

# BOYS AND GIRLS

## Our World.

The weary world's a cheery place  
For those with hearts to win it.  
Thank God, there's not a human face  
But has some laughter in it!  
The soul that comes with honest mi.  
Though health and fortune vary,  
Brings back the childhood of the eart,  
And keeps it sound and merry.

The plodding world's an eager place  
For those with wit to use it.  
Where all are bidden to the race,  
Let him who dares refuse it!  
The simplest task the hand can try,  
The dullest round of duty,  
Knowledge can amply glory,  
And art can crown with beauty.

A busy, bonny, kindly place  
Is this rough world of ours,  
For those who love and work apace,  
And fill their hands with flowers.  
To kind and just and grateful hearts  
The present grace is given  
To find a heaven in themselves,  
And find themselves in heaven.  
—'League Journal.'

## The Frolics of Trotty.

(Helen Butler Smith, in the 'Congregationalist and Christian World'.)

I first saw him one winter morning frolicking about a neighboring yard. He was dirty and sore-eyed, evidently a stray, but so fined with the joy of living that it was a pleasure to watch him. A bitter wind was blowing which sent the dead leaves flying, and he was in hot pursuit, his little thin body bounding from side to side, and his funny three-quarters tail fluffed out like a lamp-chimney brush. He might be homeless and cold and hungry, but if his stomach was light, so was his heart.

Somehow, the brave little thing appealed to me, and, when coming from town in the late afternoon, I found he had strayed to the foot of the long hill, I picked him up and brought him home.

He protested, loudly, all the way, but when released, made a quick tour of the room, and, apparently, finding it satisfactory, seated himself before the fire with the affable air of a long-expected and welcome guest, from which attitude of mind he never varied.

The next morning he began work early. He did not wake slowly, stretching and blinking as most cats do, but the instant his eyes were open he was on his feet, ready for business, with the air of saying, 'This is my busy day.'

He at once laid out an imaginary racecourse through the rooms, which were so arranged that he could make a circuit. Round and round he flew, now leaping on a table to snatch the cover from a magazine, and now, with a quick bound, nipping a mouthful of leaves from the plants.

I was away through the day, but when I returned at night my mother met me, almost in tears.

'You will have to dispose of that cat,' she said; 'he hasn't been still all day, and I cannot stand it.'

So Bobby Shafto, as we named him, was given to a neighbor's little girl, with the injunction that if her mother 'could not stand it,' he was on no account to be turned out, but must be brought back.

In a couple of days he arrived, having proved too strenuous for the peace of that family. But the child knew a little boy who wanted him and would be very kind to him, so forth he fared, with the same injunction. In less than a week he was back again; and this time he gained a residence.

A generous diet, with repeated applications of soap and water and eye lotion, fought with teeth and nail, soon put him in fine condition, physically, and as for his spirits they never flagged. It was found safer to furnish him with playthings than for him to select his

own, so a mouse was made of a bit of seal-skin, with a long tail and bead eyes, which was the delight of his heart, though a dragged mouse laid up on a chair cushion sometimes tried the nerves of callers. He had a way of hiding it under the edge of rugs, and going off to play with something else, apparently forgetting it, and presently rushing back to poke it out and go wild over it. But its favorite playthings were the fluffy tassels on some window draperies. He would sit and watch them away, until there would be a sudden leap, and the cry would go up, 'Bobby's got another tassel!' This cry went up so often that finally scissors completed the work of destruction.

Bobby Shafto had an investigating turn of mind, and not an open drawer or box escaped his inspection, and in the stable his inquisitive paw was screwed into every knothole and crevice. His predecessor, a handsome yellow and white cat, Sir Philip Sidney by name, was an aristocrat who hid his emotions under an indifferent calm. If there was an excitement in the street and we stepped quickly to the windows, he would quit his cushion, leisurely stroll to a window and look out, indifferently, as if he wondered what the weather was going to be. Not so Bobby! At the first sign of anything doing, he rushed to a window, turning his head this way and that to miss nothing. This trait earned him the name of 'Investigation,' for a time, but it was too long and cumbersome for such a flyaway, and when the ceaseless trotting of the little white feet finally suggested the name of 'Trotty,' every body recognized its fitness.

He was a hard-working little body, one of his self-elected duties being the care of the stable. He attended to marauding mice and inspected the harness closet; he trotted up stairs to see the grain measured out and poured down the chute, then down stairs to watch the stall cared for and the horse groomed.

But when Don was put in the shafts, his duties ceased and his pleasures began. Trotty mounted gravely to the seat, ready for his daily ride to the corner, a few rods distant, where he would be put out, and come racing back as if afraid something might have gone wrong in his absence. Toward noon and night he usually took up his position on the end of the hoisting beam over the stable door, from which coign of vantage he had an extended view, and the first sight of the team sent him hurrying to the ground to meet it and ride in. No child loved better to ride, and we had to keep an eye on delivery waggons coming to the house lest Trotty be carried off as a stowaway. Once we were just in time to save my brother from making a street spectacle of himself by driving down town with Trotty perched on the carriage top.

Beside his stable duties, he gave personal supervision to mowing the lawn, trotting back and forth beside the lawn mower, with an occasional circuit to get the general effect. He had various indoor activities, the most enjoyed being bed-making, with its unlimited opportunities for hide and seek, and the many flying corners to be clutched and clung to. Taken all in all, his work would have made serious inroads upon his playtime, if he had not possessed the happy faculty of combining business with pleasure!

Trotty was fond of us all, but he had his favorites, chief of whom was my mother. She held long, one-sided conversations with him, and he was never too busy or too playful to share her afternoon nap. He liked most to lie on her breast, his little bright eyes fixed on her face, until they closed slowly and his sleepy purr trailed off in a low rumble. She was very considerate, not only of his comfort, but of his feelings, and once, when I was telling a caller of some of his pranks, and he left the room during the recital, she said, with some severity, 'I wish you would never mention that before him again!'

Perhaps the horse came next in his regard. He would sit in the manger and rub his head up and down on Don's face, not in the least offended by an occasional impatient thrust of his nose. There was also a patriarchal fam-

ily cat called Clover, to whom Trotty constituted himself bodyguard, flying to the rescue if danger threatened from boy or dog.

Trotty was not specially invited to family devotions, but he often attended and 'took part.' He would sit beside my mother, soberly watching the motion of her lips, then, with a quick leap, clap his paw on them; or a small, furry avalanche would descend upon the back of a kneeling worshipper, and some briar-like claws fasten in her hair. But when any attempt was made to punish him for these misdeeds, he would break into a happy purr which plainly said, 'I didn't mean to be bad, I was only in fun,' and all would be forgiven.

He was such a friendly little cat! He met the world with outstretched paw, and the world responded in kind. Everybody had a pleasant word or a caress for him, and everything served his pleasure. A whip shaken in his face, a swaying vine, a loosened shoestring—he responded instantly to all.

So he frisked through three happy years; but in the fourth we began to say to each other, 'Trotty doesn't play as much as he used to.' We noticed that he took longer naps and neglected his work; and by and by a labored breathing became apparent. Everything was tried for his relief, but he grew more and more quiet, and one morning we found him on his bed quite still.

Other cats have come and gone since then, and we have had heavier sorrows to bear, but looking back we feel that something very pleasant went out of our lives in the passing of Trotty.

## The King's Ferry Boat.

'And there went over a ferry boat to carry over the King's household, and to do what he thought good.'—II. Sam. xix., 18.

Now, there was once some people living in a beautiful country named Chronogea. Splendid cities, noble forests, pleasant fields and flower-filled gardens made of that country a very delightful land. Little children were playing in the parks, and birds singing in the trees, and every place seemed full of happy, busy life.

And yet in this beautiful place there was one thing that often made the people sorrowful and sad. For all along one side of this pleasant country there was a river so deep that no one had ever been able to fathom it, and so black that no one could see far down its dark waters as they swept on beside the shore.

But the strangest thing about this river was, that when the people stood upon the banks, they could never see to the other side. They tried with telescopes and electric lights and all sorts of things, but they could never get anything strong enough to pierce the cloud that hid what was there.

Some said they were very foolish people to keep on wasting their time in looking for what they could never see. Why did they not leave off? No doubt they would have done so, but for one strange thing. It was this. Every now and then a black boat, with gold letters upon its prow, would come out of the cloud and come across the river to the side where these people lived; and when it got near the shore, they could read these words: 'The King's Ferry Boat.'

But there was something more, for when the boat came to land, and was fastened to the bank, some of the rowers would get out and go and knock at one of the doors in the city streets and say: 'It is time! It is time!' And then in a little while they would be seen returning to their boat, taking one of those people with them—sometimes a little child, sometimes an aged man, sometimes one that looked strong and well, sometimes one stricken with disease.

And so the people knew that when the King's ferry boat came out of the cloud on the river some one of them would have to go away.

They would follow their friend down to the bank of the river and say farewell, often