



JIMMIE AND JOE.

BY HATTIE LUMMIS.

"Isn't it pretty?"
 "Lovely! And it's so hard to decorate a church tastefully. I think Kitty's a regular artist."

"It does look nice," admitted Kitty, with a flush of gratified pride. She was the new chairman of the flower committee, and had set her heart on making a conspicuous success of the church decorations for this first concert. A pleased smile still lingered about her lips as she went to the back of the church, and from that post of observation surveyed the works of her hands, with her head on one side, like a meditative robin.

"Say, ma'am," said a voice at her side. Kitty turned and met the black eyes of a little boy, whose thin, expressive face she vaguely remembered having noticed in the Sunday-school. He held in his arms a tin can, containing an unthrifty, struggling geranium, its ungainliness crowned by a single blossom of faded pink. "Say, ma'am," repeated the boy, smiling shyly into Kitty's face, "I've brought you Jimmie."

"O, indeed," said Kitty, naturally looking about for a smaller child, whereupon the boy, perceiving her mistake, held out his plant, and with an air of making a formal introduction, announced, "This is Jimmie."

Kitty smiled in spite of herself. "That is Jimmie, is it? And who are you, please?"

"Me? O, I'm Joe," answered the boy, carelessly. "You see," he went on, lowering his voice, "the other Jimmie, that was my brother, died, and this one's named after him. See, he's got a blossom. I brought him for you to decorate with."

"Indeed!" said Kitty again. "Well, take it up front, and I'll see what I can do with it. O dear!" she added, as Joe promptly obeyed, "I didn't want any potted plants this time. They always look so stiff."

"Of course you needn't use it," said another of the girls, with sympathetic interest.

"Well, we'll see," said Kitty, uneasily. "Come, girls," she continued, rousing herself. "We mustn't stand and talk any longer, or we'll never get through."

The concert next evening proved decided success, and the church decorations won even more approval. Kitty, as chairman of the flower committee, received many congratulations; but in the midst of her triumph a melancholy voice fell on her ear,—"Please, I don't see Jimmie anywhere."

"I'm afraid Jimmie was forgotten," said Kitty, with some embarrassment. "Look in the little back room, and I guess you'll find him there."

"Who is Jimmie, pray?" asked one of the gentlemen, curiously; and Kitty explained, wondering, as she did so, that she had not

noticed before how quaint and pathetic a story it really was. The young man beside her listened attentively. "Hath cast in more than they all," he said under his breath when she had finished.

Kitty flushed vividly. "Mr. Marshall, I know you think that I should have put that ugly geranium in front, and have spoiled everything."

"You don't admire my artistic taste, do you?" said the young man, smiling. "Why do you imagine that, Miss Kitty?"

"Because, well, because I wish myself that I'd used it," said Kitty, candidly.

She turned with an impulsive movement, and hurried after Joe. At the door of the anteroom she found him, leaning against the wall, and crying bitterly.

"They've killed him, ma'am," he sobbed. And, indeed, in the hurry and confusion the geranium had been overturned, and was broken off at the roots.

"Never mind. I'll get another flower for you," said Kitty, trying to soothe him, "something prettier."

Joe shook his head, uncomfited. "Another flower wouldn't be Jimmie. I loved Jimmie."

Kitty considered a moment. "See here, Joe. I think I can take a slip off this geranium that will grow nicely. And if it does, I will put it in a pretty red pot, and it will be Jimmie, just the same. Won't that be all right?"

"Yes'm," said Joe, smiling through his tears. "And do you s'pose it will really grow?"

"I'm sure of it," answered Kitty, heartily. "You may come to my house next week, and see how he's getting along." She picked up the broken geranium, and smiled a good-bye after Joe, who went away, wiping his eyes on his sleeve, and looking quite happy again.

In his new quarters Jimmie flourished amazingly. Joe made his appearance several times during the next few days, to inquire concerning his friend's welfare, and to remark approvingly that he seemed to be "enjoying himself first rate." Then several weeks passed, and though Jimmie was promoted to the dignity of a red flower-pot, and was given a position in the front parlor window, no Joe appeared to rejoice in his success.

"I see Jimmie is in blossom," said Kitty's sister Maud one morning at breakfast. "Wonder why your other protege doesn't make his appearance. Can he have forgotten his flower?"

"I hope he isn't sick," said Kitty, thoughtfully. "I must look him up, I guess." But in some unaccountable way the days slipped by, and she heard nothing of Joe, till one morning Nora made her appearance, announcing a woman at the door, who wanted to see Miss Kitty.

Kitty hurried into the hall. The thin, sallow woman at the door lifted a pair of black eyes that at once betrayed her rela-

tionship to Joe. "Excuse me, Miss," she said in evident embarrassment; "but my boy says you've got a plant you're keeping for him, and he's taken a notion he wants to see it. He's sick, and of all children to take ideas I never saw his beat."

"Is Joe sick?" asked Kitty, with ready sympathy. "I'm so sorry."

The woman turned away her head. "He's going like his brother," she said in a stifled voice. "He won't never be any better."

Kitty leaned forward, and took the work-worn hands in hers. "Come into the house and rest a little," she said. "I should like to go back with you."

Joe was lying in his little bed, his sunken eyes looking blacker and more brilliant than ever. He noticed Kitty without surprise, but at the sight of the geranium in her arms his face suddenly grew expressive. "Is that Jimmie?" he asked feebly.

Kitty smiled assent. "Yes, this is Jimmie. Hasn't he grown large and handsome?"

Joe nodded. "I s'pose," he went on, musingly, "that when people think we're dead, God only just puts us in a better flower-pot, and makes us grow and blossom so they'd hardly know us."

"O dear," said his mother, beginning to cry. "Did anybody ever hear such ideas?"

Joe stroked the green leaves thoughtfully, then raised his face to Kitty with a look of appeal. "Say," he whispered, "don't you think Jimmie's 'most pretty enough now to put in the church?"

"I'll put him in the church next Sunday, if you like," said Kitty, in a voice she vainly tried to render steady.

Joe smiled. There was a faint flush on his pale cheek.

"I mustn't tire you now, dear," she said, stooping to kiss him. "But I'll come again and see you to-morrow."

She came again in the morning with a basket of choice flowers. But upstairs, in his bed, little Joe lay very still, and in the white hands folded on his breast was a single cluster of pink geranium.—*Golden Rule.*

TRAIN THE SMILING MUSCLES.

The story of Nanny Falconer's experiences as told by Mrs. Clara Doty Bates in the July *Wide Awake* is an instructive lesson not only to young people but to many of the little girl's elders who have fallen into her bad habit of frowning. Though she had the advantage of beginning early to train the right muscles, much can be done in later years, by continual and conscientious effort, to remove these traces of worry and irritability which so disfigure the face. Here is the latter half of the story:

Her mother took Nanny's hand and led her to the mirror.

"Look in there, my child. What do you see?"

"I see your lovely face," sobbed Nanny.

"First, dry your eyes. Now look at yourself. That is not an ugly face, even when it is wet with tears. Those lines are full of sweet temper. The laughing muscles are strong and flexible—you see they make dimples," as Nanny half smiled. "They like smiling best of anything. The shadow of crossness is all a bad habit. It is quite a new one too, Nanny, not settled and hopeless. . . . Here," pointing between the brows, "is the trouble. You use these muscles too much. You will soon have a mark there that will stay, I'm afraid."

"Yes, Don says it will surely freeze the first cold morning."

"Don't listen to the boys. Listen to me. We can make our faces, like our manners, largely what we like, as we can be rude and abrupt, or gentle and considerate, so we can be dark and forbidding in countenance, or open, fair and sweet. Keep the right face muscles in training and the mood will be pretty certain to follow their action."

Nan laughed merrily. "What do I know about muscles, Mamma? You are so scientific."

"What you do not know you can learn. A docile spirit need never show a sour face."

"Please tell me how. Often when Don and Rick call me cross, I don't feel so. I may be only thinking."

"Sit down. It has seemed to me that if

you would think to a little better purpose you might avoid being found so much fault with—as you call it."

"But isn't thinking of one's self vanity?"

"Not if you think with the hope of making yourself more lovable to those about you. To study to be pleasing is not vanity."

"But when I haven't thought of feeling hateful, why do I look so?"

"Because you are not on your guard. I have myself often got an unconscious look at myself in the glass and have seen looks of worry when I wasn't ill. Ah, these muscles you know so little about, Nanny—they are very ready tale-tellers."

"They are story-tellers, you mean. They tell what isn't so."

"They get into bad ways. And if you do not want them to make mischief you must educate them."

"But I might study physiology a year and yet look cross all the time."

"So you might if you didn't take the trouble to rule your face from within."

Nanny discerned her meaning. "I should be like an idiot if I always laughed," she said.

"Don't be perverse, daughter. You know very well what I mean. Try this rule for a week, and see what the result will be: Whenever you feel irritable, even in a slight degree, go to the glass and straighten every drawn line into repose. You need not laugh, nor even smile, but relax the tension of the worry and see to it that there is not one visible trace of it left. By that time your fret will have vanished."

Nanny tried the rule, with varying success, but with a general result of good. While she did it she never had reason to complain that people called her cross.

In later years Nanny Falconer had a famous face. "You never have any trouble," some one said to her, even when she was passing through bitter waters, "you always look glad."

An old negro describing her called her, "The lady with the glory-to-God face." And everywhere she went the sunshine of happy looks was shed broadcast about her.

She herself told me this story, of how she came to realize that a pleasant countenance is largely a matter of will, and that worried looks, and cross and sad looks, are things of habit which can be educated away.

SIX RULES FOR BOYS.

This letter from Henry Ward Beecher to his son is declared, says a special to the *New York Tribune*, on good authority, never to have been published. It is reminiscent of the worldly good sense of the advice given to Laertes by Polonius, but it is also permeated by the leaven of Christian experience. The precepts in it are those which, if followed, would produce a good man as well as a gentleman:—

You are now for the first time really launched into life for yourself. You go from your father's house and from all family connections, to make your own way in the world. It is a good time to make a new start, to cast out faults of whose evil you have had an experience, and to take on habits the want of which you have found to be so damaging.

1. You must not go into debt. Avoid debt as you would the devil. Make it a fundamental rule: No debt! Cash or nothing.

2. Make few promises. Religiously observe even the smallest promise. A man who means to keep his promises cannot afford to make many.

3. Be scrupulously careful in all your statements. Accuracy and perfect frankness, no guess-work. Either nothing or accurate truth.

4. When working for others sink yourself out of sight; seek their interest. Make yourself necessary to those who employ you by industry, fidelity and scrupulous integrity. Selfishness is fatal.

5. Hold yourself responsible for a higher standard than anybody expects of you. Demand more of yourself than anybody else expects of you. Keep your personal standard high. Never excuse yourself to yourself. Never pity yourself. Be a hard master to yourself, but lenient to everybody else.

6. Concentrate your force on your own proper business; do not turn off. Be consistent, steadfast, persevering.