

BOYS AND GIRLS

Sadie's Conquest.

(Sara Virginia du Bois, in the 'Christian Intelligencer.')

It was a strange and mysterious looking box that the expressman left at the door that morning, addressed in a clear, distinct hand to Miss Sadie Allen, No. 4 Township Line. 'There's a quarter to pay on it, madam,' the expressman said as he handed her his official book.

'I hope it's worth a quarter,' said Sadie, laughingly, as the door closed and the family gathered about the box, wondering what it could contain.

'I'll soon show you,' said Walter, who was the family mechanic on all occasions. 'Wait till I get my tool chest, and I'll have the lid off in less than no time.'

'The box is comparatively light. I do not see why it should have been nailed so securely,' said Bess. 'Perhaps it's filled with greenbacks, Sadie, or railway bonds.'

'My hopes are not soaring very high,' answered Sadie, although her looks certainly did belie her words.

'Well, here it is, Sis,' said Walter a moment later, 'and there's a letter; if I'm not mistaken it's Aunt Jane's crabbed handwriting.'

'Oh, Walter, hush!' said Mrs. Allen, sternly, 'I do not want you to forget that however forbidding Aunt Jane may seem to you, yet still she is your father's eldest sister, and was once young like yourself.'

'She forgets it now,' laughed Walter. 'But what does she have to say, Sadie?' They gathered about her eagerly as she read:

'My dear Sadie:—I happened to remember that to-morrow is your birthday, and send you a little gift upon conditions. I remember you were not particularly industrious when I visited your home last winter, and spent most of your time over books, some of which I did not approve. The hands need to be trained as well as the intellect developed. This great ball of yarn I want you to work up into a winter shawl for my own use, and when it is finished I shall reward you as I see fit. As I am very susceptible to climatic changes, I shall want the shawl finished by September. With regards,

'Your Aunt Jane.'

Walter laughed and whistled almost in one breath, and Bess's face was full of suppressed mirth as she took the great ball in her hands.

'If it were only a prettier shade of yarn,' said Sadie. 'What color would you call it, mother?'

'Drab, I think,' she said smiling, 'although I am not sure, I never saw anything like it before.'

'It makes me think of the near approach of a funeral,' said Walter. 'Say, Sis, are you going to work it up?'

Sadie looked at her mother and then at the great ball of yarn. 'It is the first time I ever remember Aunt Jane making a request of me, and I dare not refuse her even if I would.' Then meeting her mother's eyes, she hastily added: 'Do not misunderstand me, little mother, I mean that every stitch shall be woven with love and good wishes.'

'But I thought you wanted all your spare

time this summer to prepare for college,' said Bess. Sadie weighed the ball carefully in her hands before she answered: 'Well, yes, I did; but then it is doubtful if I can go, father may not be able to send me.'

'I do not see why she need impose this task on Sadie,' said Walter.

It was Sadie that answered now, and as she did so there was a new light in her eyes as she spoke. 'Father was speaking to me about Aunt Jane only last evening,' she said. 'You know how tenderly they love each other. He told me that she was not always as she is now, a great sorrow came into her life, and instead of living above it, she yielded to its depressing influence.'

'Then for the sake of old times, do it,' said Walter, as he put away his tools and gathered up his cap.

It was surprising how slowly the ball lessened in size, but Sadie did not despair, and worked at her task with such pluck that mother often gave her a loving kiss and father a smile of approval. One day father gathered up the ball from the corner where it had rolled, and where Carratunk, the beautiful little angora kitten, had been playing a merry game with it. 'Getting near the end, dear; can you finish it to-day?' 'I shall finish it this evening, and to-morrow when you go into town, you will please deliver it for me.'

At ten o'clock that evening, as they were gathered about the library lamp, Sadie gave an exclamation which caused them all to turn in her direction.

'It's finished,' she said, 'and here at the very heart of the ball is another letter from Aunt Jane.'

'Let's hear it,' said Walter, folding his hands and smiling grimly. 'There's nothing like one of Aunt Jane's letters to cheer one up.'

'My dear Sadie: Open this little envelope, it contains your reward.'

'It's a lock of her hair, I know,' said Bess.

'Hush, children,' said father. 'Wait until she sees.' Sadie gasped, then held out toward her father a tiny slip of paper.

'It's a check for a thousand dollars,' said father, 'to defray college expenses. My dear sister, may God bless her.'

Sadie's voice was beyond control, but tears of joy were falling upon the shawl.

'How can I ever thank her,' she finally said.

'I am glad,' said father, 'that this labor was one of love and not of duty alone. If we would only show thought and tenderness for the eccentricities of others, we would often find that however much they may differ from us, they usually have a warm side to their natures.'

A Bagster Bible Free.

Send four new subscriptions to the 'Northern Messenger' at thirty cents each for one year, and receive a nice Bagster Bible, bound in black pebbled cloth with red edges, suitable for Sabbath or Day School. Postage extra for Montreal and suburbs or foreign countries, except United States and its dependencies; also Great Britain and Ireland, Transvaal, Bermuda, Barbadoes, British Honduras, Ceylon, Gambia, Sarawak, Bahama Islands and Zanzibar. No extra charge for postage in the countries named.

The Walnut Tree That Wanted to Bear Tulips.

(Sarah E. Wiltse.)

Many years ago, when your grandmamma's grandmamma was a little girl, there stood a tall, young Walnut-Tree in the backyard of a tulip-dealer.

Now the Walnut thought he had never seen anything so beautiful as the little Tulips that were set out in the yard to be kissed by the Sun, who each day paid a visit of an hour to the Walnut.

The wonder is that the Sun did not stay longer to watch the pretty shadow-pictures which the Walnut began to make on the grass as soon as the Sun said 'Good morning.'

Another wonder is that the Walnut ever thought of looking down at the dear little Tulips, when he might have looked up at the greater Sun. But he did, and you and I will never know the why of a great many things, smaller even than that, until we go up higher, to be taught by the dear Friend who knows everything.

However, the Tulips were very lovely, I assure you, with their scarlet and golden cups.

One day a wonderful sister Tulip was brought out. What color was she, do you suppose?

'Crimson?'

'No.'

'Purple?'

'No.'

I am sure you will not be able to guess, so I will tell you.

She was black, and she was softer than velvet, and more glossy than satin.

When the Walnut saw this beautiful Tulip, every little leaf danced in the air for joy, and every little branch bent low. You've seen the trees bending to kiss the children and the flowers, that way, I am sure.

The Walnut did something else, which I will tell you, if you will promise not to tell the Hickory or the Chestnut. He dropped a little leaf at the Tulip's feet, which was written all over with a wonderful language that nobody but trees and flowers, birds and bees, and perhaps Mr. Tennyson or Mr. Kingsley, could read.

The Tulip did not seem to care for the little leaf or the letter written on it; and we cannot tell whether she sent an answer back to the Walnut or not. Be that as it may, the Walnut was not quite so happy after he sent the letter, but he began growing better.

And do you not think it wiser in our best Friend to make us good instead of happy, sometimes?

The Walnut used to say after this happened, 'I'll bear Tulips myself.'

How would a Walnut-Tree look with Tulips among its leaves?

You think that could never, never happen? We shall see.

Walnut struck its roots deeper, and spread its branches broader and broader, until he was quite wonderful to look upon. Sometimes the Wind used to hear