

Two Evening Trains

The first train leaves at 6 p. m. For the land where the sleep flower blows and mother, dear, is the engineer, and the passenger laughs and crows.

At 8 p. m. the next train starts for the pleasant land afar; the summons clear falls on the ear. All aboard for the sleeping car.

What is the fare to this pleasant land? I hope it is not too dear; the fare is this—a loving kiss—and it is paid to the engineer.

Ask of Him Who the children took to his knee in kindness great. In charge, I pray, of the trains each day take leave at six and eight.

Watch o'er the passengers, thus I pray, for they are very dear; have special ward, O gracious Lord, for the gentle engineer.

—Harriette R. Manvel.

The 'Boys' Brigade.' BY ERNEST GILMORE.

All of the boys, with the one exception, who belonged to the 'Boys' Brigade, of Englewood, had fine uniforms, of which they were justly proud.

That one exception was Billy Duncan, familiarly called 'Dunc.' Of course it was poverty that prevented Billy from having a blue uniform with brass buttons.

Billy's home was not a typical drunkard's home, although his father was a drunkard. Billy's mother was a woman of strong character.

It was a mystery how she could keep up her home amidst such surroundings, but she realized that her children's future depended, in a great measure, upon home and their mother.

Consequently the home was as pleasant as possible to make any home where drunkard lives. When the latter was out, as he was most of the time, the mother and children had happy hours together.

Billy was his mother's right-hand man. If it had not been for his industry and devotion the wolf would have entered their door long ago.

A week passed by; the eventful day had come. The Boys' Brigade was in great excitement all day long, and when Mr. Lake's son, Jim, who belonged to the new band of Englewood, said that 'the band would play for them without pay,' it was difficult to keep their enthusiasm within bounds.

In fact, a good many of them stood on their heads in their joy. At 7 o'clock in the evening the Boys' Brigade, bearing lighted torches and headed by the new band, paraded through the streets of Englewood and on to 'Thorn Hall,' which they entered.

Billy, clad in a beautiful new military suit, was in the parade. His fine blue eyes were glowing with delight, for he had never felt so proud and happy before.

At half past 7 the hall was filled. The families of the members of the 'Boys' Brigade' and the 'New Band' had free tickets, all the others paid. Billy Duncan's folks were all there; even the 'drunkard' was seen, although Billy had not at first intended to invite his father.

It had come about in this way: His father was sober that day, and when not under the influence of drink he was always kind. He had stroked Bessie's hair, but Bessie had escaped from his touch and run to her mother.

He had tried, too, to make friends with Baby Carl, but had failed, as the tender-hearted, timid child was afraid of him. Billy, looking on, pitied his father, so he sought in some way to speak a word of comfort.

'Father,' said he, gently, 'we're going to have an entertainment to-night at Thorn Hall; I'm going to take part, and I'd like to have you come and hear me. Will you?' Mr. Duncan's lips quivered, his heart being touched with the tenderness of Billy's words and tone.

But he asked: 'What are you going to make a speech about, drunkenness? If you are, I won't go.' 'Oh, no, father; I'm not going to say a word on that subject. I'm going to talk about George Washington.'

'What do you know about him?' wondered Billy. 'Harry Thorn lent me a book, 'Life of George Washington,' and I studied it up to please the boys; they've been so kind to me. They were kind enough to say that I'm the best speaker in the Boys' Brigade. I hope I am, for mother's sake.'

'Why?' with interest. 'Because there is a rich uncle of Harry Thorn's going to be there, and he's to give a prize to the boy who makes the best speech.'

Thorn Hall was brilliantly illuminated, and all was expectation! Presently the 'New Band' struck up a grand march, a beautiful thing, and from behind a curtain the Boys' Brigade, in the full glory of blue broadcloth and gilt buttons, marched on the stage and took seats.

Next, Harry Thorn, as president of the society, made a pleasant address of welcome in his genial, winsome way. This was followed by a cornet solo by Sam Weller, after which a bright paper on 'Washington and '76' was read. The new band played again and the curtain dropped.

When the latter was raised again, a series of tableaux on the 'Life of Washington' were given. Then the Brigade sang some stirring songs. It was now time for the prize contest. Six boys took part, the best speakers of the Boys' Brigade. As it was announced that a prize would be given to the best speaker, great interest and close attention was given to the speeches.

The Children's Stories.

BY A. D. WALKER.

Three or four children were playing in our sitting-room and we had the pleasure of listening to their chats with one another. At length one of them proposed to the others that they should sit down and tell stories.

All agreed, and we will repeat here some of the stories. Jamie's story ran like this: 'There was a man going through the woods, and they were very dark, thick woods, with not much of a path. After awhile the poor man stepped upon a place where the leaves lay very thick—yes, much thicker than in the other places. Here to his surprise he began to sink, and down, down he went till he landed in a sort of a den. He groped around, wondering where he was. At length he found out it was a bear's den, and in a corner was a litter of young bears.'

'How could he get out? It was deep and all straight up and down. He thought and thought what to do. After much thought he took the little bears and piled them up on top of one another and in that way made a ladder or steps and climbed up to the top on them and got away.'

Louise's story was of some children whose mother went away and left them to keep house. After a while they found that the furnace fire was all out and it must be kindled.

The servants were gone away, too. There seemed to be no kindling wood for them to get hold of, and they did not know what to do. At length they went to their mother's wardrobe closet and took her two best dresses and stuffed them into the furnace, and with them kindled the fire.

Hazel's story was like herself, a quaint little recital. 'One time there was a little girl and she was very plain looking. She did not have a nice skin; it was all full of freckles. Her nose did not turn down enough.'

'How did it turn?' interrupted Jamie. 'It turned up,' replied Hazel, shortly. 'Then her eyes were little and they have enough blueing in, and her mouth was too—too stretchy.'

'Mirandy, that was the little girl's name, felt so bad 'cause she wasn't pretty that sometimes she cried 'bout it. 'Well, one night a beautiful lady—a real fairy came to her room.'

'Oh, did she?' cried Louise; 'did she? And how did she look?' 'Oh, she had on a dress made of silver spots or something and it shone awful bright. Then she had on a gold crown and shoes, and she had in her hand a silver handle.'

'A wand!' cried Louise. 'Oh, yes, a wand. Well, she waved the wand and said in tones like singing: 'Mirandy, what do you want?' 'Now, Mirandy wanted to be very good and very pretty, but she concluded that by trying she could be good, but she knew she could not be pretty, even if she tried ever so hard, so she cried out: 'Oh, Mrs. Fairy, I do want to be pretty so much. Do make me pretty.'

'Then the fairy waved the silver-handle over Mirandy—' 'Wand!' cried Jamie. 'Oh, yes, wand, and the fairy said: 'Now, in the morning you'll be pretty, but the first time you're naughty all the pretty will go away and you'll be plain again.' Next morning Mirandy came down stairs with long golden curls, bright blue eyes, and her nose turned down right, and her mouth made as little and sweet as she wanted it.'

'Oh, what did her mother say?' asked Louise eagerly. 'Her mother said, 'What little vain, stuck-up girl is this come here instead of my dear little homely Mirandy?' Now, Mirandy wasn't pleased at such talk, but she tried to act good, though she had forgot to say her prayers. She meant to be good all the time so as to keep her pretty looks; but you know how easy it is to forget to be good, don't you?' 'Yes,' cried Jamie, 'I do!'

'Well, after breakfast Mirandy's mother wanted her to amuse the baby, and Mirandy forgot and began to cry, and said she thought a beautiful little girl ought not to take care of a baby, but sit in the parlor to be admired. And then she cried more and said she wouldn't, and the beauty all went away, and she was little plain Mirandy. And the fairy came once more to her and said: 'Little girl, you were foolish to wish to be pretty instead of good. Don't you know to be good will make you pretty!' 'It wouldn't turn her nose down,' cried Jamie. 'Nor make her mouth little,' followed Louise. 'Well, it would make her pretty, any how,' insisted Hazel. —Chris. Intelligencer.

Great men are they who see that spiritual is stronger than any material force.—R. W. Emerson.

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