

BOYS AND GIRLS

My Huntress.

I know a huntress; fair indeed
And womanly sweet is she;
Full many a trophy of the hunt
In her home you may daily see;
And many a story of the glory
Of the chase she has told to me.

How far away in the morning light
Where the forests drip with dew,
With shortened skirts and still-shod feet
She wanders the woodland through,
And swiftly creeps or quiet keeps
For her prey to come in view.

She caught the deer in their lissom grace
As they drank from some rock-bound pool,
And the birds that came for the morning dip
In the waters sweet and cool.
Yes, many a raid has my huntress made
On the pupils in nature's school.

But never the forest has heard her gun,
Or its shadows seen its flame,
And never a bird or beast has known
They were prey of a deadly aim.
Yet those she sought were surely caught
When into her range they came.

A camera only my huntress takes,
As she joys in life so free;
There comes no thought of struggle or pain
When she shows her 'game' to me,
And her eyes were bright with kindness light,
For womanly sweet is she.

—'Dumb Animals.'

When the Minister Came to Tea.

'Really, we ought to have the minister to supper, now that his wife is away visiting,' said Mrs. Allen, thoughtfully. 'He was in yesterday and he looked lonesome.'

'We can't until we get some new dishes,' replied Lesbia, decidedly. 'I'd be mortified to death.'

Lesbia was tall, straight and golden-haired. She had a firm chin with a dimple in it. Like most young girls, she had her ideals. She disliked shabby furniture, made over gowns and worn carpets. Her especial aversion was nicked and cracked dishes. She complained a good deal in the little house because old things had to take the place of new. Mr. Allen was a poor man and Mrs. Allen was an invalid, so there was little left for 'extras' when all expenses were paid. Lesbia worried and fretted over the little economies she was forced to practice, ignoring the fact that she had more blessings than she could count.

The little brown house was shabby enough, but it was clean and homelike. No one but Lesbia would have noticed its shabbiness, for, although the carpets had seen their best days, there were plenty of books and easy chairs, the windows were full of flowers and the sun shone into every room.

Mrs. Allen looked across at her tall girl wistfully. She was a slender, frail woman, with a sweet face, worn thin by years of ill-health.

'I don't think the minister would notice the dishes, dear, if you had one of your nice suppers,' she said, gently. 'We could have fried chicken and hot biscuit and you might make—'

'No, mother, I can't!' replied Lesbia, shortly. 'I'm ashamed of our old, shabby things. We haven't a whole cup in the house. Those that have handles are nicked, and those that are not nicked have no handles. The same thing is true of the vegetable dishes. The only thing in the house that isn't broken is grandmother's old blue china platter, and that wouldn't have escaped if we hadn't put it away. That's what those careless girls did for you before I was old enough to manage things.'

'True enough, dear,' answered her mother, cheerfully, 'and grateful indeed both father and I are that we have a daughter to look after us. We only wish we could do more for her.'

'I don't mind so much about my own

clothes,' said Lesbia, soberly, 'but I should like a lovely home, with nothing old or broken in it.'

'I don't believe the minister would care about the dishes,' went on Mrs. Allen, still cheerfully. 'You make such good tea he'd forget all about the cup that held it. I wish we were rich for your sake, little daughter, but I believe, I really do, that you take our poverty too much to heart. It's not always pleasant, but perhaps you need the discipline.'

'It seems to me I get a good deal of it,' retorted Lesbia. 'I won't complain, since it only distresses you, but I do like pretty things, especially dishes. I love fine china and cut glass and silver and beautiful table-linen and since I can't have them I'm not going to ask our poverty by inviting the minister to tea. He gets his meals over at Mrs. Percival's. She is rich and has all those things!'

'Yes, but she's old and deaf and peculiar, and I don't believe she has any more to eat in her fine dishes than we do in our old ones. At any rate, I know that the meals are not cooked any better and I should like to show the minister a little hospitality. His wife was so kind to me when I had that last bad turn! Never a day that she didn't come over or else send me something. Won't you, dear?'

But Lesbia rose quickly and went away beyond the sound of her mother's pleading voice. She shut the door of her little white room tight. Her dimpled chin looked firmer than ever. 'I'm not going to!' she whispered, rebelliously.

Lesbia always said afterward that she would never have changed her mind if it had not been for that sermon. There were not many at church that Sunday morning, but Lesbia was always glad she went.

The minister took his text from Judges iii, 31: 'And after him was Shamgar the son of Anath, which slew of the Philistines six hundred men with an ox-goad; and he also delivered Israel.'

His subject was 'Christian courage,' and he told how much God's people had accomplished with humble instruments—Gideon with his lamps and pitchers, David with his sling, Morcas with her needles, and so on down to our own times. He told of brave Benjamin West, who made his first paint-brush with fur from a cat, of Watts with his teakettle, of Sir Isaac Newton with his apple and of a long line of struggling, ambitious men and women who would not let circumstances conquer them.

'They didn't wait for the appliances of skill and science,' the minister said. 'If they had waited, they would have gone to their grave obscure and unknown. They worked with what they had.'

Lesbia went straight to her mother's room after church that morning. 'Mother,' she said, 'I've thought better of what you asked me. If you still wish it, we will have the minister to supper after all.'

Mrs. Allen's face lighted up. 'Thank you, dear,' she answered, and Lesbia knew by her tone how happy she had made her.

The minister said he did not know when he had such a pleasant time—not since his wife had gone on a visit. Lesbia had set the table with painstaking care. The table-cloth was white, the silver teaspoons shone and there was an abundance of flowers. The supper was delicious and the minister ate as if he enjoyed everything.

After supper Lesbia played and sang a little, and then the minister entertained the family with stories and anecdotes. It was good to see how Mrs. Allen brightened and how her husband's face lost its tired lines.

Lesbia saw it and crept away, humbled, but strengthened with a new courage and a new resolution—a resolution to make the best of narrow means, not to let poverty dwarf and thwart her aspirations, but to accept her life with its environments as God-given and with all its limitations to press on to greater things.

Lesbia went to the door with her guest that evening. The tall, gray-haired minister looked down upon her with kind eyes. 'That was a very nice supper, Lesbia,' he said, laying a fatherly hand on her young shoulder. 'I don't

know when I have enjoyed anything more. It is easy to see to whom I am indebted for it.'

Lesbia smiled. 'It is we who are indebted to you,' she answered, gently. 'Didn't you notice how much you helped mother? She'll think of it for a month.' She looked up at the tall figure impulsively.

'Mother and father wanted you to come so much,' she added, 'but I—I thought we hadn't things fine enough. I wanted new dishes and cut glass, and we couldn't have them, so I felt rebellious. I wasn't going to ask you at all, until you preached on Shamgar and his ox-goad, and then it came to me to make the best of what I had. So I'm going to.'

They stood in the open door. The minister laid a hand on the golden head. He read the new look of submission in the girl's face, the spirit of meekness that had lately come to her. He foresaw struggles before her, but in the end, with this new grace in her heart, there would be success and victory. 'She will make a fine woman,' he thought.

He looked off across the moonlit hills, thinking of his own life, and of the years when he, too, had fought against the hardness of his lot; of those hard years before he had learned to overcome, to sacrifice, to serve, to be humble.

'Keep it up, Lesbia,' he said. 'Good night!' —'Youth's Companion.'

'Search the Scriptures.'

Lillian felt a glow of pride and pleasure in her success at the guessing-game in which some of the elderly guests in the summer hotel had invited her to join.

'We can't expect to match our wits with a girl just out of high school,' said one of the party, with a kind smile at Lillian. 'We might have known that she would recognize Boswell as the Englishman whose claim to fame rested upon a biography.'

'And she knew it was Pepys who chronicled small beer and great historical events in the same cryptic pages,' added a gray-haired gentleman. 'But if you will leave the room again, Miss Lillian, we'll try to find a character that won't be so easy for you.'

When Lillian was recalled she was told that the person she was to guess was a leader, a lawmaker, and a magician, and celebrated for his meekness. After a few moments' thought, she owned herself mystified.

'He had stone tables,' a lady suggested.

'Was it Hadrian?' Lillian asked. 'He had lots of marble furniture.'

'Ours is an Old Testament character,' remarked the gray-haired gentleman, smiling, 'and he passed forty days on a mount.'

Even this hint did not enlighten Lillian. 'I'll have to give up,' she said.

'Moses,' merrily chorused all the players.

'Moses?' repeated Lillian. 'Why, did Moses preach the Sermon on the Mount?' The merriment died out of most of the elderly faces, and was replaced by a grave expression that made Lillian uncomfortable. 'Have I said something wrong?' she whispered to Mrs. Dorsey, her chaperon.

'I think, dear, we are all pained to find you don't know who preached the Sermon on the Mount,' was the gentle reply.

A few moments later Lillian answered a tap at the door of her own room, and Mrs. Dorsey entered.

'I thought when I missed you that maybe you were here alone,' she said, and then noticing Lillian's tear-stained face, 'Why, my child, you mustn't be unhappy.'

'I can't help it. I know every one in the parlor was shocked at my ignorance about the Bible.'

'Perhaps your ignorance is not altogether your fault. The Bible isn't taught as it used to be. In my early days it was considered an important part of education, and I think the present almost total neglect of it in the home and school is a sad mistake. Children who are not brought up on the Scriptures as I was don't know what they are missing. Aside from the great religious and ethical value of a knowledge of it, a familiarity with the Bible is necessary for a good understanding of literature. Do you know why Mrs.