

Hand in Hand

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Sweet Times.

"We've had such sweet times to-day," said a dear child, as she kissed the dear ones in the family circle "good night" and went out of the room with a happy look on her face.

As the child passed out, one after another looked up from the work or book in hand. What did the child mean? Simply this: It had been one of those rare days when everything had gone along smoothly. All had done their best to keep the atmosphere of the home very sweet and pleasant.

Many young people forget that the little things in the daily home life are the very ones that make our happiness or unhappiness. All your usefulness and comfort in the home may be marred by an unpleasant temper of mind. A spirit of fault-finding, irritable actions and words will render life anything but a blessing to others. It is far easier to be even tempered and interesting outside of the home, for every one expects to keep on "company manners" for outsiders. It is so easy to take them off with our best clothes, though, when we are about our daily rounds at home. If we feel out of sorts, how natural to show it when we are in our own homes. To

look cross as we move about the house, even if we speak no irritating word, has its influence for making others uncomfortable. A short, irritable answer to a question some one pleasantly asks us, throws "a wet blanket" over the warmth and brightness of the home. Hannah More years and years ago wrote these words, which show that she fully understood what a significance there is in "trifles":—

"Since trifles make the sum of human things,
And half our misery from our foibles springs;
Since life's best joys consist in peace and ease,
And though but few can serve, yet all can please,
Oh, let the ungentle spirit learn from hence
A small unkindness is a great offence."

How beautiful would our home life be if every little child at the bed-time hour could look into the faces of the older ones and say: "We've had such sweet times to day." No matter what we may have to do, or what may come up to annoy us, we can, if we try, be pleasant in our words and manner. It is a good sentence to illuminate and hang up on memory's walls where we can see it every day: "You have not fulfilled every duty unless you have fulfilled that of being pleasant."

The Union Jack.

Ned, Tom, and Jack Salter were three little brothers, who lived close by the sea on the south coast of our own dear land. Their father, Mr. Salter, was a coast guardsman, one of those men who keep a strict look-out on the coast. The little boys dearly loved to

play at being sailors, and would often jump into the old unused boat, named the *Fairy Queen*, and try to make it rock from side to side, that they might fancy themselves to be on the sea. But instead of being on the sea, the *Fairy Queen* lay among the grass and wild flowers, which, you know, was much safer for the little boys.

One day a little visitor arrived from London to stay with the family for a few weeks. Her name was Alice, and the three little boys were her cousins. How proud they were to have a little girl as passenger in their boat.

"I'll tell you what we ought to do," cried Ned, who was the eldest; "as soon as Alice steps into our boat, I shall hoist the Union Jack, as, of course, sailors do when Her Majesty the Queen is on board. Alice is our Queen, so here goes."

And Ned, tying the Union Jack to an oar, stood on one side of the seats and held it aloft, cheering lustily all the time. It was a grand day for Alice to be on board the *Fairy Queen*, with the Union Jack floating over her head, and three gallant little sailor cousins down below. Much pleasanter, I am sure, than walking along the busy streets of London. Yes, holiday hours are indeed happy hours, especially to the child who during schooltime has been good, dutiful, and obedient.

A Father's Love.

Cecie Grey was sometimes a foolish little fellow. One day he climbed on to his father's knee, and looking into the kind, tender face bent over him, put this question,—

"Pa, do you love me very much?"

"Very much, my son."

"Charlie said you would give me away for a million pounds. But I said you wouldn't. Would you, pa?"

"No, my silly little boy; not for a million or a billion, or for all the golden treasures the world could offer me."

The silly little boy nestled to his father's breast, satisfied and happy, not wanting to ask any more questions just then.

Mr. Grey settled him comfortably in his arms; then he said,—

"Cecie, you have another Father, and my love is at best only a very poor picture of His. Do you know that your Father who is up there in Heaven loves you so much that He sent His Son down here to earth as a man to suffer and die to save you? And in all this beautiful world, which He Himself created, that Son had not even a

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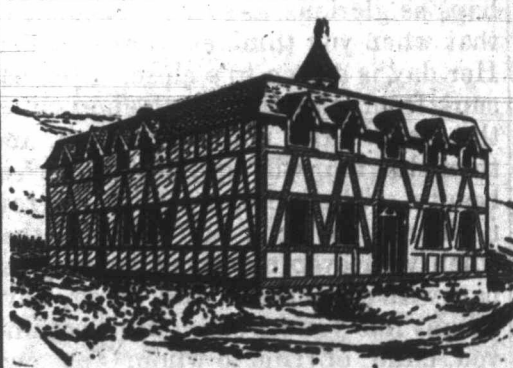
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