

BOYS AND GIRLS

His Mercy.

When the Christ, my Lord, hung dying,
Dying on the shameful tree,
Men in all their madness mocked Him;
Yet no word at all said He.
But when at His side a sinner,
Hanging there in shame to die,
Pleading, sought His loving favor,
Swiftly came love's glad reply.

'When thou comest to thy kingdom,
Lord,' he cried, 'remember me.'
'Yea, to-day, with Me in glory,'
Jesus answered, 'thou shalt be.'
Was not this most wondrous pity,
So to bless a dying thief;
E'en amid His own deep anguish,
Thus to give a soul relief?

Tell it in the highest heaven,
Tell it in the depths below,
Tell it to the lost and outcast,
Tell it in the haunts of woe:
To the very chief of sinners
Let the blessed tidings go:
He who asks a Saviour's mercy
Shall the Saviour's mercy know.
—'British Weekly.'

The Cousin No One Liked.

One naughty little cousin, who had distinguished himself by petty lies and thefts in the family—who had read the other boys' precious private diaries—failed to bring up his share of the coal and the wood—neglected errands, and so on—complained bitterly that James, an especially popular cousin, did not love him as well as he loved Martin and Jack.

'I am his cousin, just as much as they are,' he said bitterly, 'but he doesn't take me fishing with him, nor let me ride in his goat-cart. He takes them all the while.'

'It isn't because they are his cousins,' admonished his wise grandmother. 'I have seen it just as you have, and I have felt badly, too, but you know you took his sweater when he told you not to, and you read in his diary that he was going up to camp that time, when he meant to keep it secret, and a good many other things which you know better than I do. Before you can make James love you as well as Martin and Jack, you have got to be something more than a mere cousin. You have got to be an honest boy—as they are. And you won't have any other friends, either, unless you change your ways.'—Brooklyn 'Eagle.'

A Boy's Sacrifice.

(George B. Griffith, in the Michigan 'Christian Advocate'.)

Little Johnny Davies, when only nine years of age, the son of a poor widow living in a small town in the interior of the great state of Pennsylvania, came to the house of a Bible secretary at ten o'clock of an extremely cold winter night, and, on finding his shop closed, came to the kitchen door and loudly rapped several times. The book-seller had already commenced reading before family prayer, and for that reason forbade the servant to answer the door; but such was the perseverance of the boy, that he at last yielded to his importunity, and when the servant inquired what was wanting, the reply was, 'A Bible.' The secretary answered, 'If you come in the morning, you can have one.'

'I cannot, sir,' respectfully continued the boy, 'as I work in M. (a place two miles distant) and don't return home until late at night.' 'Come in, then,' said the good man, 'and you shall have one,' and on inquiring how he came into possession of the money he gave him for the Bible, and how he thought of spending it for so good a book, he told the secretary that it had been announced in the Sunday school that any little boy or girl could have a Bible very cheap at his storerooms. 'Therefore I saved it, sir,' continued the little fellow. The book-seller replied: 'You did very right in buying one for yourself,' and wished him good-night.

The next day his widowed mother came to the secretary's shop with the Bible in her hand. The good man was for a moment startled, fearing the boy had done something wrong; and her first word was, 'Did my little boy buy this Bible here last night?' 'He did,' was the answer, 'and told me that he had saved the money for that purpose.'

'Yes,' continued the mother, 'and how do you think he saved it?' 'I cannot say,' said the bookseller. 'Well, I will tell you. Having to leave home very early every morning before breakfast, I cut him two large pieces of dark bread (for I cannot get him anything better), one for his breakfast, and the other for his dinner; his supper he had when he came home at night; and with this I gave him a halfpenny each day to buy some milk, and told him to divide it into two equal parts, the one for his breakfast and the other for his dinner.' Here was a pause, and from her countenance the stirring emotion of her soul was evident; in vain she tried to repress the feelings of a widowed mother over her child. To use her own language, 'The little boy ate the dark bread and drank nothing but water for four successive weeks, without her knowledge, to have this Bible,' holding it still up in her hand.

Such was the value set upon the Word of God by this poor little boy!

Die when I may, I want it said of me by those who knew me best that I always plucked a thistle and planted a flower when I thought a flower would grow.—Lincoln.

The Slight in the Work.

(By W. Bert Foster, in the 'S. S. Messenger'.)

'You're slightin' that job Ben,' remarked old Henry, the foreman, standing beside Ben Perry's bench.

'What's the odds? Nobody's going to see this; it will be covered up all right,' responded the young workman, carelessly.

'Yes, it'll be covered up; that's true. But sometime it's bound to be taken apart; and the workman who does it, if he knows his business, will say, "The one who did this job was either a shirk or a poor hand at it."'

Ben laughed good-naturedly. 'What if he does? I shall not be there to hear his opinion, Henry. You know there's nothing very particular about this, and I'm in a hurry to get it out of the way.'

'But you'll know it yourself, won't you?' demanded the foreman.

'Eh? what do you mean?' and Ben turned a puzzled glance upon him.

'Why, don't you like to know in your own heart that the work you do is all right?'

'But what's the odds when nobody's going to see it? It will never be found out who did it.'

'I tell you,' said old Henry, shaking his head, 'a lie is sure to be found out in time—'

'Who's told a lie?' demanded Ben.

'You are tellin' one now, my boy,' said the foreman, calmly. 'A slight in your work is a lie; that's what I've always believed. Let me tell you, a slight in a job will be surely discovered.'

'This makes me think of a couple of men I knew once who were building a piece of wall,' the foreman continued. 'One of 'em, in settin' a brick, found it just a grain thicker on one side than on the other. The other workman said, "It will make your wall untrue, Henry;" yes, I admit I was the one he spoke to.'

'That makes no difference,' said I, 'You're too partic'lar.'

'It will make a difference. You wait an' see,' said he. 'Sooner or later that lie will show itself.'

'An' would you believe it,' pursued the foreman, shaking his long finger at Ben, 'he was right. I kept on layin' brick, an' carryin' the wall up, higher an' higher, right up to quittin' time at night, an' far as I could see, the wall I built was just as good as his.'

'But when I came back in the mornin' that lyin' brick had worked the end of all lies. The wall, getting a little slant from it, had

got more untrue as I carried it up, and during the night the whole thing had toppled over, an' I lost my job. I tell you, Ben, a slight's a lie, an' a lie doesn't pay—'

But his listener was already undoing the hasty work he had performed, and later did it all over again, and with his accustomed care.

Jeff and His Cow.

(Emily S. Windsor, in the 'Western Advocate'.)

Jeff slowly descended the steep clearing on the mountain-side. In each hand he carried a good-sized tin pail filled to the brim with blackberries. The latter were of perfect ripeness, and unusually large. 'They're as sweet as 'lasses,' reflected the boy. 'I reckon I could sell lots of them over at Warren, if I'd the time to pick them. But I reckon mother'll be glad to jell these.'

On reaching the foot of the mountain, Jeff put his pails carefully on the ground, and sat down on a log to rest. The midday sun was hot, and the climb to the berry patch had been a hard one.

He threw off his almost brimless old hat, and, crooking his arm, wiped his moist face on the sleeve of his clean, gingham shirt.

His eyes wandered dreamily to the sky, across whose deep blue soft veils of white cloud floated. Several buzzards were circling slowly above his head. A fugitive breeze brought him refreshment. He was aroused from the vague reverie into which he had fallen by a voice:

'Can you tell me how to reach the road leading to Warren?' it said.

Jeff turned around. A young woman stood in the road. Her short blue serge skirt and crisp shirtwaist and jaunty straw hat stamped her as not being one of the people of the country. 'One of those city people that's boarding in Warren,' thought the boy.

The young woman's face was pleasant, as the tones of her voice were musical. Both attracted the boy.

He stood up quickly. 'You're a right good piece out of the way,' he answered.

'I think that indeed I must be,' laughed the young woman. 'I have been wandering about for the last two hours trying to find it.'

'It's easy enough to get lost around here,' said Jeff, politely; 'the roads are so mixed up.'

The young woman laughed. 'I should think so. You see, I started out on a little exploring trip all by myself.'

Jeff caught up his hat, and put it on. Then, raising his pails of berries, he said, 'I'll show you the road.'

'O, thank you! If it will not take you out of your way.'

'I am going that way, any way,' answered Jeff. But he did not say that he had intended taking a cross cut home, through the ravine; for he was tired.

'You have not the speech and accent of the country around here,' she said, suddenly.

'We've not always lived here.' Then, encouraged by her sympathetic manner, Jeff recounted how, five years before, his father, failing in health in the city, had taken the position of station master at Berry, the next station to Warren. 'Then he bought the little place we're living in. I'm going to be a farmer; but I don't want to be one like those around here. I want to go to the Agricultural College, and learn how to do things scientifically.'

'Why, that is a fine ambition,' said the young woman, warmly. 'And to farm around here, with these wonderful mountains for company, would be a beautiful life.'

'I love the mountains,' said Jeff, simply. 'By this time they had reached the point where a road branched off straight to Warren.'

'You can't miss it now,' said Jeff. His companion thanked him warmly. 'I don't know what I should have done if I had not met you,' she said; 'for I could not see a house at which to make inquiries.'

The boy watched her retreating figure till