

BOYS AND GIRLS

Tom Carter's Single Lesson.

There was no help for it! I had missed the last train, and must walk home. But I knew the way pretty well, and was soon speeding along, when suddenly the silence of night was broken by a sound of singing. For a moment I stopped to listen, but the voice soon ceased. On turning a sharp corner, I found myself face to face with a policeman. As his time of duty was up, and my home lay near his own, he turned and walked with me.

'What were you singing, just now?' I asked him.

'Well, I was just having a verse of my favorite hymn: "Jesus, Lover of my Soul"—the best hymn in the whole world, sir.'

Something in the man's voice told me that there must be some deep real reason for this preference; so I asked him why that hymn, above all others, was so precious.

'Because it brought me to Christ.' The words came very slowly and solemnly; and, after a pause, he continued: 'Shall I tell you about it? For I'm never tired of telling how Jesus met me.'

'Well, sir, it's nearly thirteen years since I joined the force, and there wasn't a man in it had a better chance than I. But I hadn't the courage to say "No"—and I do believe a policeman gets more temptation than any other man—so I soon found myself linked on to a set of mates whose greatest pleasures in life were drinking and gambling. Of course, this brought me into scrapes, until one day my superintendent told me that on the next complaint I should be dismissed from the force.'

'Well, sir, you must know that my wife was very much taken up with a mission hall near home. She often asked me to go with her, and sometimes, by way of a change, I would; I liked the singing, and I've got a pretty good voice myself, and can sing by note.'

'I suppose the choir-leader there must have found this out, for one day he called at my house and said he had come to ask me a favor. There was a tea-meeting coming off the next week, and four of the choir were going to sing a quartette—a new arrangement of the old hymn, "Jesus, Lover of my Soul"—only the tenor had been suddenly called away, so would I take his place?'

'Well, he left me the music, and I had a try at it, but somehow I couldn't get on. It was so different from anything I had been used to; but I tried again, and just as I was in a real fix over it, in comes Mrs. Baines, our district lady.'

'Ah,' she says, "you've got hold of something pretty now!"

'Pretty enough, ma'am, but it's rather difficult. I can't get on with it.'

'It is a troublesome bit,' she says; "but if you like to come up to my house to-morrow evening I'll try it with you."

'Well, she was as good as her word, and took a deal of trouble to get me right, and I soon got hold of it with her help; but just as I was coming away, she says to me very quietly: "Carter, have you been singing the truth, or singing lies, that is, do you really feel what you say?"'

'For a minute I couldn't see what she was driving at, but says she: "You have just sung:

'Thou, O Christ, art all I want,
More than all in Thee I find.'

Now is that true? I thought you found more

pleasure in drink, in sin, in the world than in Christ."

'Ah, sir, if ever a fellow was taken aback, I was then! After a minute, she put her hand on my shoulder and said: "Be honest, Carter, and if you don't want Christ, don't sing that you do, for it's an awful thing to mock God like that;" and, without another word, she quietly opened the door for me to go out.'

'I shall never forget that walk home, sir; I couldn't get the thought out of my mind: "Singing lies to God!"'

'Two or three days and nights passed until I could bear it no longer, and I determined to go up to Mrs. Baines and tell her how wretched she had made me. She didn't seem a bit surprised, but she only said to me very quietly, "I've been praying for this, Carter. I'm so glad you're wretched, for I begin to think it's true that you do want Christ."

'I want something I haven't got, ma'am," I said, "I can't go on like this." She reached up and took down the hymn-book, and asked me to read the last verse of the hymn aloud—

"Plenteous grace with Thee is found—
Grace to cover all my sin;

Let the healing streams abound,
Make and keep me pure within."

"Now," says she, "that's true, Carter. Plenteous grace to cover all your sin is found in Christ. You've been a great sinner, and although you may be sorry for that sin now, that does not put away past guilt." And then she showed me, sir, how Jesus hung upon the cross for me, and how by his death for my sin, I was set free because he had borne punishment for me.'

'Well, sir, when I stood up to join in the hymn that had opened my eyes to see my need of Jesus, something seemed to choke me, and I could hardly get a note out at first. But there, I did get through somehow, and when it came to the last verse—

"Plenteous grace with Thee is found—
Grace to cover all my sin;"

I fairly shouted and almost drowned the other voices; but, you see, my heart was so full I couldn't help it. And ever since then I've been trying to sing for Jesus. I'm not much of a hand at saying anything, but I can sing, and so down at the mission hall, or whenever I get a chance, I try to sing about that precious Saviour

"Who saved a poor sinner like me."

We had reached the end of our walk together, and so were obliged to part; but although a good distance lay yet between me and home, I could not regret that I had missed my train, for it would be well worth a whole night's weary walking to hear so sweet a story of Christ's pardoning love.—"Cottager and Artisan."

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A Local Preacher Misjudged.

A minister was requested by his members to put a certain local preacher off the plan, as he had been seen frequenting a certain public-house very often of late. He refused to perform so solemn an act without positive proof. It came very unexpectedly a few days later. As he was passing along the street, the local preacher (Mr. Griffiths) was coming out of the very public-house the people had named. Surprised beyond measure, he approached him, with the remark, 'This is not a very nice place for a local preacher to be coming out of, Mr. Griffiths.' 'No,' he replied, 'but you just come along inside with me, and I will show you the cause.' He led him up the stairs, and there on the bed lay the publican's daughter in a state of galloping consumption. Instead of going to the public-house for the purpose of drinking, he had been God's instrument in leading that soul to Christ. Therefore let us be careful, for often by judging half do we misjudge the whole.—Nellie Rider, Missionary-Collector, in the 'Christian Herald.'

'Look Out for God's Postman.'

At Mr. Muller's Orphanage, Ashley Downs, Bristol, it was discovered that the boiler of the heating apparatus was in a dangerous condition. To repair it the brickwork in which it was embedded had to be pulled to pieces. The fires must be put out for at least three days. A bitterly cold north wind was blowing. Mr. Muller had read in the Bible that when Nehemiah was building the temple he accomplished it, 'for the men had a mind to work.' So he prayed for two things—that the north wind might be changed into a south wind, and also that the workmen might have a mind to work. The day that the fires were put out the wind changed and blew from the south, and the children did not feel the cold. When the evening of the first day came, the men asked to speak to Mr. Muller, and said they had been talking it over among themselves, and had all agreed to work all that night, so that the children might not be kept without fires!

How the Mouse Helped the Wren.

A TRUE STORY.

One morning in May the eaves of the old farm house seemed alive with bustle and noise. Two little brown wrens flitted back and forth under the sloping roof and out on the limb of the big branching maple tree. Their incessant chatter finally woke two sisters, May and Flora, who had been taking their morning nap while the sunbeams played hide and seek in the brown and black tresses.

May crept to the window and peeping out cried to her sister, 'Oh, Flora, the little wrens have come back, but they seem to be dissatisfied with their old home; I wonder why?'

Ever since the girls could remember the birds had been yearly visitors to the farm house, and they enjoyed watching them build their nests and raising the baby wrens. The girls dressed hastily and ran down to their breakfast, telling mother the wrens were back again but something was the matter with their old building place. Then they were called away to school.

In the afternoon they decided to have a