

# BOYS AND GIRLS

## Good Resolutions.

- I will be neat.
  - I will do honest work.
  - I will be master of myself.
  - I will keep my mind clear.
  - I will learn to love good books.
  - I will be punctual in all things.
  - I will never spend more than I earn.
  - I will not acquire another bad habit.
  - I will not let my temper control me.
  - I will know well some honest business.
  - I will be agreeable and companionable.
  - I will not become habitually suspicious.
  - I will be cheerful and enjoy harmless fun.
  - I will read my Bible and pray every day.
  - I will do 'right though the heavens fall.'
  - I will not write a letter when I am angry.
  - I will not overrate nor undervalue myself.
  - I will not be a whining, fault-finding pessimist.
  - I will neither work nor play half-heartedly.
  - I will be courteous to old people and to women.
  - I will deserve confidence whether I get it or not.
  - I will not meddle with what does not concern me.
  - I will be an avowed servant of the Lord Jesus Christ.
  - I will keep my eyes, ears and heart open to good.
  - I will never let another person lead me to act like a fool.
  - I will not break an engagement nor a promise if I can keep it.
  - I will not engage in any questionable amusement or employment.
  - I will exert myself in all honorable ways to make and keep friends.
  - I will, when I undertake a thing, be sure I'm right and then stick to it.
  - I will not waste the next ten years, the most important of my whole life.
  - I will keep myself physically clean, mentally alert, morally pure and spiritually alive.
- The 'Cumberland Presbyterian.'

## When Suzette Kept House.

(By Carroll Watson Rankin, in the  
'Wellspring'.)

'Anybody'd think,' said Suzette, examining a dusty forefinger, 'that, with two women in the house, this bookcase would get dusted at least once a week. There'll not be any dust in my house when I have one.'

'You'd better buy a glass case right now, and stay in it,' retorted Alice, Suzette's eleven-year-old sister, who was cutting out paper dolls on the hearth rug and making a multitude of scraps. 'Why don't you dust a little yourself, if you're so particular?'

'It isn't my nouse,' returned Suzette, loftily, 'but when I do have a house it shall be dusted from top to bottom, whether I keep a servant or not. I can't see how mother and Jane manage to keep so busy.'

Suzette was the eldest of four, but the heaviest household responsibility that had ever rested on her sixteen-year-old shoulders was the daily making of her own bed. Every Wednesday morning, Jane, who had lived with the family for seven years, patiently hung up the garments that Suzette left about on the chairs all the other days of the week. It never occurred to Suzette that there was anything she could do to lighten either her mother's or Jane's burdens. Indeed, all the little Brandons were careless, and Suzette, being the eldest, was, perhaps, the worst of the lot.

Mr. Brandon's business—he was a railroad man—often took him out of town for several days at a time; but he seldom knew beforehand when or where he was going. Once or twice a year he was able to persuade Mrs. Brandon to forsake her numerous duties and go with him. On these rare occasions, faithful Jane looked after the family, and she did it so well that Mrs. Brandon had unlimited confidence in her.

One Friday morning, at half-past nine, Mr. Brandon rang up his house and invited his wife, by telephone, to go for a short journey with him. An hour later, Mrs. Brandon, smiling happily at having accomplished so much in so short a time, was on the train.

She would not have felt so serene, however, had she known the errand of a perspiring boy, who was at that moment pounding lustily upon the back door of her house.

Jane responded promptly to the knock. 'Does Jane McCarthy live here,' asked the boy, breathlessly.

'I'm her,' said Jane, wiping her hands on her apron and waiting expectantly. 'What's wanted?'

'Your mother's terrible sick—dyin', I guess—and wants you right off,' said the boy, darting away the moment he had delivered the message.

'Wait!' cried Jane, but the boy was already beyond the reach of her voice. Jane looked at the clock; it was half-past ten.

'If I hurry,' said Jane, with the best of intentions, 'I'll be back in time to get lunch for the children. Oh, it's all of a fluster I am!'

At noon, Suzette, with the life of Daniel Webster under one arm and her algebra under the other, strolled leisurely into the house and sat down to work at her lessons.

'Say,' said Alice, who had reached home first, 'there's a note for you on the mantel-piece. It's from mother. I guess she's gone some place.'

'Yes,' said Suzette, reading the note, 'she's gone with father, and she doesn't know where she's going nor when she'll return, but she'll find out from father and telephone to Jane from the station. She says you're to be good while she's gone.'

'What about you?' asked Alice. 'Oh, I'm always good,' said Suzette, who was conscious of no shortcomings.

Fifteen minutes later, Suzette's fifteen-year-old brother Philip appeared at the library door. 'Say,' he asked, 'what's the matter with luncheon? I can't find Jane any place, and the table isn't set. I must get back to school.'

'Can't find Jane!' exclaimed Suzette. 'Why, she must be in the kitchen. She's always there.'

'Well, she isn't there now,' said Philip, 'and the fire's out, too. You'd better hurry round and find something for us to eat.'

'Yes,' said Alice, looking saucily up from her paper dolls, 'here's your long-looked-for chance to keep house. Most likely Jane has lost another grandparent and has gone off to bury him or her. It took three days last time. My! I expect we'll have high living for once in our lives.'

'Jane wouldn't stay away three days with mother gone,' said Suzette. 'Come on, you'll have to help. I can't do everything alone, and Bessie's too little to do anything.'

'Oh, no, I'll not,' said Alice, her eyes dancing with mischief; 'I'll be your oldest daughter and hunt round for dust.'

There was milk in the ice-box, bread in the bread-box, and cake in the cupboard, so the young Brandons were in no immediate danger of starvation. They ate what they could find and rushed off to school, leaving the ashes for Jane to wash when she should return.

But Jane did not return. In her stead, the perspiring boy, who appeared to positively enjoy disseminating bad news, again presented himself at the Brandons' back door, this time with a note for Suzette.

Dear Miss Suzette (it read): My mother is awful bad with ammony on her lungs, and brown kites two. I'm awful sorry but she being the only mother I've got the doctor sees shell dy if I dont take care of her nite and day. Your mother has wentt to Minny Aples and will bee back Mundy. Rice oatmeal potatoes and eggs is easy to boyle respeckfully, Jane McCarty.

With mingled feelings, Suzette read the note. While it was not pleasant to find herself the cook as well as the housekeeper, she had always longed for the responsibilities of a house and family. She was sure she should have no trouble, for she had often planned just how she should go about it. Ever since she had taken a course of six lessons in domestic science, she had felt that her mother's methods were antiquated, and she welcomed an opportunity to carry her housekeeping theories into practice. Her mother, she knew, would be delighted to find upon her return

that the house was, for once, in perfect order. The note came at four o'clock. Suzette laid Daniel Webster aside and immediately began to dust. She altered the arrangements of the parlor furniture, rehung two of the pictures and changed the books about in the bookcase. Then she took possession of the kitchen.

'I guess I'll not get a regular dinner,' said Suzette, when the fire was burning nicely. 'What was it Jane said was easy to cook? Oh, yes, rice. I think I'll cook all there is in the bag; perhaps there'll be enough left for breakfast.'

'There,' said the cook, pouring the rice, without any preliminary washing, into a small saucepan containing water; 'I'll get Alice to set the table.'

Alice, however, was not to be found, so Suzette herself attended to the table. When she returned to the kitchen, the swelling rice had reached the top of the saucepan, and was demanding more room. The model housekeeper found a larger kettle and dumped the rice into it, adding more water.

'I'll straighten up the sitting room next,' said Suzette, hanging up her own jacket and hat, which she had carelessly dropped on a convenient chair. 'My, how untidy those children are! Doesn't anybody in this house ever return a book to the bookcase? Here are Alice's rubbers right here in the middle of the floor—hum, I guess they're my own, after all; but here are hers, under the sofa.'

'Is dinner ready?' asked Philip, bouncing in at six o'clock. 'I'm hungry.'

'We're going to have just a lunch, to-night,' said Suzette, going to the kitchen. 'Just rice with sugar and cream on it. Goodness, Philip, come out here and help me lift this kettle. Where shall I put all this rice? Who'd ever suppose rice would swell up like this?'

'Here,' said Philip, taking the bread pan from its hook, 'put your stuff in this. Do you intend to keep us on rice for the rest of our natural lives?'

'I didn't intend to, but I'm afraid I put in too much. How was I to know the horrid stuff would behave so? I never cooked any before.'

'It doesn't look,' said Philip, with an unsympathetic grin, 'as if you'd ever need to cook any again; but bring on your rice, if you think you can spare any. I'm hungry.'

'Is this all there is to eat?' asked Alice, who had turned up just at dinner time. 'It's a wonder you wouldn't put a little salt in the things you cook.'

'Salt!' exclaimed Suzette. 'Do they put salt in rice?'

When Suzette awoke the next morning she did not at once remember that the cares of a family were resting upon her shoulders; but when she heard her brother stirring in the next room, she sat up hastily and reached for her clothes.

'I guess I'll not have a regular breakfast this morning,' decided she. 'I'll just warm up some of that rice.'

Indeed, Suzette continued to 'guess' that she wouldn't have a regular luncheon or a regular dinner, or a regular breakfast for the next two days. Between the lavishness of her supply of rice and the children's natural antipathy to that useful cereal, the result of her first cooking seemed destined to last all summer. She made rice croquettes, rice puddings, rice soup, and rice pancakes; but disguise it as she might, the children never failed to recognize the detested vegetable, and at last they rebelled openly.

'I'm no Chinaman,' said Philip, pushing back his plate on Monday, 'and no matter how you fix it I'll not eat another grain of that horrible rice. Give me the rest of it and I'll feed it to Billy Northrop's bear. Billy says he'll eat anything.'

Mrs. Brandon did not return on Monday. Instead, she sent a telegram stating that she should not be home until the following Saturday. The children had paid a visit to Jane, imploring her to return; but she had turned a deaf ear to all their entreaties. She was up with her only mother's 'ammony' day and night, she said, and was 'awful sorry,' but it couldn't be helped. Alice, true to her character of eldest daughter, was never around when there was any work to be done;