

BOYS AND GIRLS

Weed Your Own.

If you are sighing for a lofty work,
If great ambitions dominate your mind,
Just watch yourself and see you do not
shirk

The common little ways of being kind.

If you are dreaming of a future goal,
When, crowned with glory; men shall
own your power.

Be careful that you let no struggling soul
Go by unaided in the present hour.

If you are moved to pity for the earth,
And long to aid it, do not look so high,
You pass some poor, dumb creature faint
with thirst,
All life is equal in the eternal eye.

If you would help to make the wrong
things right,
Begin at home; there lies a lifetime's
toil.

Weed your own garden fair for all men's
sight,
Before you plan to till another's soil.

—Selected.

Being Worth Knowing.

A girl, eager, ambitious, restless for
many things, once heard two sentences that
changed much of her life. They were
these: 'Would you be known? Then be
worth knowing.'

In a flash she saw how cheap an ambi-
tion hers had been, and how selfish. Who
was she to long for the friendship of high
souls? What had she to give in return for
the treasure of their lives? Would she, as
she was, even understand their language?

In humility and sorrow she prayed again
—no longer that she might be known, but
that, in God's good time, her own life might
grow strong and beautiful, that she might
prove worthy of all blessings that were
given her. Then, since God in his wisdom
teaches us to answer many of our own
prayers, she began to study, to read, and
to think, and to try to love greatly. So
years passed.

Did she become known? Never as in her
girlish dreams. But she found something
far, far better. For she learned that to be
known is nothing, and to try to be worth
knowing that one may be known is less
than nothing; but to lift one's soul to high-
est living, because one will not be satis-
fied with lesser things, is a task whose joy
deepens with every passing year and reaches
on into God's eternity.—'Forward.'

Perfect Through Suffering.

I kept for nearly a year the flask-shaped
cocoon of an emperor moth. It is very pec-
uliar in its construction. A narrow open-
ing is left in the neck of the flask, through
which the perfect insect forces its way, so
that a forsaken cocoon is as entire as one
still tenanted, no rupture of the interlacing
fibres having taken place. The great dis-
proportion between the means of egress and
the size of the imprisoned insect makes one
wonder how the exit is ever accomplished
at all—and it never is without great labor
and difficulty. It is supposed that the pres-
sure to which the moth's body is subjected
in passing through such a narrow opening,
is a provision of nature for forcing the
juices into the vessels of the wings, these
being less developed at the period of emerg-
ing from the chrysalis than they are in
other insects.

I happened to witness the first efforts of
my prisoned moth to escape from its long
confinement. During a whole forenoon, from
time to time, I watched it patiently striv-
ing and struggling to get out. It never
seemed able to get beyond a certain point,
and at last my patience was exhausted.
Very likely the confining fibres were drier
and less elastic than if the cocoon had been
left all winter on its native heather, as
nature meant it to be. At all events I
thought I was wiser and more compassion-
ate than its Maker, and I resolved to give

it a helping hand. With the point of my
scissors I snipped the confining threads to
make the exit just a very little easier, and,
lo! immediately, and with perfect ease, out
crawled my moth, dragging a huge swollen
body and little shrivelled wings. In vain
I watched to see that marvellous process
of expansion in which these silently and
swiftly develop before one's eyes; and as
I traced the exquisite spots and markings
of divers colors which were all there in
miniature, I longed to see these assume
their due proportions, and the creature to
appear in all its perfect beauty, as it is, in
truth, one of the loveliest of its kind. But
I looked in vain. My false tenderness had
proved its ruin. It never was other than
a stunted thing, crawling painfully through
that brief life which it should have spent
flying through the air on rainbow wings.

The lesson I got that day has often stood
me in good stead. It has helped me to un-
derstand what the Germans mean when
they speak of the hardness of God's love. I
have thought of it often when watching with
pitiful eyes those who were struggling with
sorrow, suffering, and distress; and it has
seemed to me that I was more merciful than
God, and would fain cut short the discipline,
and give deliverance. Short-sighted fool!
How know I that one of these pangs or
groans could be spared? The far-sighted,
perfect love that seeks the perfection of its
object does not weakly shrink from present,
transient suffering. Our Father's love is
too true to be weak. Because he loves his
children, he chastises them, that they may
be partakers of his holiness. With this
glorious end in view, he spares not for their
crying. Made perfect through sufferings, as
the Elder Brother was, the sons of God are
trained up to obedience, and brought to
glory through much tribulation.—'Family
Herald.'

The Vindication of Lydia Frances.

By Marcia M. Selman.

Lydia Frances stood in the corner of the
school-yard, nervously folding and unfolding
the hem of her pink spotted apron. A group
of a half-dozen larger girls whispered together
not less than a yard away. Between the whis-
pers they looked at Lydia Frances. Lydia
Frances looked back at them consciously and
perhaps a little defiantly.

She was a sturdy little creature of ten
years, who would have attracted no attention
for her beauty, though she had wonderful eyes
and a frank expression of countenance. Her
hair was short and straight. Her nose was a
snub. Her face and hands were brown with
tan.

Nor would her dress have excited admiration,
for she was very simply attired in a brown
flannel gown and the aforesaid pink dotted
apron. Her shoes were stout and rough, and
were tied with leather shoe-strings. These
strings were the very gall of bitterness to the
soul of Lydia Frances. She was even more
troubled by them than by her name, which she
had inherited from her two grandmothers. If
she could have chosen the appellation by which
she was to be known among men, she would
have been called 'Mabel' or 'Stella' or 'Flora
May,' like some of the girls she knew, who
wore prettier gowns than hers and who never
suffered the mortification of wearing leather
strings in their shapely kid shoes.

But Lydia Frances she was, and the fact
was emphasized every day by everybody that
spoke to her. Her brother, Thomas Henry, was
often called 'Tom.' Her father and the boys
at school could not often take the time to ad-
dress him otherwise. But nobody was hurried
into the necessity of abbreviation in her case.
If her mother called her to wipe the dishes, it
was by a prolonged 'Lydia Fran-ces!' If one
of the school children had a piece of news to
impart, it was prefaced by 'O Lydia Frances!
I want to tell you something!' And, though
her teachers at day school and Sunday school
pronounced her name lightly and sweetly, they,
too, said unmistakably 'Lydia Frances.'

It was a good, honest, durable name, her
parents thought, and quite suitable for the
youngest of a family of six children, whose

father and mother were commonplace, hard-
working farm-folks. And there were times
when the child herself was not troubled about
it or the leather shoe-strings. When she fed
the hens, or chased the turkeys, or tramped
to the pasture to drive home the cows, her
heart was so filled with the happiness born of
the responsibilities of her occupation that there
was no room in it for repining. Still less did
she feel like murmuring against her lot when
she sat conning her much-loved books in the
village school-house, or ran romping over the
playground at recess. She was the brightest
scholar in her class, and the acknowledged
leader in the games outside; and of many of
the pleasantest of these she was the originator.

There had been neither laughter nor games
to-day. Something had happened that had
been at once a humiliation for the many and
a victory for one. And yet, sad to relate, the
victor now stood in greater humiliation than
that suffered by the defeated.

Lydia Frances it was who for a brief space
had enjoyed the exhilaration of triumph. The
school superintendent, Mr. Howe, had called,—
a rare event, and a somewhat dreaded one.
For, though Mr. Howe was a genial man, he
was the superintendent, and every scholar
knows what that means. He came in just be-
fore the third class in United States history
was called. This was Lydia Frances' class,
and as it happened, the only one in which
she did not stand at the head, having lost that
position a week before, when she had been dis-
missed before the lesson to do an important
errand for her mother. There were always a
few, however, whose recitations were so uni-
formly poor that it was no difficult thing to
pass above them. So this morning had found
Lydia Frances fifth from the head in a class
of nine.

It was the teacher's method to ask questions
on the preceding day's lesson first, after which
the new lesson was introduced. She followed
this method to-day.

Never were children more nervous than the
four who stood above Lydia Frances, and with
reason. They had been out the evening be-
fore, practising for a concert that was soon to
be given by the village singing-class. As a
result, the usual home study bestowed upon
the history lesson had been omitted by them,
and in consequence of their late hour of re-
tiring the morning had found them little fit-
ted for study. A hasty attempt to 'cram' the
lesson had availed to give them little more
than a vague idea of its contents. Of all days
for a visitor, and for the superintendent, of
all visitors! But there he was, and there were
they!

They breathed a little more freely as they
found themselves able to reply to the first two
rounds of questions. But at length the dread-
ed lesson came. Miss Evans must have known
that Jennie Stone, who stood at the foot of
the class and who never had her lesson, would
not be able to answer the question, 'What
were the four provisions of Penn's model con-
stitution?' But she put the question, never-
theless. Jennie shook her head, and blushed.

'Can't you answer, Jennie?' said Miss Evans.
'No, ma'am,' said Jennie.

The question was passed to Flora May Jen-
kins, who stood first in the row. She had
hoped that Miss Evans would call for volun-
teers, in which case the answer might have
been given out of turn, though she was not
sure that she knew the remainder of the les-
son better. She hesitated.

'Flora May?' said Miss Evans expectantly.

'I—don't—know,' said Flora May. A flat
failure! She had not been able to say one
word!

'Fannie Sykes,' said the teacher. Fannie
knew her brows and studied the ceiling, but in
vain.

'Mabel Seymour.'

Miss Evans bit her lip with vexation when
Mabel, too, the oldest and the largest girl in
the class, confessed utter ignorance, and,
dreading to ask Willie Jenkins, who stood
next, she asked, 'Who "does" know?'

Up went Lydia Frances' hand. She stood
below Willie. But Miss Evans would not pass
him without giving him a chance.

'Willie?' she said.

'I—I—forget,' he stammered.

'Lydia Frances,' called the teacher, and
Lydia Frances responded in full. Mr. Howe