

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS.

LEARNING THE ALPHABET.

Our little Minnie, four years old,
Is learning A, B, C,
And when she comes to W,
She calls it Double-Me.

Then sister Susy, teaching her,
Is very sure to say,
"You precious baby, W
Is not pronounced that way."

A kiss, a hug, and once again
They try the A, B, C,
But Minnie's dimples dance about
With fun at Double-Me.

And Susy feels discouraged quite,
She don't know what to do
With such a naughty little puss,
Who won't say W.

If I were Sue, I'm sure I'd let
The darling run away,
And leave the queer old alphabet
Until another day.

RUDENESS AT HOME.—There is at this day, undeniably, among the rising generation, a lack of courteous demeanor in the family. Of all the places in the world, let the boy understand that home is the place where he should speak the gentlest and be the most kindly, and there is the place, above all, where courteous demeanor should prevail.

A GOOD LESSON.—"Wait a minute, Will."

"What for?"

"I want to get that bunch of blue-bells."

Ned laid down his fishing-tackle and sprang over the fence, presently to return with a handful of the flowers, with their dainty coloring thrown out by a background of two or three ferns.

"You're a great fellow for flowers."

"Oh, they're not for myself; but mother's always crazy over wild flowers."

And all through the walk home, notwithstanding he was already well-laden with rod and fishing-basket. Ned gave good heed to his flowers, once stopping to wet his handkerchief to wrap about the stems, that they might not suffer from the warmth of his hand.

"There she is!" While still at a distance, Ned spied his mother, and made a dash toward her across the large yard. Will, following more slowly, saw him drop his red, and take off his hat as he offered the flowers with a bow and a smile. A little stir of pain was in Will's heart, as he saw them received with a kiss and some words, evidently loving ones, which he could not hear.

"Come round to the barn with your traps, and then you can stay to supper; mother says so," said Ned, rejoicing his friend.

"You're different from most boys," said Will; and Ned colored a little, for he was inwardly a trifle afraid of his mother's display of fondness provoking ridicule from the boys.

"How?" he asked, although knowing well what was meant.

"Oh—that," said Will, with an indefinite backward nod over his shoulder.

"But I like it—I do, really."

"I like it," said Ned, his deepening color now due to feeling. "Don't know how I'd get along if my mother wasn't just that way. And, as she is just that way, how can I help being just that way too? Of course, it comes natural that I should be."

Ned's mother, if she had heard this, might have smiled in remembrance of the many lessons it had taken to inculcate the grace of politeness, which was now, indeed, if not natural, rapidly becoming second nature to the boy.

"If I had a mother, I'd like to be so," said Will.

"Well, it isn't only just mothers, you know. That is, of course, nobody else can be like your mother; but I mean you can be it to other folks—in a way; to anybody in your home. They all like it."

Will burst into a laugh.

"All, hey? I wish you knew my Aunt Susan. But you will; for, now we're getting settled, you must come over. You'll laugh at the idea of such doings for her. Why, if I should bring her a flower or take off my hat to her, she wouldn't know what to make of it. She'd think I was crazy."

"I don't believe it," said Ned: "That is, if she's a good woman. And, of course," he added, in quick politeness, "your aunt must be."

"Good! I guess she is! She's so good herself she thinks there's no good in such a thing as a boy. I believe she thinks boys were only made to be a torment to such as she."

"Some boys are, I suppose."

Will colored a little as he inwardly realized that Aunt Susan might be somewhat justified in holding such an opinion.

"Well," continued Ned, "I thought all ladies liked flowers, and liked to be nicely treated, too. And," he added, stoutly, "I think so still."

"I don't believe Aunt Susan would take the trouble to notice either flowers or nice behavior," replied Will.

"Have you ever tried?"

"Well, I haven't, that's a fact. But," he gave a little laugh, "the idea of bringing flowers to Aunt Susan! Fancy her stare! She would not know what to make of it."

But the remembrance of Ned's graceful thought of his mother, and the sweetness of the caressing tenderness between mother and son, had

touched the conscience as well as the heart of the motherless boy.

"If it wasn't flowers, I suppose it might be something else. She's as stiff and proper as a poker, and I suppose a boy might smile, and bow, and be polite all his life, and she'd never know but that he was cutting up some new kind of pranks. But, then, perhaps it's no wonder. She doesn't know much about any boy but me. I guess she thinks all they're good for is to carry mud in on their shoes, and slam doors, and leave the fly-screens open, and be late at meals. But, I say!—I've a great mind to try Ned's way; that is, partly—just for the fun of seeing how she'll take it."

With which determination Will walked around the house, to find his aunt approaching the side door with a huge parcel in her arms. At any other time he would not have troubled himself about this, but now he stepped up and opened the door for her. She took little notice of him except to ask:

"Do you know where Hiram is?"

"No, I don't."

"I've been looking for him. I want to send this bundle down to Mrs. Brown's."

She passed on through the hall as if speaking more to herself than to any one else. Will was rushing up to his room two steps at a time, when he suddenly paused.

"I'll take it to her, Aunt Susan."

She stopped and looked at him unsmilingly, concluding at once in her own mind that he had some business of his own that way, yet still surprised that he should be willing to include in it a service for herself.

"Well, if it won't bother you," she said.

More intercourse with Ned awakened in Will a more honest resolution to make the best of himself in the matter of grace of manner and behavior. It is a pity that every boy should not reflect how largely his conduct influences those among whom he is thrown. Will increased his efforts to avoid small annoyances to his aunt, and began showing her small attentions, which sometimes won for him an approving smile.

He began to feel touched and conscience-smitten at perceiving that what he had begun in an unworthy spirit of fun should be making the impression on Aunt Susan which should belong with honest effort. It was pleasant to the boy whose home life was so lonely to find himself looking for Aunt Susan's smile, and for the softened voice in which she answered his good-morning. And one day he ran up to his room and laughed by himself till he was out of breath.

"I look off my hat to her as I met her on the corner, and she actually turned red with astonishment."

"More shame for me that it should take her off her feet so," came with a soberer reflection. "If I've done it in fun before, I'll do it in earnest now. I think it pays for a boy to be decent in his ways, whether anybody notices it or not. It pays just in the feeling he has himself."

Which was as wise a conclusion as a boy often arrives at.—Catholic News.

RENTABLE.

There are many vacant offices right here in Montreal that could be easily rented if they were brighter—had more daylight. There is nothing which counts for more in renting an office than brightness. Luxfer Prisms in the windows give the result required. On the first floor of the British Empire Building is a very desirable office, in the windows of which the owners have installed Luxfer Prisms, and any one requiring such an office will find the light all that can be desired. The Luxfer Prism Company, of 1833 Notre Dame St., have just put the prisms in place, and any who have already seen this office would be interested in noting the change caused by the new light. Star—Feb. 18th.

SEEING THE POINT.

The following story is told of a once well known millionaire who had been dead some years. A young man came to him one day and asked pecuniary aid to start him in business.

"Do you drink?" asked the millionaire.

"Once in a while."

"Stop it! Stop it for a year and then come and see me." "The young man broke off the habit at once, and at the end of the year came to see the millionaire again, with the same request.

"Do you smoke?" asked the successful man.

"Now and then."

"Stop it! Stop it for a year, and then come and see me again."

The young man went home, and broke away from this habit. It took him some time; but, finally, he worried through the year, and presented himself again.

"Do you play billiards?" asked the Cæsar.

"Yes, I do," was the desperate reply.

"Stop it! Stop it for a year, and then come and see me again." The young man stopped playing billiards, but never went back. When asked by his anxious friends why he had not called upon the millionaire again, he replied that he knew exactly what the man was driving at.

"He'd have told me that now that I'd stopped drinking and smoking and playing billiards. I must have saved enough money to start myself in business. And I have."

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