. There was a football game in the afternoon. The faith-



HOLD HER, BOYS! HOLD HER IF YOU PULL YOUR HEARTS OUT!

One day in July the inspector read in his newspaper that the student crew had righted a Beebe-McClellan surf-boat in twenty-eight seconds, and said sarcastic things about the veracity of newspapers; but, nevertheless he caught the first north-bound afternoon train.

The drill that followed will never be forgotten. The fat inspector, who had managed to cram himself into Atwell's biggest suit, went out in a beautiful chop sea, and was ducked and tumbled and bounced and splashed until his eyes looked homesick and his puckered mouth blew spray. There was a bump on his bald spot where a thwart had struck him when Scott and Maxwell crowded him under; and his two shins were 'barked' in long, symmetrical rows.

ful crowd stamped its feet and blew on its fingers for two hours, while eleven men in purple jerseys played havoc with eleven others in buff, although little could be seen through the whirling snow. In the evening there was to be a dinner and a reception; in the meantime, the battered players scattered to their homes for bandages and rest. Toward six o'clock Haven was lying stretched out on his bed, nursing a sadly wrenched shoulder, and at intervals grinning foolishly,—it is a pleasant thing to win games,—when Baird came in.

'Brace up, Cupid! We're due at seven.'

'I'm all right. Hope we get a good feed; I'm empty.' He swung his feet around and sat on the edge of the bed, rubbing his eyes.

'What's that?' Baird sprang up and list-