

BOYS AND GIRLS

The Climber.

How should he know, who hath not won
Sure victories from sun to sun—
How can he know, who hath not tried
The peril of the mountain-side,
What strength of arm is his—what zeal
In combat with the brave to deal?
What prowess and what skill he hath
To find his footing on the path—
To cling, and cling, and always keep
His hold of faith along the steep?
Who tries is also tried. Who dares
To scale the heights, their danger shares.
But on the cliff's uneven face
He finds each day a higher place.
His strength expands; he thrills to know
How broad the breathing-places grow;
And every hour some gain is found,
Some view from wider vantage-ground
—Frank Walcott Hutt.

No!

'No!' clear, sharp and ringing, with an emphasis which could not fail to arrest attention.

'I don't often hear such a negative as that,' remarked one gentleman to another as they were passing the play-ground of a village school.

'It is not often anyone hears it. The boy who utters it can say "Yes," too, quite as emphatically. He is a new-comer here, an orphan, who lives about two miles off with his uncle. He walks in every morning, bringing his lunch, and walks back at night. He works enough, too, to pay his board, and does more toward running his uncle's farm than the old man does himself. He is the coarsest dressed scholar in school, and the greatest favorite. Everybody knows just what to expect of him.'

'Quite a character; I should like to see him. Boys of such a sturdy make-up are getting to be scarce, while the world never had more need of them than now.'

'All this is true; and if you wish to see Ned come this way.'

The speaker moved on a few steps, pausing by an open gate, near which a group of lads were discussing some exciting question.

'It isn't right, and I won't have anything to do with it. When I say "No," I mean it.'

'Well, anyway, you needn't speak so loud, and tell everybody about it,' was responded, impatiently.

'I am willing that everybody should hear what I have got to say about it. I won't take anything that don't belong to me, and I won't drink cider, anyway.'

'Such a fuss about a little fun! It is just what we might have expected; you never go in for fun!'

'I never go in for wrong. I told you "No" to begin with, and you're the ones to blame if there's been any fuss.'

'Ned Dunlap, I should like to see you a minute.'

'Yes, sir,' and the boy removed his hat as he passed through the gate, and waited to see what Mr. Palmer might have to say to him. 'Has your uncle any apples to sell?'

'No, sir; he had some, but he has sold them. I've got two bushels that were my share for picking; would you like to buy them, sir?'

'Yes, if we can agree upon the price. Do you know just how much they are worth?'

'Yes, sir.'

'All right, then. I will call for them, and you may call at my house for the pay.'

This short interview afforded the stranger an opportunity to observe Ned Dunlap closely. The next day a call was made at his uncle's and although years elapsed before he knew what a friend he had gained that day, his fortune was assured. After he had grown to manhood and accepted a lucrative position which was not of his seeking, he asked why it had been offered him.

'Because I knew you could say "No," if the occasion required,' answered his employer. "'No," was the first word I heard you speak, and you spoke it with a will. More people, old and young, are ruined for want of using that word than from any other cause. They don't wish to do wrong, but they hesitate and parley until the tempter has them fast. The boy or girl who is not afraid to say "No" is reasonably certain of making an honorable man or woman.'—'Christian Intelligencer.'

A Much Mothered Youngster

A correspondent of 'Nature' tells the following interesting bird story: A pair of blackbirds built a nest in a small thick laurel, and in another shrub, some four feet off, a pair of thrushes also set up housekeeping. The young in both nests were hatched at the same time, and were successfully reared until, when some eight or nine days old, they were attacked by a cat, who killed all the young thrushes and all the blackbirds except one, which was found hidden under the shrubs. It was continually visited after the tragedy by both the old thrushes and old blackbirds, and two or three hours later was removed in some way to a shrubbery twenty or thirty yards away. There for the last five days it has been fed and looked after by both pairs of birds, who mob with exceptional vigor any intruding cat or dog. The four parents seem in no way jealous of one another.

Remarkable Ants.

A cook was much annoyed to find his pastry shelves attacked by ants. By careful watching it was discovered that they came twice a day in search of food—at about seven in the morning and four in the afternoon. How were the pies to be protected against the invaders?

The cook decided to make a circle round the pie with treacle and await the result. He did not have long to wait, for at 6.30 he noticed that off in the left corner of the pantry was a line of ants slowly making its way in the direction of the pies.

They seemed like a vast army coming forth to attack the enemy. In front was a leader who always kept a little ahead of his troops. They were of the sort known as the medium-sized red ant, which is regarded as the most intelligent of its kind, whose scientific name is 'Formica rubra.'

About forty ants out of 500 stepped out and joined the leader. The general and his aids held a council and then proceeded to examine the circle of treacle.

Certain portions seemed to be assigned to the different ants, and each selected unerringly the point in the section under his charge where the stream of treacle was narrowest. Then the leader made his tour of inspection. The order to march was given and the ants all made their way to a hole in the wall, at which the plastering was loose.

Here they broke rank and set about carrying pieces of plaster to the places in the treacle which had been agreed upon as narrowest.

To and fro they went from the nail-hole to the treacle, until at 11.20 o'clock they had thrown a bridge across. Then they formed themselves in line again and marched over, and by 11.45 every ant was eating pie.—The 'Northwestern Advocate.'

An Experiment.

(Susan Brown Robbins, in the 'Dominion Presbyterian'.)

'Did you have a good time, Annis?'

'Yes.' The answer came dubiously, and her face wore a weary expression.

'You are tired,' said Ruth, gently. 'Go and lie down till supper is ready.'

Annis passed slowly upstairs, and Ruth went about setting the table. She wondered at her sister's mood. Usually, when she came home from any little pleasuring, she was very happy and animated, eager to tell all she had seen and heard. On this occasion she had expected to have a more than usually delightful time, as she was going to a small gathering of old college friends. Something must have happened to spoil her good time, Ruth decided, and she sighed. Annis had so few. It was a pity for her not to enjoy every one of them.

After nightfall the sisters sat alone, each by a window in the darkening sitting room. 'Tell me all about it,' Ruth had said, and Annis began:

'There were five of us there. The others whom Grace Colburn had invited could not come. First there is Grace herself. She has a beautiful home, a kind husband, and three nice children. She is bringing up her children and managing her house in the best possible way. She makes a study of it, and still finds time to keep up with her music and reading.'

'Then there is Ida Scovil, who is a very successful teacher; Edna Mace, a prosperous doctor, and Sarah Dean, who teaches elocution. Last of all there was Annis Proctor, who lives on a farm, and helps to do housework for her brothers and grandfather,' her voice broke.

'Well, it is necessary work,' said Ruth, rather quickly. 'Perhaps as necessary as some of those other things.'

Annis was silent, trying to get control of her voice.

'It isn't wholly that,' she said at length. 'It isn't that I feel the work to be unworthy; it is myself. You know how you sacrificed your hopes and ambitions in order to send me to college, and then when father and mother died, you insisted that I should finish the course. I wanted to do it, too, for, though I knew that my duty was at home here helping you, I felt that the college course would make a difference in my after life. Well, it hasn't.'

'Oh, Annis,' Ruth broke in, 'I think it has.' 'No,' said Annis, doggedly, 'it hasn't. What hopes I had! I meant to continue with my music and painting. I wanted to make our home attractive, so that the boys would think it was the nicest place in the world. I expected to influence the neighborhood, and redeem it from the commonplace. Everything was to be different because I was here.'

'It has been different,' said Ruth. 'You don't know how different.'

'For a month or so it may have been, but after that—I have been a failure. I haven't seen my water-color box for a year, and I haven't touched the piano since winter. There have been times when I have tried to live up to my ideals, but in the years to come I see just what I shall be. Exactly like everyone