

Family Circle.

A God After All.

We laid in a cell, Mr. Judge, all night long. Jimmie and me, waitin' and wishin' for the mornin' to dawn. 'Cause we couldn't sleep, Mr. Judge, in that cold, damp place. And Jimmie was scared to death at the wild, mad race. That the rats kept runnin' all through the dark night; That's why we were glad, Mr. Judge, to see the daylight.

Please, Mr. Judge, we are not very bad little boys, And the policeman that took us said we're some mother's joys. He was wrong, Mr. Judge, and should only have said That we are two little outcasts, and our mother is dead; And there's no one to care for us, at least here below, And no roof that shelters us from the rain and the snow.

A preacher once told us that way up in the blue There was a God that was watchin' all that little boys do; And that He loved little children, and His love it was free; But I guess, Mr. Judge, he don't love Jimmie or me. For I prayed and I prayed till I was most out of breath, For somethin' to eat to keep Jimmie from death.

And that's why we're here, Mr. Judge, for you know There was no help from above, I must find it below. 'Twas no use beggin' and be told in God I must trust, For I'd begged all the day and got never a crust; And there was poor Jimmie, holdin' his cold little feet, And cryin' and moanin' for somethin' to eat.

So I went to a house that was not very far, And saw, Mr. Judge, that the back door was ajar; And a table was settin' right close to the door, Just loaded with pies, about twenty or more. So I quickly slipped in and grabbed one to my breast— The policeman then caught us, and you know the rest.

Discharged, did you say, Mr. Judge? both Jimmie and I? And—we ain't got to be jailed 'cause I took a pie? And we can eat all we want?—how funny 'twill seem— Say, Jimmie, pinch me, for I—I think it's a dream, And you'll give us work, all summer, winter and fall— Say, Jimmie, I think there's a God after all!

THE FIVE-DOLLAR BILL.

BY GENEVA MARCH.

"Tommie! are my boots blacked?"
"Tommie! what did you do with that paper parcel?"
"Tommie! run around to the corner and get me two ten-cent cigars!"
"Tommie! sweep down the front steps and the pavement, and look sharp about it, d'ye hear?"
"Tommie, aren't those knives ready yet? I never saw such a loiterer in my life!"
And little Tommie Sorrel, errand boy, table waiter, and general factotum at Mrs. Green's boarding-house, stood in bewilderment, scarcely knowing which way to turn.
"Yes, sir, your boots are blacked, sir. I put the paper parcel under the hall hat-rack, Mr. Millet. The knives were cleaned ten minutes ago, madam, and I'll do the steps and pavement just as soon as I've run to the corner for Mr. Gusto's cigars."
"Humph! pretty well managed," said old Mr. Murdock, as he sat in the sunny bay-window of the boarding-house parlor, and saw little Tommie dart down the street like an animated arrow. "Smart lad that. Where did you get him, Mrs. Green?" to the landlady who was dusting off the china mantel ornaments with an old silk pocket handkerchief.
"I've had him some time," said Mrs. Green.
"He came to the house one winter day, and asked leave to carry in a load of coal and kindlings that had just been dumped at the door. He was very ill clad and hungry, and told me such a pitiful tale about his ailing mother and sick sister, that I told him if he was a mind to come in, and work for his board, and such odd scraps as come off the table to carry home to his folks, he could; and he has been here ever since."

"Don't you pay him any wages?"
"Dear me, no, sir. A lad like that ought to be thankful for enough to eat and drink, these hard times."

"And yet he seems very useful."

"O, yes, useful enough."

"He has a nice face," said Mr. Murdock. And that was all that was said about it; but that evening, when Tommie came up to Mr. Murdock's room to put on fresh coal for the evening, the old gentleman spoke to him.

"My lad," said he, "do you always expect to be errand boy?"

Tommie looked at him, with an odd smudge of black across his eyebrows, and earnest, glittering eyes.

"I hope not, sir," said he.

"How old are you?"

"Twelve, sir, last November."

"Twelve, eh?" said Mr. Murdock. "Quite old enough to earn a little something for yourself, I should say."

Tommie dropped his coal shovel and came a little nearer, in his eagerness.

"Please, sir," said he, "do you know of any place where I should suit? Because I ain't earning anything here only my board, and the cold victuals Mrs. Green is kind enough to give me. Mother's rheumatism is bad, and little Katy ain't old enough to help, and I'm all they've got to depend upon, sir. If I could earn a little, sir, even though it was but a trifle."

"There, there my lad, you're going too fast," said Mr. Murdock, abruptly, though not unkindly. "No, I don't know of any place in particular, just now. If I do, I'll let you know."

"Thank you, sir," said Tommie, evidently a little disappointed. "I tried several times to get something to do. There's the Honer Clark that keeps the news-stand on the corner, he would take me in partner if I could raise five dollars, and it is a very good stand, sir, and I could carry papers around to the customers if once I could get in. But five dollars! sir, why, I never had one dollar in my life?"

"Well, well, Tommie, have patience. Rome wasn't built in a day. Perhaps some day you may get a chance to earn five dollars."

"Perhaps so, sir," said Tommie, rather dejectedly. He took up his heavy coal scuttle of ashes and cinders, and went out of the door, bowed down, and stooping under its weight.

The next morning old Mr. Murdock went early down town, and so it happened that the grate and hearth in his room were about the first that Tommie cleaned. As the little fellow was down on his knees, whistling softly, as he brushed up the loose ashes, his foot struck Mr. Murdock's big easy chair. "I guess I'd better move it back," said he to himself. But as he wheeled the heavy piece of furniture back, he saw something lying on the floor close to the old-fashioned carved leg of the chair, something like a crumpled bit of paper. "It's money!" said Tommie. "It's a bill, I do believe!"

So it was, a five-dollar bill.
Tommie Sorrel smoothed it out with trembling fingers, and eyes that glittered strangely. He had so longed for five dollars of his own: he had thought of so many easy roads to fortune, if only the first step could be on a five-dollar bill. And now fortune seemed to have listened to his prayers, and sent him the longed for sum. Here it was, so to speak, rained down at his very feet. It was a terrible temptation. Tommie had always believed himself an honest boy; but then, he had never had any incentive to be otherwise. Miss Tilton had once dropped a ten cent stamp, and he had found it and restored it to her.

Tommie! Tommie! take care! Satan is very near these now. The kingdom of darkness is enveloping thee around with its net of gloom.

"No! no!" cried Tommie, out loud, as he dashed the bill to the floor. "It isn't mine, it's the kind old gentleman's. If I were to take it, I would be a mean thief. Mother would rather starve, than have me grow rich by stolen money."

Nevertheless it was a great disappointment, and we hope our readers won't think Tommie Sorrel unmanly, when we confess that he wept a few tears over the ashes and coals. He was waiting at the door with a beaming face, when Mr. Murdock came home in the evening.

"Please, Mr. Murdock," cried he eagerly, "have you missed anything?"

"Missed anything, Tommie?"

"Because I found a five-dollar bill by your chair, sir, when I was tidying up the hearth, and here it is."

Slowly Mr. Murdock fitted his spectacles across the bridge of his nose, slowly he unfolded the bill and scrutinized it closely by the hall gas-light.

"Yes," said he nodding his head. "Yes, exactly, it's the bill I lost. Do you see that little red cross across the point of the letter V?"

"I do see it now, sir," said Tommie, as Mr. Murdock held it toward him, "I didn't before."

"If it had been dishonestly taken, stolen, in short," said Mr. Murdock, "it could have been easily identified by that mark; Tommie, I believe you are an honest boy."

"Thank you, sir," said Tommie much gratified. "But did you really know you had left the money on the floor?"

"I really did know it," answered the old gentleman with a twinkle in his eyes. "I wanted to know if I could depend on you, Tommie, in fact, I set a trap for you. And the old gentleman laughed so heartily he shook all over like a mould of jelly."

"That's the first chapter," said he, "and now here comes the second. Would you like a nice place in my office as errand boy, at a dollar and a half a week?" Tommie uttered an exclamation of delight. "Because," continued Mr. Murdock, "I think after this affair of the five-dollar bill you may be trusted down there. We want a boy, we'll give you the refusal of the situation."

And that was the way Tommie got a place in the down-town office. He proved so willing and useful, that in the spring they raised his wages to two dollars a week, and Mr. Murdock sent a barrel of flour and a warm, black shawl, to his mother. "I like the boy," said he.

And Tommie feels as if he were makin' his way in the world now.

Minnie May's Dep't.

One Afternoon.

Papa and mamma went out to row, And left us alone at home, you know, Roderick, James, and me. "Now, dears," they said, "just play with your toys, Like dear little, good little, sweet little boys, And we will come home to tea."

We played with our toys the longest while! We built up our blocks for nearly a mile, Roderick, James, and I. But when they came tumbling down, alas! They fell right against the looking-glass. Oh, how the pieces did fly!

Then we found a pillow that had a rip, And all the feathers we out did slip, Roderick, James, and I. And we made a snow-storm, a glorious one, All over the room. Oh, wasn't it fun, As the feathery flakes did fly?

But just as the storm was raging around, Papa and mamma came in and found Roderick, James, and me. Oh! terrible, terrible things they said, And they put us all three right straight to bed, With the empty pillow-case under my head, And none of us had any tea.

— St. Nicholas.

MY DEAR NIECES:—

I was for a short time a guest in a house of a wealthy family. Everything about the place betokened means. The grounds tastefully kept, the house, a veritable mansion, beautifully furnished. But there was something lacking. On looking about on tables and shelves I could not find a single book or scrap of reading matter. What a desert that house seemed to me. Better dispense with carpets and upholstered furniture, and have food for the mind. How could children grow up in such a home, with minds other than warped, narrow and prejudiced. Those not having formed reading habits little know what a world of undiscovered pleasure and delight lies within their reach, for reading is a habit, and a very strong one, and may be acquired by most people if they resolve to begin and honestly persevere. A lady informed me that she commenced reading to oblige an elder sister, and so acquired a taste for that which before was a drudgery. I trust that many of my nieces are readers; if not, pray begin at once. Ask some educated friend to select books for you; avoid as a plague the trashy works of fiction that poison the mind by giving false views of life and sympathy to wrongdoing, or the silly stories that yield no sustenance. Read good novels or none. How varied the feast spread before us. We may accompany the traveller across burning deserts, and become acquainted with the inhabitants of distant regions and their mode of life; or with the Arctic explorer, sail past cities and mountains of ice into unknown seas, and learn what human nature can dare and endure. Let us learn something of what life is really made of. Why lead a mole-like existence with the means of information and culture at hand? Why not know something of the lives of

"Bards, patriots, martyrs, sages,
The noble of all ages,
Whose deeds crown history's pages
And times great volume make."

and gather inspiration from these deeds, suffering and attainments? "But when have farmers' daughters time for all this reading?" say you. I will tell you, in the pauses of work. "Where there's a will there's a way." The old adage holds good here. An eminent man prepared himself for a great life work by having a book at hand on the breast beam of his loom, and seizing every spare moment to study its contents. With a thirst for reading you will pick up some scrap of reading matter just as naturally as you