

## Chat to . . Boys and Girls.

This week I have a story, for my boys and one that is in the main, true or founded upon fact, and, though it is rather a sad little tale, yet I hope you will like to read it and find in it perhaps a lesson of life and its purposes.

### The King's Treasure.

One glorious day, at the close of September, our school-boys started for Barlow's Wood with bags and baskets in quest of nuts.

A merry troop they were indeed, as they stopped half-way at 'Frosty Spring' to eat their luncheon and refresh themselves with the sparkling water that bubbled up icy-cold under shady trees and amid fragrant ferns and mosses.

You may fancy the noise and chatter, as, sitting on the grass, on the fence on the roadside, in the trees, everywhere till the place fairly swarmed with boys they ate their gingerbread and currant buns.

And what a wood that was together nuts in! How the boys made the old forest ring with shout and song! And how pleasant it was, when tired, to rest in little groups together, guessing who had gathered most!

Farther off, lay the thicker woods, looking dim, solemn and mysterious. At the edge of a great clump of tall pines and peering cautiously into the unexplored forest beyond, stood Norman Whitley in a 'brown study.'

'I say boys,' he cried at last, 'don't you suppose it was in such a wood as this that Robin Hood and his merry-men used to meet? I wish we knew some good old legend connected with this spot—nothing ever happens now-a-days.'

'They do say that long ago, in time of war, some English barons buried large sums of money in these very woods, and even hid away much of the king's treasure,' said Walter Best.

'Hurrah boys! that sounds promising,' cried another; 'let us invade these dark old woods, and finish up the day with a hunt for gold.'

'Yes, yes! Let us see who shall be the lucky one to discover the king's treasure,' they shouted.

No sooner said than done. The nuts were safely stowed away in a hollow oak from whose topmost branches waved two or three handkerchiefs; and with a wild halloo our party plunged into the thicket scattering in twos and threes, they, half in fun, half in earnest, began to look for the hidden treasure supposed to be marked by a pile of stones in a rude form of a cross. So, digging away at every suspicious-looking hillock, poking into hollow trees and climbing to the top of the tallest, for a good outlook, the afternoon passed, till they had gone so far into the wood that the elder boys thought it wiser to push on to the opening which led into a small, back village, than to retrace their steps.

The sun was sinking fast, and they could not now be far from the edge of the forest. Sure enough; a little more plodding on—they were too tired to about and chase much now, and perhaps a little disappointed if the truth were told, in finding no traces of antiquity in their search till they suddenly found themselves approaching a rude burying-ground.

Norman and Walter, being in advance, stopped in surprise at sound of a voice in prayer, and through an opening saw a little lad kneeling at a new-made grave, his pale, wan face upturned to the sky, his frail little figure trembling with weakness and emotion.

'Oh dear Lord Jesus,' he was saying, 'take me, do take me up to heaven, where I may be with thee, oh my dear, dear father! I want to go, oh, so much, dear father, but please to make me patient, for Jesus' sake.' His delicate face grew even whiter, he swayed, and fell fainting to the ground before the boys could reach him. Walter ran some distance for water, with which he tenderly bathed the poor little face and hands as the child lay in Norman's arms. Being restored to consciousness, he looked about him, bewildered at the group of boys who now crowded

around, awed into perfect silence at sight of the emaciated child and the newly-covered grave, with its rude wooden cross to mark the resting place of a dear mother. Seeing that the boy was quite too weak to talk much, Norman merely asked if he had any home. He shook his head wearily, and glanced from the grave to the sky, as though his heart and treasure were centered in the two places.

'Will you go with me for the night little fellow?' he then asked.

'Oh yes, if you are so good,' was the grateful reply. 'Auntie will think it all right' said Norman, nodding to Walter; and then began the homeward march. The elder boys took turns at carrying poor little Willie Ford—for such was the orphan's name—carefully choosing the smoothest way, till Miss Whitley's cottage was reached; a few words made that good lady acquainted with all the boys knew and Willie was put comfortably into such a bed as he had never dreamed of.

'Lord Jesus, I thank thee,' he murmured, and sank into a heavy stupor.

The boys quietly dispersed from Miss Whitley's gate, where they had waited patiently to hear how Willie bore the journey and after arranging who should go for the nuts next day, Norman and Walter re-entered the cottage to keep watch by their little foundling all through the night. It was weary work after their tiresome day in the woods, but it was a labor of love, for one of Christ's little ones.

With careful nursing Willie rallied sufficiently to tell his sad story of poverty, sickness, and finally the death of his only friend, the dearly loved mother. Having no home the timid child spent his days beside that mother's grave, and his nights in the shelter of the woods near by but want of food and exposure had almost done their deadly work when the boys found him.

Poor Willie! His short sad life was not lived in vain. Many were the lessons of patience, faith and love, Norman and Walter learned at his bedside, for in spite of loving care, the little child whom everybody had learned to love went home to God, after sowing much good seed amongst the boys of the school, his daily visitors, who crept in and out so quietly, as to be quiet unlike the merry nut pickers. For them Willie had always loving words and grateful thanks, or at least a tender smile. To his friends Norman and Walter, the little fellow was deeply attached and his earnest loving prayers for them, moved the boys to seek more diligently for that which is better than gold or hid treasure.

'Auntie,' said Norman, one day after Willie's funeral, at which the school boys walked as mourners, 'I think we did find one of the King's treasures in Barlow's Wood that day we went nutting—and beside it was a cross too.'

'Yes Norman,' said his Auntie with tears in her eyes, 'I think you did my dear.' And she murmured softly 'They shall be mine saith the Lord, "in that day when I make up my jewels." AUNT BELL

### SILK PETTICOATS.

They Are an Absolute Necessity to Women and are Elaborate and Costly.

The rustle of silk petticoats is very soothing to feminine ears. Indeed, there is a fascination about their swish, swish and frou-frou that charms even the most case-hardened hater of the petticoated sisterhood. Their very sound imparts an element of completeness to woman's toilet. The time was when the silk petticoat was considered a luxury; now it is an absolute necessity, and a very expensive one, too. A plain skirt decorated with one or perhaps two flounces with corded or pinked edges is a thing of the past, for the modern model is elaborate and perfect as to cut and fit.

Prevailing styles in dress skirts always influence the fashion in petticoats directly, and now that skirts are made to flare out most extravagantly from there down, petticoats are cut on the same plan. The latest fit with absolute smoothness at the top and are devoid of gathers and pleats in the back. This necessitates having the opening on one side or well toward the front. All the gores are shaped, and that in front is marvellously narrow. An extra graduated flounce higher in the back and devoid of fullness, is attached to give the desired flare, and also to add stiffness about the feet, for the hem of this flounce is generally trimmed on top and underneath with a tiny full ruffle or rose ruching.

Plain glaze in all the beautiful new shades has about ousted changeable taffeta for full dress wear. In fact, the latter is considered quite out of date, except in some new and very delicate shades that can only be obtained by blending two tones. Even in these white is usually the foundation. Plaid and striped silks and those in broken checks are made into handsome skirts to be worn with plain tailor-made gowns, but are considered bad form with elaborate cloth or silk dresses.



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These fancy skirts are brilliant in coloring, vivid green and purple, magenta and violet and scarlet and yellow being some of the combinations noted.

In the plain glaze silks many beautiful shades of coral, rich lavender, purple and bright green are taking the lead. An exquisite petticoat of coral silk has a circular-shaped flounce running up in the back. This is covered with three full ruffles of silk, embellished with vertical tucking in groups of seven, and edged with gray and black lace applique.

Smocking in Vandyke points is introduced on many of the deep accordion-pleated ruffles so much in fashion. Hardly a full dress petticoat model is to be found that does not call for lace motifs, put on separately or garland fashion, or for lace insertions which are often set in on the foundation, bayadere style, down to the point of attaching the flounce. A very elaborate design calls for three-pointed pleated flounces which fall a little over one another. Each flounce is edged with a tiny pinked rose ruching, and this also outlines the attached flounce. Gathered flounces are frequently made more fanciful by means of cross tucks.

Glaze petticoats for evening wear are generally trimmed with folds and festoons of chiffon or else with a great deal of lace. White and delicate pinks, blues and yellows are best for full-dress wear, though by all means one must be guided by the color of the gown worn. Elaborateness and extravagance are the chief characteristics of all silk skirts.

**WINTER HATS IN FULL FEATHER.** Strange Combinations of Plumage a Feature of the New Millinery.

The animated millinery openings of the past month are pretty good evidence that this particular branch of winter modes did not languish because of the mantle of summer heat which fell on the ardor of early shoppers. Winter hats are literally out in full feather, since feathers of every known, and of many a heretofore unknown variety have come out at the top of the list in hat trimmings. There are the usual extremes and exaggerations of fashion, with many modifications, altogether charming and becoming.

Toques are larger, and nearly all of them turn up in front with a glittering buckle or a bright rosette, with osprey feathers. The crowns are often in bee-feather shape, of soft velvet or silk, embroidered all over with scrolls of narrow ribbon or worked with steel or jet on net and horsehair. Large hats with a brim, both medium and extreme in size, figure largely in variety, with some French bonnets very odd in shape, which will hardly find favor. One is sort of scoop or poke shape, very short in the back, and suited only to the Madonna race. It is fully decorated with feathers, as is the case with all hats this season.

There are many novelties in feathers, all sorts and kinds of made varieties, and what are called trimmed feathers. Osprey plumes tipped with spots of chenille are one specimen, and spotted effects of all kinds are very much used. The plumage of the guinea fowl is a special feature of trimming, both dyed and in its natural color, being used sometimes as an edging for brightly colored wings. Quills of every kind and color, pheasants' plumage and Mercury wings in all the light and dark shades are employed. Large birds with four wings, real butterflies on bustard quills, and osprey breast feathers with butterflies are among the novelties. Feathers are not the whole millinery show, however, varied as they are, for there are lovely velvet plumes in soft, rich purple, reds, pretty combinations of lace and fur and tulle and fur, which is decidedly new.

Conflicting suggestions as to the kind of hat to buy and the special variety which will be most popular are as usual very freely given, but it is impossible to settle on any one shape among so many. The hat that turns back from the face (is both becoming and striking in effect, but there are quite as many hats that tilt down over the eyes. The most becoming hat is the one to choose whatever the shape may be. You are told that all-black hats are not the thing, that bright colors are to be very much worn; but if you put a bright rosette or a showy rhinestone buckle on your black hat it will pass muster all the same. The color used must be bright and decided to be effective, and not one of the neutral tints or soft dull reds which are

used for the entire hat of velvet. Tulle is combined very prettily with velvet, being used in tiny gathered ruches on the edge of the brim and forming some scroll design all over the crown. It matches the velvet in color, or may be in a lighter or darker shade. One stylish hat in black velvet has a twist of white silk fastened with a handsome rhinestone buckle around the crown, which is embroidered with white braid ribbon, and two white ostrich feathers for a finish.

White silk, with narrow black and white ribbon on the edge, is used for bows, and narrow ribbon trims the edges of some of the brims.

A novelty in combination of colors is a heliotrope felt hat trimmed with scarlet velvet geraniums and black feathers. A pretty toque shown in the illustration is made of brown velvet with white braid on the edges or the folds which form the crown. A band of sable encircles the front, black ostrich feathers trim the sides, and purple-red flowers the back.

Colored felt hats, with feathers and trimming to match, are very stylish. Felt hats are considered especially smart this season for wear with tailor-made gowns, and it is said that white felt hats are coming into favor. A shape in felt which is very odd has a low, soft crown and a bowl-shaped brim turning down to meet the hair directly in the back, where velvet rosettes fill in either side. High puffs of velvet and shot taffeta trim the front, with one feather in the middle turning toward the back.

Sharp (of the firm of Sharp and Jenkins): 'Why did you countermand your order for those fountain pens?' Jenkins: 'The agent took down my order with a lead pencil.'

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