

BOYS AND GIRLS

Little Gifts.

It was only a sunny smile,
And little it cost in the giving,
But it scattered the night
Like morning light
And made the day worth living.
Through life's dull warp a woof it wove
In shining colors of light and love,
And the angels smiled as they watched above,
Yet little it cost in the giving.

It was only a kindly word,
And a word that was lightly spoken,
Yet not in vain,
For it stilled the pain
Of a heart that was nearly broken.
It strengthened a faith beset by fears
And groping blindly through mists of tears
For light to brighten the coming years,
Although it was lightly spoken.

It was only a helping hand,
And it seemed of little availing,
But its clasps were warm,
And it saved from harm
A brother whose strength was failing.
Its touch was tender as angels' wings,
But it rolled the stone from the hidden springs
Though it seemed of little availing.

A smile, a word or a touch,
And each is easily given,
Yet one may win
A soul from sin
Or smooth the way to Heaven.
A smile may lighten the failing heart,
A word may soften pain's keenest smart,
A touch may lead us from sin apart—
How easily each is given!
—'The Baptist Commonwealth.'

Don't Be Cross.

Bishop Brooks was much attached to children, and had many acquaintances among them. In one family whom he sometimes visited there were four children, and they loved to gather around him, the younger two sitting one on each knee, and the older two leaning one on each shoulder. He would talk with them in this position for a long time, entering into all their childish affairs apparently with no less interest than was shown by the children. On one occasion a little girl, perhaps twelve years old, was telling him of some childish grievance, and concluded her story with the words: 'It made me real cross.'

'Cross,' exclaimed the bishop: 'why C—, I didn't suppose you were ever cross.'

'Wouldn't you be cross,' replied the child, 'if anybody had treated you so?'

'I don't know whether I would or not,' said the bishop, 'perhaps I should if it would do any good. Did it make you feel any better?'

'No,' said the girl.

'Did it make anybody feel any better?'

'No,' came the answer again, hesitatingly.

'Then,' answered the bishop. 'I don't see any sense at all in being cross, and wouldn't be again if I were you.'—'Ladies' Home Journal.'

Scruggles and Beauty.

There may have been a tougher boy on the East Side than Scruggles, but there is no record of the fact. He was twelve, a gamin of the street, a terror to the neighborhood, unkempt in person, and unregenerate as to his manners, not to say morals.

There was little that was reprehensible that he had not done. At an earlier stage of his career the roof garden of the Educational Al-

liance had known him, to the grief of all the teachers and the despair of the eminent phil-anthropists who took pride and delight in the reforming and educative influences of the methods so successfully used there. He had caused a riot by tying a fire-cracker to the tail of a cat at an otherwise well-conducted celebration; he had frightened a mother into hysterics by swinging her baby out over the end of the pier 'for fun;' he had caused a runaway that had almost killed a man, by slyly prodding a horse with a lighted brand, and had indulged in similar occupations which for some went under the head of amusement.

The police did not take the same view of it, and though he had never been formally under arrest, he had been hauled to the station-house of the precinct, and roundly lectured by the sergeant. Scruggles naturally glorified in this distinction, and boasted he would be arrested yet; whereby, I trust, it is clear to the unprejudiced reader that Scruggles had ambitions of his own. His world was bounded by the section enclosed by Second Avenue and the East River, between the City Hall and the Twenties, and it was rarely that he had been farther west than the Bowery, though, on a memorable occasion, he had made what was equal to a transcontinental journey by traversing the entire length of Christopher Street.

'Huh! It ain't much,' he announced on his return with the air of a traveller who has seen strange lands, 'Second av'noo's good enough for me.'

But Scruggles did not exhibit the red welts that were hidden under his tattered trousers, and did not hint that his body was so bruised and sore than he could scarcely walk. Instead, he swaggered and posed, as others of a larger size might have done, smoked the stumps of cigarettes he had gathered out of the street, and was great in his small world, and no one knew that his black-browed father, who would not care if he broke every commandment in the Decalogue, had nearly beaten the life out of him for what he called 'running away.' Beatings for nonethical reasons were familiar to Scruggles, and he maintained a strict privacy regarding them which did him no injustice.

After that, when Scruggles foraged out afield, he was cautious, and he succeeded in getting back from Central Park undiscovered and bearing with him a trophy which made him at once the envy and butt of the rest of 'de gang'—nothing more nor less than a dog, a beautiful little thoroughbred terrier.

Strange to say, the dog had cultivated Scruggles, something no animal had ever reason to do, and Scruggles had adopted him without knowing it. Coming out of the Park at the Circle, the little creature, apparently almost frightened to death, ran at him yelping and barking frantically, circling, turning, leaping, then crouching at his feet with an all but human note of keen distress in the shrill little voice.

For once Scruggles neither kicked the dog nor threw a stone at him; he was too much astonished, and not without reason. The dog was thoroughbred from the tip of his dear little nose to the extreme end of his tail, that ended in a high-bred curl. He was snow-white, and the fine hair was soft, fluffy, and silken all over his tiny body, now quivering with intense excitement. His eyes were blue and were scintillating with half shed tears, at least that was the impression Scruggles got, and he picked him up to investigate more

closely. Then, for the first time in his rough young life, he felt the thrillings of fear shooting through the slender frame, and the vibrations in some mysterious manner had a new effect on him. He did not know what that effect was, but involuntarily he stroked the little head, whereupon the dog ceased yelping and gratefully licked his hand.

Scruggles was not the fainting kind; if he had been he would have fainted then and there. He looked furtively around him. In that jam and rush characteristic of the great entrance to the Park, no one seemed to notice him. The little dog seemed to realize that he had found a haven, and cuddled down contentedly on Scruggles's tattered and dirty arm; he was still panting and agitated; his body was hot and palpitating, and his tongue stuck out of his red mouth; he was evidently exhausted. He wagged his tail feebly and looked appealingly up into Scruggles' eyes.

The youth snuggled the dog a little closer, with an almost involuntary muscular action, and started eastward. And thence, all the way to Second avenue and Twelfth street he trudged to the insanitary shelter he called 'home,' carrying the tiny creature. Long before he had reached it the warmth of the small body against his arm, the unconscious trust, the utter helplessness of the tiny animal had awakened something in Scruggles, and no power in the world could have taken the dog from him without a fight 'to the finish.' When he finally reached his destination the dog was asleep. It was after eight o'clock, and he had had no supper, but as his father was on the Island for thirty days, he knew he would at least have no beating; so he curled himself down by the dog and, wearied by his long tramp, fell asleep also.

The next day Scruggles investigated the papers. Sure enough, in a pink evening sheet appeared this advertisement: 'Lost on Thursday, in Central Park, a Maltese terrier, answers to the name of "Beauty." Invalid cannot rest without him. Liberal reward.' Then followed a name, Randolph Mason, and the address, Seventy-second street, near the Park.

He did not know exactly what an 'invalid' was, but he found out from the nearest news-boy without betraying his ignorance. Then he went back to the dingy little room. 'Beauty!' he called to the dog. With dog cries of joy the little creature leaped up and barked until his quivering body seemed ready to burst. He raced back and forth across the floor, his graceful form a white flash, darting in curves and gyrations of delicate agility. Scruggles watched him, fascinated, then he took him up and held him against his face. Beauty, partly from hunger, partly from joy, partly from ethical motives licked the dirty countenance, and kept on licking until in that desert appeared an oasis.

'What's the matter with yer?' cried his sister, passing the door. She stood and laughed at him. 'You an' the dog's pretty cick,' she continued, 'an' half o' yer face is licked off.' She tossed a broken hand-glass toward him, and went out with a shrill laugh. Scruggles looked in it. Undoubtedly his face was clean where the dog had licked it. A dark red color crept up under this unwonted area. Scruggles looked at Beauty, and the dog seemed to smile a sagacious and approving smile as he wagged his tail. Without ado, Scruggles, still carrying Beauty, went down to the sink and washed his face, drying it with the remnants