

Our Boys and Girls.

THE MUTINEERS.

BY MARY WHITING ADAMS.

John Henry had ten fingers,
Two eyes, a tongue and brains.
But when he started in at school
He didn't take the pains
To make them yield obedience
To what the teacher said;
And so they quickly learned to do
Just what they chose, instead.

The fingers would not follow
The copies they were set;
The eyes kept wandering here and there
The tongue refused to get
The lessons right, but whispered
Instead the whole time long.
As for the brains, they strayed and
dreamed,
And let things all go wrong.

When days of school were over
John Henry went to work;
But eyes and tongue and fingers
And brains still joined to shirk.
First one job, then another,
He spoiled, and lost his place,
While other boys less clever
Passed by him in the race.

TWO BOYS IN ONE JACKET.

BY THE REV. AMELIA A. FROST.

"Hi! Yah! Come see the kid with a baby's hand." Distress flushed the little fellow's handsome face. His big dark eyes snapped with anger as he quickly thrust the deformed hand behind him and backed up against the school house.

"Jiggers and bumblebees! Looks 's if he wanted ter fight," shouted the same rough voice.

By this time a crowd of children stood in front of the young stranger as he bravely faced his persecutors and choked the tears back.

"What's his name, Don?" asked another boy. "Say, bub, what's yer name? and where'd you come from?" he continued.

"Oh! I know his name," piped a girl's voice. "It's Wilbur Sherman. I heard him tell teacher this morning."

"He's moved into the house next to mine, and there's a sick woman,—his mother, I guess," added another.

Wilbur's lip quivered but he straightened up. As he did so a clinking sound caught the ear of his first tormentor.

"Say, kiddie, what's them irons on yer legs for? Ter make yer run fast? Lost yer tongue? Here! Show up yer fightin' hand!" and he roughly seized the rigid arm to bring forward the tiny misshapen hand.

Like a flash Wilbur doubled his strong right fist and dealt a stunning blow between the eyes of the larger boy. It was so sharp and unexpected that Don Porter was dazed for an instant. The astonished crowd quickly parted in front of the two boys. Wilbur, his little heart pounding, his face burning, his eyes blinded with tears that would push into them, made a dash for the street. The stiff irons, worn to straighten his ankles, made it harder for him to run. In spite of the irons he had to run on the sides of his feet. But he could run faster than most boys of ten. Before the astonished Don realized what had befallen him, Wilbur was some distance down the street.

"Won't he get a poundin'?" Jest let me ketch him!" exclaimed the furious Don as he felt the bunch on his forehead and started after the runner with

both fists in fighting trim. Several children were close at his heels, excited and curious to see what would come of it. They were not prepared for what did come.

Wilbur sped toward Main Street. Without taking cross walks he rushed heedlessly into the broad square, dodging wheels and horses with the skill early acquired by every city boy. Electrics had no terror for him, and so he hurried on to cross in front of the one approaching. But one of the poor uncertain feet gave a sudden twist and sent him headlong. The motorman checked his car, but not soon enough. The prostrate boy was struck on the head. A big policeman tenderly lifted the unconscious child in his arms.

"I am his mother's physician," said a kindly voice. "Here, officer, get into my carriage, we'll take him home. Poor little fellow! His crippled body doesn't match his courage. This street is no place for him. Here, boy," he added to one standing near, "jump in next the officer, and let the legs rest on your knees."

The boy was Don Porter. He had come up just in time to see the accident. Hot and angry, at first he felt glad when his enemy fell. But a feeling of terror quickly followed. He would have snatched Wilbur off the track had there been time. But now for an instant the thought flashed: "What'll the fellers say to see me helpin' to get him home?" It was only an instant. He took the place as directed, and carefully lifted the iron-bound legs to his lap. The carriage had rubber tires, the doctor drove carefully, and they soon reached the house.

Quickly hitching his horse the doctor went in without ringing, as was his custom. With a few words he quieted the fears of Mrs. Sherman. The big officer took the injured boy into the house. The door was shut, and Don was left to think it all over.

Slowly he walked down the street. The picture of that white still face on the policeman's arm, and the tiny deformed hand held so tenderly in the great strong fingers, kept right before his eyes. He could still feel the weight of those limp little legs in the iron frames across his knees. The doctor said Wilbur was not dead, but what if he should die? Who was to blame for it all?

"He was a plucky chap to hit me like that,—only one hand, and no feet to speak of; wonder if he'll die," said the unhappy boy to himself.

Don's supper didn't taste good that night. The boys played football on the green without him. He was glad to get by himself into the wadded and split kindlings. It gave him a chance to think. Early in the evening he crept off to bed. It was long before he could get to sleep. The big brave eyes of Wilbur Sherman kept staring at him in the dark. He could see the tears, and it made him choke. Why didn't he tease a boy of his own size with two hands and strong feet? What could he do to show he wasn't so mean as it looked?

There was his flower garden, and the money he had earned for a fishing-rod, and the collie pups, and his rabbits. At last he went to sleep.

When Mrs. Sherman's Bridget was setting the table for breakfast next morning, she heard a knock at the kitchen door. There she found a frightened looking boy with his hands behind him.

"Is he dead?" was the boy's anxious greeting.

"An' is it Wilbur yez be axin' about? The saints be praised an' he's livin', but

it's a sorry time the darlint's been havin' all night wid his ravin's about the b'y that do be pokin' fun at his little hand. If yez know the varmint, jist bring him in sight o' Bridget Mahoney!"

"Here—give him these!" interrupted Don, as he thrust a great handful of sweet peas toward her and hurried away.

"Now isn't he the foine lad a-bringin' the swate posies wid kisses o' the mornin' all shinin' on their purty faces," muttered Bridget as she watched him turn the corner. "Sure and I'll put 'em on the table furninst the little bed!" and she tiptoed to the sick-room.

"What if he should die? What if he should die?" kept pushing itself in among Don's "map questions" and "miscellaneous examples" that day. Lessons went heard, and he was glad when school was over.

As Bridget stepped out of the back door with her ash-pan next morning, Don came up the walk.

"Hello!" said she, and tilted her pan on the edge of the barrel. "It's Wilbur yez be wantin' to know about, and it's meself wid be glad to say he's better, but fax thin I'd be lyin' to yez. The poor head of him is swelled to the size o' two, wid a face as black as the kitchen stove. He doesn't know annybody, and the docther can't tell which way it'll be turnin' wid him."

"I—I'd like—if he"—stammered Don. "Here's one of my"—and he passed Bridget a small basket containing the dearest thing he owned—a handsome collie pup—then turned, and was out of sight before the astonished girl had time to set down her ash-pan.

The doctor soon found signs of improvement in Wilbur. Don came to the back door every morning to hear news from the sick boy, and always left some small treasure, but wouldn't tell Bridget his name.

One day, a fortnight after the accident, Don was mowing the lawn for a neighbor on the next street. Suddenly a voice called, "Porter! Don Porter! Come here!" He looked up and saw a group of boys on the opposite sidewalk. Dropping his mower he started toward them.

"Come on!" called another voice. "Here's a whole circus!"

Just then beyond the group he espied Wilbur Sherman. It was the first time Don had seen him since the scene that for a fortnight had been haunting him,—Wilbur with a pale pleading face backed against the fence by thoughtless boys, trying to hide the queer little hand from cruel questioners.

Like a flash the two boys in Don's jacket met for a tussle. Should he join the persecutors? He couldn't do that. Should he make some excuse and go back to his work? He couldn't do that. Should he openly take Wilbur's part? That was the thing to do, but what would the boys say? This battle was ended in about two steps. He braced up and hurried toward them. Poor Wilbur looked more terror-stricken when he saw Don. Something dreadful would surely happen to him now.

"Here, you fellers! Let him alone! Take a chap yer own size. Say kiddie! Come an' watch me mow the lawn!" These were the words Don flung out to the astonished group as he pushed his way among them. They were too surprised to resist him if they wanted to.

Wilbur was dazed. He knew it was Don Porter he had struck two weeks ago for teasing him. But this Don,—with an arm over his shoulder, taking his part, leading him across the street—was it another Don?—S. S. Times.



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MOTHER FIRST.

Fred Baker sat one winter evening watching his mother as she patiently stitched away on the garments of her more prosperous neighbors. Mrs. Baker was a widow, and her income was so small that she must needs eke it out by the help of the needle. Fred was almost thirteen, and was the oldest of her three children. He attended school every day, and Saturday he also spent over his books, for he had determined to make a scholar of himself, and so be fitted to make a good livelihood for his mother and sisters.

But other thoughts suddenly crossed his mind. "What if mother does not live until I am a man? She looks pale and thin. I'd better not wait to do great things. I'd better begin now. Mr. Richie needs a boy over at his store. I think I will speak for the place. He paid Bert Randolph four dollars a week."

He put on his overcoat, took his hat and went toward the door.

"Where are you going, my son?" asked Mrs. Baker, looking up from her work.

"I'm just going over to Mr. Richie's store."

"Very well; that is a safe place for you."

Mr. Richie was Fred's Sunday school teacher, and she thought he wanted to ask something about the lesson, as it was Saturday evening, and he had been looking over his lesson leaf. But he did not even think of the lesson. His mind was full of his new plan. He asked for the situation and procured it, but said nothing until early Monday morning, when he was obliged to explain.

"Mother, I am going into Mr. Richie's store. I kenw you would object, and I had intended to keep the whole thing a secret until I had in my hands four dollars, my first week's wages. But I could not do it, because I must leave