

# BOYS AND GIRLS

## A Little Word Lost.

I lost a very little word  
Only the other day;  
A very naughty little word  
I had not meant to say.  
If only it was really lost,  
I should not mind a bit;  
I think I should deserve a prize  
For really losing it.

But then it wasn't really lost  
When from my lips it flew;  
Mamma said that the worst would be  
My little brother picked it up,  
And now he says it too.  
I could not get it back:  
But the worst of it now seems to me  
I'm always on its track.

Mamma is sad; papa is grieved;  
Johnnie has said it twice;  
Of course it is no use for me  
To tell him it's not nice.  
When you lose other things, they're lost;  
But lose a naughty word,  
And for every time 'twas heard before  
Now twenty times 'tis heard.

If it were only really lost,  
Oh, then, I should be glad;  
I let it fall so carelessly  
The day that I got mad.  
Lose other things, you never seem  
To come upon their track;  
But lose a naughty little word,  
It's always coming back.

—Selected.

## What One Girl Did.

One winter she found herself stranded hundreds of miles away from the large and busy church which had hitherto been the centre of her outside life, in a place that seemed to her almost like a desert—she and her young brother who was not a Christian. He had gone to that dreary settlement to look after his health and certain land claims, and she had gone to him there, because all her life she had been a caretaker, and this brother with his uncertain health and reckless ways had all his life been one of her cares.

Very early in this new experience came the question what was to be done with Sundays. There were neighbors within three and four and five miles of their cabin, pleasant people who were enduring hardships and privations without making much talk about them, and who were inclined to be neighborly and sympathetic. But there were no Christians among them, so far as my friend—whose name, by the way, was Rebecca, could learn.

They distinguished Sundays from other days by sleeping much later, and having better dinners, and going fishing or hunting, or calling on some neighbor. Rebecca and her brother had received a number of these friendly Sunday visitors, and entertained them with apples and ginger cakes. This, the brother had told Rebecca, was the custom of the neighborhood.

'But they don't get any such cakes as you make,' he had pleaded proudly, and was evidently pleased at the thought of giving his neighbors a treat.

But this was not Rebecca's idea of a good Sunday, and she thought long and earnestly over her problem. In fact, on the fourth Sunday in her new home she lay awake most of the night, trying to plan what could be done. She was a timid girl, alone in her longings for something better.

The astonishment on her brother's face when at last she hesitatingly spoke her thought beggars description.

'A Sunday school! Out here in the woods five miles from anywhere! What are you thinking about? To begin with, there aren't any children within ten miles of us, except the Snyder baby and Jim Kirk's half-witted boy; but, if there were, who would teach them, and who would lead off? There isn't a man within twenty miles of us who could do a thing of that kind, not that I ever heard of.'

Rebecca tried to explain. She did not mean a real Sunday school, with a superintendent and a good many teachers, but just a—well, a Bible class; they could all be in it, all the

neighbors who could come. They could read a chapter together, and talk it over. 'It would be pleasanter than talking all the time about the claims of the driven wells and such things, wouldn't it?'

He seemed to grow more amazed with each word she spoke.

'Who would do the praying?' he asked. He thought they always had praying at such places.

Her cheeks were ablaze, and there was a suspicious quaver to her voice as she tried to answer. It was evident that Rob would do nothing but make fun over her. But she had begun, and must go on.

'I—I thought, Rob that I could repeat the Lord's Prayer, and some other Bible prayers, perhaps, if there was no one else.'

He did not laugh as she had expected; instead, he stared, a curious expression on his face.

'Well,' he said at last, 'I always knew you were a brick, but this beats all creation! Go ahead, though; I'll back you; I'm swamped if I won't! They'll like your ginger cakes, whether they do your praying or not.'

Rebecca had not meant to give them ginger cakes, but she instantly resolved that she would, if ginger cakes could help toward a better keeping of the Lord's day, surely they could never be better employed.

This was the way in which the work began, in weakness and trembling. The way it grew was almost bewildering. The neighbors came in on the first invitation. They were lonesome and some of them homesick, and were glad to get anywhere. Rebecca made the one living-room of the cabin as cheery as possible, and as cold came on, the big fireplace glowed. The people liked the singing, and joined in it lustily. Then discoveries were made. Two or three timid voices joined Rebecca's the first time she repeated the Lord's Prayer. On the next Sunday there were a dozen; and at its close Uncle Joe, the oldest and kindest resident in the region, said 'Amen' so heartily that Rebecca believed he knew how to pray. She got courage to accuse him of it, and he confessed that he used to pray 'out loud, sometimes, back East.' After a little he learned to pray 'out loud' again.

Then one Sunday Mother Bascom, ten miles away, heard of the strange doings at the new cabin, and came. Now Mother Bascom was more than seventy, and was a saint of God, with a homely shining face.

'Bless the Lord!' she said, grasping Rebecca's hand after the meeting. 'I knew he would send you, in his good time. I've been praying for you for years and years!'

This amused Rob, but it gave Rebecca courage. And Mother Bascom had never forgotten how to pray. What a help she was!

The ginger cakes helped, without doubt, and the nuts and apples, later, that Bob provided; and—O, I can not tell the story! there is neither space nor time. It is a true story, and there is a little church out there now, with forty members, and a flourishing Sunday school, in which Rebecca has a Bible class of young men and women. But the superintendent of the school is her brother Rob!—'O. E. World.'

## The Story of Captain Kidd.

(S. E. Winfield, in the 'Child's Hour.')

This is not the story of the first Captain Kidd, the wicked pirate chief whose hidden gold so many foolish people have hunted along the coast, but it is the story of our Captain Kidd, the blackest, smartest crow that was ever tamed and made a pet of.

Dickie found him one morning in the spring, after a heavy storm, down at the foot of the big elm tree, and brought him up to the house, a roll of soaking wet feathers.

'What is it?' asked Polly, prodding a small finger at the bunch.

'It's a bird. Look out there, he'll peck you.' But Dickie didn't speak quick enough to save Polly's finger, for from out the bunch of wet feathers came a strong, sharp, little bill, and Polly sprang back with a cry of pain.

But that was when the Captain first knew us, and when he was very much frightened. Af-

terward he never offered to peck us unless we teased him, which we sometimes did just to see him get angry.

We dried him, and made him a bed by the library fire and fed him, and after a day or two he seemed quite at home. He grew fast, too, and for fear that he would fly away before he was wholly tamed, Dickie clipped his wings a bit. He was black as the blackest coal possible, and glossy, like satin; and it seemed as if his sharp eyes took in everything which happened.

When the hired man began to make the garden the Captain was on hand and would follow him along the beds. If the Captain liked the looks of the new plants, he would promptly snip them up, and later when the nasturtiums were in full bloom he was very fond of snipping off the blossoms. He always took a yellow or crimson one, and acted as if he knew those colors were the most becoming to his glossy black back.

Some of the children who came to play with Polly and Dickie he was fond of, and Dickie he adored. He would sit with him for hours together, but one small girl who used to come he hated,—why we could never tell. She always wore buttoned boots, and he would spread out his wings and rush across the lawn toward her, fly at her boot buttons, and peck and scold in a perfect fury. The small girl, frightened almost to pieces, would drop down on the grass and cover her feet and begin to cry, while the Captain would stand on the grass a little way off and wait for her to move on. And there Dickie would often find them, and rescue her.

He was as tame about the house as a kitten, and often sat on the table while I was sewing, although if he took the notion he would take all the pins and needles out of the cushion, one at a time, and drop them on the floor. He liked the top of my dressing-table, and simply loved to look at himself in the glass. He was the vainest creature I ever knew, as well as the most mischievous.

Crows have one thing odd about their make-up and that is a crop which they can fill with corn which they eat, and hold it there, instead of having it pass on into their stomachs. This is so that in their wild state they can carry the food which they find back to their nest, even at a long distance. Dickie had taught the Captain to fill his crop with corn or blueberries, or even small pebbles, and then to put them out on the piazza. It had taken lots of time to teach him, but it also made lots of fun when he showed him off to callers. It certainly was a funny sight to see that solemn black bird standing, his wings closely folded, with his beak putting one after another blueberry until he had a lot of rows of them on the piazza. The sight always called forth shouts of laughter from strangers, and it always seemed funny even to the family, and it almost seemed to us as if even the Captain enjoyed the joke of it. But this trick of his got him into trouble one day.

We lived some way out of the village, on the top of quite a high hill. One warm day in the summer the minister of the church walked out to the house to call upon mother. No one saw him coming, because we were all in the rear of the house, so no one ran to the door to let him in as we usually did. So, tired with his walk, he sat down a minute to rest before ringing the bell.

Now we had on the piazza an old-fashioned chair which had been grandmother's; it had a high back, and on the top of the back it spread out into a tiny shelf. It was into this chair that the minister dropped, only to fly out of it with a yell which brought us all running swiftly to find out who was hurt. He was just a little ashamed, when he found out what the matter was, that he had screamed so loud; but then, he was badly scared. It was only that Captain Kidd, who had been amusing himself with spreading out on the back of the chair on the little shelf a large array of small sharp pebbles, and when the minister sat down the motion of the chair threw the stones inside his collar and down his back. When we told him what the trouble was he was much amused and Dickie had to hunt up the Captain and make him do the trick for the amusement of the minister.

Poor Captain Kidd! his curiosity and his