

Our Boys and Girls

CHANGED MINDS.

By Sarah Franklin.

Mother had been cross all day. She had spoken crossly to father, and father passed it on, Tom and Myrtle had fussed for the first time in all their lives, because they were late for school, and so on. Before night came the whole Bibsley family wore a scowl on their faces.

Now, their aunt, Mrs. Bernard Temple, was coming to spend the summer with them, and the house was topsy-turvey getting ready for her. Tom and Myrtle were not looking forward to her visit with much pleasure, for they had never seen her, and their father and mother would not describe her, as they wished to surprise them. Thursday came and Mrs. Temple was expected on the four o'clock train. Myrtle was setting the dinner table, and her mother was putting the finishing touches to the guest room. Tom and his father washed the car, as they couldn't take a dirty car to meet her, for Tom was sure the expected guest had eyes that saw everything.

"Oh, mother," said Myrtle (for about the fortieth time), "why does Aunt Marion have to come now when I was so anxious to have a house party?"

"Well, daughter, you know the house is large and you can have it just the same."

"But, mother, she will be cranky, I know, and spoil all our fun. But I guess I will have to make the best of it."

The car was coming up the lane now with the aunt in it. Myrtle and her mother were out on the steps waiting to welcome her. Mrs. Temple was Mr. Bibsley's sister, and had been abroad for several years.

The car rolled up to the door, and out skipped Mrs. Temple. She was about sixty years old, but looked years younger. She kissed her sister-in-law and niece, and they walked into the house.

"Won't you go up to your room a while before dinner? You must be wearied from your journey."

"No, indeed, I would much rather go outdoors and try your new lawn swing," and out she went.

Myrtle looked at her mother and her mother looked at her. But Myrtle only said, "O mother," and she slowly walked out after her aunt. She found her aunt under the grape arbor eating grapes for dear life. When Myrtle walked up to her, her aunt put her arms around her and whispered in her ear, "Myrtle, I have made up my mind to give you a good time while I am here, for I have taken a great fancy to you." Myrtle was silent, but the look on her face was enough answer for her aunt.

The dinner bell rang and Myrtle walked in to dinner with her aunt, and seated her at the table. When Mrs. Temple smiled, she was indeed pleasant to look at. Everyone who saw one of her smiles was compelled to smile too. She got mother smiling, father smiling, and so on, until you never saw a merrier group in all your life.

Myrtle sat next to her aunt, and she was telling her brother of her plans. "Henry, can you take Myrtle and me over to Norrington to-morrow morning to catch the train for Romney?"

"With pleasure," he answered.

"You know I have many plans laid out," she said as she turned to Mrs. Bibsley. She gave Myrtle's hand such a squeeze that she almost cried out with pain.

After the colored woman had cleared the table, Mrs. Temple asked her sister-in-law if she would excuse Myrtle and herself for a few hours. Hand in hand they went upstairs. The trunk had arrived, and after Mrs. Temple had changed her traveling dress for a cool gingham, she got down on her knees, unlocked the trunk, and Myrtle gave a little scream of delight as her aunt drew out dress after dress, pretty shoes, hats and everything a girl would like. Myrtle said nothing for a few minutes, then she rushed to her aunt and threw her arms around her, and hugged her until she was blue in the face. Then she ran and called her mother. She wondered why her mother wasn't more surprised. But, of course, Aunt Marion had written to find out Myrtle's measurements. In the mail that afternoon there came addressed to Tom a beautiful bicycle, a camera, and by express a little poodle dog. Tom thanked his aunt many, many times, and, in private, Tom and Myrtle decided that Aunt Marion was splendid.

The next morning, Myrtle and her aunt left for a nice long stay in the city, for they wanted to take in the city, and do some shopping.

The summer passed rapidly, and winter was coming, and it was nearly time for Aunt Marion to go home. Myrtle had grown very much attached to her and they all dreaded next week's coming for that would be the end of her visit.

Mrs. Bibsley decided to give her sister-in-law a little party, and she turned the inviting over to Myrtle and Aunt Marion, and such a crowd as they did invite, people from ten years old up to forty, but Aunt Marion knew how to entertain all ages, and they all said they never had a better time.

Aunt Marion was telling her nephew and niece good-bye at the front door, for Mr. and Mrs. Bibsley were going to the depot with her. It was rather a sad good-bye, but it was soon over, and Tom and Myrtle waved their hands and shouted until they were out of sight. "Long live Aunt Marion, of Boston" they yelled.

Myrtle turned to Tom and said: "I tell you, it doesn't do to form your opinion of people before you know them."

"Right you are," said Tom. "Say, isn't she great!"

ONE SATURDAY AFTERNOON.

"All the other girls get to go automobile riding, mother. I wish I!"

Claribel looked up suddenly and saw Marjorie Dawson coming up the steps. "No, I can't come in," panted Marjorie; "I haven't time. The girls of the eighth grade are fixing up a picnic for this afternoon over in Wheaton's Grove. I hurried over to tell you. Going to start from Lalia's at one o'clock. Be there on time. I'm in a hurry." Marjorie was out on the sidewalk flying along before Claribel could answer.

"Hoo-hoo! All right," called Claribel as Marjorie turned the corner, still on a run.

"Oh, mother, the eighth-grade girls are going to Wheaton's Grove this afternoon for a

picnic. The first picnic this summer! It's just the right kind of a day, and"—She stopped suddenly, her mouth drooped at the corners, and her shoulders sagged. "Oh, mother, I forgot! I told Dora I'd come and stay with her this afternoon. Oh, dear!"

"That's too bad," replied her mother. "She'll be looking for you. Two or three days ago her mother told me she could hardly wait until Saturday."

Claribel frowned as she drummed on the table. "She couldn't expect me to miss the picnic, mother. It's the first we've had."

"Yes, Claribel. I'm sorry it happens just this way. I think I'll let you decide it yourself. You promised a week ago to spend Saturday afternoon with her, and she has been thinking of it every minute since. She's been shut up in the house so long, and, of course, she'll be very much disappointed if you don't go. But there's the picnic; it's pretty hard. Yes, I'll let you think it out and decide for yourself."

Claribel's face brightened. "Well, I know just what I'll do, mother. I'll call up Mrs. Condit and tell her that I can't come. That's what I'll do."

Her mother went on rolling out cookies and made no reply.

Claribel waited a minute and then started for the telephone in the dining room. When Mrs. Condit's "Hello" came to Claribel's ears, she began bravely. "Hello, Mrs. Condit. This is Claribel. How's Dora today?"

"Oh, she's happy as a lark, Claribel, think of your visit this afternoon. I haven't seen her look as well for six weeks. She's been singing all the forenoon. I guess if you could come every day, she would get better right along. You're better than the doctor. You're certainly a dear girl. Dora is looking forward to a happy afternoon. She gets so lonely. Come as early as you can."

When Claribel went to the telephone, she knew exactly how she was going to tell Mrs. Condit that she couldn't come and spend the afternoon with Dora; but after hearing all this, she couldn't think of one thing she had intended saying. But Mrs. Condit was waiting; she must answer something at once.

"I'm so glad Dora is better," Claribel's voice rang out over the wire. "Tell her I'll come right after dinner."

She hung up the receiver and stood a moment leaning against the telephone box. Then she went slowly out in the kitchen.

"Well, there will be other picnics, Claribel," consoled her mother. That didn't help very much; it was to-day's picnic of which Claribel was thinking.

After dinner Claribel started out along the road, and at one o'clock she stepped into the Condit yard and saw Dora smiling in the window. The next second the door opened, and Claribel was pulled inside by Mrs. Condit and Dora.

At two o'clock they were having a fine time, but once in a while the picnic would bob up into Claribel's mind.

"Honk, honk, honk!" Another minute and Mr. Condit came blustering into the sitting room. He was smiling all over his face. "Come, girlies; get your hats on. We're going to take a ride. It's such a nice day; the doctor says it will be fine to get Dora out in the fresh air. Come; get ready."

There was a scrambling for hats and jackets. Just as Claribel jumped into the machine, Mrs. Condit put a basket on the front seat beside Mr. Condit. Then they went whizzing and tooting away, calling good-bye to Mrs. Condit. On and on they went, turning corners so fast