

## THE HARPER GIRLS.

Helen Harper had gotten the better of the day at last. There was no denying that it was very warm, and she had said so, for at least a dozen times since noon. Despite its being August and very warm, there were several things for Helen to do; she was at this moment being waited for with a sort of feverish impatience, by a sick friend, to whom the August heats, increased as they were for her by a wearing, nervous fever, were almost unbearable. She had looked forward for an hour, to the coming of Helen Harper in her dress of white, looking cool and fresh. And when the afternoon dragged its slow length along and Helen did not come, the poor fevered girl, who had expected that she would bring a flower, and perhaps a book, and read to her, cried outright.

It was not that Helen had forgotten. Twice in the course of the hour in which she had lounged about the piazzas looking for coolness, her mother had said, first: "I thought you were to go and sit with Alice Wood this afternoon;" and then, "Helen, I am afraid poor Alice will be greatly disappointed; it must be very warm for her, too." And Helen had answered, "I was, but it is too warm to think of going out, yet a while, at least. The only reasonable thing one could do on such an afternoon as this, would be to have a row down the shady side of the river; and that I can't have, because we have no boat. I think it's too mean for anything." And a little later, "O dear, mamma! I really can't go now; it will not make Alice any cooler to have me there." And her mother had sighed, and made no answer.

At last, as I tell you, Helen had composed herself in the hammock and was really having a good time. She dreamed that she went to see Alice Wood, and took her a cool-looking rose, and a juicy orange, and fanned her, and read some lovely bits from the latest magazine to her. These pleasant and unselfish ministrations wreathed her face in such quiet beauty, that her mother, passing the hammock soon after, said to herself, "How pretty Helen looks when she is asleep. Poor child, I do hope the luxuries with which our love surrounds her, are not simply making her selfish."

Meantime the older sister, Laura, was having almost as miserable a time over the weather as Helen. She had gotten as far in her afternoon toilet as to dress her back hair becomingly, then tie a bit of gauze around the front frizzes, as she told them it was "too hot to touch them!" "I just can't get dressed," she said languidly; "there is no use in trying. Not a breath of air stirring, go where I may. As if anybody in the world could be expected to go to a missionary meeting on an August afternoon!" And she took her fan, and dropped a limp heap into one of the easy chairs in her room, and closed her eyes and groaned. It was there her mother found her, half an hour later. She had come to remind her that it was time for the missionary meeting, and that the ladies would depend on her for music. But she closed the door again, quietly. No use to remind a sleeping girl, with no dress at all on her, that it was quite time to start for missionary meeting. "They will have to do without her," the mother said with a sigh; "I wonder why it is that my girls are so wilted with warm weather? They are as well as other girls; and I didn't use to feel so."

Perhaps it was fifteen minutes afterwards, that she softly opened the door of Elva's room. Elva was her youngest daughter. She was neatly dressed, and was bending over a small work table, intent on taking an "impression" of a lovely leaf from a choice foliage plant.

Around her were grouped a variety of successful impressions, done on satin paper, and ready to be mounted, or gathered in a portfolio.

"Child!" said her mother, "how can you work in such warm weather?"

"O, mamma! it is such pretty work; when I get really interested I forget how warm it is."

"But this is the warmest afternoon we have had; and what little air there is, is on the other side of the house."

work table. "But, mamma, how does it happen that the good fortune falls to me? Where is Helen?"

"Asleep in the hammock, only partly dressed, and Weston is in haste."

"Oh! what a pity. She was longing for a row down the river, only this morning. But where is Laura?"

"Asleep in her room, not dressed at all."

Elva laughed. "What sleepy heads!" she said. "I haven't thought of such a thing as being sleepy. Well, I'm sorry for them, but delighted to go. Will you have Marie put up a lunch for me, mamma?"

"Elva has absorbed the energy that belongs to all three," Mrs. Harper explained to her husband that evening, as she was accounting for the child's absence. "She is just as bright as a bird all these warm

## A WORD FOR ALL.

BY GEO. H. DE KAY.

It was Sunday evening in one of our large Western cities. The meeting was over, and the happy, smiling faces of the young people, as they gathered here and there in the lecture-room, showed how much they had enjoyed it. And well they might; it had been a good meeting, and they were an earnest set of young people, endeavoring to make their prayer-meetings pleasant places for all.

But Frank White rose from his seat in the rear of the room, feeling dissatisfied and unpleasant. He was a young man, and almost a stranger in the city. Years before, in his Eastern home, he had confessed Christ, and taken a stand among his people; but, in one way and another, he had grown cold and fallen away, and now for nearly ten years he had never publicly confessed his Master.

He had been attracted to these young people's meetings, and felt his heart warmed as he listened to the testimonies of one after another. But this was his third Sunday evening there, and no one had welcomed him. He was lonely in the great city, and felt the need of friends, yet, with the feeling so common to all among strangers, he shrank from making any advances.

In the past few weeks he had been hesitating between two ways. The still small voice called him back to the better way, but his temptations were many, and tonight he was nearly won to them. The friendly greetings he heard among the others seemed but to increase his loneliness, and irritated him, and with a bitter feeling in his heart he started to leave the church, forever, he told himself.

Next Sunday he would join the other boys in the shop, who had so cordially invited him to share their fun at the seashore. He had nearly reached the door when a cheerful "Good evening!" checked him, and he turned to see from whom the greeting came. It was Mary Travis, who had noticed the stranger, and, finding herself near him, felt impelled to speak. Extending her hand, she added pleasantly, "I see you are a stranger. I noticed you here last Sunday evening, and am glad to see you here again. We would like to have you join us; I'm sure you will like us after you get a little acquainted." And then, half afraid she had been too forward, she turned and left him. But the little act was not lost. The kindly smile, the warm handshake, and the Christian greeting had driven out the bitter feeling. "I will come again," thought Frank, as he descended the steps. And he did.

Soon his voice was heard in testimony, and ere long he became an active member of the society and an earnest worker among the mission schools. No one knew, for months, the battle which had been decided by those few kind words, and Mary Travis never imagined the work she had done for the Master that night.

It is a work we all can do. Let us be "on the look-out" for the strangers among us; speak to them. God will as surely bless the "Welcome, brother," as he will our prayers, if it be given for his sake.—Golden Rule.

"So smile on friend and foe,  
That they who hating came  
Will loving go."



"I suppose so; I didn't mean to work long; but some of the leaves are just in perfection now, and I wanted to catch them. Besides, you know, next Thursday will be Alice Wood's birthday; and I did want to get this collection ready for her, and let her have so much of the summer. But I have nearly finished for to-day. Can I do anything for you, mamma?"

"Not for me," said Mrs. Harper, smiling, "but perhaps you can for yourself. Don't you want a row down the river to cool you? Weston Moore has called to say there is room in his party for one more, and they are going to picnic on the island."

"Oh! how lovely," and Elva sprang up so suddenly as to almost overturn the little

days, and is busy from morning till night doing something for somebody, while the others can do nothing but lounge around, and think how warm they are. I don't understand it."

"I do," said the father, as he unfolded the evening paper. "The other two are up until midnight half the nights in the week, and Elva goes to bed at nine o'clock; that accounts for two thirds of it, and you accounted for the other third. They think of themselves, and she thinks of others."

Are my Blossoms acquainted with the Harper girls? Having now been introduced, keep your eyes wide open, and be sure to recognize them when you meet them.—Pansy.