

The Boy That Laughs.

I know a funny little boy—
 The happiest ever born;
 His face is like a beam of joy,
 Although his clothes are torn.

I saw him tumble on his nose,
 And waited for a groan—
 But how he laughed! Do you suppose
 He struck his funny bone?

There's sunshine in each word he
 speaks,
 His laugh is something grand;
 Its ripples overrun his cheeks
 Like waves on snowy sand.

He smiles the moment he awakes,
 And till the day is done;
 The schoolroom for a joke he takes—
 His lessons are but fun.

No matter how the day may go,
 You cannot make him cry;
 He's worth a dozen boys I know.
 Who pout, and mope, and sigh.

BRAVE JACK.



HERE was a group of boys gathered in front of the red school-house that cold morning in January. The mid-winter holidays were over, and they were ready for school life again.

One boy stood apart from them, as if neither asking or expecting to join their fun. He was about twelve years old, poorly clad, though his well mended suit gave evidence of a careful mother's hand.

Suddenly, one of the boys, a freckled-faced, saucy-eyed lad, turned to the one who stood alone and said: "Hello there, you, Jack, where's them new shoes you was tellin' you got fer Christmas? Was you 'fraid you'd sile them? I see you wore your old uns with wenterlaters in the sides."

A general roar went through the group, though a few looked reproachfully at Tom as he winked at some of the boys. But Harry Everett cried out as Jack hastened away, his eye flashing, his fists clinched in spite of himself: "For shame, Tom. How could you be so cruel?"

"You needn't say nothin'," answered Tom, "fer your father's got the shoes this blessed minute. Old Hanky Merwin traded 'em off at your tavern for liquor afore the week was out."

"I'd like to know how you know so much," said Harry, "for I didn't know anything about it. I knew father had a new pair of shoes for me, but do you s'pose I'll wear them if they are poor Jack's?"

"Well, yer know, dad gets mighty dry some days and I have to bring the beer. And I was in the tavern when old Hanky brought in the shoes to pay for a dram. Mr. Everett didn't want to take 'em, and Mis' Everett said no to once, but Hanky 'sisted on it, so of course they took 'em."

Harry flushed with shame as he said:

"I'll never wear them, boys; just remember that." And they knew he would not.

But let us follow poor Jack as he goes so sadly down the country road. Before he knows where he is he hears the roar of a coming train of cars which will soon dash around the curve, across the road and go whizzing half a mile up to the station. But looking up the track he saw something that made his heart stand still with horror; for there stood the tavern-keeper's little Lilly, her flaxen curls flying around her head, her blue eyes open with astonishment at the fiery monster now almost upon her. He saw the father start from the other side of the track, but boy that he was, he knew that he could not reach her in time, so, lifting up his brave young heart to Jesus, whom he had learned at his mother's knee to trust, he sprang forward.