

Boys and Girls.

MY LITTLE BOY THAT DIED.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "JOHN HALIFAX, GENTLEMAN."

Look at his pretty face for just one minute!
His braided frock and dainty, buttoned shoes—
His firm-shut hand, the favorite plaything in it—
Then tell me, mothers, was't not hard to lose
And miss him from my side—
My little boy that died?

How many another boy, as dear and charming,
His father's hope, his mother's one delight,
Slips through strange sicknesses, all fear dis-
arming,
And lives a long, long life in parents' sight.
Mine was so short a pride—
And then—my poor boy died.

I see him rocking on his wooden charger;
I hear him pattering through the house all day
I watch his great blue eyes grow large and larger,
Listening to stories, whether grave or gay.
Told at the bright fireside—
So dark now, since he died!

But yet I often think my boy is living,
As living as my other children are,
When good night kisses I all round I am giving
I keep one for him, though he is so far
Can a mere grave divide
Me from him—though he died?

So, while I come and plant it over with daisies—
(Nothing but childish daisies all year round)
Continuously God's hand the curtain raises
And I can hear his merry voice's sound,
And feel him at my side—
My little boy that died!

Good Words

WILLIE'S COURAGE.

Willie Carr was one of those boys who never likes to be beaten at anything. Only dare him to do a thing, and he would do it, no matter how absurd or foolish it was. He had lately come to live in a town on the sea-coast, and he and his school-fellows constantly amused themselves on half-holidays by climbing the cliffs, fishing, boating, and many other seaside pastimes.

On one Sunday afternoon Willie said to his companions:

"The tide has just turned; in a quarter of an hour that rock" (pointing to a small rock covered with seaweed) "will be under water; I dare any one of you fellows to run ten times around it."

Some shook their heads and said they did not care to run the risk of being drowned, but a few said, "We will go if you will lead us."

So off they started. The water was over their shoes at the first round.

"Salt water will do us no harm," said Willie.

At the sixth round Tom Bishop and Willie were the only ones who kept on running; the water was already above their knees, for the tide was coming in fast. At the eighth round Willie was running alone, and many of the boys said, "Don't go any more, Willie." But Nell Dawson cheered him: "Only twice more and I will say you are the bravest fellow in Hastings." But at the tenth round all said "Don't go any more."

"Do you dare me to do it?" cried Willie; "although the water is above my waist, I will go just to show what I can do."

Many of them tried to hold him back, but he rushed off panting for his last round. When he reached the rock he was very tired, so he sat down to recover his breath; then he got up and waved his cap. The boys cheered him, and cried "Make haste—come along."

But he stayed longer than was necessary just to show how brave he was, and waved his cap. At this moment a large wave dashed over the rock, drenching him to the skin, and obliged him to start off. But before he had gone half way on his journey another wave came, and then another, and carried him off his feet. He was nearly choked with the salt water that went down his throat, but he

held himself enough to get back to the rock; there he sat panting and exhausted.

His boasted courage began to fail him; he could swim but little, and encumbered with his wet clothes and all exhausted as he was, there was not much chance for him. Higher and higher the water rose; the rock was under water and there he sat, pale and shivering.

Some of his comrades ran off for help, but poor Willie doubted if it would come in time. All his sins and follies rose before him like a cloud; he thought of his mother's anguish (for he was her only son), and how she would feel when she heard he had been drowned—drowned, and by his own folly. A large wave rolled over him,—he tightened his grasp on the seaweed, another came, and then another, a mist rose before his eyes—he loosened his hold, and all was dark.

Some hours later Willie was in his own bed at home, and a lady with a sweet, pale face was bending over him. "Thank God!" she said. Willie heard it, and opened his eyes.

"Oh, mother," he said, "I am saved then! I was so frightened, and when I thought of you, death seemed so terrible."

"Yes," she said, "you were saved by a boatman who heard your school-fellows' cries of distress, let us thank God for His mercies in saving you."

Some time after Willie entered the navy, he had lost none of his courage and daring, but acted more under a sense of duty and less to gain man's applause.

He is now an officer, beloved by his men, and respected by all who know him, for at the call of duty he is always first, and where danger is, there you will always find him.

THE CHILD SINGER.

In a narrow dirty street in the most miserable part of London, a group of children were playing beside the gutter. They were all dirty and ragged, and the faces of many were old and worldly wise. One little girl, however, though her dress was as soiled and as torn as that of any of the other dwellers in the filthy street, had a pretty, childish face. She was a bright-looking little one, with matted brown hair hanging in tangled curls that had never known a brush, and a pair of sweet, dark eyes looking out trustfully into the uninviting world around her. She stood a little apart from the others, leaning against the doorway of a rickety tenement house, humming softly to herself.

A rough-looking boy in the group by the gutter, hearing her low tones, called out, "Londer, Nell; sing something."

The child obeyed; with her hands clasped, and her eyes fastened on the speck of blue sky to be seen between the roofs of the tall, smoky houses, she burst into a song. No wonder that the other children stopped in their noisy play, and listened. It was not their ignorance of music that made the singing seem beautiful to those little street vagabonds.—There was in the clear voice of the child-singer a strange, wistful tone, of which she herself was unconscious, but which held the listener spell-bound.

Nell had been born and bred in those low surroundings. She had never seen the inside of a church, or heard other music than the whining tones of a street organ, yet there was in her the very soul of music. She lived in a wretched garret, with a dirty, slouchy woman whom she called aunt, and loved as only a child or woman can love one from whom she receives no sign of affection. Miserable as such a life was, it might have been worse.

One day Nell's aunt was brought home on a shutter; she had been run over by a carriage and instantly killed.

Now Nell was indeed destitute; no money and no friends but her rough neighbors. But these, though rough, were not hard-hearted; they would have

given her money, but they had none themselves, except what they earned or stole each day. So they told her, if she wanted her aunt buried properly, she must go out at night and sing, in which way she would very likely earn enough, as people would pity so young a child.

So that night poor little Nell set out on her work of love. She walked till she reached the broad streets and hard-some houses that form the London which the world knows. Here she sang. In the clear, silent night the childish voice rang out, and the hour and the stillness made its wistful tones seem wild and weird. Up one street and down another the little figure went singing, while its heart seemed breaking. A strange excitement bore her up, and she felt no fatigue.

Her pathetic appeal was not in vain, it seemed to touch the hearts, and what is more difficult, the pockets of all who heard her. When midnight came she thought of stopping only because most of the houses had closed for the night, and there was little more to be obtained. So she took her last stand in front of a fine old house in Kensington Square, in whose windows lights were still burning. It was the home of Barch, the great musician. As the tones of Nell's voice broke on the stillness of the night he paused in the work he was doing, and after a moment rose and threw open the window. With amazement he saw the little childish figure standing in the light of the street lamp, and while his artist's ear drank in the wonderful tones with delight, his fatherly heart filled with pity for the desolate child. When Nell ceased, he called to her, and descending took her in.

From that moment Nell was no longer destitute, no longer friendless. In Barch she had found a friend who never deserted her. Captivated by her voice, he took the little waif into his heart and home, and thenceforth she was protected, cared for and educated. And he was amply rewarded when, in after-years, the fame of Helen Barch spread over England. No one then ever dreamed that the great singer began her career years ago, one dark night, under the stars, a little outcast singing for money to bury her dead.

A BLACK ANGEL.

Did you ever see one?
I have.

Most people suppose that angels have shining faces shedding light around them, and are arrayed in garments as white as snow. All black angels are thought to be ministers of evil.

But I believe that seldom has an angel walked the earth with a better mission than the black angel I am writing about. Assuredly it was an angel's mission.

She had a very dark face, but it expressed amiability, uprightness, and sincerity. You could not have mistaken either her character or her mission, if you had chanced to meet this woman either in the church or by the way. Let me describe her. She was a washerwoman.

"I never thought that angels were washerwomen," says an unthinking reader.

"Humphbacked, poor, without a family—almost homeless."

"Homeless?"

All this, yet sent forth a minister of good to those whom others would not seek.

She came to my study. With her was a young woman for whom she had been praying that God would lead from evil ways.

The sexton tried to send both her and her companion away when the two came to the church. But there was the purpose of an angel written on her face, and he saw it.

When she had been admitted I learned her story. She had been employed by this young woman, who was leading an immoral life. In her visits to the rooms of her employer she had seen the degradation of the outcast's life, and her whole

sympathies had been aroused. She longed to lead her back to the paths of virtue, and to God. Rescue her she must, for had not her Master forgiven a Magdalen. This became her aim—her prayer—her mission.

Night after night she followed the young woman in her evening walks in the streets. Whenever she seemed about to join a bad companion, the black angel walked between the two, her heart uplifted to God.

She did not speak. Not a word of reproach or expostulation escaped her lips. Both men and women sometimes assailed her with angry words, but she did not heed them. She felt that she was God's messenger of mercy and of warning.

This silent, persevering, loving remonstrance against sin could not fail in its ministry of good. Months passed. The black angel triumphed.

Conscience-stricken the wanderer was induced to come to my study. And there shrinking, yet longing after the better life, she was led to turn from the way that leads to death, to purity, and peace and consecration to Him whose Divine love and pity can save from sin even an outcast.

I would like to give the history of this restored wanderer. I have only space to say that the black angel on earth rejoices to-day in sympathy with all the angels in heaven over a reformation, the fruits of which are abiding.

How little it concerns us whether we be poor or rich, educated or ignorant, white or black, if, indeed, our lives are angelic in their efforts to help others. This is life's great business after all. Christ's spirit dwelt in the heart of this black angel, and her feet did not do her Master's bidding in vain.—Rev. S. H. Tyng, Jr., in *Youth's Companion*.

TWO SCENES.

A gentleman took his son to a tavern, where the inmates were fighting and swearing, and he said:

"Do you know what has caused all this?"

"No, sir."

His father, pointing to the canters, said, "That's the cause. Will you take a drink?"

The boy started back with horror, and exclaimed, "No!"

Then the father took the child to the cage of a man suffering with delirium tremens. The boy gazed upon him affrighted as the drunkard raved and tore, thinking the demons were after him, and crying, "Leave me alone! leave me alone! I see 'em! they're coming."

"Do you know the cause of this, my boy?"

"No, sir."

"This is caused by drink. Will you have some?" and the boy shrunk back with a shudder, as he sipped the cup.

Next they called at the miserable hovel of a drunkard, where was squalid poverty, and where the father was beating his wife and with oaths knocking down his children.

"What has caused this?" said the father.

The son was silent.

When told that rum had brought the misery he saw, he declared that never would he touch a drop of it in his life.

But suppose the lad should be invited to a wedding feast where, with fruit and cake, the wine-cup is passed amid scenes of cheerfulness and gayety, where all the friends are respectable and kind to each other, and he should be asked to drink. Would he refuse? Or, suppose he should walk out with his father on New Year's Day to call on his young lady friends and enjoy the festivities of the occasion. With other things, wine is handed them by a smiling girl. His noble-hearted father presses the wine-glass to his lips and compliments the young lady on the excellence of its quality. What wonder if the son should follow his example?—*Weekly Rescue*.