

## OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

## SOMETHING TO DO.

"Something to do, mamma, something to do!"  
 Who has not heard the cry?  
 Something to plan, and something to try!  
 Something to do when the sky is blue,  
 And the sun is clear and high;  
 Something to do on a rainy day,  
 Tired of lessons or tired of play;  
 Something to do in the morning walk,  
 Better than merely to stroll and talk.  
 For the fidgety feet, O something to do,  
 For the mischievous fingers something too;  
 For the busy thought in the little brain,  
 For the longing love of the little heart,  
 Something easy, and nice and plain;  
 Something in which they all can take part;  
 Something better than breakable toys,  
 Something for girls and something for boys.

—Frances Ridley Havergal.

## A BIG SURPRISE.—A STORY OF SEVEN DIALS.

BY L. T. MEADE, AUTHOR OF "A PEEP INTO PARADISE."

## CHAPTER I.—Continued.

The air, so close and hot in the sultry attic, was much fresher outside, and the sensation of the pleasant breeze on Maggie's cheeks was enough happiness for her at first. With her arms tightly clasped round Joe's neck, the time seemed not *very* long before the supreme moment, when, placing her in a wide low seat, he said, "Now!" in a voice of triumph, and removed the covering from her eyes. She had never seen a flower in her life; she had never been in the open air before, and *now*—now flowers in profusion, flowers of every hue lay at her feet. For Joe had carried Maggie to one of the beautiful gardens of the Thames Embankment.

"Oh! Joe, 'tis 'eaven—'tis 'eaven!" said the excited and dazzled child, and she burst into tears.

"Didn't I say so?" replied Joe, beginning to caper about. "Was I wrong when I said they was most blindin'?"

"They're like 'eaven," said Maggie again. Her joy was too great for any words but those. The birds were singing over head, the soft, fresh air was blowing on her thin cheeks, the bright flowers were like a glory everywhere; and when Joe sat down by Maggie's side, and she leant her head against his shoulder, no child in London could be happier than she.

We have day-dreams, many of us, and the dreams are brighter than the reality; we have visions of future glory, and the future comes without the glory; we have hopes which fade; we have anticipations which turn to ashes in our grasp. Those castles we build for ourselves without hands far exceed in their gorgeous colouring any human dwellings; but Maggie's castle had not disappointed her; strange as it may seem, her dreams had fallen short of the reality; bright as her visions of the real flowers were, the flowers themselves were brighter.

"Joe," she said at last, accompanying her words with a great long-drawn sigh of happiness, "I'm real glad as I seed the live flowers, fur I knows 'bout it now."

"'Bout wot?" said Joe.

"Why, 'bout my bin so little, and sickly and lame, yer knows."

"I'm sure I don't, then," said Joe. "I never *could* see why you warn't like other gals, wot could larf and skip and play wid a feller. There be chaps wot I knows as 'ave sisters wot plays marbles like h'any think,

I never *could* see why yer warn't like 'em, Maggie."

"But I know," said Maggie. "I knows now; 'twas God, wot wanted to give me a s'prise. Why, Joe, ef I 'ad bin strong and 'arty like you, I'd 'ave bin h'always in the streets; and I'd 'ave seen the flower-gals goin' about, and mebbe bin a flower-gal too; and I'd 'ave h'always knowed wot flowers was like; and t'would never 'ave come on me fur a s'prise."

"Well," said Joe, "I never thought as a s'prise wor worth h'all that much."

"Oh, but 'tis," said Maggie in an awestruck voice. "Doesn't yer know, Joe, 'tis same as 'eaven? Wen little Jim died next door, Mrs. Chandler said as 'ee war gone to 'eaven, and 'twould be a s'prise to 'im."

"Well?"

"I'd not be sorry *now* to die and go to 'eaven. I won't mind wen my leg gets a bit bad, nor wen mother cries and says as I won't be long with her. Oh! 'ow I used to fret, but now I'll be real glad."

"I know," said Joe; "yer wants another big s'prise."

"Yes, I do; I likes 'em, and I want God H'almighty to s'prise me soon again."

"Well, let's talk of the flowers now," said Joe, who felt that Maggie's conversation was carrying him rather out of his depth. "Does yer see that 'ere lily, Mag—that large white lily, same as yer pictur'?"

"Same as 'Consider the lilies 'o the field,'" exclaimed Maggie. "Oh, where, where?"

The sight of the real flower chased away, for the time, Maggie's pretty fancies; and Joe carried her about and showed her one gay bed of brilliant blossoms after another, and at last she knew what blue and orange and purple and red meant. At last Joe took her home.

That night, as the little child lay tired but happy on her straw mattress, Joe came in softly and bent down and kissed her.

"Mag," he said in an eager whisper, "I've got *some*think to tell yer."

"Wot?" asked Maggie.

"Another big s'prise, Maggie. Wot does yer say to seein' them 'ere flowers again?"

"Yes, I'll see 'em again," replied Maggie in her sweet voice. "I'll see 'em in God H'almighty's world, Joey dear."

"Oh, I know," replied Joe impatiently; "but I means soon, Mag—h'every week."

"How?" asked Maggie. "Yer know I can't walk, and yer mustn't run away from school."

"No," said Joe, "that's the 'mazin' part. I can take yer to see the flowers, and to feel the fresh h'air, but I needn't run away. Listen, Mag, and I'll tell yer about it. Wen I went back to school, the master, he h'up and axed me 'ow my sister liked th' 'mbankment, wid a lot of talk 'bout wot a fine thing it was for us poor folks to 'ave a place like that to set h'out in, and I said yer were nearly daft wid the s'prise, and 'ow yer had never seen a flower; and when I said that, 'ee war fit to be shot, and 'ee axed a heap o' questions; and in the h'end 'ee said, 'Well, h'old chap, I'm more glad than h'any think wid wot yer 'ave told me, and see yere!' and 'ee brought down his 'and wid a big bang on the desk, and 'ee says, says he, 'there wor never a rule made for such a case, but you shall

'ave leave to take the little 'un once a week to th' 'mbankment, and I'll be 'sponsible.'"

Having finished his narrative, Joe was silent, staring very hard at Maggie—equally hard did Maggie gaze at him.

"Joe," she said at last, speaking very solemnly, "does God H'almighty love you and me as well as he loves the flowers?"

"Why, yes, Maggie, I never thought of it; but I s'pose He do," replied Joe.

"That's why He lets us be together, 'cause He loves us all—flowers and all," said Maggie. "Joe," she added, "yer just the goodest and nicest boy in London, and I'm the werry 'appiest little 'un."

I have never heard anything since of Maggie. I cannot say whether she still goes with Joe to the beautiful gardens on the Thames Embankment, or whether her worldly circumstances have improved, and she has gained admission into some pleasant children's hospital, like that established not very long ago at Cheyne Walk, Chelsea, for poor little incurable children. Perhaps this is so, or perhaps, far better than that, God has sent for little Maggie, has shown her that He loves her even more than He loves the flowers, and has given her a grand surprise in a country where the bright blossoms never wither, and the children are never sick.

THE END.

## JUVENILE MISSION SCHEME.

DEAR CHILDREN,—The "Juvenile Mission Scheme" belongs to you, the children of the Church. It is a way by which each Sabbath School may contribute directly to our Foreign Missions. Probably you would like best to do what you can towards helping the *children* in heathen lands who have never been taught, as you have been, the blessed knowledge of our Father in Heaven, and of Jesus Christ His Son. If so there are various ways in which you may help to do this—which will be explained by your Superintendent, so that you may choose the one which you may think the best. You know, perhaps, that our Canadian Church has now a mission of its own to Indore, a large and important district of India. There we have two excellent missionaries, the Rev. J. M. Douglas and the Rev. J. Fraser Campbell, with several lady missionaries, and two Zenana teachers. These last are supported by a Bible Class in connection with one of our Sabbath Schools. They are native Christian girls, and their work is to go into the rooms in which the children and girls of the Hindoo families live shut up, as in prison, and to teach them the same things you learn, but above all, the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour. We want more schools to support more teachers, so that many more children and girls may learn this blessed truth. There are other ways too, and important ways, in which you may help, and those you will learn from a circular addressed to your superintendent. And if you value the light that God has given *you*, you will *want* to help others to get it too. You may not be able to give much, but if you give what you *can willingly*, it may please the Lord Jesus as much as the greater gifts of those who can afford more. He wants all who love Him to love others and help them, and especially to help those who are in heathen darkness, to know and love Him too. Do you not think, that if you deny yourselves something you like, to please the Lord Jesus and help to "rescue the perishing," it will give you far more happiness than the money you spend on the things that children like best, for there is no happiness like the happiness of obeying Christ's commands, and His parting command to His followers was that they were to see that His gospel was taken "through all the world," so that "every creature" might hear it, and have the opportunity of believing in Him. You *can* help to do this. You will not say "No!"—A. M. MACHAR, Sec. J. M. S., Kingston.