

BOYS AND GIRLS

Black Mother's Lullaby.

One Little Lamb.

(Martha Young, in 'Outlook'.)

I'm a little sheep mos' too black to see,
So de hire-man-shepperd can't never find me
When I'm wrap around wid de dark er de
night,
And de odder sheep shine in de dusk so
white—
So he gadder dem all safe inter de fol'
And leave me a-trimblein' out in de col'.
Coo-ee!
Sheep-ee!

Folks say dar's one black sheep in every flock,
But dat hire-man-shepperd don't hear me
knock;
Hit seem lak he'd ruther his sheep be all white
When he shut 'em all up safe and sound at
night—
He count dat he got in de half and de
whole,
When he shut-to de door of de warm shap-
fol'.
Coo-ee!
Sheep-ee!

But de Master come singin' adown dat way
To see of His sheep airy one gone astray;
And He say, 'I wants nairy one los', you
know?
But de hire-man-shepperd he don't sesso—
He pulled his forelock and he speak out
right bol':
'Yas, sah, Massa, de good uns is all in de
fol'.
Coo-ee!
Sheep-ee!
Des a little black sheep am me!

Den de Master look all around, and he say,
'I'm missin' of one'—He speak des dat-away.
Den out on de mountain all col' and so dark,
He go callin' dis-away: 'Sheep—oo— Ah,
hark!'
He finds and he ketches me wid a firm hol',
And dar's sholy one little Black Lamb in
de fol'.
Coo-ee!
Sheep-ee!
And Mammy's little Black Lamb am he!

Mother's Vacation.

(By L. Montgomery, in the 'Sabbath School Visitor'.)

The Osbornes were in the sitting-room when Jill—whose name was Therese—came dancing in. She flung a strapful of text-books in one corner, threw her hat in another, and cast herself on her own pet rocker in the sunset window.

'Breddern and sistern, I'se free,' she announced. 'Free! F-r-e-e! I could roll the word as a sweet morsel under my tongue. Two glorious, golden months to let myself go—never once to have to remember that I am a prim teacher with an inconvenient dignity to keep up. I mean to have the very jolliest vacation of my life this year.'

'Two months! Lucky you!' groaned Larry, enviously, from his nest of pillows. 'Two weeks are all I'll get—and that in the broiling days of August. But I'm going to cram as much fun into them as you'll spread over your eight, Jill.'

'It seems to me that we're all looking forward to a very gay and festive time this summer,' said Fred. 'Here's reckless Jill going to the seaside with half a dozen old high-school chums, and sober, sedate Sis is betaking herself to the mountains, while Larry and I, if we're lucky enough to get our vacation together, are going camping up river. Whoopee! It makes me young again to think of it.'

In the laugh that followed, the door bell rang. Cecil went out and brought Miss Woodruff in. It could not be said that the Osbornes were frantically glad to see her. Miss Woodruff had a habit of saying caustic things without any apparent provocation that put you out of conceit with yourself. This might be wholesome, but it did not make

for popularity. A special antipathy existed between Miss Woodruff and Jill. A general wave of straightening up passed over the room as Miss Woodruff entered.

'Is your mother home?' said Miss Woodruff.

'No, Miss Woodruff,' said Cecil. 'She went down to the Baker road this evening to take some jelly to old Mrs. Trent. She is very ill, you know.'

'Yes, I know. Your mother'll be ill herself if she goes walking down there on these hot nights. She's not looking well. Why didn't some of you take it?'

Cecil flushed scarlet.

'There was nobody home at the time except myself, and I was busy cooking.'

'As meek as Moses,' said Jill fiercely, afterwards. 'And poor Cecil had agonized all the morning in the heat making that jelly! Cecil is too good for this earth. I have to say it of her, if she is my sister.'

'Well, I merely called to see her about her contribution to the flannel fund,' said Miss Woodruff, who was always more deeply interested in the flannel fund in dog days than at any other time. 'I can drop in again. Very warm weather, isn't it? I suppose your school is closed, Therese. Are you going anywhere for your vacation?'

'Oh, yes,' said Jill. 'We are all planning a nice time. I am going to spend the summer with friends at a little seashore place, and Cecil has been invited to go to the mountains with Cousin Fedora. The boys are going camping with a number of their chums.'

'Humph!' said Miss Woodruff. 'And where's your mother going for her vacation?'

A dead silence followed this pointed question. Everybody waited for somebody else to answer it. In the end, Jill stepped lamely into the breach:—

'Why—why—mother isn't going anywhere, I suppose. She can't be spared from home very well. Somebody has to keep house, you see.'

'I see,' Miss Woodruff rose to go, with an acid smile. 'Of course, mothers never need vacations. Strange, isn't it? They're warranted not to wear out. I don't think I'll wait any longer. Good evening.'

'She gets on my nerves,' sighed Jill, as the door closed behind her. 'She has taken the savor out of everything.'

At the breakfast table next morning Cecil had a private, uncomfortable suspicion that her mother had been crying in the night. Her eyes looked it. To be sure, she seemed as bright and cheerful as ever, entering wholeheartedly into the vacation plans the boys were making, and discussing Jill's new dresses with her. But Cecil felt sure that her suspicion was correct.

Later on in the forenoon, as she was passing through her mother's room, she picked up an open letter from the floor and laid it on the table. As she did so, her eyes fell on a paragraph, and she could not avoid taking in the sense of it.

'Can't you come home for a visit this summer, Emily?' it ran, in Aunt Alice's large handwriting. 'We have not seen you for fifteen years. Surely now that the children have grown up—'

Cecil went out with flushed cheeks. This accounted for the look on her mother's face that morning. She was very thoughtful and abstracted all day.

When the time came for their accustomed conclave, Cecil said: 'I have a proposition to make to you all—to you, Therese Osborne, better known as Jill; to you Lawrence Osborne, alias Larry; and to you, Frederick Osborne, commonly called Fred. It's this—let us give up our vacations, at least so far as going away is concerned, and send mother down East for the summer.'

An eloquent silence followed, broken only by a whistle from Larry.

'You see,' went on Cecil, after a pause, 'what Miss Woodruff said yesterday set me to thinking. Mother doesn't look well. She's pale and tired, although she never complains. Last night she had a letter from Aunt Alice, wanting her to go home this summer. Mother hasn't been home for fifteen

years. She cried over it—I know she did—and I know she'd love to go.'

'But Cecil, if you back out of going to the mountains now, Cousin Fedora will be offended. She'll never give you the chance again.'

'It will not matter,' said Cecil, bravely. None of them really knew how her heart had been set on that mountain trip. 'If mother will go, I'll stay home and keep house, and the money that was to have gone into my clothes will go into hers. You will have to give up the seashore, Jill, and, boys, I'm sorry, but there'll be no camping out in company for you.'

'I'll do it,' said Larry, sturdily. 'Sorry I didn't think of it first. I've fifty dollars I'd saved up for my share in the campaign. It'll buy mother's ticket home.'

'And my fifty will buy it back,' said Fred. 'We're with you, sister.'

They all looked at Jill. Jill glared back at them. Then she rose and walked three times around the room. She did not believe she could give up the seaside and her jolly plans. At the end of her third perambulation, Jill came back and sat down.

'It's wrenched every bone and sinew, but it's over,' she announced, cheerfully. 'I'm with you, breddern. My little hoard is in the forget-me-not jug in my room. It is at your disposal, Cecil. I'll help you keep house if I'm not more bother than I'm worth.'

'The trouble will be to coax mother round,' said Larry. 'She's so strongly in the habit of effacing herself and giving everything to us that she'll not want to go.'

'We must make her,' declared Jill, resolutely. '"Parents, obey your children," is a good commandment sometimes.'

'She'll go if we're only in earnest enough,' said Cecil. 'Let's go straight to mother and tell her this minute. I want to gloat on the dear, blessed, unselfish little woman's surprise.'

So Mrs. Osborne went East. At first she protested, but her protests were not listened to, and the preparations for her visit were carried serenely on all the time she declared she couldn't go. In the end she succumbed.

'It was worth it,' said irrepressible Jill, when the train had steamed out of the station the next morning and the Osbornes started home. 'Mother's face was better than all the vacations in a lifetime, wasn't it? I declare, there's miss Woodruff coming down the street. Well, I can look her squarely in the face to-day.'

Only a Little Doll.

Elsie was only a poor little girl, but she had heard the missionary from India tell of the children there who have no toys and very little to make them happy. She wanted very much to send something to help them. She had only a penny to spend, and as she looked in the shop windows she saw so few things that only cost a penny. At last she bought a doll. It was only a little one, but she begged a piece of red silk and some white lace and dressed it very prettily, and it was then quite a nice present for some little Indian girl. One day she had the joy of taking it to be packed in a box with many others to be sent to India. Elsie felt rather sad when she saw so many large dolls, beside which hers looked so small, but she prayed that although hers was so little, Jesus would use it to tell some one of His love.

After a long voyage the doll reached India, and for some time lay in a cupboard waiting to be sent on its mission of love.

Far away from any town, in a village where the people all worshipped idols, and where no missionary had ever gone, lived a little Brahman girl named Lakshmikka. She was a pretty, curly-headed girl of seven years of age. One day her elder sister's marriage took place. Friends from all the villages around were gathered together to rejoice and feast. On the greatest day of the feast the usual fireworks were let off, and, as often happens in India, one took fire too