OUR BOYS AND GIRLS

THE HUNTED DEER'S APPEAL.

A deer hard pressed by hunters and their hounds,
O'er hill, thro' woodland, and the meadow bounds,
To seek a place of safety, and elude
The hunters and their hounds, who close pursued.

Though now his speed seemed at its height,
His only safety was in faster flight;
Redoubling now his efforts, faster flew,
And hounds and hunters soon were lost to view.

Still on he kept nor slacked his pace,
Till honest effort won for him the race.
Alas for honest effort and fair play!
The hounds and hunters crossed a nearer way.

The now-exhausted deer they intercept,
Who (as deers do, I'm told) now wept
When finding his best efforts vain,
His life to save and liberty to gain.

Of every hope, save on'y one, bereft,
He quick resorts to that which now is left;
A prayer to God—the only God he knows,
Which was the Godlike mercy of his foes.

A prayer to all that higher self in man,
Which, if not God, can pity as God can;
So to the foremost hunter came the deer,
Quickly and boldly as though naught to fear.

And lifting his sad eyes to hunter's face,
He seemed to say, "Lo! I have lost the race."
And thrusting his head beneath the hunter's arm
He seemed to say, "Kind sir, please save from harm."

The creature's God did not refuse his prayer—
The hunt was stopped—the creature rested there.

LESLIE'S LUCKY SIXPENCE.

A LITTLE girl named Leslie Sylvern, lived in a little house in a little town. The town was named Bubble and was in Nebraska. Leslie was seven years old when her aunt from "back east" came to pay her mother a visit.

"She is just exactly like a fairy god-mother," Leslie confided to Billy. "She has silk dresses in her trunk, Billy, and I think one is velvet! She has the prettiest hands, with nails like the inside of the sea-shell that papa bought at the State fair. She speaks soft, but the words sound as if they were loving you. And there's a smell about her clothes like our sweetbrier bush and the sweet peas mixed together."

"Can she shoot?" questioned Billy.

"I," faltered Leslie, "I don't—know."

"'Cos she ain't of much account," decided Billy, critically, "if she can't shoot. I seen a woman at a circus over in Kansas who could bust nine glass balls out'n every ten."

"My!" breathed Leslie with round eyes.

"Oh, she was smart!" condescended Billy, with a swagger. But before long he, too, surrendered to the stranger within the gates. He took Aunt Elyssa down to the old mill near which the wild ducks flocked. He drove her in a buckboard over the prairies. He hunted up for her the flowers she admired. He experienced a consuming sense of the vanity of all human affection when his Aunt Elyssa asked his mother to let Leslie go home with her.

"I intend," she avowed, "to saunter eastward at the most leisurely rate. I'll stay in Omaha a week, in St. Louis a week, and in Chicago a month. I have been such a rover all my life, I really believe I have friends in every city on the continent. I'll spend May in Washington, and spend about a fortnight in Philadelphia. I expect to get home about the end of June."

"But Elyssa dear," her sister cried, protestingly, "What would you do with a child in all that travel? She would be a great care to you."

"She would be a great delight and comfort to me, Alice. You know I lost a little girl just Leslie's age. To have Leslie with me for awhile would be almost like finding Fay. I'll promise to bring her back safe in the fall."

Mrs. Sylvern hesitated. She would miss the sunshiny presence every hour; but, if the child were to grow stronger, to be happier,—"Leslie may go," she decided softly.

Billy went out to the coop and began throwing sticks at the chickens. He felt at war with the world. He, too, desired to see the wonderful world where there were shops and stree-cars and crowds of people—the world where there was something to see beside corn, and that he could not—yet.

The day of Leslie's departure arrived. Billy swallowed his disappointment and a lump in his throat. He was genuinely sorry to lose this merry little sister of his, who looked so sweet and kissable in her new fawn colored Gretchen coat and big rosetted hat. It was with a feeling of surprise he recollected he used not think Leslie as pretty as Janie Simonds, because she had a tooth out in the upper front row and freckles on her nose. He thought her beautiful just then.

"I'll mind your red bird and the rabbit," he promised, giving her a kiss redolent of the peppermint drops which had been bestowed upon him in compensation for staying at home.

"Will you? And the hen with the white forehead? She's mine, too. Yes, I'm coming, Aunt Elyssa! And tell Gracie Lanse she can play with my doll that has the legs loose,—not the one in the party dress, for the dress won't wash, and, oh, mercy me, Billy," the words rising into a shriek of dismay, if "I didn't 'most forget my lucky sixpence!"

Billy's eyes rolled and blinked curiously and he gulped at the air once as if struggling to speak.

"Jiminy!" he exclaimed, with a kind of perfunctory sympathy.

Leslie flew upstairs. Presently she was down again, clutching a tiny purse tightly.

"Goodness knows what might have happened," she later confided to her aunt, "if I hadn't remembered to bring my lucky sixpence. You see I found it one day, and old Mammy Mame was washing at our house; and she said, 'Long's you wear that round your neck, honey, or carry it in your pocket, you won't have no bad luck, nor nothin's goin' to happen you!' So it would be terrible if I'd forgotten it now!" And tighter still she held the little purse, as if therein lay immunity from all evil.

Leslie saw sights in the days that followed which made her dusk blue eyes open like morning-glories in the sunshine that follows dawn. She saw Omaha, precipitous, picturesque, progressive, with its odd little houses perched high on its clay banks, its homelike streets, and its electric cars whirring up and down. She saw St. Louis, staid and conservative, its fine old residences looking strangely desecrated by the smart shop buildings which had sprung up around them.

She saw the crowded streets of Chicago, and looked from the Auditorium tower across the tossing waters of Lake Michigan. She trotted down the shallow steps leading from the Capitol at Washington, saw Pennsylvania Avenue all gayly glittering at night, and peered in at the pillared portico of the White House. She wandered through the quaint parks, the handsome streets, the tempting stores of Philadelphia; and she felt herself the wisest of little women when she reached New York.

"If," she said to her aunt, with a sigh of satisfaction, as they ate their breakfast on the dining-car steaming into the Empire City, "if it wasn't for my lucky sixpence, we'd never be eating these lovely griddle-cakes now, would we?"

Mrs. Chalmers smiled at the solemn little face opposite. "How is that dear?" she questioned.

"Well, you see there was that bridge outside Omaha that burned up. The train we came on might have been on that bridge at that time, if we hadn't come the day before. Then there was that cyclone in Illinois. We might have been blowed away in that, if we got to Chicago before the day after. The rain in Philadelphia that made streets so muddy might have drowned us if there was enough of it; and the train that took us over the river might have tumbled off into the water, but," triumphantly, "nothing bad happened to us because I brought my lucky sixpence!"

Her aunt nodded.

"Once," Leslie continued gravely, "a cat came into our back yard. We think she was mad, 'cause she talked through her teeth. She would have bited Billy, only I came out and throwed a stone at her, and she ran away, because I had my lucky sixpence in my pocket."

"Indeed," Mrs. Chalmers said interestedly.

"Yes, and there," impressively, "were our chickens. A great big hawk was just a-fliggering down to catch them; and I chased them quick into the covered coop, and fastened the door, so she couldn't. I had my lucky sixpence tied around my neck that morning."

"Gracious!" ejaculated Mrs. Chalmers.

"Oh, that wasn't much!" averred Leslie, deprecatingly. "Once my lucky sixpence saved my life. There was a lovely fair at the county seat. They had a merry-go-round there, and some colored people who sang in a tent. A boy got run over and killed; but I didn't."

"How did that happen?"

"That I didn't get killed? Oh, I couldn't find my lucky sixpence, so I stayed at home."

"Oh!" comprehensively.

There never in this world was a little girl who kept her ears so wide open for accidents and calamities and catastrophies of all kinds as Leslie did that summer, and she was quite positive each and every one of them was only averted by her lucky sixpence. Taller, radiant, and healthy, her aunt took her back to Bubble in the fall.

"O Billy!" she cried, giving him a fusillade of kisses when she escaped from her mother's embrace: I've brought you a real, sure enough steam-engine; and—what's the matter?"

For Billy was looking strangely downcast and remorseful. "You didn't ought to bring me anything, Leslie. You know what I done," he said.

"I don't. Let her play with my doll with the party dress on?" in sudden suspicion.

"No. Worse'n that."

"Forgot to feed my red bird?"

"No. Can't you guess, don't you know?"

She shook her head.

"I—I took your lucky sixpence, just the loan of it, out'n the fastened-up part of your purse before you left; and I hadn't no chance to put it back."

A silence followed the confession.

"And I hadn't it at all?" said Leslie, staring amazed.

"No," replied Billy, penitently.

"And you had it all the time?"

"Yes." He timidly extended a battered dime with a hole in it. She took it from him.

"Billy," she declared magnanimously, "I'm almost glad you had it; for, if you hadn't something would have happened to you, sure. Let's go and start that steam-engine!" *Kate M. Cleary, in the Youth's Companion.*

FEARLESS AND HONEST.

A Scotch lad landed at Castle Garden, the brightest, yet the loneliest passenger of an emigrant ship. He was barely fourteen, and had not a friend in America, and only a sovereign in his pocket.

"Well, Sandy," said a fellow-passenger who had befriended him during the voyage from Glasgow, "don't you wish that you were safe now with your mother in the old country?"

"No," said the boy; "I promised her when I left that I would be fearless and honest. I have her fortune to make as well as my own, and I must have good courage."

"Well, laddie, what can you do?" asked a kind voice behind him.

"I can be loyal and true to anybody who will give me something to do," was the quick response.

A well-known lawyer, whose experience with applicants for clerkships in his office had been unfavorable, had taken a stroll down Broadway to ascertain whether he could find a boy to his liking. A canny Scotchman himself, he had noticed the arrival of the Glasgow steamer, and had fancied that he might be able get a trustworthy clerk from his own country. Sandy's fearless face caught his eye. The honest, manly ring in Sandy's voice touched his faithful Scotch heart. "Tell your story," he said kindly.

It was soon told. Sandy's mother had been left a widow with little money and a child to bring up. She had worked for him as long as she could, but when her health failed she had bought his passage to America, and given to him what little money she could spare.

"Go and make your fortune," she had said. "Be fearless and honest, and don't forget your mother, who cannot work for you any longer."

Sandy's patron engaged him as an office boy.

"I'll give you a chance," he said, "to show what there is in you. Write to your mother to-day that you have found a friend who will stand by you as long as you are fearless and honest."

Sandy became a favorite at once in the office. Clients seldom left the office without pausing to have word with him. He attended night school and became an expert penman and accountant. He was rapidly promoted until he was his patron's confidential clerk. After sharing his earnings with his mother, he went to Scotland and brought her back with him.

"You have made my fortune," he said; "and I cannot have luck without you."

He was right. When he had studied law and began to practice at the bar, his fearlessness commanded respect and his honesty inspired confidence. Juries liked to hear him speak. They instinctively trusted him. His mother had impressed her courage and sincerity upon him. His success was mainly her work. —*The Household.*

THE GREAT FIREFLY.

The great firefly—elater notilucus—is an inhabitant of the savannahs of most of the warmer parts of America and the West India Islands. It is said to attain a length of an inch and a half. In the gloom of night these flies are extremely luminous, and the effect is brilliant. The light chiefly proceeds from four parts, viz., from two glandular spots behind the eyes, and one under each wing. They have the power to cut off the light at will, in which case the glandular spots become perfectly opaque. The light of this wonderful insect by itself is such that if the creature be held in the palm of the hand, print or manuscript is as easily read as by a candle. The aboriginal natives cage these creatures and make use of them, it is alleged, as lanterns. Ladies adorn themselves with this electric like luminary.

It is related of Don Domingo Conde, of Columbia, that he would appear on the evening promenade with a large firefly ornamenting the buckle of his broad hat, while a band of smaller luminous insects surrounded it. The same Spaniard lighted his palace with fireflies in silver cages. The display must have been enchanting, for at one time the light is ruddy, at another the tinge is greenish, then there is a change to golden yellow. It is stated that when the Spaniards were about to land one of their expeditions against Mexico, a panic was caused by these luminaries. The host of flitting lights on land was supposed to be an indication of the enemy arousing their camp to resist the attack.

When the English were attacking the West India Islands, the fireflies were taken to be a Spanish army advancing with burning matches against them, and the upshot was a hasty retreat to the ships.—*All the Year Round.*

HERB MOLLY.

In a corner of one of the great markets of Philadelphia a little stall was for many years occupied by an old Scotch woman. She sold only heads of lettuce and herbs, but few as crisp and fresh were to be found in the city. Sometimes the other hucksters urged her to "spread out" into the larger vegetables.

"Na, na!" she would say. "I ken my salats an' my herbs. I dinna ken th' ithers. I suld cheat or be cheated wi' them."

Herb Molly never wronged any one of a penny. Her sense of justice was so long proved, that disputes in the market were brought to her to decide. Customers who once stopped to buy the fresh, crisp leaves from the tidy old body always came again. Something in the withered face looked out from under the white cap went with them and drew them to her again. More than one busy housekeeper would go a mile out of her way to buy from old Molly.

"It is not only that her herbs are so fresh and delicious," one said, "but it rests me to speak to her. She is only an ignorant woman, but so true, so friendly. It is the kindest soul in the world that looks out of her eyes."

In the twenty years during which she sat in the same quiet corner, she gradually became a power in the market. Noisy people lowered their voices in their bargaining when they spoke to to her. Even Big Pete, the butcher and rough, made her his confident.

It was to Molly that the women carried their troubles about sick babies and drunken husbands. It was Molly who coaxed Big Pete's boy to give up liquor, and who saved more than one girl in the market from going astray. She lived alone. These rough folks were the only children she had. She had love enough in her own heart to mother them all.

But the thing that gave her such extraordinary power over them was that God was so real to her. Big Pete used to say, "I believe in Molly's God.

Molly died the other day. There was no notice in any paper to show that a power for good had gone silently out of the world. But her empty corner was swept and closed that day, and over every stall in the market hung a scrap of black. One man whom she had brought back to decency and happiness said:—

"A woman may sit as a huckster in this market, and yet be one of the angels of God."

That was her only funeral sermon.—*Exchange.*

How Longfellow Got His "Jack The Giant Killer."

Some time ago I read a little anecdote of Longfellow which illustrated his love for children. It seems that one little fellow in particular was fond of spending his time in the great poet's library. One day, after a long and patient perusal of the titles (to him great cumbersome works) that lined the shelves, the little chap walked up to Longfellow, and asked in a grieved sort of way, "Haven't you got a Jack the Giant Killer?" Longfellow regretted to say that in all his immense library he did not have a copy.

The little chap looked at him in a pitying way, and silently left the room.

The next morning he walked in with a couple of pennies tightly clasped in his chubby fist, and laying them down, told the poet that he could now buy a "Jack the Giant Killer" of his own.—*Harper's Round Table.*