

## Children's Department.

### A Boy's Resolution.

The quaint fishing hamlet of Banks, nestling among the sand-hills that run along the shore of the northern coast, awoke one morning to don gala attire. It was the occasion of the new market being opened at Crossings by the mayor, the latter seaport lying only a mile and a half distant from the village of Banks. It was a day of importance for the fishermen and their wives, inasmuch as the new market meant profitable and easier sales for them than had been the case when obliged to send the fruit of their toil to markets further away. Thus it was that the good folk of Banks had decorated their old-fashioned homes and buildings, as far as they could, in outward demonstration of their inward satisfaction at the new state of affairs which was to be.

Mrs. Blundell had risen betimes—even as the sun had first appeared, shining over the glistening, restless sea—and had put her cottage in order, made the simple breakfast and taken in a sniff of the fresh breeze, before calling the rest of the family to the neatly-spread table.

"It's going to be a fine day, wife," said Mr. Blundell, coming in from a shed at the rear, where he had been repairing a shrimping net, "and the earlier start we get, the better spot we'll find for good hearing."

"That's true enough," replied she, pouring out a cup of milk each for the sturdy little fellow and the plump, rosy-faced girl who were seated at the round, pine table. "And you think we'd better not take the children, John?"

"Yes, I do, Maggie," said Mr. Blundell, decidedly. "There'll be such a crowd as never was seen in Crossings before—folks are coming

**HE LOVED**  
good bread, pie,  
and pastry, but his  
stomach was delicate.  
**SHE LOVED**  
to cook, but was  
tired and sick of the  
taste and smell of lard.  
She bought Cottolene,  
(the new shortening) and  
**THEY LOVED**  
more than ever, be-  
cause she made better  
food, and he could eat it  
without any unpleasant  
after effect. Now  
**THEY ARE HAPPY** in  
having found the BEST,  
and most healthful short-  
ening ever made—  
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from all over—and the children would only be in the way. Besides, it would be no enjoyment for them to sit listening to talk they could not understand."

"I was only thinking they'd be pleased to see the decorations," said Mrs. Blundell, mother-like, yearning to give her children some of the pleasure that was to be hers. "And besides, John, I know Peter'll think he's hard put to it if we ask him to stay at home to look after them; most of the neighbors are going too, or we'd leave Jack and Mary in their care."

"I saw Tim Sutton this morning, and he's not going to take his family, so I told him they could come over and stay with Jack and Mary, and Peter would look after them all."

"Oh, father, must I do that?" said a brown-faced lad, entering the kitchen at that moment, and hearing the latter part of Mr. Blundell's speech, "and I've planned to go to Crossings with the Jamison boys. We were going to have such a grand time!" and the speaker threw himself down disconsolately upon a chair, as he looked entreatingly at his father.

"Now, Peter, didn't I explain all this to you yesterday? I want your mother to go to the opening of the market and enjoy herself, which she can't do if she's got to have the children dragging at her heels. She wouldn't go comfortably if we left them here alone, nor more would I, so there's naught for it but for you to stay and look after them. And I'll tell you what, Peter; your mother and me'll try to get back by half-past two or three, and then you can go to Crossings. You'll be just in time for the procession around the market. We don't care so much about that as the mayor's

speech." And having finished his say, and his breakfast at the same time, Mr. Blundell arose from the table, adding, "Get ready as soon as you can, Maggie. Peter'll help you clear up."

"Don't you mind, Peter," said Mrs. Blundell comfortably, as the father left the kitchen; "we'll get back as soon as we can, and it will be a real treat to me, you know, this little outing. You'll like to feel you're making it so, my boy?"

For a moment there came no answer.

"It is so hard," thought the lad, "that I have to stay home just at this time; it's cruel! all the other boys can go, and I've to stay and be nursemaid." And then a better thought came; he remembered how patiently his mother always went around the house, trying to smooth out the tangles that came in her children's way, and how she was ever ready to sympathize and comfort and help.

"Indeed I shall, mother," he said at last, so heartily that his mother's eyes glistened and she answered tenderly,—

"That's spoken like my own boy."

It was hard sacrifice for the boy—harder perhaps than the father dreamed of, for pleasure did not often enter into the simple life led by the Banks boys and girls—and as Peter watched his parents leave the house, big tears came into his eyes and his lips trembled as the thought of what remaining behind meant. "I shall have to walk there all alone," he murmured, "for the other boys are going this morning; and when I get there they'll all be spread round." But he shook his head, pressed back the mournful thoughts, and called out cheerily after the departing figures,—

"Hope you'll have a good time, father and mother. Don't hurry back; I can stand it all right."

"That reminds me," said Mr. Blundell, turning back with his hand upon the garden gate, "if you like to leave the house about two, Peter, you might walk across the fields with the children and meet us on the way. It would be so much time gained for you. We shall come back by Roe Lane, and if we leave Crossings about two we could meet half way."

"Yes, father. That'd be fine," said Peter, his eyes glistening. "I'll do that."

But after all the duties that fell to the boy's share had been seen to, and still there was plenty of time left before two o'clock, Peter began to find time hang heavily upon his hands. The children were playing down on the beach with their little neighbors, as happy and joyful as though their older brother was not watching them from the kitchen door half-wistfully; they evidently needed no looking after just then.

"Hallo, Pete! this is luck. I thought you'd have gone on sure."

Peter turned with a start. It was Tom Jamison speaking to him. "I couldn't get off with the rest of the boys," continued he: "had to go on an errand for mother. But come on, we'll be late. Didn't the boys call for you, as they passed by?"

"Yes, but I wasn't ready, no more'n I am now." And then Peter briefly explained.

"Oh, the children'll get on all right; it's nearly twelve now." two hours won't make much difference. Come on, Pete," said Tom persuasively.

Peter shook his head. "I can't," he said, shortly.

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Bradford, Mass.

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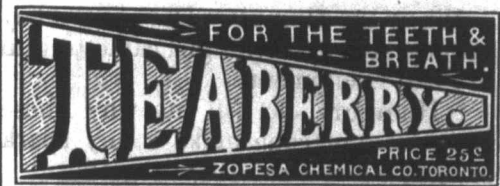
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