

MY LITTLE MATCH-GIRL.

"Matches, sir? Buy my matches, sir? Only a penny a box, sir!"

There she stood in the same place every day on the south side of London Bridge. Her little brother stood by her side, as usual, with a few tiny bunches of violets.

I bought a bunch, for I, an artist, am fond of flowers. I bought the matches, too, though I don't smoke.

She looked thinner than ever that morning, and I couldn't help wondering if she had any breakfast. Just at hand was a hot potato stand. I bought a few, and returning, pushed them into her hand.

All that day I thought about her. How the tears rushed to her eyes as she took the hot potatoes! The boy had evidently had his breakfast.

"Yes, I's father an' mother to him," she had said one day in answer to a question. "An we gets along werry well, sir, w'en the weather's fine, sir. But w'en it rains, sir, an' its cold, sir, then gentlemen won't stop to buy my matches, sir, an' the ladies has to look after their skirts an' the mud an' their umberels, instead o' buyin' posies, sir."

And this was one of those days, dreary and drizzling. I worked hard until the light grew dim and I could not trust my colours. And then I took to dreaming, until I remembered that I had nothing for tea or supper. For I boarded myself, except for dinners, which I took in one of the eating houses near the London Bridge Station (when I could afford them), and that's how I came to pass my little match girl so often. So I started off for bread and cheese, and this took me to the Southwark side again.

There they were still, the boy clinging to his sister, partly shielded by her cloak, she with the veritable two match boxes which were left her after I had taken one in the morning.

I called at the cooked-meat shop and bought a slice of cold roast beef, I got my bread and cheese, and then, taking a few piping hot potatoes, and then—why, then, I was so near, and they looked such miserable, water-soaked rats, that I just stopped and offered them a penny each if they would carry my parcels home for me.

It looked mean, but it was all a dodge to get them to come with me, for London arabs are so afraid of being delivered up to the "Bobby" or to some institution where they will be deprived of their liberty that they would rather starve than run a risk.

Well, we arrived at the house, and I was too weak to carry my parcels upstairs, so those water-witches had to follow. And then I threw open my door and those two just said "Oh!" and dropped my parcels. I must own the room did look pretty as a picture after the dark, dreary, oaken staircase, and the gloomy drizzle outside.

A bright fire throwing out blue and yellow flames lit all the room, bringing into relief my pictures and bronzes (imitations, the bronzes) and plaster casts. Then, too, red draperies will warm up a room so.

"Oh!" said the children. The girl's eyes were shining at the pictures, but the boy was looking at the fire, seeing which, I drew him to it, bidding him dry himself.

"But we mus' go," said the girl, timidly. Nevertheless, she, too, was presently beginning to steam.

An old box served for a table, and

what a supper those children did eat! "It's like heaven," said the girl at last, very softly.

"What!" said I, startled.

"This—this room—these pictures—and these—" And here she laid her head back against the red curtains. I jumped to my feet.

"Don't move!" I exclaimed, "not a hair's breadth!" Already I was beginning to dash in the colours.

What a picture the child did make! That clear, olive skin, those shining black eyes, the mass of black hair dropping over her shoulders, that long, brown hand so delicately shaped! What a vision! How I worked! This should be my Academy picture! Down on her feet I threw her tray with two forlorn little boxes on it.

Fairly the beads of perspiration stood on my forehead and rolled down my cheeks. I dashed them away and worked on. How patiently she sat there, though I knew she must be getting cramped.

"You must come again," I cried at last, dashing down my brush from my quivering hand and stepping back from the canvas.

She sprang to her feet.

"O, sir, how beautiful!" she cried, and then remembered that it was herself.

The boy was fast asleep on the rug. I shook him up. "Where do you sleep?" I asked the girl. And then it struck me to ask her name.

"I'm Genie and he's Paul Vincent," she answered, drawing the cloak around her.

"And where do you stay?" I persisted.

"Anywhere, sir. Under the bridges an' in the doorways, mostly; an'—an'—here her voice sank, "sometimes in a beautiful place, but it's—it's awful!"

"Where?"

"Won't you never tell, sir?" No, well, sometimes we sleep in St. Paul's. You see, we slips in at dusk, an' we hides in the shadders ahind the pillars till we gets locked in. An' in the mornin' w'en the man open it we chances it to get out. We hides near the door, and w'en he's gone in to where its mostly shadders, then we slip out. But it's awful, sir, with those marble people all about you, an' all so still.

I shivered as I listened.

"You shall stay here to-night," I said. And then I made them a bed in a closet just off my room.

And after that they came every night.

In time my picture was finished and went to the Academy. It was well received, well hung, and brought a good word from Ruskin. Then the public wanted to know who I was, for the papers were full of My Little Match Girl.

And who can tell how rich I felt when Lord Lansdown paid me a couple of hundreds for it, and came with his friends to see my "Sir Walter," and bought that also.

The tide had turned. No more working for Jews. No poverty for my little match-girl and her brother. They should be educated and cared for, my children from henceforth. God bless their dear souls!—*Church Weekly.*

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THE MOTHERLESS.

Sitting in the school room I heard a conversation between a sister and a brother. The little boy complained of insults or wrongs received from another little boy. His face was flushed with anger.

The sister listened awhile, and then, turning away, she answered: "I do not want to hear another word; Willie has no mother."

The brother's lips were silent; the rebuke came home to him, and, stealing away, he muttered, "I never thought of that."

He thought of his own mother, and the loneliness of Willie compared with his own happy lot. "He has no mother," he repeated to himself.

Do we think of it when want comes to the orphan, and rude words assail him? Has the little wanderer no mother to listen to his little sorrows? Speak gently to him, then good news.

WHAT IS NEEDED by every man and woman if they desire to secure comfort in this world is a corn-sheller. Putnam's Corn Extractor shells corns in two or three days and without discomfort or pain. A hundred imitations prove the merit of Putnam's Painless Corn Extractor, which is always sure, safe and painless. See signature of Polson & Co. on each bottle. Sold by medicine dealers.

THE RESTLESS BOY.

Yes we've had the restless boy. He is never absent. Rain will keep away the girl who is absorbed by her new hat, and storm will often detain the chronic giggler and whisperer, but the troublesome boy cannot be hindered by trifles. Every teacher of boys knows how he wriggles and twists through the opening exercise, rattles his paper when the superintendent calls "Silence!" and punches the other boys during the prayer-time. "What shall be done with him?" asks the long-suffering teacher, with a discouraged tremble in her voice and a tired, long-drawn sigh. Well, in the first place, have him set next to you. Insist upon this; though you will probably not need to insist if you make the request pleasantly and as though you expected him to acquiesce at once. Give him something to do as far as possible. Have him find the place in the singing-book, encourage him strongly to sing; have him mark the attendance if he can be trusted to do it, or whatever is to be done. Study the lesson with him in your mind, and have one point at least for him which you can bring out early before he is already absorbed. Above all, endeavour to have great patience, remembering that the boy who is felt in your class is the boy who will be felt out in the world by-and-by.

DIVIDING.

"Did you divide that chocolate with your little brother?"

"Yes, mamma."

"Did you divide it fairly?"

"Yes, mamma; I ate the chocolate, and gave him the paper with the pretty pictures. He likes to look at the pictures."

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DEATH.

At Brockville, Ont., on Thursday evening, Oct. 7th, Dorothea Julia, infant daughter of the Rev. Arthur Jains, Rector of Carleton Place, Ontario. Age 11 months.

FATAL ATTACKS.—Among the most fatal and sudden attacks of diseases, are those incident to the summer and fall, such as Cholera Morbus, Bilious Colic, Diarrhoea, Dysentery, etc., that often proves fatal in a few hours. That ever reliable remedy Dr. Fowler's Extract of Wild Strawberry, should be at hand, for use in emergency.

A MODERN MIRACLE.—In a recent letter from R. W. Dowton, of Deloraine, Ont., he states that he has recovered from the worst form of Dyspepsia after suffering for fifteen years; and when a council of doctors pronounced him incurable he tried Burdock Blood Bitters, six bottles of which restored his health.

IN GOOD REPUTE.—James McMurdoch, writing from Kinsale, says: "B. B. B. as a remedy for diseases of the blood, liver and kidneys, has an excellent reputation in this locality. I have used it and speak from experience, as well as observation. It is the only medicine I want, and I advise others afflicted to try it."