

gymnasium ticket, Rob?" asked Mrs. Boyse with a bright smile as she helped him gather up his schoolbooks on the opening day.

"Well, I guess so!" he exclaimed heartily. "And it didn't cost four dollars either, did it?"

"No. Do you notice how sturdy Alden has grown during the summer? He looks like a different boy."

"Sure enough! And Dollard and I have got biceps like a blacksmith's. Just feel that! I tell you, mother, it's funny that every boy doesn't get up a gym of his own. Don't you think so?"—"The American Boy."

### Master of Himself.

That was a unique way in which Mr. Smith, a merchant of an Eastern city, in want of a boy, is said to have tested the young applicants who came to him. He put a sign in the window: "Wanted, a Boy; Wages, \$4; \$6 to the Right One."

As each applicant appeared, the merchant asked, "Can you read?" Then he took the boy into a quiet room, gave him an open book, and bade him read without a break until told to stop.

When the reading had been going on for a few minutes, Mr. Smith dropped a book to the floor and then rose and moved certain articles about the room. This was sufficient to pique the curiosity of some of the candidates. They looked up, lost their place on the page, blundered, and the merchant said:

"You may stop. I shall not need you at present. I want a boy who is master of himself."

If the reader was undisturbed by Mr. Smith's movements, a lot of roguish puppies were tumbled out of a basket and encouraged to frolic about the floor. This proved too much for most of the boys. They looked, hesitated, and were dismissed.

Boy after boy underwent the same treatment until over thirty had been tried and had failed to control their curiosity. At length, one morning, a boy read steadily on without manifesting any desire to look at the puppies.

"Stop!" said the merchant finally, "Did you see those puppies?"

"No, sir," replied the boy. "I could not see them and read, too."

"You knew they were there?"

"Yes, sir."

"All right. I think you will suit me," said the merchant. "Come to-morrow. Your wages will start at \$4, and if you prove master of yourself, as I think you will, you shall have \$6, perhaps more."

It was not many weeks before the wages were \$6, and promotions followed. Now the young man fills a high position in the store.—"Youth's Companion."

### Expiring Subscriptions.

Would each subscriber kindly look at the address tag on this paper? If the date thereon is Sept., 1902, it is time that the renewals were sent in so as to avoid losing a single copy. As renewals always date from the expiry of the old subscriptions, subscribers lose nothing by remitting a little in advance.

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### John's Mother.

(By Minna Stanwood, in "Wellspring.")

"Phillis! Phillis!" called out the girl who was sitting at the little table on the piazza, surrounded by half a dozen young men, "I've shown the boys all the pictures we took on the Vermont trip, and they have pronounced them all good, every one of them. They didn't dare to do anything else, and, besides, they couldn't and be truthful. Now Will Carberry is begging to see the picture of "John's Mother." He says he wants to see if it looks like her."

The tall, clean-shaven young man with brown hair turned quickly to the girl in the hammock, who was listening contentedly to the talk of her brother's friends about their Adirondack camping trip. She looked up in surprise.

"And pray, how would Will Carberry know whether it looked like "John's Mother" or not?" she demanded. Then she laughed, good-naturedly. "Oh, that's just one of Bee's jokes, of course. But if you really care to see it, Will, I'll show it to you. It's in my portfolio in the sitting-room."

"You see," explained Phillis, as she walked into the house with Will Carberry, "I didn't put it in with the other pictures because I had a kind of a queer feeling about that one after I had snapped it. I felt that I had no right to it, really, because it seemed to tell so much of the woman's heart. It has been sort of a sacred picture to me, and I couldn't put it out for everybody to handle and joke about. I suppose you think that's queer, don't you?"

The girl looked up rather shyly, but the young man was not smiling. Indeed, he looked very sober, and his tone was quite grave, although he spoke gallantly. "I know Miss Phillis Rand well enough to believe that every feeling she has does her honor. I'm sure I consider it a special mark of esteem that you are willing to show it to me."

"Oh, well," said Phillis, laughing herself now, to see how anxious he was to sustain her position, "I couldn't very well refuse without seeming outrageously rude when Bee screamed the request out as she did. You see," she went on, untying her portfolio, "Bee and I were wheeling it down from Randolph to West Randolph, and we stopped to rest under a big elm, about two miles out of West Randolph. Just across the road from where we sat was the loveliest white house with green blinds and a wide piazza going clear round the house. There was the very dearest front yard just full of old-fashioned flowers. In spite of the flowers, though, the place had a sort of lonely look, and I was wondering if anybody really lived there, when at the side of the house I spied an old, white-haired gentleman sitting under one of the trees, with a book in his hand. He wasn't reading, though; he was asleep."

"Of course, as is my custom, I fell to speculating at once upon who lived in that house, and I decided that the old gentleman must be a grandfather, and that the grandchildren had not come yet to spend their vacation, or else I should hear them screaming and squabbling and tumbling out of the big white barn. But I concluded that they were expected, and that grandmother and the maiden aunt were in the house getting ready for John and his family to come home. And what do you think? Pretty soon there was a whistle. It was the five-fifteen express."

Then, actually, grandmother hurried out of the front door and stood on the tip edge of the piazza and put one hand over her eyes, like that, to keep out the sun, and watched until the train switched away off through the trees at the right. You could just see it. She watched the tail of smoke until that faded away. Then she looked down the road in the direction of the station. She stood there forty-five minutes by my watch, the poor grandmother, and then she went into the house. John hadn't come. She looked so dejected and forlorn as she turned to go in that I wanted to call out, "Grandmother dear, O grandmother! John will come to-morrow afternoon; I just know he will!" But I didn't, of course. And the old gentleman never stirred and the maiden aunt never peeped. Just the dear mother."

Phillis stopped speaking, but Will Carberry offered no observation. He was looking intently at the picture in his hand apparently absorbed.

"She had beautiful, fluffy, white hair, parted as you see," Phillis resumed, hoping that this alert young business man did not think her horribly sentimental. "And she had on a lilac gown and a white lace kerchief. And now that you've seen "John's Mother" you may tell me, please, if you think it looks like her. Bee said that was your desire—to see if it looked like her."

Phillis filled her voice with merry sarcasm, but apparently it was all lost on Will Carberry. He continued to gaze at the little picture. At last he spoke. "It does look like her. It is the image of her." His voice was unsteady, and the eyes that met Phillis's were full of tears.

"O Mr. Carberry! Do you know her? Really?"

"I ought to. She's my mother," t

"But—oh—I hope you didn't think I knew it!" Phillis was abashed, confused, feeling that she must have stumbled on a tragedy of some sort.

"Oh, don't feel bad about it, Miss Phillis," spoke Will, earnestly. "There is nothing wrong, really. That is, I can fix everything up. But, you know, things sort of came over me. When Miss Bee spoke about that picture I had a curious presentiment that it must be my mother. But it was odd that you should have called her "John's Mother."

"Why, no, I think not," answered Phillis, responding quickly to Will's returning cheerfulness, and greatly relieved that there was no tragedy after all. "You see, I know boys by every name in the list except "John." So I decided that her son must be John. What's odd about that?"

"Nothing, except that although my name is William John, mother always called me John. Everybody else calls me Will, including father. Her father's name was John and father's father's name was William."

"I see," laughed Phillis. "She has a spice of human nature in her if she does look like a saint."

"She is a saint," declared Will Carberry, with conviction. "A blessed saint. She writes me the best and cheeriest letters, and I try to write to her every Sunday, but sometimes I let it slip. I suppose it is a great disappointment to her when I don't write. But truly, Miss Phillis, I did not realize how lonely and sombre her life must be until I looked at that picture—through your eyes."

"My father is dozing a good deal lately,