

LITTLE FOLKS

Archie's Letters.

'Ug ug ley ugly.'

Archie threw his head back and gazed at the word after he had written it.

'I wonder if that's right. It don't look right, somehow. Mamma, is there any e in ugly?'

'No, dear, it is just u g l y.'

Archie scratched out the e and wrote on, wrinkling up his forehead, and setting his lips tightly together. He found letter writing hard work.

'Mama, are there two l's in hateful?'

'No, only one.'

'Mamma, are there two l's in hate-part of the library wondered what her small boy could be doing.

'What are you writing, Archie?'

'A letter, Mamma.'

'To whom, dear?'

'To Harold.'

'I used to be fond of writing letters,' said Mamma. 'I had a dear little friend when I was about as old as you are. We used to go to school together, and eat our lunches together, and play together—'

'That's just the way Harold and I have been doing,' said Archie with a scowl.

'But one time we quarrelled.' Archie left his seat and came nearer his mother to listen.

'I don't remember just what it was about. Very likely it was something not worth quarrelling over. But I was very angry, and made up my mind I would write her a sharp letter, and then have nothing more to do with her. So I wrote it, saying a great many cross, ugly things. I took it to my mamma to see if it was all written right, and she said:—

"You are not going to send this, are you, my little girl?"

"Yes, I am," I said.

"I wouldn't dear. You may be sure a time will come when you will be sorry. Angry words spoken are bad enough. They hurt and burn—hurting most those we love most. But angry words written are worse, for they are put down, and they stay. After your anger is all forgotten they will all be there to show how ugly you once felt. I hope you won't send this, dear."

'Well, I am glad to say I took

her advice and tore up the letter. I was soon friends again with Ger-tie, and oh, how glad I was that she had never seen that letter.'

Archie slowly went back and read his letter. It began:—

'Mr. Harold I think you are mean and ugly and hateful. I'll nevvver speke to you again, and you shan't nevvver speke—'

That was as far as he had written. He did not like his letter, and before long mamma saw some scraps of paper go into the waste-basket.

He took another sheet. He would not write Harold such a very cross letter, but he must tell Harold something of what he thought of him. And he would tell him he was going to send back

using any hard words, told Harold to come and take away the rabbit as they would never play together again.

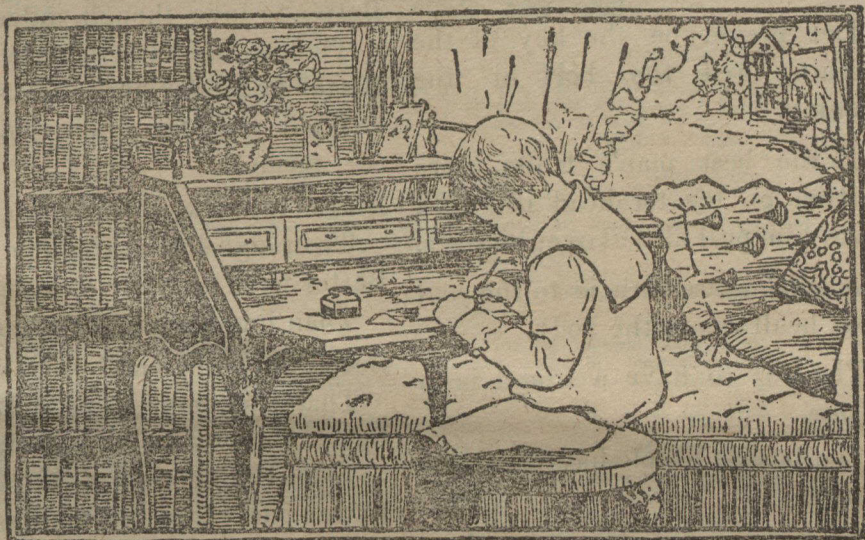
'I always thought,' said mamma, laying down her sewing and settling back as if for a chat, 'that it was very lovely in Harold to bring you that rabbit as he did.'

'Yes,' agreed Archie, a little unwillingly.

'It was when you had the scarlet fever. You were getting well, but you could not go out, and none of the boys could come to see you. Do you remember how every day Harold used to come and stand at the window smiling at you?'

'Yes,' said Archie, brightening.

'And always bringing some little thing for you. Sometimes it



the rabbit he had given him. He was very fond of the rabbit, and he and Harold had found it very useful when they played menagerie, for Snowball was very docile, and was equally willing to be lion, or elephant, or monkey, just as the boys wished.

But, of course, Archie was not going to keep anything given by Harold now that they had quarrelled. His heart failed him a little as he thought of the pretty creature, remembering that it was nearly time to go and give him his supper of fresh clover with a little parsley.

He began again, after awhile coming to his mother to show her the letter.

'I don't think that looks quite right,' he said, pointing to where he had written "rabit."

'No,' said mamma, as she saw that the letter was not much like what she had guessed the other to be. In it Archie had, without

was an apple or a peach, sometimes a picture book or a bunch of flowers.'

'Yes, yes,' cried Archie.

'And one day he brought the rabbit and set it on the window-sill so that it could look in at you with its soft eyes. We knew he could not have it back for a long time, and when you did offer it to him, he said, no, it was yours.'

'I think,' said mamma, more soberly, as Archie seemed to have nothing to say, 'that it is a very sweet and lovely thing for a boy, or a girl either, to have a friend who is very near and dear. They love each other better and better as the years go on. It teaches them to be unselfish, for, of course, we are always glad to give up to those we love. They are together through school days, and then through college days, always enjoying things the more because the other enjoys with them.'

Mamma went out. Archie went