

BOYS AND GIRLS

His Worth.

I would 'na gie a copper plack
For any man wha turns his back
On duty clear;
I would 'na take his word or note
Or trust myself in any boat
That he would steer.

I would 'na gie an auld bawbee
For any man wha' ere he be
That did 'na hold
The sweetness o' his mither's name,
The justice o' his brither's claim,
The honor o' a woman's fame,
Far mair than gold.

—Selected.

Esther Hart.

(M. Elizabeth Booth, in the 'Episcopal Recorder'.)

'Dear me! It's hot enough in here to roast a turkey, and I verily believe I'm being singed myself,' groaned Nan from the depths of a sleepy-hollow chair.

'Well, I agree with you,' said Fanny; 'and the very idea of having a missionary meeting such an afternoon makes my blood boil. I hope there won't another soul stir out to-day, for as it is there isn't a quorum, and if the others do not come, we will make our way to the basement, and I'll show you, girls, that I can make an orange ice equal to our best caterer.'

'Goody!' rang out several voices; 'and I'll bring that delightful book we are reading and give you something to feast your mind upon,' said Fanny. 'I'm wild to see how that beautiful girl in the story brings Donald to her feet.'

'By the pricking of my thumbs something wicked this way comes,' said Dorothy in her most doleful tones, and with such a tragic air that the girls burst into laughter. Before it had ceased, a sharp ring at the bell called the girls to their senses and Nan to the door. She was much surprised to see Miss Simms, her Sunday School teacher, and with her a young girl about her own age.

'Good afternoon, my dear!' exclaimed Miss Simms. 'I'm glad this heat has not affected the spirits of my girls. I heard your merry laughing nearly a block away, and felt so glad you were keeping cheerful, if not cool. I want to introduce our friend, Esther Hart. Esther, this is one of my girls, Nan Wilson, and I want you to be friends. Esther is anxious to become an active worker here, as she always has been at her old home in Dover, and I am sure you will give her a welcome to your hearts as well as work. I must run on now, but I will be with you in spirit, and hope your enthusiasm will equal the hot day;' and with a cheerful 'Good-bye' Miss Simms left them.

The other girls had been behind the door during this little conversation in the hall. 'Wonder who she is? Wonder if she's pretty? Never heard of her father, did you?' 'I hope she is our equal,' remarked Fanny, when suddenly the door opened and Nan entered, followed by Esther Hart, whom she introduced in not a very genial way to the girls.

Was she pretty? No. No one had ever called her pretty; but there was something very sweet about the face, and had you gazed into the full, sad eyes, you would have read a world of earnestness and depth of nature. She had on a simple calico dress, clean and certainly becoming, and a hat, though of last year's style, was arranged to admirably suit the face beneath it. Esther was aware of the girls' critical gaze, and as she had heard Fanny's remark, her heart grew heavy; but she had prayed to be useful, and God had seemed to send her here, and He would help her. There was an awkward silence, and these girls, who could chatter like magpies about society notes, seemed speechless. Finally, Fanny remarked, 'I move we don't have any meeting, and that we send word to the other members to bring in what money they have, and then

let's form into a Literary Club. Lots more interesting!'

'Well, that may be,' said Dorothy, 'but what will become of that poor girl we started to educate?'

'Well, Dot, I am not going to consider that girl before our comfort and complexions. I look like a boiled lobster now, and I won't do another thing for the heathen while it's so hot! Look at my nose. I can see a blister coming this minute,' and Fanny rolled her eyes in the direction of her nose, making herself look so ridiculous that the girls who laughed easily this afternoon were at once in a titter; all but Esther. She sat with a very serious look in her eyes, and finally asked the nature of their work. Upon being told, she could not help the pleading words that sprang to her lips. 'Oh! girls, have you thought what it means to that girl and what an influence it would have upon her life and those about her, should all her hopes be broken and all her advantages stopped because a few girls could not give up one afternoon, or some little personal want, that they might have, to help a soul upward and onward?'

'New brooms sweep clean,' sneered Fanny. 'Perhaps Miss Hart might carry on the meetings herself.'

'O, I did not mean to be officious,' quickly broke in Esther. 'I was only thinking what step we would be likely to take if Christ were coming to our next meeting in person to receive our decision!'

The girls looked amazed and began to fidget.

'I guess the other girls are not coming, and we won't try to have a meeting,' said Nan.

Esther thought of the promise, 'Where two or three are gathered together,' but getting up quietly, bade the girls good-bye, and went home with her heart too full to speak.

'I think we are frozen without any orange ice, and for my part, I shall resign if that individual comes in,' sullenly remarked Fanny.

'Now, don't be cross,' said Dorothy. 'I think she took the right stand, and I rather like her.'

'Hurrah, girls! for the basement. I'm not frozen, if Fanny is!'

But somehow, the making of ice wasn't quite as agreeable as they had anticipated, and the girls one by one grew quiet and finally parted for their several homes.

The week rolled quickly around and the meeting day arrived. Many of the members were present, bringing their small contributions, for Fanny had sent out the notices, suggesting the 'Literary Club,' and many were eager for the new plan. Esther did not arrive, but a little boy, looking very poor but clean, with a bright, manly little face, appeared at the door and left an envelope for 'Miss Wilson.' Upon opening it, Nan was surprised to find a note from Esther, stating that sickness had detained her, and enclosed was a crisp five dollar bill. The girls were silent, nearly every one being in cool silk dresses or dainty muslins, and yet their contributions were as nothing compared with their sister who had attended in calico.

'Girls!' said Dorothy, 'I don't know how you feel, but I've not been able to get away from that question of Esther Hart's this whole week. If Christ were coming for our decision, what would it be? We treated Esther abominably last week, and we are treating Christ worse, and I, for one, am thoroughly ashamed. I move we show our penitence by going to Esther's house in a body, thank her for her subscription, and ask her pardon for our behavior. I feel that God sent her to us for our good, and we, like spoiled children, have sent the gift away, because it didn't come in just the way we wanted it.'

The girls were thoughtful for a moment, but as Dot was a leader among them, they soon were off in the direction of Esther Hart's home.

After some inquiries, they were surprised to find her in very poor quarters, but every-

thing was spotlessly clean. It was dusk, and the girls, coming quietly up to a side window, were surprised to find Esther sitting near another window with a pile of shirts by her side, and she just finishing a button-hole in the last one. The girls glanced at each other. Not one of them knew what it was to work for a living. But there she was, and near her a little bed, with the face of an old woman grown old in sorrow and care, upon the pillow. Was she sleeping? No; for just then a sweet voice was heard and Esther in a moment was at the bedside, giving comfort to the sightless, crippled woman. She came back sweetly humming to herself, 'Just as I am, O Lamb of God, I come,' and set the table for tea. Such a tea! And she to send five dollars! Could it be that tea and bread were all they had? The girls noticed, too, that the poor old grandma was the only one who had butter on her bread. Esther, seating herself once again, to wait for the little brother to come in, she mused aloud. 'I wonder what the girls did this afternoon at the meeting! Such bright, pretty girls, capable of so much. O Father, let them realize what they might do for Thee! If we might only take another girl to help along instead of giving up this one,' and Esther hid her face in her hands and prayed as the girls had never dreamed of praying, for each one of them, especially for Fanny, and then such a plea for the poor girl they had taken to help.

The girls hurriedly left the house, their hearts too full to speak, until they reached Dorothy's home, when she turned and, with tears in her eyes, beckoned the girls to follow. Reaching her own pretty room, she dropped on her knees and, amidst her tears, thanked God that there was still time to work and that Christ had given them another opportunity for a decision.

The next day Esther was strangely moved by receiving a letter, signed by each one of the girls, begging her to come among them and help them to begin all over, and earnestly asking her forgiveness for their conduct. Tears of joy rained down her face, and need I give you the results of another meeting? How much happier the girls became; how the contributions increased, so that Esther's prayer for 'helping two' was answered? How the girls grew and how the influence of their prayer meetings so changed their hearts and lives that even Fanny's mother was heard to say to her husband that a wonderful change had taken place in her life, for Fanny was now continually looking for opportunities to help instead of hinder, and Frank, who had spent most of his evenings out, was beginning to find home unusually delightful? Fanny heard it, and in a surprised way said to Dot, 'Why, we but double our helpfulness in our own homes when we reach out to other hearts and lives.'

After all, true charity, true help, while it may begin at home, can never end there.

Esther never fully knew how the change came about, and little guessed the picture of her life the girls had been permitted to see. Only God knew the sacrifice that the giving of the money and her services meant, but the girls thought they knew, and the sweet and earnest influence of one poor Christian girl won at least two souls for her Father, and brought eight capable, bright girls, who thought they were Christians, into the full knowledge and love of Christ.

Can you estimate where your influence will end if you place yourself a 'willing servant' in the Father's hand? Try it!

Giggling Girls.

If half the girls knew how silly they looked and sounded when they constantly giggled, they would stop it.

Learn to smile; not giggle.

Nothing is more infectious and charming than a good laugh; but very few people know how to laugh. It is as rare in life as it is on the stage.

A giggle usually comes from nervousness. A girl will giggle when she cannot think of anything to say or when she is trying to be at ease in company.

She will giggle when a boy meets her and