

# BOYS AND GIRLS

## The Other Girl.

(Mary E. L. Brush, in the 'Christian Intelligencer.')

Soft, white and fluffy, it lay across the shining rail of the little brass bedstead—a dainty, lace-trimmed party dress fine enough to delight any little girl's heart; nevertheless Mollie Lester's face wore a frown as she looked at it.

'To think that stupid Miss Spooler didn't put on the nice, Frenchy rosettes I ordered, but made those prim, little ribbon bows instead!' she grumbled to herself, adding with increased sullenness in her tone, 'Although I don't suppose it matters much, now that Caroline Lane had to come down with the measles the very day before her party! Spoils everything! Then, too, papa had to be called away to a convention of scientific men or something, and so had to leave me just when I needed him the most because of my disappointment—Oh, dear me!' Here Mollie rocked vigorously back and forth in her pretty willow chair, and presently the scowl lost itself in the sober, thoughtful expression that crept into her face.

'I wonder what papa meant when he kissed me good-bye; he looked at me so tenderly and yet sort of quizzically as he said, "If my little daughter, whose life is filled with so many good things, could only know "the other girl."'

'Then he had to hurry away, for the boat was whistling for the dock.

"The other girl"—did he mean Caroline Lane? Don't hardly seem's if he did!'

Just how it happened Mollie could never tell! She had taken the skiff and rowed over to the Inlet to gather water-lilies. Papa had taught her how to manage a boat, to swim, too, so she was fearless upon the water and often went out alone when the weather was fine. And it certainly was this afternoon; the sky was a deep blue with here and there a tiny, white cloud like a bit of thistle-down; the sunshine lay warm on rugged rock and wooded shore, awoke sparkling reflections on the broad bosom of the stream and turned far-distant sails to a gleaming whiteness.

But the calm beauty of the scene failed to quiet the discontent of Mollie's foolish little heart; even when she reached the object of her quest, and, plunging her rosy arms into the water, gathered lily after lily, every one a marvel of loveliness, her face still wore its petulant expression.

'Such a poky, stupid day!' she murmured as she piled up bow and stern with the fragrant buds and blossoms. 'Such a stupid day—seems as though it would never come to an end!'

Ah, that day came near having an end for Mollie herself!

Busy gathering the lilies and pondering over her own imaginary trials, she failed to notice that, lying low along the green crest of Murray Island there was a gray line of clouds slowly rising and widening, and that far away, on the horizon's silvery rim, the wind was ruffling up the waters. Meanwhile her little boat was drifting in among the lily-pads and Mollie herself nestled down in it, her head resting on the cushioned seat, as she said dreamily:

'It's warm rowing. I'll just float along for a while. I think I must look real sweet lying here among the flowers like that lady Mr. Tennyson wrote about—what was her name?—Oh, the Lady of Shalott.'

Mollie, you see, was somewhat vain. Most selfish persons are, as you have doubtless observed.

By and by her half-closed lids fell lower and lower, and the bow of her skiff, shifted by changing wind and stronger current, turned away from the safe-sheltered inlet out into the broad waters already troubled by the coming storm.

For the gray clouds were more than a line now; they had become a broad band covering nearly half the sky. The river took on their sullen, leaden hue. Now and then a wave came leaping by, wearing a white cap, but the sound of its lapping against the boat and the rocking of the little craft itself only served to lull Mollie into a deeper slumber. It was not until a touch of cold spray dashed against her face that the little girl awoke to

find herself alone on the angry river, with the gloom of the storm hovering over her. Then, in sudden fear, she lifted her voice in a shrill, piteous cry; but even if the noise of wind and water had not drowned her call there was no one in sight to hear her; excursion steamboat, pleasure yacht, fisherman's skiff—a brief half hour ago the river had been alive with them—but now, not one was to be seen; the approaching storm had sent everything scudding into safe harborage.

Only Mollie's boat lay like a little leaf on the bosom of the water. Fortunately it was a staunch little craft, so it rode the waves well and, though now and then the white spray dashed over its sides, it was never submerged.

Thus it drifted on past island after island, all looking to Mollie's dizzy gaze like shadows moving in the gloom. Now and then the gray curtain of the sky was pierced by the swift thrust of the lightning; sullen thunder-peals echoed from rocky shore to rocky shore; presently the rain began to fall heavily, pelting down the waves somewhat.

Mollie's garments were soon drenched; she shivered with cold and grew weary from the exertion of plying the oars. At last with a little sob she sank down in the bottom of the boat and all her discomfort was lost in unconsciousness.

When she came to herself again, a rough, bearded, but not unfriendly face was bending over her, and she heard a girl's voice say excitedly:

'O, goody! She ain't dead after all, is she, pa! The poor dear! Let us hurry and get her up to the house! You carry her, pa, an' I'll run on ahead and get the fire started up an' some of my clothes warmin'; hers are soppin' wet!'

Then Mollie felt herself lifted from the boat and carried, a dripping bundle, along the sandy shore and up a rock path to where a wee, weather-beaten house was perched like a brown bird's nest up on the wooded crest of the rocks; its door was wide open and within a cheering vision of the dancing, red flames of a crackling wood fire.

A half hour later, Mollie, dressed in Polly Naugie's faded but clean gingham dress and Polly Naugie's patched shoes, was sitting at a little round table covered by a red table cloth, eating fried perch, baked potatoes and a saucertul of fresh blueberries, while Polly herself, rosy and bright-eyed, was bustling about waiting on her unexpected but evidently very welcome guest.

'How queer and nice and funny it all seems,' Mollie thought. 'I never ate in a kitchen before, nor at a table with a red cloth and such thick dishes, and with the stove so near the table that you can reach out and help yourself from the frying-pan! And I think Polly is the nicest girl I ever met, even though her nose is so freckled and she wears such old-fashioned clothes. But she is like me in one thing, for her mother is dead!—(Mollie and Polly had been having an interchange of biographies during the drying and dressing process)—and she's just my age, too. Yet in lots of other things we're different. To think that she does every bit of the house-work. Of course the house is very small, but there are breakfasts, suppers and dinners to get every day, and Tommy and Rosie and the twins to care for. She even washes and irons, bakes and mends! I wonder how she does it all!'

Here Mollie's thoughts found a voice, and between mouthfuls of fried fish and baked potatoes she asked a little shyly:

'Don't you ever have any time to play, Polly?'

'Oh, I go berrying sometimes, and last summer I went to a picnic down at the Bay,' was Polly's cheery reply as she refilled the tea kettle and tucked another stick of wood into the stove. 'You see,' she added with a merry laugh 'I can't spend much time thinking what I'd "like" to do, 'cause there are so many things I've "got" to do! Sometimes when I see the summer boarders along the river I get to wondering just how it'd be to have nothing to do but pleasure-seeking and dressing up stylish.'

'But don't you ever get lonesome, or nervous, or low-spirited?' Mollie inquired earnestly.

'Never!' and the dimples played hide and seek in Polly's round, red cheeks; then

a thoughtful look came into her clear, gray eyes as she said:

'I guess, as pa says, there are two kinds of poor folks in this world. The folks who haven't much money and have to work hard for a living, and the folks who have so much money that they don't know what to do with it—nor what to do with themselves!'

Mollie looked at her curiously.

'Polly,' she said impressively, 'I guess I know what my father meant this morning. You are "the other girl!"'

Polly Naugie's face wore a mystified expression, then her merry laugh rang out again.

'I'm sure I don't know just what you mean. You're one kind of a girl, I s'pose, and I'm another, and—and I'm real glad we've met!'

'So'm I!' was Mollie's hearty rejoinder.

## What Rally Day Brought About.

(Alice May Douglas, in the Michigan 'Christian Advocate.')

'I'll be glad when Sunday School opens,' shouted Francis Niles, after the last load of hay had been safely stored on the mow.

'Will you, Francis?' asked his cousin Lem, who had been helping on the farm that summer.

'Yes, I will. I like Sunday school, but you see we don't have any through the busy season. I suppose folks are too tired.'

'Do you have Rally Day in the fall?' asked Lem.

'Rally Day!' exclaimed Francis, as he gave Brinky, the horse, another mouthful of sweet hay, 'what's that?'

Lem laughed. 'I mean when you "rally" in the Sunday school scholars, who are just home from their summer vacation,' he said.

'That's it,' returned the boy. 'Wonder if we couldn't have one up here in the country.'

'Nothing to hinder, as I see,' said Lem.

'What do you do on Rally Day?' asked Francis, earnestly.

'In the first place,' explained his cousin, 'the church or vestry is trimmed all pretty with decorations, such as— O, I guess I don't know what the flowers are—and evergreens, and pumpkins. O, no, that's Harvest Sunday. Anyhow, the church has "something" in it. Then the children speak pieces and sing and the older ones make speeches, and tell us fellows how they never had such privileges when they were youngsters. We have a jolly time, anyhow. You'd like it.'

'I know I should,' replied Francis, placing his cap more firmly on his head, for the breeze blowing through the barn doors at either end was determined to dislodge that cap if it possibly could.

'But why don't you start up your school, and have the first session for your Rally Day?'

'Well, that would be a capital idea, wouldn't it? But if I get the others to help this thing along, I shall have to know something about it myself.'

So his cousin gave him a brief recital of the doings of the last Rally Day in his home church, assuring him that similar results could be obtained in his own community. But one great difficulty about having a new Sunday school was that the old superintendent had moved away, and Lem wondered who could take his place.

'Why don't you get your father to be the superintendent?' suggested the cousin.

'My father!' exclaimed the boy in surprise. 'Why, he never went to Sunday school in his life. He wouldn't know what to do.'

'Then he's just the one you want to get into the school. That's what Rally Day is for, to get new scholars as well as to rally in the old ones.'

'I see,' observed Francis. 'Well, there's father now, coming up the road.'

'Let's talk with him about it,' proposed Lem.

'May be he's tired and we'd better wait till morning till we speak to him about this,' suggested Francis.

So the boys waited till the night's repose had given the haymaker a good rest, and before the sun was very high in the sky, they