

P R E F A C E.

"Dining once with a friend, whose family consisted of only himself and three boys, conversation with my host was interrupted by a violent outbreak among the latter; and, as we turned, a plate of squash was hurled by one at his opposite neighbour, which took a perfect cast of his countenance. My host, turning to me, simply said, 'Lively boys--lively boys, doctor!' and resumed the remark he had been making."—DR. TREAT'S *Diary and Table-Talk*.

In judging the boy, liveliness should not be mistaken for wickedness, if anybody can stop long enough to discriminate; but a plate of flying squash, for the moment, might well awake a doubt, except in the mind of the one who understood the parties. The stories herein told must be judged in this way. They illustrate the general conduct of the "Human Boy," as Mr. Chadband calls him; and the term "Lively Boys" will better distinguish conduct that may be mischievous without being malicious. Ike, as the representative Boy, has long demonstrated this idea. The Boy must not be judged by the standard of Childhood or Manhood. He has a sphere of his own; and all of his mischief, frolic, and general deucedness belongs to his own condition. The Boy has a little plan, purpose, or intention, in what he does, beyond having a good time. Boys think, and have no interest in the doings of boyhood, may be delightful aids to a quiet home; but the life, spirit, energy, and health of the active Boy come with his activity. As for boyish fun, it is not so much that as it is experiment; and the boyish reader of these pages will see how it is for himself. He will see his own motives, impulses, and conduct, in the incidents narrated and those of older growth, who once were boys, will read in them their own early experiences. Boys will be boys.