

# BOYS AND GIRLS

## Misses—The Story of a Funny Combination.

There once was a school  
Where the mistress, Miss Rule,  
Taught a number of misses that vexed her;  
Miss Chief was the lass  
At the head of the class,  
And young Miss Demeanor was next her.

Poor little Miss Hap  
Spilled the ink in her lap,  
And Miss Fortune fell under the table;  
Miss Conduct they call  
Did a Miss Creant fall,  
But Miss State declared this was a fable.

Miss Lay lost her book,  
And Miss Lead undertook  
To show her the place where to find it;  
But upon the wrong nail  
Had Miss Place hung her veil,  
And Miss Deed hid her book safe behind it.

They went on very well,  
As I have heard tell,  
Till Miss Take brought in Miss Understanding;

Miss Conjecture then guessed  
Evil things of the rest,  
And Miss Counsel advised their disbanding  
—Selected.

## The Quaker Girl's Dream.

I dreamed I was on my way to school, when, suddenly I noticed a great crowd upon the green. People were hurrying to and fro, and when asked what all this commotion was about, a girl said:

'Why, don't you know It's Measuring Day, and the Lord's angel has come to see how much our souls have grown since last Measuring Day.'

'Measuring Day!' said I: 'measuring souls! I never heard of such a thing,' and I began to ask questions; but the girl hurried on, and after a little I let myself be pressed along with the crowd on the green.

There in the centre, on a kind of throne under the green elm, was the most glorious and beautiful being I ever saw. He had white wings; his clothes were of shining white, and he had the kindest yet most serious face I ever beheld. By his side was a tall golden rod, fastened upright in the ground, with curious marks at regular intervals from the top to the bottom. Over it, in a golden scroll, were the words, 'The measure of a perfect man.' The angel held in his hand a large book, in which he wrote the measurements as the people came up at the calling of their names in regular turns. [The instant each one touched the golden measure a most wonderful thing happened. No one could escape the terrible accuracy of that strange rod. Each one shrank or increased to his true dimensions—his spiritual dimensions, as I soon learned, for it was an index of the soul-growth which was shown in this mysterious way.

The first who were measured after I came I did not know; but soon the name of Elizabeth Darrow was called. She is the president of the Aid for the Destitute Society, and she manages ever so many other societies, too, and I thought, 'Surely E. Darrow's measure will be very high indeed.'

But as she stood by the rod, the instant she touched it she seemed to grow shorter and shorter, and the angel's face grew very serious as he said: 'This would be a soul of high stature if only the zeal for outside works which can be seen of men had not checked the lowly, secret graces of humility and trust and patience under little daily trials. These, too, are needed for perfect soul-growth.'

I pitied E. Darrow as she moved away with such a sad and surprised face to make room for the next. It was poor, thin, little Betsey Lines, the seamstress. I never was more astonished in my life than when she took her stand by the rod, and immediately increased in height till her mark was higher than any I had seen before, and her face shone so I thought it must have caught its light from the angel, who smiled so gloriously that I envied poor little Betsy,

whom before I had rather looked down upon. And as the angel wrote in the book he said, 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.'

The next was Lillian Edgar, who dresses so beautifully that I have often wished I had such clothes and so much money. The angel looked sadly at her measure, for it was very low—so low that Lillian turned pale as death, and her beautiful clothes no one noticed at all, for they were quite overshadowed by the glittering robes beside her. And the angel said in a solemn tone: 'O child, why take thought for raiment? Let your adorning be not that outward adorning of putting on of apparel, but let it be the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is, in the sight of God, of great price. Thus only can these grow like the Master.'

Old Jerry, the cobbler, came next—poor, old, clumsy Jerry. But as he hobbled up the steps the angel's face fairly blaked with light, and he smiled on him, and led him to the rod and 'behold, Jerry's measure was higher than any of the others. The angel's voice rang out so loud and clear that we all heard it, saying: 'He that humbleth himself shall be exalted.'

And then, oh, my name came next! And I trembled so I could hardly reach the angel, but he put his arm around me, and helped me to stand by the rod. As soon as I touched it I felt myself growing shorter and shorter, and though I stretched and stretched and strained every nerve to be as tall as possible, I could only reach Lillian's mark—Lillian's, the lowest of all, and I a member of the church for two years!

I grew crimson for shame, and whispered to the angel: 'Oh, give me another chance before you mark me in the book as low as this. Tell me how to grow. I will do it all so gladly, only do not put this mark down!'

The angel shook his head sadly, 'The record must go down as it is, my child. May it be higher when I come next. This rule will help thee, "Whatsoever thou doest, do it heartily as to the Lord, in singleness of heart as unto Christ."'

And with that I burst into tears, and suddenly awakened to find myself crying. But, oh, I shall never forget that dream! I was so ashamed of my mark.—'Measuring Rod.'

## Ursula's Outing.

She was a little shop girl of no particular account in the world, enjoying a holiday, hardly earned, by the sea. It was late autumn now, and she had dreamed of her holiday all the summer through. For she was a London girl, and this was her first glimpse of the sea. After much deliberation and study of time-table and illustrated guide-books, she had decided upon a little place on the Norfolk coast.

Hers was not a mind to which the attractions commonly accepted as popular could appeal. She was a gentle, dreamy-creature, whom circumstances had cast upon the world, in which she was unfitted to strive. But though gentle, she was not weak. She had found the sea on the whole disappointing. Its vast loneliness oppressed one whose heaviest cross was her own peculiar isolation from her kind.

There were few visitors left at Crampton Cove in the last week of September. Except for a handful of children who regularly played on the beach morning and afternoon, the little shop girl had it mostly to herself. The rest had done her good, and though she did not know it, her face looked very sweet under the brim of her cheap sun-hat. Yes, it was quite a winsome face. Her book, which she had taken from the village, had interested her for nearly two hours; when she shut it at last she was surprised to see that a change had come over the spirit of the place.

The sun had gone. In its place a thick sea-fog seemed to have been unrolled from some mysterious background. Across flat, wet sands came the boom of the waves, and their foamy outline could just be seen. She rose in no way alarmed, interested in what was a phenomenon to her. And just then

she heard the voices of children, and saw the red skirt of the little girl making a welcome bit of color among the prevailing gray. As she walked towards them she was surprised to see that they seemed to be alone, playing unconcernedly among their numerous sand castles, and taking no heed of the fog. For there was neither cold or rain with it; it had stolen in very softly, almost as if it sought something stealthily to hide.

There were three little ones, a chubby girl of nine, and her two brothers, younger, the baby, a dear fat mite, making a picture with his clothes bundled about him, and his bare legs padding contentedly on the wet sand.

'Isn't it time you were going home, dears?' she said pleasantly, if a little timidly; 'don't you see how thick it has grown?'

'Nana is coming back,' said the little girl. 'She only went up to the village to buy herself a paper.'

Ursula nodded, but lingered, determined that she would not leave them until the nurse returned. And glancing round she saw something in the opposite direction quite away from the sea, which gave her a little start. It was the gleam of water, and she realized, with a feeling of sudden sick horror, that they must be on the sand-bank, and that perhaps were already quite cut off. She had often watched the rapid flow of the incoming tide just here, and the quick engulfing of the sand-bank with the big rock in the further end, which was almost, but not quite, covered at high water. And, they were at least five hundred yards from the dry bents, which the tide could not reach. She said nothing to the children but crossed the firm, hard bank of sand, and took her bearings. And sure enough the tide was around them, an encircling bond on every side. It was already too broad to leap. She pulled off her shoes and stockings and waded in. But the bank sloped quickly, and in a moment she was almost beyond her depth. Her face whitened, and she looked anxiously around for a moment, not as yet seriously alarmed, because the nurse surely must hasten back quickly, and would undoubtedly bring relief. She said nothing to the children; in fact she went close to them again, and began to play with apparent unconcern, promising to show them a quite new kind of castle never before seen upon the beach. It answered for a moment, and then the little girl suddenly sounded the note of alarm.

'The sea's all round us,' she cried in terror. 'Look, Betie, it's coming right up, and we'll be drowned like the naughty children in the book. Oh, I want Nana and Daddy and Mummy.'

Ursula comforted them, and they clung about her, forgetting that she was a stranger, only conscious of her kind face, her wet but smiling eyes, her air of protection, her promise of safety and rescue.

And the minutes passed. Talking softly and cheerfully to them, she gathered them about her, and climbed upon the rock and tried to interest them with a make believe, that they were only story-book people, and that presently they should find themselves back on the bents, and that it had never happened at all. Indeed, her own resource surprised her as nothing in her life had yet done. But steadily the water came creeping in. It lapped greedily about their rock when it had swallowed all the sand, and presently it was up to their feet, and the little girl gave a slight scream. But the boy, though his face was dead white was quite brave.

'Gentle Jesus won't let us drown, Winnie; let's pray him to put the sea away, bring us back to Mummy and Daddy.'

But it was Ursula who prayed, with her face hidden in the baby's neck as he clung closely to her, too frightened to cry. It was a curious prayer.

'Never mind me, dear God; nobody needs me or wants me, but save the little children, for their father and mother, for Jesus' sake.'

The water was very cold, and she numb, holding the heavy child with one arm, and trying to keep the two tight with the other. How long could she hold them, she won-