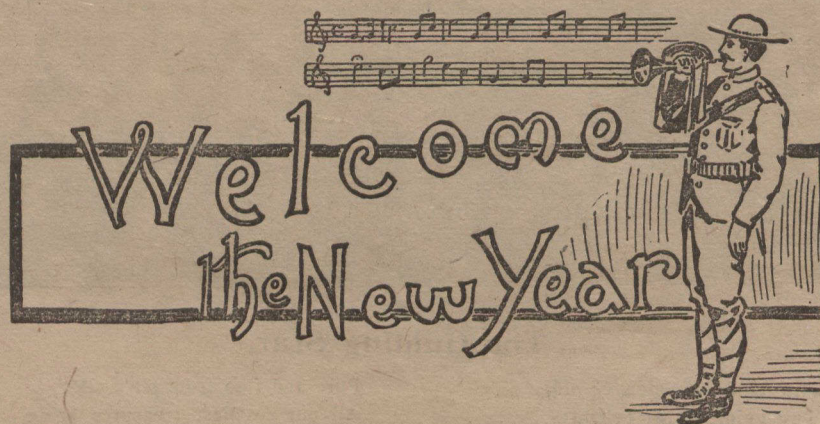


# BOYS AND GIRLS



## Thy Brother.

When thy heart, with joy o'erflowing,  
Sings a thankful prayer,  
In thy joy, oh, let thy brother  
With thee share.

When the harvest sheaves ingathered  
Fill thy barns with store,  
To thy God and to thy brother,  
Give the more!

If thy soul, with power uplifted,  
Yearn for glorious deed,  
Give thy strength to serve thy brother  
In his need!

Hast thou borne a secret sorrow  
In thy lonely breast?  
Take to thee thy sorrowing brother  
For a guest!

Share with him thy bread of blessing  
Sorrow's burden share!  
When thy heart enfolds a brother,  
God is there.

—Theodore C. Williams, in 'S.S. Chronicle.'

## A Legend of Banbury.

(S. K. Hutton, in 'Little Snowflakes'.)

The heat of summer had passed; cold October had pinched the chins and cheeks of the old people and children; an Indian summer had come with renewed warmth, rejoicing all hearts, gilding the slender birches with brilliant gold, painting the Virginian creepers with crimson, and that again had passed away, and the 4th of November broke lowering and ominous over the old town of Banbury; heavy clouds scudded before the wind, threatening every moment to break in violent storms of rain over the surrounding country. But you must know that it was Nellie Lee's birthday, and the previous lovely weather had deluded her into planning a picnic for the day, and Miss Nellie Lee was a young lady who had not quite learnt that it is the duty of human beings to bear disappointment cheerfully. So, in spite of clouds and threatening rain, she marched forth at three o'clock, and commanded her party to follow.

They took the road to Broughton Castle, where a fire was to be lighted and a sumptuous tea to be partaken of; but the Fates were all against them, and, just as they reached the Giant's cave, a few drops of rain fell from the lowering clouds.

At the opening of the cave, leaning upon his crook, stood an old shepherd watching his flock, which were sheltering under a tree hard by.

'Shall we have much rain, think you?' asked one of the party.

'Ay, ay!' said the old man, 'and thunder and lightning to boot. Ye may tell what's coming by looking at my sheep under yon tree. They know when a storm's near.'

All eyes turned towards the sheep, and there, huddled together, trembling in every limb, and uneasily moving about in a terrified mass, were the poor sheep, and, keeping watch by them, the faithful shepherd dog.

'Then I won't go a step farther!' cried Nellie, who is now an old lady, but was a self-willed girl then, 'for thunder and lightning scare the very life out of me. Make the fire here, and we will shelter in the cave.' So the fire was made, and soon the crackle of the burning sticks rose up to meet the distant grumble of the thunder, and the tea was spread in the Giant's Cave.

'This cave was once part of an underground passage, I've heard my great grandfather say, when I was a little chap,' began the old shepherd, who was sharing in the good fare of the party and warming himself at the ruddy blaze; 'it led from Broughton Castle to Banbury Castle in olden days, grand-dad was wont to tell, and along it came young Edward of Broughton, to court the Lady Matilda of the Castle of Banbury. The young Lady Matilda was as fair as the lily flower, as slender as the silver birch, and as sweet as the summer rose, and she loved young Edward with all her heart and soul. He was a tall and a handsome youth, with bright dark eyes that flashed with fun and anger, and a mouth that could speak words of love that would melt the hardest heart (and Matilda's heart was of the gentlest), and it could speak words of wrath that would make the boldest tremble; but to Matilda no rough word was ever spoken; he loved her as his own life, and his hand and heart were ready to keep and protect her all through life unto death. When they were girl and boy together he would lead her by stream and valley at noon and evening hour, and with him by her side she knew no fear. He would tell her tales of the great world outside her quiet home, and she would dream of him as the hero of the world.

'All this was sweet to the young Matilda, for her life was very still. In the castle of Banbury she had no brothers or sisters to laugh and play with her; her mother was gentle and sweet, and her father a quiet student. It is true that Matilda had a brother, but Nevil was one of the Queen's pages and lived at Court, so Edward was all in all to her. Edward's father, however, was a stern man, and there had long existed a deadly feud between the two families, and he had vowed that no child of his should wed with a child of the house of Banbury. This was very sad to the gentle Matilda, and cast the first sorrow over her peaceful life; but though she was gentle she was also as true as steel—she had plighted her troth to Edward, and his wife she would be if he should choose to ask her when they both grew to a fitting age. And so the years stole on. When the lovely Matilda attained her majority, the baron, her father, gave

a great fete, in the castle, to all the neighborhood, and to this fete came Edward, disguised in a forester's suit of Lincoln green. All the noble lords and ladies from the country round assembled in Banbury Castle on that day, and the good people of Banbury were bidden to meet them at the ball in the evening. The great hall was hung with crimson and gold; hundreds of candles burned in the silver sconces; wreaths of evergreens and flowers hung in festoons from pillar to pillar, and a notable company of musicians was placed upon a dais at the upper end of the hall. By the ruddy hearth stood the baron and the baroness welcoming their guests, and by their side the graceful Lady Matilda clad in white and gold, white roses in her golden hair and in the bosom of her dress, and a bright pink flush upon her soft cheeks. Her eyes sparkled with happy light, and every thought in that vast company proclaimed her fair. But if the thoughts of untouched hearts thus testified to Matilda's beauty, what said the heart of young Edward under his forest garb? Nay, that I cannot tell. Words could not describe his loving adoration. He longed to kneel before his queen and kiss her dainty feet, and do all else that love could suggest and reason permit. He gazed and gazed as though there were naught else to gaze upon, when to this fair lady he saw approach a handsome youth, exquisitely appressed. He saw him kiss the two white hands as he would fain have done; nay, more, he saw him press his lips upon the girl's bright hair, and place a diamond star among the flowers in the golden coils, and Edward's heart swelled with anger and despair. He could contain himself no longer, but rushed from the room to the open air of the courtyard. As he leaned against a pillar, some few minutes later, the young gallant passed by him and a desperate combat ensued. Lithe and strong, the two lads fought like young lions, and soon the whole assembly had gathered round, holding torches high in air, to watch the fray, till Matilda, wondering what had chanced amiss, and drawn by an instinct, she knew not why, rushed to the spot, and threw herself upon the frantic combatants.

'Edward! Nevil!' she cried in horror and despair, 'what is this? You two who are the most dear to me! For my sake desist. Lover and brother, would you murder each other before my eyes?' At these words, the two young men fell apart as though struck asunder by a heavy blow, and Edward threw himself, at Matilda's feet, in deep contrition. Nevil was but slightly injured, but Edward's case was bad indeed. Days and nights passed by and Matilda never left the side of the poor youth, who lamented bitterly his frantic act. Nevil, while he remained at the castle, watched by his couch almost as tenderly as did his sister, and a warm friendship sprang up between the youths, but his time was short, and before long he was summoned to resume his duties at Court.

'It was a wild dark night in November; the wind blew and whistled through the turret room where Edward lay wan and worn, when a waiting maid—the favorite of her young mistress—came and knelt by Matilda's side, and taking her hands, said, "Sweetest mistress, it is chill to-night, and the wind blows cold, and there came a stranger to the door—an aged man—who sat with us by the hearth in the hall. Amongst other things we talked of our sad distress, and he told us that at this time of the year, a holy man—a pil-