

# BOYS AND GIRLS

## Kind Words.

Kind words are like the morning sun, that gilds the opening flower;  
Kind words are like the blessings spread by every summer shower;  
They light the heart with sunny beams—they shed a glad some ray,  
And cheer the weary traveller as he wanders on his way.

If you have nought to give the poor when winter's snow-clouds loom,  
Oh! ne'er forget that one sweet smile may chase away their gloom!  
Remember, too, that one kind word may blunt affliction's dart,  
And softly fall, like healing balm, upon the wounded heart.

Let us hear none but gentle words—no tales of dismal strife—  
But only kind things whisper as you tread this vale of life.  
Then try, by every word and glance, the suffering to beguile,  
And watch them, when you speak kind words, how happily they smile!

—Selected.

## 'The Happiest Day.'

As a long-drawn sigh escaped her young guest, Mrs. Grant said:

'A penny for your thoughts, Harry.'  
Harry shifted about uncomfortably an instant, then, unable to resist the pleading look of his auntie, he said:

'Well, I'll own right up. I was thinking how much nicer it would be if the Sundays were left out of the week; they seem to spoil everything so.'

'Spoil everything! Why, Harry, I think it is the best day of all the week,' said Mrs. Grant, trying not to look shocked at the words of her boy friend.

'Oh, well, that's because you're grown-up, I suppose. But I almost hate Sunday; it puts a stop to all my nice times.'

After some thoughts Mrs. Grant excused herself and went to the garden, where she picked seven of the most beautiful Crawford peaches she could find. Putting them on a fruit plate she garnished them with their own glossy leaves, making the whole as attractive as possible.

Harry's eyes danced with delight as she entered the room holding them in her hand, saying:

'Now, Harry, these are for you; but please don't eat them just yet.'

So Harry took the plate in his hand, and, feasting his eyes on the treat in store, listened as patiently as any boy could under the circumstances. Mrs. Grant began by saying:

'Now, Harry, I have selected for you seven of my finest peaches; they are all yours. You can, if you choose, eat all of them; but, if, after you have eaten six, you will carry the seventh to the poor sick boy at the foot of the hill, and give it to him, it will make me very happy.'

'Why, Auntie Grant,' said Harry, 'what sort of a boy do you take me for? Of course I will take it to Dick—the very nicest one, too.'

'Well, let us imagine that after you have eaten six peaches you say, "Oh, dear! I suppose I must give the last peach to Dick, but I hate to."'

'I won't even imagine such a thing!' interrupted Harry, with a very red face. 'It isn't in me to be so mean.'

Mrs. Grant made answer by taking the plate of peaches into her own hand and saying, impressively:

'Here are seven peaches. They remind me of a boy who had seven beautiful gifts. The Giver said in giving them, "They are yours; but if you love me you will do me honor by setting one apart as sacred to my memory." Did the boy regard the wishes of the Giver as sacred and gladly obey them?'

'It would be a mean sort of a boy that wouldn't do that much for such a generous friend,' ventures Harry, as the speaker paused thoughtfully.

'It would seem so,' said Mrs. Grant. Then, taking up one of the peaches she continued,

'We will, for the sake of illustration, call this Monday; that's the day he played ball, and came off victorious. Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday he camped out, and "fun" marked every one of them. Friday, picnic day, not half long enough. Saturday, kite-flying and a full tide of enjoyment.'

Mrs. Grant had pointed to one peach after another in naming them, but had avoided looking at Harry. Had she done so she would have seen that the lesson was striking home, for the boy's face was growing crimson.

At last only one peach remained unnamed. Taking it up, she drew a heavy sigh and allowed her kind face to be marred by something seldom seen on it—a scowl; then imitating as best she could the surly tone heard not long before, she said:

'You are Sunday, and I almost hate you because you spoil all my nice times!'

There was an instant's silence, then Harry, in a repentant tone, said:

'Oh, Auntie Grant, I see it! I have often made my boast that with all my faults I was at least generous; but now I see how easy it is to be selfish and not know it.'

'I am glad to see my peach lesson has made you see yourself,' said Mrs. Grant, looking pleased.

'It has, for a fact. Six days for fun ought to satisfy any boy, and I don't think anyone will ever again hear me say I hate Sunday.—'Ram's Horn.'

## An African Wash.

(Virginia Swormstedt, in the 'Christian Advocate.')

'What fools ye mortals be.' Shakespeare probably did not refer to civilized peoples and their mode of washing when he said this, but he is literally true nevertheless.

Poor civilized people! They must have tubs, wringers, wash-boards, boilers, clothes lines, pins, and washing machines, all of which are totally unnecessary except to give the various manufacturers a livelihood.

'Rugged all-nourishing earth' has provided man with all the essentials, and from my way of thinking the luxuries of washing and the poor unclad ignorant heathen African knows better how to wash to save the clothes and himself than the age-enlightened washwoman of civilized lands.

It is wash day and the missionary finds herself in need of a little fresh air medicine and recreation, starts out before six a.m. with three of her girls, to act as chaperone and watch the washing, a new sight to her.

The clothes are carried in a large five gallon bucket which rests on the top of the girl's head with perfect ease and stability, while she goes dancing and singing merrily through a freshly ploughed field which often causes the missionary to stumble with nothing on her head.

A cool shady place is found. This place also abounds in large smooth stones, which serve as washboards. The clothes are emptied into the river, and for a little while left to soak, then each girl perches herself on a stone, reaches down into the tub formed by stones nature has provided, and brings out a garment which laid upon the stone is well soaped.

The soap manufacturer could grow rich in Africa, but even here, nature offers competition, for the native entirely out of reach of civilization demonstrates that onions, soap bark, sand or coconut bark will make the clothes as white, and not eat them half so much as soap.

After the clothes are soaked they are first lashed on the stones, then kneaded, then dipped in the water, lashed again, lastly one end of the garment held upon the stone while the other is being rubbed up and over.

This act finished, the garment is taken to another tub provided by nature, well rinsed and after being rung (no wringing) is spread upon high clean grass where the sun beautifully bleaches the garment.

Thus the work continues until the whole wash is finished, no blistered hands, no broken backs, no emptying of tubs, no worn out nerves.

This is the ideal way to wash, the teal washing paraphernalia, a custom civilization could well copy from heathen Africa.

## Almost a Heroine.

(Grace Pettman, in 'Good Words.')

### CHAPTER I.

'I don't care, I won't learn! You may scold, Miss Clare; I wish you would scold Helen for a change. She is always the favorite! I hate languages! French is trouble enough, but German is worse. Fancy expecting anyone to remember different genders for everything, and calling a spoon "he," a fork "she," and a knife "it." I'll never touch that grammar again—so there!'

'Trixie!'

For a moment the governess' voice of authority lulled the storm of her pupil's passion.

'Trixie, please go indoors until you recover your self-control and learn respect. You have forgotten yourself.'

But when once Trixie Crawford's high spirits got the upper hand she threw restraint to the winds. Tossing her head defiantly she turned away from her governess; not, however, to go into the house as bidden, but, stalking off in high dudgeon, she went farther down the garden.

It was a scorching hot July day, and although Colonel Crawford's pretty house stood on the high cliffs overlooking the wild North Sea the heat was terrific. Miss Clare had readily agreed to lessons in the summer-house this morning.

Trixie Crawford was motherless—the only child of a father who doted on her, and rendered discipline rather difficult. For a long time Miss Clare found her position of governess no easy one as far as her elder pupil was concerned.

With Helen Harcourt it was different. The gentle daughter of the vicar of Woldham came every day to share Trixie's lessons, and never once gave the long-suffering governess any trouble.

A storm had been brewing for a long time, and now it had broken—broken in open defiance of discipline and obedience, that was all. Trixie was by no means clever, though she might have done very well but for sheer indolence and inattention. But where French and German were concerned Miss Clare found trouble indeed. Not only had Trixie no gift for languages whatever, but she hated German with positive animosity; why, nobody knew, Helen on the other hand, had made quiet and steady progress, and was so far ahead of the older girl that it was impossible for them to study together. Perhaps Trixie's anger and jealousy over this accounted for a good deal, though she knew she alone was to blame.

But this morning's open defiance of her governess had brought matters to a climax, and Miss Clare felt she must tell the whole story to Colonel Crawford, for the girl's sake as well as her own.

'What is the meaning of it all, Miss Clare?' He spoke a trifle sharply, for, as his wilful daughter well knew, he generally took her part.

'Trixie has defied my authority, Colonel Crawford, and spoken in a fashion I dare not overlook. Either she must apologise and obey, or I must resign my post.'

'I am sorry, but she will never apologise; I know the minx too well. If you decide to leave I shall send her abroad to school. She will learn to be friendly with foreigners, and a knowledge of their languages will follow. A couple of years globe-trotting will not come amiss to me, and Trixie will be a woman then, and glad to settle down at home.'

So it was settled. Miss Clare held honor certificates that meant a great deal, and had no difficulty in obtaining another post as governess at once; while Trixie was delighted to hear she was to go abroad to school—to her it would be no punishment whatever.

So one early September day a girl, with dark, flashing eyes and defiant expression on her face, stood upon the white deck of the swift mail boat that shot out of Dover