Our Boys and Girls.

"KEEP A STIFF UPPER LIP."

There has something gone wrong,
My brave boy, it appears,
For I see your proud struggle
To keep back the tears.
That is right. When you cannot
Give trouble the slip,
Then bear it, still keeping
"A stiff upper lip."

Though you cannot escape
Disappointment and care,
The next best thing to do
Is to learn how to bear.
If when for life's prizes
You're running, you trip,
Get up, and start again —
"Keep a stiff upper lip."

Let your hands and your conscience
Be honest and clean;
Scorn to touch or to think of
The thing that is mean;
But hold on to the pure,
And the right with firm grip;
And though hard be the task,
"Keep a stiff upper lip."

Through childhood, through manhood,
Through life to the end,
Strugle bravely and stand
By your colors, my friend,
Only yield when you must,
Never "give up the ship,"
But fight to the last,
"Keep a stift upper lip!"

—*Phoebe Cary.*

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ROBERT'S MISTAKE.

"Ting, ting, ting!"

The little bell sounded, giving notice of the closing of the reading room for the afternoon. Twilight was settling down, and already the little stir of preparation for departure had begun.

Robert Vance gave a little grunt of dissatisfaction, making no move to close the book in which he had been absorbed.

"What's the trouble?" asked the boy next him.

"I want just half an hour longer to get these notes.

"Can't you come tonight?"

"No; I'm going away for the week's vacation, and I have something else to do."

"Then you will have to wait for it."

"When I am so anxious to get these facts for my next essay! It will be too late when I come back. I could do it in half an hour. But I can't come away down here again for it."

The reading room, belonging to the Lincoln School, was well furnished with books, maps, and works of reference. It was bright and cheery, in every way fitted to attract young readers and students. It was conducted on a liberal plan, which placed its privileges at the disposal of any responsible person desirous of seeking them. Even the small tots were not overlooked, a selection of bound juveniles being always ready for their delighted examination.

In the little confusion attendant upon the dismissal, a new thought came to Robert..

"I don't see why I might not just take this book home with me on the sly," he said to himself. "Then I can slip in in the morning before I go and get it into its place before anybody knows. I don't see what harm it would be."

That he was conscious of some harm attending his action was shown by the care with which he guarded against even one of his boy friends seeing what he was about as he buttoned the book, a number of an encyclopedia bound in small sized volumes for the greater convenience, inside the breast of his overcoat.

The half hour with the book in the evening finished his use of it, and he laid it carefully in a drawer in his room until the time came for returning it in the morning.

But, as many of us have experienced, the morning of a journey away from home leaves little opportunity for small errands. Every hour, every moment, was more than filled, and it was not until the last fifteen minutes that Robert rushed to his room for final preparation.

"There's that book!" It stared him in the face, checking for a moment his hurried movements. "Well, I simply can't return it. It is just as safe here as it would be on the shelf. It must lie here until I come back."

But the remembrance of the hidden book, the consciousness of broken rules, of benefits abused, cast a slight shadow over all the pleasures of his visit.

Arriving home, he soon made ready to return the book. Of course, no one had disturbed it. No; as he opened the drawer its respectable leathern back appeared exactly where he had left it. He hastily took it out.

"Oh, my!"

He stood aghast at the sight of the front edges of the book, then jerked out the drawer.

Yes, there it was — the cause of the mischief — mischief too dire for any help or repair.

Not long before, coming home from some boy's frolic, he had emptied into the drawer the contents of his pockets, consisting of bits of candy and peanuts. Mice had been attracted by them, and the small destroyers had not remained content with the goodies, but had feasted on the marbled edges of the book, and had also pulled out whole pages. Robert gazed at it in despair.

"It is ruined, completely ruined!"

How his heart sank as he again closed the drawer on the ruin.

"Of course I shall tell of it," he communed with himself, as he walked to school, "and, of course, I must pay for it. But there's no great hurry about it. There are plenty of such things in the library."

"Any time is no time," goes the proverb. Robert's time for telling of the mischief for which he was responsible was further and further postponed. As time went on, he became more ashamed of his action, more reluctant to own it. Tricky, sly, underhand—there were a number of bad-sounding names which might be applied, and justly, he confessed to himself, to his action.

"What's become of Jimmy McCoy?" Robert asked one of his schoolmates some weeks later. "I thought he liked so much to come here?"

"So he did; but I've heard there's been a great rumpus about Jimmy. You know he works for Reed Brothers, and one of them became responsible for him, so he could come to the reading room nights. There's a book gone and the librarian said Jimmy had one of the set one evening, and she thinks it was that one. Mr. Reed had to pay for it, and like as not Jim's lost his situation, though I don't know."

Robert stood still as the other turned away, feeling as if he had received a heavy blow. "No harm" — only a little thing done on the sly, but it was working disaster to an innocent boy, to whom life had shown its hard side.

There's only one thing to be done now. If I'd been a sneak, yes, that's an ugly word, but it's one that fits me — before, I'll do things like a man now. But how much worse it is than if I had owned it at once."

Setting things right involved the going to the librarian with his pitiful story, to be referred to the trustees. Then the interview with Mr. Reed, when he was glad to find that Jimmy, cleared of the accusation against him, would be reinstated in his place and his library privileges.

But here poor Robert received another blow, coming within the discussion of the book for which Mr. Reed had paid.

"It was for the set, you know. You can't get such a book singly. It was thirty-five dollars."

"You will — please give me a little time on it-?" asked Robert. in a steady a tone as he could command.

"Certainly, all you want,'" was the response — a great relief to the boy, who dreaded the thought of burdening his father. "And then, you know, you will have the broken set for yourself."

"I don't know that I should ever be able to bear the sight of it."

"I wouldn't feel that way about it, my boy," said the other kindly. "It will be a useful thing to have. And if the sight of it should be a continual reminder that any shading off of a high tone of honor is an unsafe thing for boy or man, it will have an added value to you." —*Sabbath School Visitor.*

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CATCHING THINGS.

Camella had the measles and had to be kept in a room by herself for fear Don would catch them, and as soon as she was enough better so that he might have to come in to play with her, Don fell ill with mumps and must stay away for fear she would catch them. "It would be very bad indeed," said he, "to have mumps right on top of measles."

"Oh, dear," sighed poor lonely Camella, "I didn't know so many things were catching, mamma. Are there any nice things catching?"

Mamma laughed. "Yes, indeed," she said, "lots of them."

"What are they? Do tell me about them. I never heard of any."

"I think I will let you watch and see how many you can find."

Donald was soon over his mumps, and the children were very glad to be together again, but they were neither of them very strong yet, and it is so easy to be cross if one isn't strong.

One afternoon things seemed to be going especially wrong. To begin with, Camella wanted to build houses with the blocks, and Don didn't want to.

"I was sick last, and you ought to let me choose," he argued.

"No," said Camella, "I was sick hardest. And anyway, I'm a girl. Boys ought always to be p'lite to girls."

"I don't care. If you'll play choo-choo cars, I'll be p'lite enough."

"Don't want to," insisted Camella, contrarily.

"Then I won't play at all," declared Don.

So it went on till the air of the nursery was so full of frowns and pouts and cross words, that you wouldn't have believed the sun was shining anywhere. Mamma was almost sorry when the door bell rang and Mary said that Daisy Hill had come to play with the children, for she didn't like to have any one see her boy and girl when they were so disagreeable.



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Daisy came in like a breath of fresh air.

"Isn't it nice that you're well again," she cried in her happy voice. "What are you doing? Let me come right into it."

"We weren't doing anything just now," said Don, rather shamedfaced. "Don't you think it's fun to play cars? Mine run on a track when you wind 'em up, you know."

"Oh, yes, that's lovely," said Daisy.

"But not so nice as building-blocks," put in Camella with a scowl.

"Why not do both?" suggested Daisy, "build houses and stations and run the cars between."

"The very thing," said Don; and even Camella looked interested.

"Let's begin," she said, bringing the blocks.

In a few minutes all sorts of fine buildings were being put up alongside of a winding railway track, and it really seemed as if a good deal of sunshine had crept into the nursery.

Whenever anybody disagreed, Daisy gave up so pleasantly that the others were ashamed to be selfish. After a while mamma looked in, much surprised and pleased to find everybody good and happy.

"Mamma," said Camella that night, "I've found some nice things that are catching. We were cross as anything when Daisy came, but she was so kind and smiley that we just had to be, too. So I guess smiles and kindness are catching, don't you?"

"Yes," said mamma, "I think they are."— *Little Learner's paper.*

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This span of life was lent for lofty duties, not for selfishness; not to be whiled away in aimless dreams, but to improve ourselves and to serve mankind.—*Sir Aubrey De Vere.*