

Our Boys and Girls.

THE FLY.

A fly,
To my eye,
Is a wonderful thing.
He buzzes about all the day on his wing
A gossamer, fibberty, gibberty thing.
You wouldn't surmise
A thing of his size
Had strength for all of the tasks that he
tries.
For instance, today
I was reading away
Of fairies and gnomes and the pranks
that they play,
When a fly
Came by,
And then he began
On a horrible plan
Of worrying,
Flurrying,
Scurrying in,
And flicking the ends of my nose and
my chin,
Until I'd
Like to died
With wrath and chagrin.
Now I'm a big thing—
The fly he was small.
He'd flop and he'd fling,
He'd buzz and he'd sing,
While I would do nothing at all
But whack at that fly
Each time he came by,
Deep wrath in my eye;
I never could hit him, however I'd try,
I whacked for two hours
With all of my powers;
And when it was done
I sat weary
And teary—
While he was fresh as when he had
begun.
—John Kendrick Bangs in September
St. Nicholas.

WHAT PEGGY LENT.

Peggy watched Mrs. Toomey go away with a look of relief on her tired face. "Oh, mamma," Peggy said, "I wish I could lend something to somebody, too!" "Well, why not?" mamma said, cheerily. "Truly?" Peggy hurried to the door, but Mrs. Toomey's calico dress was just a little blur of dingy red in the distance. It was too late to call her back. "And there isn't anybody else with seven little mites o' children and a landlord," Peggy said, coming back into the kitchen slowly. "Besides," she added, as a sudden afterthought, "I spent my ten cents—I forgot." Mamma smiled. She had just taken out a pan of sugar cookies, and she selected two of the golden-brownest ones, and tucked them, all warm and spicy, into Peggy's hands. "Never mind, dear heart," she said; "there are other people to lend to besides Mrs. Toomey, and plenty of other things to lend besides money. Now run out on the piazza steps, and eat your cookies." It was cool and shady out on the front piazza, but just outside the reach of the great leafy branches of the linden-tree how sunny and hot! Peggy munched her cookies, and pitied the people going up and down the street. She made believe the avenue was the Desert of Sahara, and it really did make a good one. There was such a wide stretch of

glaring white dust to cross, from curb to curb. Only, of course—Peggy laughed at the idea—of course, there wasn't a steady procession of camels going up and down the Desert of Sahara! On the avenue the cam—I mean the horses and the cars—went back and forth always.

"There goes that blind music teacher—he's going to cross the Desert o' Sahara," mused Peggy, lazily. "He always stops the longest time and listens, first. I shouldn't like to cross the Desert o' Sarah in the pitch dark, either—my, no!"

Out on the curbstone the blind man waited and listened. His face was turned toward Peggy, sideways, and it looked anxious and uncertain. There were so many wheels rumbling by! The hot sun beat down on his head pitilessly.

"He's going to give Tillie Simmons a music les—"

But Peggy never finished that word. A sudden wave of pity swept over her. The next moment the blind man on the corner felt a little cool hand slip into his, and a shy voice was saying something in his ear.

"It's me—I'm Peggy," it said. "I'll lead you 'cross the Desert o' Sa'ra, just as soon as that 'lectric car goes by—there, now!"

Together they crossed the wide, hot avenue in a whirl of dust. Peggy's bare yellow head caught the sunlight like a nugget of gold. Her earnest, care-stricken face was red and moist. On the further curbing she slipped away and ran across again, back to the rest of her cooky on the piazza steps. By and by she remembered the return trip the blind man must take.

"I'm going back there, and wait for him, so's not to miss him," she decided, promptly; and away she flew.

But it was hot—my!—on the other side of the avenue! There was no linden-tree over there, and Peggy thought it wouldn't be polite to sit on other people's doorsteps.

"Lillie Simmons takes pretty long music lessons," she thought, with definite sympathy for Tillie and a general compassion for everybody else who had to wait round on sunny avenues without a hat on.

The return trip across the Desert of Sahara was made safely and the blind man plodded his careful way home with a happy spot in his heart. And Peggy—Peggy went home with a glad spot, too. She had never thought to be glad for her eyes before.

Mamma opened the window, and beckoned to Peggy. "Well, was it as nice as you thought, dear?" she said, smilingly.

"What?—was what as nice, mamma?" asked puzzled Peggy.

"Lending things to people."

"Why—why, I haven't lend a single thing to anybody, mamma!"

"No, not a single thing—two things, dear. I think you must have enjoyed it very much."

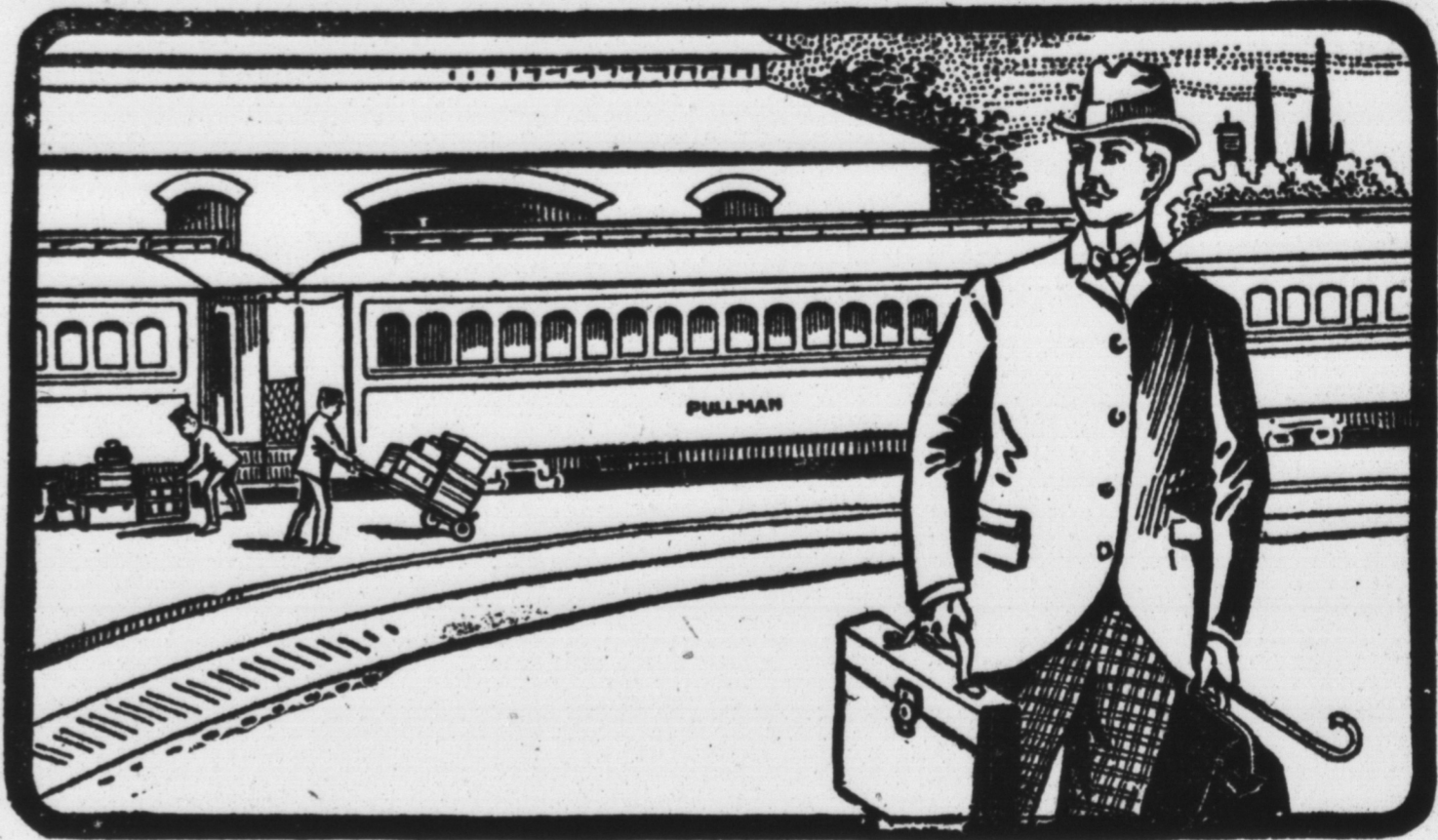
Peggy looked decidedly astonished. What in the world she had lent to anybody? Two things, mamma said—mamma said such funny things.

"Oh!" cried Peggy, suddenly, laughing up at mamma. Then her face sobered, and grew gentle.

"Yes—oh, yes, I liked it, mamma," she said.—Annie Hamilton Donnell.

COST OF REFORM.

An old peer said to Wilberforce, "And so you intend to be a reformer, young man?" And then, pointing to a picture of the crucifixion, he added, "That is the end of reformers."



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KATIE'S SATURDAY.

"Dear me!" sighed Katie, when she got up that Saturday morning.

"What can be the matter?" said mamma, laughing at the doleful face.

"Oh, there's thousands and millions of things the matter!" said Katie, crossly. She was a little girl who did not like to be laughed at.

"Now, Katie," said mamma, this time seriously, "as soon as you are dressed, I have something I want you to do for me down in the library."

"Before breakfast?" said Katie. "No, you can have breakfast first," mamma answered, laughing again at the cloudy little face.

Katie was very curious to know what this was; and, as perhaps you are, too, we will skip the breakfast, and go right into the library.

Mamma was sitting at the desk, with a piece of paper and a pencil in front of her.

"Now, Katie," she said, taking her little daughter on her lap, "I want you to write down a few of those things that trouble you. One thousand will do."

"Oh, mamma, you are laughing at me now," said Katie; "but I can think of at least ten right this minute."

"Very well," said mamma; "put down ten." So Katie wrote:

"1. It's gone and rained, so we can't go out to play."

"2. Minnie is going away, so I'll have to sit with that horrid little Jean Bascom on Monday."

"3. ———"

At this point Katie bit her pencil, and then couldn't help laughing. "That's all

I can think of just this minute," she said.

"Well," said the mother, "I'll just keep this paper a day or two."

"That afternoon the rain had cleared away and Katie and her mamma, as they sat at the window, saw Uncle Jack come to take Katie to drive, and, oh, what a jolly afternoon they had of it!

Monday, when Katie came home from school, she said, "Oh, mamma, I didn't like Jean at all at first; but she's a lovely seat-mate. I'm so glad, aren't you!"

"Oh!" was all mamma said; but somehow it made Katie think of her Saturday troubles and the paper.

"I guess I'll tear up the paper now, mamma, dear," she said, laughing rather shyly.

"And next time," said mamma, "why not let the troubles alone until they are a certainty? There are many of them that turn out very pleasant if you only wait to see. By waiting, you see, you can save the trouble of crying or worrying at all."—Sunlight.

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