

THE LITTLE FOLK.

The Story of the Chain.

Did you ever read the story that Dr. Miller tells about the chain that an old blacksmith made? asks the late Mrs. George A. Paull. He lived in a heart of a great city, and all day long people could hear the clanging of his hammer upon the anvil, and they knew that he was forging a chain. Now and then idlers dropped in to watch his work, and as they saw how faithful and patient he was and how he would never pass over a link until it was absolutely perfect, they laughed at him and told him he would get ever so much more accomplished if he did not take so much pains. But the old smith only shook his head and kept on doing his best, making every link as strong as if the whole chain depended on it. At last he died, and was laid away in the churchyard, and the great chain which lay in his shop was put on board a ship. It was coiled up out of the way, and for a long time no one noticed it.

But there came a fierce, wild night in the winter when the wind blew a gale, the rain dashed down in torrents, and vivid flashes of lightning darted through the sky. The ship toiled through the waves and strained and groaned as she obeyed her helm. It took three men at the wheel to guide her. They let go her anchor, and the great chain went rattling over the side of the dock into the gloomy waves. At last the anchor touched the bottom, and the chain, made by the old blacksmith, grew as taut and stiff as a bar of iron? Would it hold?

That was the question everyone asked as the gale increased. If one link, just one link, was imperfect and weak, they were lost. But the faithful old smith had done his best in each link. Each had been perfect, and this night his work defied the tempest, and when at length the waves were stilled and the sun arose, the vessel, with all her precious lives, were safe.

What had saved her? The chain, you say. Well, yes; but what was the quality that had been wrought into the chain? Fidelity. Yes, that was it. And don't you see what a parable it is of our daily character building? Link by link, hour by hour, deed by deed we fashion it, and when temptation comes it will test our work. One weak spot and we shall be wrecked by that one imperfect link. But if we have been faithful in all, we can withstand temptation and hold fast to the anchor of our souls.

One Good Turn Deserves Another.

By HELEN MARION BURNSIDE.

Once upon a time two little boys were walking along a path which crossed a stretch of heath and moorland. They walked in the shade of a fir plantation, for it was a warm Autumn morning, and the bees were humming quite loudly as they dipped in and out of the heather bells.

"Suppose we go into the wood and eat our dinners now, Chris," said Fred. "I'm sure it's time."

Chris was quite ready for his dinner, and the boys chose a pleasant mossy seat under a tall fir at the edge of the wood.

"Look there," said Chris as they were unpacking their basket. "Two hares caught in a trap, I declare! Poor things—they look dreadfully frightened, but I do not believe they are hurt. We will just let them go."

Stooping down the boys carefully searched amongst the tufts of heather and bracken till they found out how the trap was set, then they managed to open it and let the hares go.

"What a cruel thing that trap is," said Fred as they ate their dinners. "It might have broken the legs of the poor hares; I am surprised it did not. But, I say Chris—I wonder what that rumbling sound is. One would think a railway train was running past."

"I have heard that there used to be mines about here," returned Chris; "perhaps there are tunnels under the heath, and miners working in them."

Now the hares knew well enough there were mines just under where the boys were sitting. Old mines, which often fell in; they knew too that the rumbling sound meant danger, and suddenly one of them stopped as they were scampering away.

"One of the big holes is going to fall in," she said, "and our kind friends will be hurt. One good turn deserves another; let us run back and warn them."

"How shall we do it?" asked her companion. "Boy's don't understand our talk."

"Leave that to me," replied the first hare, nodding her head wisely. The pair went leaping back and frisked round the boys. Presently one of them came quite close. Fred's handkerchief was lying on the ground, and seeing it in her teeth she ran off with it, looking back as she went as if inviting the boys to follow, which of course they did. "They are the very hares we set free from the trap," said Fred. "What impudent, ungrateful little creatures

they must be."

"I believe they are only playing with us," remarked Chris. "See they stop and look back at us as if they were laughing, and let us get quite near them, and then scamper off again."

This was just what the hares were doing. The merry active little animals led the boys quite a dance over the heath, and they were at some distance from the plantation when suddenly a loud and long rumble was heard behind them. The boys looked back, and just as they did so, the tall fir, underneath which they had been sitting, swayed and fell to the ground with a crash. Two or three smaller trees followed, and a great hole yawned where the earth had fallen into the mine below.

"Chris," whispered Fred, in an awe struck tone, "If the hare had not run away with my handkerchief, we might both have been killed."

"It almost seems as if they knew," returned Chris, "and tried to help us as we helped them." The boys turned to look for their little friends as they spoke. Fred's handkerchief lay on the moss at his feet, but the hares were nowhere to be seen.

A Sister's Influence.

"I wonder," said Mrs. Eaton, "what makes Frank Sawyer so different from Tom Blake and Jim Harris? They've got good homes and good parents, but Tom and Bill are as rough as young Indians, and never seem to know the difference between the inside of the house and outdoors."

"Well, the fact was that Frank Sawyer had sisters, and it was impossible to feel that the "inside of the house" was the same as "outdoors," where the presence and influence of either older or younger sisters were constantly felt.

Said a gentleman in our hearing not long since. "I can never tell what my older sister was to me all through my growing up. I knew nothing of her value to me as a boy, recognized comparatively little of it as a young man, but now I have reached years of maturity I realize how much she did to make home attractive and my childhood a very pleasant one."

And again, it was but a little while ago a lady was speaking of the gentle manner and unusual ability in entertaining shown by a young gentleman who had recently come into the community.

"Oh, well," said a friend, "I'll tell you where he learned his ease and acquired such finished manners; he grew up with a lot of sisters, and they always depended on him to help them when they had company, and they consulted him about their fancy work and the arrangement of a room or tea-table, just as if he was another girl."

Commend us to those boys who have grown up with "a lot of sisters." We have often heard a gentleman remark regretfully: "I never had a sister; that was something I missed." We feel for them a genuine pity that they should have missed so much. But do the girls of the family realize even slightly the great influence they are exerting, or might exert, over their brothers?

Six Rules for Boys.

This letter from Henry Ward Beecher to his son is declared, on good authority, never to have been published, says a special to the *New York Tribune*. It is reminiscent of the worldly good sense of the advice given to Laertes by Polonius, but it is also permeated by the heaven 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 guesswork. 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