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Boys and Girls

Dear Cousins,—

Seems to me I shall have to hurry up and get this letter off, else Mr. Mailman won't wait for it any longer, and then one or two questions will be asked in the office. (Not in my office. Oh, no! All questions are asked in the editor's office, and don't you forget it.) Still, I can't help leaving it so late. What are you to do when Old Man Cold-in-the-Head, and his brother, Old Man Cough-on-the-Chest, come and visit you, and stay with you for a week? They've been visiting me now for a week, but I am glad to say they packed up and went off this morning, grumbling and sneezing as they went. (It's their fault, really, Mr. Printer, that my writing is so much worse than usual. They are guests who simply take up all your time, and allow you to write no letters at all while they are with you.)

Just before these two very unwelcome visitors arrived, I had two most welcome ones in the shape of letters from two more cousins, Leon and Gordon Bland. I am glad to find they have not forgotten me. They both have vigorous tales to tell of helping in the harvest last year, and I suppose by the time this letter gets into print, people will be beginning to think of this year's harvest. How the time does fly!

Last week, when I saw the sun shine and heard the icicles drip and the soft ice on the roads crunching under the cart-wheels, I said to myself, "Here comes Miss Spring at last. She wasn't sure whether she'd stay or not a fortnight ago, but here she comes all right now." And yesterday, they tell me it, was zero weather in the morning! What are you to do? I had heard Mrs. Cousin Mike murmur something about a spring hat, but she didn't seem to mention it yesterday, I noticed. Small wonder. I think a good, warm coat and fur cap are all I'll want for a while. Meantime, if you happen to see Miss Spring anywhere in the country, you might just let me know, will you? It was April last year before I found hepaticas.

Your Affectionate Cousin Mike.

POLICEMAN BILLY.

Billy is a big, black Gordon setter dog, and is owned by a man and his wife, whom we will call Mr. and Mrs. May. Their home is a plain but neat three-room "shack" in a small ranch town in one of our new Western States. There are a number of dogs in the little village, but Billy takes first place in strength, while his size commands the respect of every other dog, although he is friendly with all of them, and on good terms so long as they conduct themselves as he thinks respectable dogs should.

As is generally customary, when a dog from one of the neighboring ranches followed his master to town, there was almost sure to be trouble unless Billy was around. But if he was in sight when the stranger appeared, he would immediately go to him, in some way expressing his feeling of friendliness and welcome, and together they would walk up and down the short street, or doze together in some sunny spot, Billy always ready to give any needed protection.

At night Billy slept on a mat just inside the door of Mr. and Mrs. May's bedroom, and in summer-time the outside door in the living-room was left wide open. It was one of the first

warm nights in June, when Mr. May was awakened by some unusual disturbance over on the main street. He soon discovered that a vigorous dog-fight was going on, and he smiled as he heard Billy get up and go quietly out. He was dimly conscious as he dropped off to sleep again that the tumult had ceased.

When he and Mrs. May arose the next morning and went out into their little sitting-room, where were gathered the few choice things which they had brought from their Eastern home, what was their surprise to find a most disreputable-looking yellow hound, covered with dirt and blood, lying in the centre of the only rug they possessed, while Billy was stretched across the opening on to the porch, safeguarding the poor brute whom he had rescued from his savage tormentors. The rug was almost ruined, but such a "good Samaritan" spirit shown by even a dumb beast could not call forth very vigorous criticism, and the dog was pardoned that time.

Billy shared his breakfast with the forlorn stranger, and then, as his guest limped away toward town to find his master, who had probably spent the night in some gambling den and among greater enemies than vicious dogs, Billy went before him, and stayed close by until he was safely out of town.—Journal and Messenger.

WHAT A BOY COSTS.

SO you are twenty-one. And you stand up, clear-eyed, clear-minded, to look all the world squarely in the face. You are a man!

Did you ever think, son, how much it has cost to make a man out of you? Someone has figured up the cost in money of rearing a child. He says to bring up a young man to legal age, care for him and educate him, costs \$25,000, which is a lot of money to put into flesh and blood.

But that isn't all. You have cost your father many hard knocks and short dinners and gray streaks in his hair; and your mother—oh, boy! you will never know! You have cost her days and nights of anxiety, and wrinkles in her dear face, and heartaches and sacrifice.

It has been expensive to grow you, but— If you are what we think you are, you are worth all your cost—and much, much more.

Be sure of this: While father does not say much, but "Hello, son," way down deep in his tough, staunch heart he thinks you are the finest ever; and as for the little mother, she simply cannot keep her love and pride for you out of her eyes. You are a man now.

And some time you must step into your father's shoes. He wouldn't like you to call him old, but just the same he isn't as young as he used to be. You see, young man, he has been working pretty hard for more than twenty years to help you up! and already your mother is beginning to lean on you.

Doesn't that sober you, twenty-one? Your father has done fairly well, but you can do better. You may not think so, but he does. He has given you a better chance than he had. In many ways you can begin where he left off. He expects a good deal from you, and that is why he has tried to make a man of you. Don't flinch boy!

The world will try you out. It will put to test every fibre in you; but you are made of good stuff. Once the load is fairly strapped on your young shoulders, you will carry it and scarcely feel it—if only there be the willing and cheerful mind. All hail you on the threshold!

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are now packed in square packages. Each package contains five cakes, which are equal in quantity to six round cakes. All dealers are authorized to guarantee that the quality of the round and square cakes are identical in every respect.

It's high time you are beginning to pay the freight; and your back debts to your father and mother. You will pay them up, won't you, boy? How shall you pay them? By being always and everywhere a man!—Selected.



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