

Our Boys and Girls.

THE ORDER OF THE SMILING FACE.

We've formed a new society—
"The Order of the Smiling Face."
An honored member you may be,
For every one may have a place.

The rules say you must never let
The corners of your mouth droop
down;
For by this method you may get
The habit of a sulky frown.

If playmates tease you, let your eyes
A brave and merry twinkle show
For if the angry tears arise
They're very apt to overflow.

If you must practice for an hour
And if it seem a long, long while,
Remember not to pout and glower,
But wear a bright and cheerful smile.

The rules are simple, as you see;
Make up your mind to join today.
Put on a smile—and you will be
An active member right away.
—Lucy Foster, in November St. Nicholas.

A CONCERT OF CREDIT.

BY HATTIE LUMMIS.

"I can't come to school this afternoon, Miss Hollister," Dorothy told her teacher at recess. "Mamma hasn't been out of the house since Dale was sick, and that's most seven weeks. But today she and papa are going to the concert, and I'm going to take care of Dale."

"That's quite a responsibility," said Miss Hollister, smiling at Dorothy's important air. "Your mamma must be very sure that you are to be trusted."

"Well, you see it makes people very queer to be sick such a long time," Dorothy explained, lowering her voice confidentially. "Dale never used to cry, but now he cries about everything that he doesn't like, and then he gets feverish, and mamma's afraid he'll have a relapse. Mamma knows I'll let him beat in all the games, and that's why she dares to leave me to take care of him."

It was not easy to get along with Dale. Dorothy hardly knew her brother, and a dozen times a day she was obliged to comfort herself by remembering mamma's assurance that Dale's temper would improve as his body grew stronger. This afternoon it was worse than usual, for Dale had become so accustomed to his mother's presence that he was inclined to resent her leaving him, even for a few hours. Dorothy tried her hardest to be entertaining, with rather unsatisfactory results. "And if he gets to fretting, and is worse," she thought, despairingly, "why, mamma won't dare to go away again for ever so long."

They were in the midst of a rather uninteresting game of authors when the sound of distant music reached their ears. Dale dropped his cards and looked at Dorothy, with brightening eyes. Then he smiled.

"It's a hand-organ," he cried. "I wish he'd hurry and get to our house. Do you 'spose he'll stop here, Dorothy?"

"We'll give him some money, and then he will," replied Dorothy, jumping to her feet and running to her bank. But though she shook it with all her

might, not the faintest jingle answered her. Dorothy's bank had a way of being empty, but it had never failed its mistress at quite such a crisis as this.

"Oh, I wonder if there isn't a nickel or a penny lying around somewhere," cried Dorothy, darting around the room, distractedly, and looking into all sorts of unlikely places.

"He's coming, Dorothy! Hurry," cried Dale, who had pressed his face against the window-pane.

"But I can't find any money. Maybe Norah's got five cents," and Dorothy flew down to the kitchen, only to meet another disappointment. Norah had just finished explaining how she had sent all her month's wages to her mother in Ireland when Dale's voice, choked with tears, called over the banisters: "He's gone by, Dorothy. He isn't going to stop."

"Oh, yes, he will, Dale," Dorothy called back, cheerily. "Just wait a minute."

Dale heard the outside door slam. Going back to the window he saw a small girl, with flying curls, running after a little Italian, bent double under the weight of his heavy organ.

The man looked surprised when Dorothy pulled his sleeve, and he broke into her explanations with a gentle murmur in his native tongue. If he did not understand English, how was she ever to explain what she wished. Then all at once she discovered at her side a small boy with big black eyes and gleaming white teeth, who was peering around at her with an air of interest.

Dorothy took a long breath, and told the whole story; how her brother had been sick, and how the least little thing made him cry, he was so nervous, and how when he cried he grew feverish, and was worse again. Then she told how much Dale wanted to hear the music, and how she had looked in her bank for money, but in vain.

"And won't you play for us today, and trust us for the money till the next time?" cried Dorothy, appealingly. "Oh, please, please do!"

The white teeth of the little Italian boy flashed in a smile as she ended, and when he had translated Dorothy's speech to his father, he smiled too. Without another word the three went back to the corner. The Italian stationed his organ just under the window from which Dale was looking down so eagerly, and still smiling, began to grind out his music.

What a treat it was, even if the organ was a trifle asthmatic, and wheezed sadly over "Listen to the Mocking-Bird!" Dale beat time on the window-sill, his face wreathed in smiles, and Dorothy sat by, overjoyed to see him happy. The hand-organ man played every tune through twice, and the boy rattled his tambourine vigorously, smiling up at Dale as he did so. And at last the concert was ended, and the musicians waved their caps for good-by and went slowly down the street.

It was ten days before they came again, and Dorothy worried a little over their non-appearance. "I hope they didn't think I wanted them to play for nothing," she told her mother. "I specially asked them to trust me till next time, but they don't understand English very well."

But one night at dinner the strains of "Listen to the Mocking-Bird" came wheezing through the window, and Dorothy was on her feet in a minute.

"It's our hand-organ man," she exclaimed. She flew to the window, and a dark-eyed man and a dark-eyed little boy greeted her with a flash of white teeth. "I've got ten cents for them up-

stairs," Dorothy cried. "Dale and I have been saving up."

"I think I'll have to add a contribution," said her father, taking a quarter from his pocket, and brother Tom cried gaily: "Pass the hat, Dorothy; we all want to put in something."

"It is a good thing the hand-organ season is nearly over," papa said to mamma, when the music ended, which was not for an hour or more. And Dorothy and Dale wondered, as they often wondered before at the strange notions of grown-up people.—*Congregationalist*.

PRUDENCE AND PRISCILLA.

BY JULIA OLDER CARLETON.

Alfred sat on the shady back porch of his Aunt Lucy's house, watching a mother-hen and her brood of downy-chicks. He had just fed them a generous breakfast of corn-meal and stale bread-crumbs, wet with sweet milk; and, although he had spent a portion of every one of his nine years in the country, he eyed those twelve fluffy things as if he were seeing them for the first time.

"Oh, auntie!" he called, "do come and see this old hen talk to her chickens. She steps just as careful, and when she finds a crumb that's too large for them she breaks it up fine, and makes such queer, soft little noises to them, and they come just as if they understood. Do they, auntie?" he asked, eagerly.

Aunt Lucy came out and sat in a low rocker, and while she shelled peas for dinner, watched the chickens and talked with Alfred about them.

"Certainly they understand her, and she them," she said, in answer to his question. "See, now, one of them is lost behind the watering-can; hear it cry for its mother,—hear her call to it. There! now it has found her. How contented both are!"

"Why do they peep so?" asked Alfred. "They can't be hungry, for they've left food and water."

"Watch them," said Aunt Lucy.

The hen settled down, fluffing out her feathers, and uttering a sort of purring sound,—a low "k-r-r-r,"—and, with sleepy little peeps, the twelve balls of yellow down rolled under her wings.

"Oh, see the little yellow feet!" exclaimed Alfred. "What a lot of them! Twenty-four,—looks like a hundred, most."

Now and then a little head would peep through the shelter of feathers, and then cuddle back under its soft cover.

One little fellow, with brown stripes down his back, come out and ran after an insect, when all at once the hen, with neck stretched and head turned sidewise, gave a cry of alarm. It was the same "k-r-r-r," uttered in a high, sharp key, and repeated many times, while the hen kept her bright, yellow-rimmed eye turned upward. At the first note of alarm, the venturesome chick ran for shelter.

"What did she do that for?" asked Alfred, greatly puzzled.

"She sees a hawk," said Aunt Lucy, "and she told her baby to run to cover; and, you see, he understood, and obeyed instantly."

"I never know before that chickens were so interesting," said Alfred, thoughtfully.

"I've watched them a good many many years," said Aunt Lucy, "and I think they are very interesting, and know more than most persons give them credit for, and I could tell more than one story to prove it."

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"Oh, tell me one, auntie, please do," begged Alfred.

Aunt Lucy put the peas to cook, and brought out a basket of strawberries to hull. Alfred helped a little and listened eagerly to Aunt Lucy's story.

"Two years ago when our white Leghorn, 'Topknot' came off with her brood of ten, she was the proudest mother I ever saw. Eight of the chicks were Plymouth Rocks, big sturdy fellows, and two were small and dainty, like their mother, only they were of a soft dove-gray. The Plymouths soon outgrew their golden-brown coats, and were obliged to wait for some time for full suits of mottled black and white. They seemed not to mind this in the least except when some cross old biddy pecked them with her sharp bill.

"The little gray chicks were not obliged to wait, for the long feathers grew quickly over the fluffy baby-clothes, complete in every part, from the stylish collars which fell over their silvery-gray dress in deep points to the trim, fan-shaped tails. The tiny creatures looked to me very much as two dimpled toddlers would dressed in tailor-made gowns, with boots, hat, and gloves to match. They were so prim and dainty that I named them Prudence and Priscilla. They seemed to know that they were different from the others, for they always 'flocked by themselves.'

"While searching for eggs one day, I noticed Prudence and Priscilla alone, as usual, contentedly scratching over a pile of litter near the barn. As I entered, Prudence followed, lifting her slender feet slowly and cautiously, while she peered around, turning her wise little head this way and that.

"Being perfectly quiet, I watched her as she walked carefully up to a sack of grain, closely tied, that stood against a manger. She walked around this sev-