

# THE CHILDREN'S FRIEND.

VOLUME 1.

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NUMBER 1.

## GUILTY, OR NOT GUILTY.

She stood at the bar of justice,  
A creature wild and wild;  
In form too small for a woman,  
In features too old for a child:  
For a look so warm and pathetic  
Was stamped on her pale, young face,  
It seemed long years of suffering  
Must have left that silent trace.

"Your name," said the judge, as he eyed her  
With kindly look, yet keen,  
"Is"—"Mary McGuire, if you please, sir."  
"And your age?" "I am turned fifteen,"  
"Well, Mary," and then from a paper  
He slowly and gravely read,  
"You're charged here, I am sorry to say it,  
With stealing three loaves of bread.

"You look not like an offender,  
And I hope that you can show  
The charge to be false. Now, tell me,  
Are you guilty of this or no?"  
A passionate burst of weeping  
Was at first the sole reply,  
But she dried her eyes in a moment,  
And looked in the judge's eye.

"I will tell you how it was, sir,  
My father and mother are dead,  
And my little brothers and sisters  
Were hungry and asked me for bread.  
At first I earned it for them  
By working hard all day,  
But somehow times were hard, sir,  
And the work all fell away.

"I could get no more employment;  
The weather was bitter cold.  
The young ones cried and shivered—  
(Little Johnny's but four years old)—  
go what was I to do, sir?  
I am guilty, but do not condemn,  
I took—oh, was it stealing?—  
The bread to give to them."

Every man in the court-room—  
Gray-beard and thoughtless youth—  
Knew, as he looked upon her,  
That the prisoner spoke the truth.  
Out from their pockets came "kerchiefs  
Out from their eyes sprang tears.  
And out from old faded wallets  
Treasures hoarded for years.

The judge's face was a study—  
The strangest you ever saw,  
He cleared his throat and muttered  
Something about the law;  
For one so learned in matters—  
So wise in dealing with men,  
He seemed, on a simple question,  
Sorely puzzled just then.

But no one blamed him or wondered,  
When at last these words they heard;  
"The sentence of this young prisoner  
Is, for the present deferred?"  
And no one blamed him or wondered,  
When he went to her and smiled,  
And tenderly led from the court-room  
Mary, the "guilty" child.

A bouncing girl baby arrived  
in Wilson on the 15th ult, and  
took a cradle in the hospitable  
house of the Grand Master, Geo.  
W. Blount. May she never be an  
orphan.

Emma Whitted, of Orange,  
nine years old, worked an otto-  
man and sent it to the Fair. Her  
premium was two dollars and she  
sent the money to the Orphans.

Love thy neighbor as thy self.

## REPORT ON THE ORPHAN ASYLUM.

TO THE MOST WORSHIPFUL GRAND  
LODGE OF NORTH CAROLINA:

The receipts of the Orphan Asylum from December the first, 1873, to December the first, 1874, were ten thousand, seven hundred and eighty-three dollars and ninety-four cents. The disbursements during the same time, were ten thousand, seven hundred and one dollar and fifty-seven cents, leaving on hand eighty-two dollars and thirty-seven cents. The receipts in kind include a large quantity of food, clothing and bed-clothing. These contributions have been made by Masons, Odd-Fellows, Patrons of Husbandry, Knights of Pythias, Good Templars, Friends of Temperance, Literary Societies, Colleges, Sewing Circles, Bands of Music, Christian Associations, churches of various denominations, and by individuals not members of any church or society. The Jews especially have been quiet, but liberal in their offerings. Help has come to us across the rugged mountain tops of the West, and from the sandy shores of the loud-roaring ocean, Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, New York, Michigan, Tennessee, South Carolina, Texas and California have rendered timely and valuable assistance. What a compliment to Masonry! So many organizations and so vast a multitude of individuals have said, "We approve your work, we have confidence in your economy and honesty, and we give you our co-operation!" O that we may prove worthy of a confidence so great, and be found equal to a responsibility so vast and overwhelming.

During the past year new furniture has been added, the fixtures have been improved, hogs and cattle of the best blood have been procured, two good mules have been bought, and a stable built for them, as well as good houses for the cows. The old garden has been enlarged to four acres, and a new one of eleven acres has been enclosed. Though the soil was thin and the summer dry, a good crop of vegetables was raised. Of these some are growing now, and others are ready for future use. With the fertilizers already on hand and in process of accumulation, the gardens can be made much more productive during the next year. In this way expenses can be materially diminished. From the trees dismantled by the sleet and from others dangerous or useless in the positions they occupied, a large quantity of wood has been procured and the cost of fuel saved. The policy has been

to accumulate property, and diminish expenses, while improving the health and increasing the comforts of the Orphans.

Since the opening of the Asylum two hundred and forty orphans have been admitted. One hundred and thirty-two are now in the Institution. One hundred and eight have left. Most of them are honorably and usefully employed. Some are afflicted with diseases or habits which disqualify them for receiving the benefits offered. Our rule has been to discharge them at fourteen, or sooner, if they complete a good English education, and promise to be useful in a farm, store, shop, factory or family.

Though there are still many needy, distressed and oppressed orphans growing up in ignorance and vice, the work is steadily progressing and its benefits are extending to places most remote. The rights of orphans and their claims to educational privileges are now admitted and defended by hundreds who, two years ago, saw them oppressed and neglected with the utmost indifference.

## ANOTHER INSTITUTION.

For some time it has been apparent that an Asylum at Oxford could not spare its officers long enough to give due attention to the orphans West of the Blue Ridge; and if it could, the children ignorant and timid would be afraid to go so far from the place of their birth, and especially to a place which they consider "away down the country." Besides, the expenses of an orphan from Buncombe to Granville would feed him for two months. After some consultation, the Trustees of Mars Hill College offered to present their building and eighteen acres of land to the Grand Lodge, for the purpose of establishing an Asylum for the orphans of the Mountains. In company with the Grand Master and Senior Grand Warden I went across the Mountains. The premises were deliberately and carefully examined. It was found that fifty orphans could be comfortably cared for and that provisions were cheap and abundant. Some needy orphans were living nearby and were ready to enter.—I therefore advised the officers of the Grand Lodge to accept the offer and open another Asylum for orphans at Mars Hill, in Madison county. After due deliberation, I am convinced that two institutions operating in "harmony and exchanging supplies will help each other, and both will be supported more easily than one.

And even if there should be difficulties, those orphans in the West have claims upon us which we ought not to disregard.

## NO STEWARD.

In the main, the Institution has been managed according to the regulations prescribed; but the office of Steward was cautiously tendered and cautiously declined. The apparent uncertainty of the salary seemed to be the "lion in the way." But a gentleman honest and competent is now ready to accept the position. I have not made the appointment, because it seemed best not to embarrass my successor, with appointments which he himself would prefer to make.

When the Matron seemed overburdened, I appointed another, by the advice of the Grand Master, and placed the girls in charge of one, and the boys in charge of the other. This arrangement has been found to be a great improvement.

## A WEEKLY PAPER.

I ask pardon for repeating a recommendation made last year, that a small weekly paper be published in the interests of the Institution. I mention four reasons for this recommendation.

1. The friends of the orphans need a medium of communication, in order that they may compare views and plans and make suggestions and explanations to each other.

2. Impostors have frequently made collections in the name of the Orphan Asylum, and never reported the money. With a weekly paper, they could be exposed and driven away. In our present situation, any travelling humbugs may sandwich their advertisements with appeals for orphans, and never contribute a cent to their support.

3. The people might be informed of the nature and progress of the work. Its needs and necessities might be made known and a greater interest excited. Misrepresentations might be corrected and errors exposed. Take an illustration: Slavery has been abolished. So has the social position once occupied by the slave. Now if farms, shops and factories could consolidate their houses and have fewer cooks and washers, the demand for these might be supplied; but every man, white or black, must now keep up an establishment. Hence there is an inordinate demand for "girls without kin." Now many persons suppose that orphans are collected at Oxford merely for distribution, and the Superintendent is compelled to spend too much of his time in defending the orphans

against those who say they are obliged and determined to have servants whom they can use and abuse as they please. Boaz was a model Mason, though he lived in the incipency of Masonry. When he wanted a nurse for the infant Obed, he did not seize some helpless orphan, but employed his wife's mother-in-law. Pharaoh's daughter did not hunt up an orphan to nurse young Moses; but sent for "one of the Hebrew Women." Age should be honored and usefully employed, and youth should be guided and protected.

4. With a paper devoted to the work, full and detailed reports could be made every week, and contributors would know that their benefactions had been received. On the present plan, the monthly reports are condensed till they are often obscure, or fail to tell the whole truth, and even then, they find admission into very few papers. Contributors have made many just complaints and the wonder is that they have not complained more.

Other reasons for publishing a paper will readily suggest themselves.

## LOTTERIES.

I have not sympathized with any gift concerts, or lotteries, announced for the benefit of the Orphan Asylum, though they are approved and conducted by men infinitely better than I am, and by men whom I hold in the highest personal esteem. Such schemes seem to me to be wrong:

1. They are forbidden by the Tenth Commandment. The man who buys a lottery ticket must covet his neighbor's goods. The fact that one paper comes out before another does not give one man a right to another man's money. Masons should be just towards men, and faithful to that God in whom they always put their trust. Even an ancient heathen Sibyl, in condemning the madness of men for money, reminds us that a thorough investigation of deeds and motives will finally come, and that the mills of God will carefully grind them all into the finest powder. Longfellow translates the line:

"Though the mills of God grind slowly  
Yet they grind exceeding small;  
For though with patience He stands  
waiting,  
With exactness grinds He all."

2. They are forbidden by the laws of our country. Masons are law-abiding men. Plato studied Moral Philosophy under Socrates and learned his masonry from the lips of Pythagoras, after this Grand Custodian of the work had invented and incorporated into his lectures the musical scale and the

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