

LITTLE WATTS.

No matter how cold or stormy it was, Little Watts was always waiting for his papers, in front of the *Daily Leader* office, at half-past four in the morning.

It was often stormy and always cold at that hour, in the thriving and populous Rock Mountain town in which the *Leader* was published; and Little Watts lived a mile from the office in a poor wooden house near one of the great mines.

I met him one morning hurrying down the stony, deserted, unlighted street. The wind was blowing keen and cold; the air was filled with fine, sleety snowflakes; and I thought, when I saw Little Watts, that the fates had not been kind to the boy, or he would have been warm and snug in bed at home at that hour.

But the *Leader* was published every morning, and Little Watts had regular customers at whose doors he left his papers before he hurried away to the early morning trains.

He was only twelve years old, and small for his years; and he would never be much larger or stronger. A great hump between his narrow shoulders told a sorrowful story of a fall down a long flight of tenement-house stairs, when he was only two years old.

It was often my duty to count out to the boys the papers as they came from the press. This is how I happened to know Little Watts.

His name was Clarence, but I never heard him called by any other name than Little Watts.

I remember when I saw the boy and heard his name for the first time. It was the first morning I gave the papers out to the boys. The *Leader* that morning contained one of the matters of important news that always increases the demand for the papers, and the moment the office door was open the newboys came pushing and scrambling in, each eager to be first.

Suddenly the largest of the boys—a low-browed, thick-lipped, stocky fellow—began to beat the other boys back.

"Git back, fellows!" he shouted. "Git back, I tell ye ye're scroungin' the life out o' Little Watts! Ye know he allus gits his papers first. Git back, now!"

The other boys left back, and out from among them came Little Watts, bearing evidence of having been pretty severely "scourged."

His hat had fallen off, and he limped as he struggled forward. The rough boy who had befriended him, in a way so surprising to me, found his hat and put it on the boy's head, while he said:

"Aint hurt, are ye, Watty? No? Well, that's good. Git yer papers now, and light out, for they'll go like hot cakes this morning."

There stood, next to the house in which I boarded, a small house containing two or three rooms, which had not been occupied for several weeks.

One evening, as I went home, I saw cheap paper shades at the windows of this little tenement. Smoke was rising from the chimney, and on the step of the open door sat Little Watts, playing on a harmonica.

The door was within three feet of the street, and I stopped to say, "How do you do, Little Watts? Are you going to live here?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then we shall be neighbors. I live next door."

"I'm glad of it, sir," said Little Watts, politely.

"You must come in and see me some time," I said. "I have a good many books, and you may use any that you like to read."

A small, thin-faced woman came to the door, and looked inquiringly from me to Little Watts.

Herose and said, "Mother, this is Mr. Hart of the *Leader*. You've heard me speak about him."

"So I have," said Mrs. Watts, quickly. "The *Leader* folks are real good to my boy, sir. He tells me about it, and I'm very much obliged."

The window of my room looked out upon the house which the Watts family occupied. A day or two after their arrival I was sitting in my open window. The windows of the other house were also open, and through them came the sound of some one singing in a wonderfully clear and sweet voice. I laid down my book to listen.

The words came distinct and beautiful: Flow gently, sweet Afton, among thy green braes, Flow gently, I'll sing thee a song in thy praise.

Could it be Little Watts singing in such a voice? While I looked and listened, I saw Little Watts coming from a well at the back of the house with a pail of water. I could not restrain my curiosity. As he came near my window I asked, "Who is that singing?"

"My sister Elise," he answered, eagerly, his face beaming.

"She has a wonderful voice," I said. "Hasn't she though?" exclaimed Little Watts, with more enthusiasm than I had ever before seen in him.

"Did you ever hear any of those big singers?" he went on.

"Yes."

"Can they sing any better than she can?"

"Well, they are much older than your sister, and of course they are highly trained. How old is your sister?"

"Sixteen."

Before many days I and others in our neighborhood sat in the scantily furnished living-room of Mrs. Watts' house, and heard Elise sing.

Mrs. Watts was a widow, and Elise and Clarence were her only children. A small pension partly supplied their wants, and Mrs. Watts and Elise took in plain sewing when they could get it; but Little Watts' earnings from the sale of his papers were the chief source of income.

It seemed to me that they might live a little more comfortably; but one day Little Watts confided a secret to me.

"We're saving for Elise," he said. "She's going to be a big singer some day, after she's gone away and studied and had a chance. I'm saving up for that."

This was the reason why Little Watts wore such shabby clothes, and this was why their table so scantily supplied. This was why Little Watts walked the streets in all kinds of weather, crying his papers at an hour when other boys slept.

One, two years passed. I was still in the *Leader* office. Little Watts still came before daylight for his papers, and was called Little Watts still, for he was not noticeably larger or stronger than when I saw

him first. He still lived next door to my own home, and—Elise was going away.

She had been singing in church choirs and at concerts, and some ladies who had become interested in her, but who were unable to lend her money for her study, had given her a benefit concert, which the *Leader* had widely advertised without charge on account of Little Watts.

But most of the money that was to pay for Elise's two years of study in the East had been or would be earned by Little Watts.

"But when I come back he shall work no more," Elise said to me, with the tears in her eyes. "I shall earn it then, and he shall go to New York to study drawing and engraving. He's so eager to learn it, you know, but he won't say much about it or even think about it until I begin to earn money."

Quite a little company of us went to the station to see Elise off. Of course Little Watts was there. His large eyes were shining through his tears, and his white face wreathed in smiles, though I knew his heart ached with sorrow at the thought of two years without her.

But the boy cried his papers just as loudly and cheerily as ever next day—the *Leader* in the morning, when day was breaking, and the *Times* at night when the day was done.

I often met him hurrying around the corners of almost deserted streets, or paying a last visit to the hotels, where he hoped to sell another paper at an hour when all other newsboys had gone home.

Every paper he sold counted, not for himself, but for Elise. He and his mother lived upon the pension and her sewing.

Every month a draft to the amount of all of Little Watts' earnings went to New York to Elise, and every week she wrote encouraging letters of what her teachers said about her voice, and of her hopes for the future.

"I knew they'd have to say her voice wasn't anything common," Little Watts said proudly to me, when the first of her letters came. "I knew she'd astonish 'em!"

Twice the mountains changed from green to white and from white to green. They were changing to white again when Elise wrote the letter that told when she could start for home.

Little Watts brought me the letter to read.

"I shall reach home about the last day of October," she wrote. "You need not send me any more money—I am afraid you have sent me too much now. It is time for me to begin paying it back to you. You must be here next year, and I at home working and earning money for you. If I'm not too tired, I shall sing for you and mother the very night I come—I'm so anxious to show you how well your money has been spent!"

She was delayed a little, and came on the third day of November. It was on the afternoon of the first day of that month that the man whose duty it now was to give out the papers said to me:

"Little Watts didn't show up for his papers this morning. It's the first morning he's failed to come since I've been here. I wonder if he's sick."

"Not that I know of," I replied. "It was a terribly stormy morning, you know."

"The weather has never made any difference with him before. He's been on hand the first one every morning worse than this. Poor little chap! How he's escaped pneumonia as long as he has is a wonder to me."

The sun had not shone for three days. First rain and then snow had fallen early all the time. A fierce, cold wind had swept down from the mountains. The barren town had never seemed so gloomy and cheerless and desolate to me as it did now.

At noon I went to see Little Watts. His mother came to the door and said, briefly and in a low tone, for Little Watts was in the next room and the door was open:

"He's real sick! The doctor is afraid it's going to be pneumonia. I've tried to keep him in the last three days, but he would go out. You see why."

Her eyes were full of tears as she pointed toward the corner of the room. There stood a shining upright piano, with a stool of crimson velvet before it.

"He made the first payment on them yesterday," Mrs. Watts said. "He was so anxious to have them here for Elise."

"Well, he's a perfect little hero, Mrs. Watts," I said, under my breath, but heartily. "I believe he will be able to fight off the pneumonia for the sake of Elise."

I am sure he could have done so if his bodily strength had been as great as the love that filled his faithful heart for Elise.

He was worse the next day.

"He'll never be any better," said the doctor in the afternoon, when I met him coming out of the shabby little house.

In the evening Little Watts said in a whisper:

"She'll be here in the morning, won't she?"

"At eight o'clock," I said.

"Then I'll hear her sing again," he answered.

The wind died away in the night. The skies cleared; all the distant ranges, the nearer hills and the streets of the town were white with snow when the sun came out next morning.

Elise came at eight o'clock. Little Watts pulled himself up on his pillows to meet her and welcome her.

There was no sign in his eyes or face of sorrow in his heart at this ending of all his hopes and plans for the future. He met Elise with a smile and with tearless eyes. For a moment she thought it must all have been a mistake about his being so ill.

"Now go and sing for me," he said, after a few minutes.

They rolled his bed to the door that he might see her at the new piano. Elise sat before it with streaming eyes, and sang the little ballads and the old songs he had loved so well.

"There was one," he whispered, "about 'the shining shore,' and 'My Father hath many mansions,' won't you sing that Elise?"

She sang it, with trembling voice; and while she was singing, Little Watts looked up with wide-open eyes, as if he were gazing at something wonderful that we could not see, and then sank back, his eyes closed forever.—*J. L. Harbour.*

Large assortment Picnic Prizes, at wholesale prices at McArthur's Book Store King street.

A QUEER RESULT.

An Odd Fact About the Numerals Three and Seven.

Mr. John W. Kirk, the white-haired veteran who was with Morse when the first working telegraph line was stretched, and who stood beside the great inventor when the first message was transmitted from Annapolis Junction to Washington, has made during his life a great many interesting calculations in numbers. The two most remarkable numbers in the world are 3 and 7.

"The numeral seven," says Mr. Kirk, "the Arabians got from India, and all following have taken it from the Arabians. It is conspicuous in Biblical lore, being mentioned over 300 times in the Scriptures, either alone or compounded with other words. It seems a favorite numeral with Divine mind, outside as well as inside the Bible, as nature demonstrates in many ways, and all the other numerals bow to it. There is also another divine favorite, the number three, the trinity. This is brought out by a combination of figures that is somewhat remarkable. It is the six figures 142,857.

"Multiply this by 2, the answer is 285,714.

"Multiply this by 3, the answer is 428,571.

"Multiply this by 4, the answer is 571,428.

"Multiply this by 5, the answer is 714,285.

"Multiply this by 6, the answer is 857,142.

"Each answer contains the same figures as the original sum, and no others, and three of the figures of the sum remain together in each answer, thus showing that figures preserve the trinity.

"Thus 285 appears in the first and second numbers, 571 in the second and third, 428 in the third and fourth, and 142 in the fourth and fifth.

"It is also interesting to note that taking out of any two of these sums the group of three common to both, the other three, read in the usual order, from left to right, will also be in the same order in both sums.

"Take the first and second sums, for example. The group of 285 is common to both. Having read 285 out of the second sum, read right along and bring in the first figure of the thousands last. It will read 714. All the others will read in the same way.

"Again, note that the two groups of three in the first sum are the same as the two groups of three in the fourth reversed in order, and that the same thing is true of the second and third. The last multiplication has its groups of three the same as those of the original number, reversed again.

"Examine these results again, and you will see that in these calculations all the numerals have appeared save the 9. Now multiply the original sum by the mighty 7—the divine favorite of the Bible and of creation—and behold the answer! The last of the numerals, and that one only in groups of three—again the trinity!

142,857
999,999

"No other combination of numbers will produce the same results. Does not this show the imperial multipotent numeral 7 and its divinity?"—*Boston Transcript.*

The Sorrel Hadn't Forgotten.

A young Atlanta lawyer has quite a fine trotter, which he bought recently from a Kentucky drover. It happened that the drover bought the horse from a Cincinnati street car company. He had seen him trot in the car, and knew him to be fast. The young Atlantan who purchased him first tried him out at the Piedmont track, and found that he could go inside of three minutes.

There is another young man here who has a fast trotter, and naturally each claimed his horse to be the fastest. As a consequence there was a bet, and the two young men went out to Piedmont track one day last week to have a mile race for \$50 a side.

The Cincinnati horse was a sorrel, the Georgia nag a bay.

It happened that one of the friends of the owner of the bay knew of the past life of the sorrel, and knowing him to be the faster of the two decided to arrange a scheme to protect his friend.

After two or three attempts the racers were given the go. The sorrel took the lead and kept it half way around. Then the bay pulled up under whip, and both horses broke. The bay lost by breaking, but the sorrel quickly got down to action again, and came up the home stretch fully three lengths in the lead. They came within forty yards of the string, and it seemed a dead-open-and-shut thing for the sorrel, but suddenly a gong was heard to tap loudly right on the side of the track, and the sorrel stopped so suddenly that he almost threw his driver from the sulky. The bay won the race.

While the sorrel was fast he had not forgotten his training as a street car horse, and the scheme of the friend of the bay's owner worked admirably.—*Atlanta Constitution.*

Fashionable Colors in Horses.

There is a fashion in the color of carriage horses. Once, many seasons ago, there was a rage for gray; now gray animals are at a discount and are, as a rule, associated with wedding parties catered for by a livery stable. Light chestnuts had then a turn, but they were found, like certain showy materials, not to wear well. One year roans were in fashion, and they were most satisfactory as to wearing qualities and also as to temper. Even now a well-matched pair of red roans are looked upon as quite correct and very handsome, but the color of the season is dark bay with black points. Dark browns were in favor last season, and naturally, since horses can not change the color of their coats as easily as men and women, will be much used this year. Some good has certainly been done by the recent agitation against the bearing-rein, headed by the Duke of Portland. We have noticed lately that many coachmen have dispensed with it, and in the case of lady whips we have seldom seen it used. Once we saw the footman loosen the bearing-reins while the carriage was waiting, and so comparatively freed the horse's heads for a while.—*London Letter.*

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PROGRESS PICKINGS.

"I have a weight upon my mind,"

"That's good," said she, "I'll keep the wind from blowing it away."

"This liver is awful, Maud," said Mr. Newwood. "I'm very sorry," returned the bride. "I'll tell cook to speak to the liveryman about it.—Harper's Bazar.

As they stood on the beach where the wavesets play
She laid her head on his satin vest
And lifted her lips in a pouting way
And—he did the rest.

—Cape Cod Item.
Poverty-stricken Suitor—Be mine, Amanda, and I will treat you like an angel! Amanda—I should think so! Nothing to eat, and still less to wear. Not me!—Figaro.

A bachelor, upon reading that "two lovers will sit up all night with one chair in the room," said it could not be done unless one of them sat on the floor. Such ignorance is painful.—Ex.

Jessie—"Did you get the marriage license, dear? Let me see it." Harry—"You won't understand it." Jessie—"Yes I will. To whom these presents may come"—yes; that is all right.—Puck.

Maud—"Aunt Celia Bates says it is very wrong for girls to sit on young men's laps." Fred—"What does she know about it? She's never had any experience except in the lapse of time.—New York Herald.

"John, dear, I wish you had married the cook instead of me."—"Maud, dear, that's a strange thing to say." But I mean it, because then you would have had a wife who could be the boss of the house.—Philadelphia Times.

Wollard—"What do you mean by telling the boys that you have had the lockjaw?" Pollard—"Just a little joke of mine. You see, I couldn't find the lock last night, and my wife gave me the jaw from the window above."—Lowell Citizen.

"So you proposed to her. Accepted of course?" "Accepted! Why, she treated me like a dog." "Allow me to congratulate you, old fellow. I saw how she treated one the other day, and by jove, how I envied that dog!"—New York Sun.

"John's mother lives with you now, does she not?" "Yes, and there's one nice thing about having my mother-in-law here. John never thinks of comparing my cooking with hers, for fear of having to eat one of her dinners."—Harper's Bazar.

Mrs. De Work—"I have trained my eldest daughter into a thorough housekeeper. There is nothing she does not know." Miss De Flight—"What a nice, handy maiden aunt she will make for your other daughters' children."—New York Weekly.

Abby (who is thirty)—How long will we have to wait for dinner? Hiram (who lacks decision)—About twenty minutes, I guess. Then I'll have a bottle of plain soda, and have it opened here. She—I should like to hear some thing pop, if it's only a cork!—Life.

Magistrate—"What is the charge against this old man?" Policeman—"Stealing a lot of brimstone, your honor. He was caught in the act." Magistrate (to prisoner)—"My aged friend, couldn't you have waited a few years longer.—Chicago Tribune.

"I do hate to hear a man grumble all the time as that man is doing over there," said a disgusted passenger to the conductor of the train. "My dear sir," exclaimed the conductor in surprise, "you evidently do not understand the case. That man is travelling on a pass."—Somerville Journal.

He looked into her loving eyes
And could no more resist her;
She answered him with sweet surprise,
That she would be a sister.

"Yes, that is what I need," he said,
And stooping, softly kissed her;
"Whenever I'm inclined to wed,
My wife must be as sister."

"A lion broke loose in a circus at Rock Island the other day," remarked Mrs. Snaggs, who had been reading the papers. "That's not the usual way," replied her husband. "Isn't it?" "No; the lynx generally breaks loose on the posters."—Pittsburg Chronicle.

"So you are in the multiplication table," asked little Joseph's father, who was in the clothing line. "How much is twice two?" "Six."—"What! Why, twice two are four!" "Yes, papa, but I said six so that afterwards I could easily come down to four," replied the youth, with true business instinct.—Ex.

Three tailors established themselves in the same street. The first wrote on his sign, "The best tailor in this town." The second adopted as his motto, "The best tailor in the world;" but the third, who was the smartest of the lot, beat them all by putting on his sign, "The best tailor in this street."—Ex.

"What has become of that crack pitcher of yours?" was asked of the manager of a country ball nine. "He has gone camping." "I should hardly suppose you could spare him for that just now." "We do need him, but he wanted to perfect himself in his profession. He said that the only thing he didn't know how to pitch was a tent.—Buffalo Express.

During a dense fog a Mississippi steamboat took landing. A traveller, anxious to go ahead, came to the unperturbed manager and asked why they stopped. "Too much fog; can't see the river." "But you can see the stars overhead." "Yes," replied the urbane pilot, "but until the boiler busts we ain't going that way." The passenger went to bed.—Ex.

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