

## THE LITTLE FOLK.

## A Boy Who Recommended Himself.

John Brent was trimming his hedge, and the "snip, snip," of his shears was a pleasing sound to his ears. In the rear of him stretched a wide smoothly-kept lawn, in the centre of which stood his residence, a handsome, massive modern structure, which had cost him not less than ninety thousand dollars.

The owner of it was the man who, in shabby attire, was trimming his hedge. "A close, stingy old skinflint, I'll warrant," some boy is ready to say.

No he wasn't. He trimmed his own hedge for recreation, as he was a man of sedentary habits. His shabby clothes were his working clothes, while those which he wore on other occasions were both neat and expensive; indeed, he was very particular even about what are known as the minor appointments of dress.

Instead of being stingy he was exceedingly liberal. He was always contributing to benevolent enterprises, and helping deserving people, often when they had not asked his help.

Just beyond the hedge was the public sidewalk, and two boys stopped opposite to where he was at work, he on one side of the hedge and they on the other.

"Halloa, Fred! That's a very handsome tennis racket," one of them said. "You paid about seven dollars for it, didn't you?"

"Only six, Charlie," was the reply.

"Your old one is in prime order yet. What will you take for it?"

"I sold it to Willie Robbins for one dollar and a half," replied Fred.

"Well now, that was silly," declared Charlie. "I'd have given you three dollars for it."

"You are too late," replied Fred. "I have promised it to Willie."

"Oh! you only *promised* it to him, eh? And he's simply *promised* to pay for it I suppose? I'll give you three dollars cash for it."

"I can't do it, Charlie."

"You can if you want to. A dollar and a half more isn't to be sneezed at."

"Of course not," admitted Fred; "and I'd like to have it, only I promised the racket to Willie."

"But you are not bound to keep your promise. You are at liberty to take more for it. Tell him that I offered you another time as much, and that will settle it."

"No, Charlie," gravely replied the other boy, that will *not* settle it—neither with Willie nor with me. I cannot disappoint him. A bargain is a bargain. The racket is his, even if it hasn't been delivered."

"Oh, let him have it," retorted Charlie angrily. "Fred Fenton, I will not say that you are a chump, but I'll predict that you'll never make a successful business man. You are too punctilious."

John Brent overheard the conversation, and he stepped to a gap in the hedge in order to get a look at the boy who had such a high regard for his word.

"The lad has a good face, and is made of the right sort of stuff," was the millionaire's mental comment. "He places a proper value upon his integrity and he will succeed in business because he is punctilious."

The next day, while he was again working on his hedge, John Brent overheard another conversation. Fred Fenton was again a participant in it.

"Fred, let us go over to the circus lot," the other boy said. "The men are putting up the tents for the afternoon performance."

"No, Joe, I'd rather not," Fred said

"But why?"

"On account of the profanity. One never hears anything good on such occasions, and I would advise you not to go. My mother would not want me to go."

"Did she say you shouldn't?"

"No, Joe."

"Then let us go. You will not be disobeying her orders."

"But I will be disobeying her *wishes*," insisted Fred. "No, I'll not go."

"That is another good point in that boy," thought John Brent. "A boy who respects his mother's wishes very rarely goes wrong."

Two months later, John Brent advertised for a clerk in his factory, and there were at least a dozen applicants.

"I can simply take your names and residences this morning," he said. "I'll make inquiries about you, and notify the one whom I conclude to select."

Three of the boys gave their names and residences.

"What is *your* name?" he asked, as he glanced at the fourth boy.

"Fred Fenton, sir," was the reply.

John Brent remembered the name and the boy. He looked at him keenly, a pleased smile crossing his face.

"You can stay," he said. "I've been suited sooner than I expected to be," he added, looking at the other boys and dismissing them with a wave of his hand.

"Why did you take me!" asked Fred, in surprise. "Why were inquiries not necessary in my case? You do not know me."

"I know you better than you think I do," John Brent said, with a significant smile.

"But I offered you no recommendations," suggested Fred.

"My boy, it wasn't necessary!" replied John Brent. "I overheard you recommend yourself."

But as he felt disposed to enlighten Fred, he told him about the two conversations he had overheard.

Now, boys, this is a true story, and there is a moral in it. You are more frequently observed, and heard and overheard, than you are aware of. Your elders have a habit of making an estimate of your mental and moral worth. You cannot keep late hours, lounge on the corners, visit low places of amusements, smoke cigarettes and chaff boys who are better than you are, without older people's making a note of your bad habits.

How much more forcibly and creditably pure speech, good breeding, honest purposes, and parental respect would speak in your behalf!—*Golden Days*.

## Lend a Hand.

Washington one day came across a small band of soldiers working very hard at raising some military works, under command of a pompous little officer, who was issuing his orders in a very peremptory style indeed.

Washington, seeing the very arduous task of the men, dismounted from his horse, lent a helping hand perspiring freely, till the weight at which they were working was raised.

Then, turning to the officer, he inquired why he, too, had not helped, and received the indignant reply, "Don't you know I'm the corporal?"

"Ah, well," said Washington, "next time your men are raising so heavy a weight send for your commander-in-chief," and he rode off, leaving the corporal dumfounded.

## The Dial of Time.

Two slender hands upon Time's dial-plate  
Go creeping round, and mark the hours of man,  
Unconscious of his momentary plan  
In all the circling years of Time's estate;  
Nor fast nor slow, nor pause for small or great,  
An hour for Caesar or Napoleon;  
And so it was since first Time's march began.  
The lover cries, "My soul, it cannot wait;"  
The murderer, "That hour will bring my doom;"  
The sick man sighs, "To-morrow and the tomb;"  
While empires crumble like the cliffs to sand  
Before the waves of years, and planets cold  
Are clothed with life, and virgin spheres grow old  
Beneath the dial balanced in God's hand.  
All its pains rewarded by gifts of honeyed kisses,  
And angel looks that babies bring from heaven,  
Claspings of soft arms, and murmuring of lovers  
Innocent as birds in the dewy boughs of Maytime.