

Only a Boy.

I AM only a boy, with a heart light and free;
I am brimming with mischief and frolic and glee;
I dance with delight, and I whistle and sing,
And you think such a boy never cares for a thing.

But boys have their troubles, though jolly they seem;
Their thoughts can go farther than most people deem.
Their hearts are as open to sorrow as joy,
And each has his feelings, though only a boy.

How oft when I've worked hard at piling the wood,
Have done all my errands and tried to be good,
I think I might then have a rest or a play;
But how shall I manage? Can any one say?

If I start for a stroll, it is "Keep off the street!"
If I go to the house, it is "Mercy, what feet!"
If I take a seat, 'tis "Here! give me that chair!"
If I lounge by a window, 'tis "Don't loiter there!"

If I ask a few questions, 'tis "Don't bother me!"
Or else, "Such a torment I never did see!"
I am scolded or cuffed if I make the least noise,
Till I think in this wide world there's no place for boys.

At school they are shocked if I want a good play;
At home or at church, I am so in the way;
And it's hard, for I don't see that boys are to blame,
And 'most any boy, too, will say just the same.

Of course a boy can't know as much as a man,
But we try to do right just as hard as we can.
Have patience, dear people, though oft we annoy,
For the best man on earth once was "Only a Boy."

The Scotch Thistle.

LITTLE Minnie, in her eagerness after flowers,
had wounded her hand on the sharp, prickly thistle.

"I do wish there was no such thing as a thistle
in the world," she said, pettishly.

"And yet the Scottish nation think so much of
it that they engrave it on their national arms,"
said her mother.

"It is the last flower that I should pick out,"
said Minnie. "I am sure they could have found a
great many nicer ones, even among the weeds."

"But the thistle did them such good service
once," said her mother, "that they learned to es-
teem it very highly. One time the Danes invaded

Scotland, and they prepared to make an attack on
a sleeping garrison. So they crept along, bare-
footed, as still as possible, until they were almost

on the spot. Just at that moment a barefooted
soldier stepped on a great thistle, and the hurt
made him utter a sharp, shrill cry of pain. The

sound awoke the sleepers, and each man sprang to
his arms. They fought with great bravery, and
the invaders were driven back with much loss.

So, you see, the thistle saved Scotland, and ever
since it has been placed on their seals as their
national flower."

"Well, I never could suspect that so small a
thing could save a nation."—*Selected.*

Lessons for Little White Men from Little Red Men.

Most of an Indian baby's first year is spent
strapped up in a tight little cradle, such as you
have seen in pictures. When those little feet get

out of the cradle, they will soon learn to run about.
Then the little red man will mount on a corn-stalk,
and take just such rides as you take on a cane or

broom. He would say that his horse is much
better, because it makes such a dust.

As soon as the little red woman is out of her
cradle, she begins to carry a doll, or a puppy, upon
her back—just as her mamma used to carry her-

self. She makes cunning little wigwams, too, and
plays "keep-house," while her little brother plays

at hunting and fishing.

But the little red men and women do not play all

the time. They learn to help their mothers, and a
good Indian mother takes great pains to teach her
children to be polite. She teaches them that they
must never ask a person his name; they must
never pass between an older person and the fire;
and they must never, never speak to older people
while they are talking. When a little red man
forgets these very good rules, and is rude, what do
you suppose his mother says to him? I am sure
you can never guess. She says: "Why you act
like a white child!"

Can it be that these little red men can teach us
lessons in politeness?—*Children's Work.*

That Kiss of My Mother.

GEORGE BROWN wanted to go somewhere, and
his mother was not willing. He tried to argue
the matter. When that would not do, instead of
saying, "I should really like to go, but if you
cannot give your consent, dear mother, I will try
to be content to stay," he spoke roughly, and went
off, slamming the door behind him. Too many
boys do so. George was fourteen, and with his
fourteen years' experience with one of the best of
mothers, one would have thought better of him.
"But he was only a boy. What can you expect of
boys?" So say some people.

Stop! Hear more. That night George found
thorns in his pillow. He could not fix it in any
way to go to sleep on. He turned and tossed, and
he shook and patted it—but not a wink of sleep
for him. The thorns kept pricking. They were
the angry words he had spoken to his mother.
"My dear mother, who deserves nothing but kind-
ness and love and obedience from me," he said to
himself. "I never do enough for her! Yet how
have I behaved? Her oldest boy! How tenderly
she nursed me through that fever!"

These unhappy thoughts quite overcame him.
He would ask her to forgive him in the morning.
But suppose something should happen before morn-
ing! He would ask her now—to-night—this
moment. George crept out of bed, and went softly
to his mother's room.

"George!" she said. "Is that you? Are you
sick?" For mothers, you know, seem to sleep with
one eye and ear open, especially when the fathers
are away—as George's father was.

"Dear mother," he said, "kneeling at her bed-
side, "I could not sleep for thinking of my rude
words to you. Forgive me, mother—my dear
mother!" And may God help me never to behave
so again!"

She clasped the penitent boy in her arms, and
kissed his warm cheek. George is a big man now,
but he says that was the sweetest moment of his
life. His strong, healthy, impetuous nature became
tempered by a gentleness of spirit. It softened its
roughness, sweetened his temper, and helped him
on to a true and noble Christian manhood.

Boys are sometimes ashamed to act out their
best feelings. Oh, if they only knew what a loss it
is to them not to do so!—*Mother's Magazine.*

Seeing God.

A CHILD in Burma was permitted by his parents
to go to a mission school because they wished him
to learn to read. By-and-bye they found he was
losing faith in the idols. This made them feel very
badly. So the father took him to one of the gayest
of the temples and showed him the idol, covered
with gold and silver ornaments, surrounded by
flowers and candles and fragrant incense. "Here,"
said the father, "is a god you can see, but the
Christians cannot show you their God."

"Yes," said the child, "we can see your god,

but he cannot see us. We cannot see the Chris-
tian's God, but he sees us all the time."

Was this child not wise in choosing the God
from whom even the thoughts of the heart cannot
be hid?

Scientific Experiments.

BY LAURA B. STARR.

AN interesting home-made method of natural
decoration consists simply in taking a glass or
goblet and placing in the interior a little common
salt and water. In a day or two a slight mist will
be seen upon the glass, which hourly will increase
until in a very short time the glass will present a
very beautiful appearance, being enlarged to twice
its thickness and covered with beautiful salt crys-
tals, packed one upon another like some peculiar
fungus or animal growth.

A dish should be placed beneath the glass, as the
crystals will run over. The colour of the crystals
may be changed by placing in the salt and water
some common red ink or a spoonful of bluing; this
will be absorbed and the white surface covered with
exquisite tints. No more simple method of pro-
ducing inexpensive or beautiful ornaments can be
imagined, and by using different shapes of vases
and shades an endless variety of beautiful forms
can be produced. The glass should be placed where
there is plenty of warmth and sunlight. It is an
experiment which any child can make, and it will
be found both novel and interesting to watch it
growing gradually day by day, until the outside of
the goblet is covered over with beautiful crystals,
blue, red, or white, according to the colouring
matter which has been used.

Another scientific experiment which may interest
some of the older as well as the younger members
of the family may be made by suspending from the
ceiling a thread which has previously been soaked
in very salt water and then dried. To this fasten
a light ring and announce that you are about to
burn the thread without making the ring fall. The
thread will burn, it is true, but the ashes it leaves
are composed of crystals of salt, and their cohesion
is strong enough to sustain the light weight of the
ring attached to the thread.

Another form of the same experiment is to make
a little hammock of muslin to be suspended by
four threads, and, after having soaked this in salted
water, and dried it as before directed, to place in
it an empty egg-shell. Set the hammock on fire;
the muslin will be consumed, and the flame reach
the threads which hold it, without the egg falling
from its frail support. With great care you may
succeed in performing the experiment with a full
egg in place of an empty shell, taking the precau-
tion, however, to have it previously hard boiled,
that you may escape an omelet in case of failure.

Another curious experiment is that of putting
an egg into a bottle without breaking the shell.
Soak the egg, which must be fresh, for several days
in strong vinegar. The acid of the vinegar will eat
the lime of the shell, so that while the egg looks the
same it is really very soft. Only a little care is
required to press the egg into the bottle. When
this is done, fill it half full of lime water, and let
it stand. The shell will absorb the lime, and be-
come hard again, and after the lime water is poured
off you have the curious spectacle of an egg the
usual size in a small-necked bottle, which will be a
great puzzle to those who do not understand how it
is done.

THE little one made a beautiful answer, without
knowing it. "What! kiss such a homely man as
papa?" said the mother, in fun. "Oh! but papa
is real pretty in his heart," was the reply.