

Country Home Department.

Conducted by Mrs. E. D. Nall, Sanford, N. C., to Whom all Matter for this Department Should be Sent.

THE BOY'S NUMBER.

My boy copied this one day, handed it to me and said, "Here is something for your paper." It caused me to think that it would be nice to have a "Boy's number" and that's what I'm intending this to be.

For fear they might consider it simplified I shall be silent, but have some excellent selections for them. I'll have a "Girl's number" later.

A Little Bit of a Boy.

There was never a smile in a weary while,
And never a gleam of joy,
Till his eyes of light made the whole world bright—
A little bit of a boy.

He came one day when the world was May,
And thrilling with life and joy;
And with all the roses he seemed to play—
A little bit of a boy.

But he played his part with a human heart,
And time can never destroy
The memory sweet of the pattering feet
Of that little bit of a boy.

We had wondered how he could play all day,
With never a dream of rest;
But once he crept in the dark and slept
Still on his mother's breast.

There was never a smile in a weary while,
And never a gleam of joy;
But the world seems dim since we dreamed of him—
A little bit of a boy.

—Selected.

THE DEPENDABLE BOY.

Tom stood, hands in pockets and head down as if studying his stout shoes, one heel of which was digging into the soft dirt. Nearby stood his teacher, Mr. Denton, a strong-faced, earnest-eyed young man, with thrown-back shoulders and a purposeful air. "I trusted you," said the deep voice, not sternly but sadly.

"Yes, sir," said Tom, in a low voice. Then he swallowed and looked away. He so liked and admired this teacher-friend of his, and it was all he could do to keep his rather grimy fist from his eyes. "Only girls cry!" he told himself, scornfully. But if this meant that he wasn't to be trusted again, nor to be this man's comrade! A big, hot drop slid down his freckled nose in spite of himself, but perhaps no one noticed it. "I depended upon you!" No, Mr. Denton had not spoken again. It was the voice of an accusing conscience.

"I didn't mean to break my word," he began, falteringly. "I meant to come right back in time for all my classes. It was good of you to let me take little sister home. When I started back my puppy followed me. I kept taking him home, but he—he wouldn't stay, and wanted to play awful bad. Finally I let him come on, and a rabbit jumped up from a brushpile and Jinks tore off after it! I followed, as I could not bear to lose Jinks. Did you ever own a puppy, Mr. Denton?" Mr. Denton nodded, but his eyes sparkled as if he had pleasant memories.

"We finally lost track of the rabbit, but we were so far away I knew I could never get to school in time for my lessons. That's all, sir, but

I'm sorry I broke my promise, and if you'll only trust me again I'll try to do right—try my level best, sir."

"Trust you again? Why, of course I will!" and a friendly hand was laid on the little bowed shoulder.

"Brace up? Take those hands out of their hiding places. They're going to do manly, worthy things from now on. That's something like it!" Tom's blue eyes blinked a few times and then shone with their old, merry twinkle. Then the two walked out of the school yard together. "Let me tell you a little story, just a short one but it has a good point. A civil engineer late one afternoon saw a little boy playing in the street. 'Here sonny!' he called out, 'just take this little red flag in your hand and hold it until I come back and tell you to drop it.' So he left the boy standing in the street, holding up the little flag, and went about his work. But when the work was finished, he forgot to go back, and passed that way no more until 10 o'clock that night. Then, to his surprise and horror, he saw the little boy standing at his post, holding aloft the little flag and shaking with cold. 'Why didn't you run home when the time came?' he cried, remorsefully.

"'But you told me to wait till you came back,' answered the boy. The man took the boy home and did all he could to show how sorry he was. But this boy proved that he could be relied upon, and we are not surprised to hear that, years later, he held a very responsible position in a great bank. He was not brilliant, the story goes, only reliable, dependable. The dependable boy makes the dependable man."

"And that's what I'll be from now on—a dependable boy!" said Tom, and he spoke from his brave young heart.—K. R. S. Baptist Boys and Girls.

AMBITIOUS BOYS.

Decision of character is the secret of success in life. The boy is free to make choices every day, which will ultimately lead to success or failure. Poverty is no handicap to a chap who has red blood and an iron will.

Demosthenes was one of the greatest orators, and yet he lived in a humble cottage in his boyhood, and his father was a blacksmith. Euripides was one of the most famous authors of Greece, but his boyhood was spent in a simple home with many deprivations, for his father was a dealer in vegetables. This lad had the energy to "make good" in literature, by sheer decision to toil, and he "won out." Socrates, as a boy, lived in a plain little cottage, and many boys in rich families looked down upon him, because his father was a mediocre carver of statues. But the young fellow was not afraid of hard work, and he had the mighty purpose to live a pure life and to make the most of himself. His choice to live a noble and laborious life made him one of the greatest philosophers the world has ever known. Virgil had a poor start as a young chap, for his father kept a tavern. The atmosphere of an ancient inn-keeper's place of business was not very favorable to the production of a great poet. But Virgil had the decision of character to conquer the temptation of his environment, and made the wise choice to become a scholar. By prodigious toil he surmounted every obstacle, and at last reached the pinnacle of fame, as one of the most illustrious poets of history. Shake-

peare was not bred in a home of luxury or opulence. The matchless Bard of Avon, in boyhood, was looked down upon by many lads in wealthy families, for his father was an ordinary butcher. We do not look upon a butcher-shop as the place to produce the foremost author in English literature. But this butcher's son did not choose idleness as his career. He became a prodigious reader of the best books. He dug deep into history, and general literature, until his mind was a storehouse of the best thoughts of the world. He had remarkable genius, and yet he had tremendous industry. He made a definite choice to lead a strenuous life of toil, and his reward was immortality of fame. Even the hut of a coal miner, with its poverty, could not extinguish the ambition in the soul of the boy, Martin Luther. With all the difficulties in that narrow life, the brave German chap made an inflexible choice to secure an education. There were hard problems to solve in that young life. Often he sang in the streets of the college town, where he went to college, in order to get pennies with which to buy bread. But such poverty cannot break the spirit of an ambitious boy who believes in the core of his Heavenly Father, and who has faith in hard work, and in his own destiny. No wonder that such a fearless lad became the head and front of the German reformation. Benjamin Franklin was the son of a soap boiler. As a boy he could see the sons of rich parents look down upon him and his father's humble trade. But this boy of heroic mold was not daunted by ridicule. He read the best books, and he toiled with his hands at any humble task, and made the most of every hour of his time until he was recognized as one of the greatest patriots and philosophers of America.—Orphans' Friend.

SOME BOYS' MISTAKES.

It is a mistake for a boy to think that a dashing, swaggering manner will commend him to others. The fact is that the quiet, modest boy is much more in demand than the boy of the swaggering type. Modesty is as admirable a trait in a man as in a woman, and the wise boy will find it to his distinct advantage to be quiet and modest in manner.

It is a mistake for a boy to put too high an estimate on his own wisdom. He will find it to be his advantage to rely on the far greater wisdom of those much older than himself. And he will find it still more to his advantage to rely on God's Word for direction in all the affairs of life, for a part of that wisdom that passeth understanding.

It is a mistake for a boy to feel at any time in all of the days of his boyhood that it is not his duty to be respectful and deferential to his father and mother. The noblest men in the world have felt this to be their duty.

It is a mistake for a boy to feel that there is any better way of acquiring a dollar than by honestly earning it. The real "royal road to fortune" is by the road that requires honest toil and the giving of the very best one has to give in return for money received.

It is a mistake for a boy to feel that religion is something intended for women and girls, and that it is unmanly for him to go to church and Sunday-school. The world has never known better or manlier men than those who have been faithful attendants at both church and Sunday-school. Real piety is the foundation of all character, and the scoffer at religion is never respected by those whose respect it is worth while to have.—The Sunday School Messenger.

A DIVINE PLAN IN YOUR LIFE.

Many of the great men of the world have found inspiration in life by believing in the divine leadership in every-day affairs. Tyndall, the illustrious scientist, had profound admiration for Alfred Tennyson, the famous poet, and was very anxious to meet him. One day, unexpectedly, the great opportunity came. Mr. Tyndall said to a friend, just before the meeting, "How things gravitate in this world. Here is a great privilege and a great pleasure come to me without my seeking!"

Every boy who has vision can see the divine leadership in his daily life. I have read Rudyard Kipling, at one time, was supposed to be dying in one of the hotels in New York City, and he was heard to whisper something very softly with a feeble voice. The nurse at once went to the bedside and said: "Do you want anything?" "Yes, I do," he said. "I want my Heavenly Father; he alone can care for me now." The celebrated author had realized the divine care in youth and in health, and, when in the crisis of illness he still depended upon the infinite care of the Divine Father.

After the Diet of Worms, Martin Luther was an outlaw. No civilized State could shield him from his cruel enemies, who were plotting his death. But his party, on their way back to Germany, was surrounded by armed men, and was captured and carried off and concealed at the castle at Wertberg. This capture was a plot of his friends to save his valuable life for the world. But the great Reformer was not idle in his captivity. He worked with wonderful zeal, and translated the entire Bible into the German language. This translation became very popular, and was one of the great factors of the German Reformation.

We are compelled to see divine Providence, in the fact that in the nick of time the Elector of Saxony recalled Luther from his captivity to recognize the German church, and in the course of time Martin Luther became the religious leader of two-thirds of the German nation, and one of the greatest reformers in the history of the world.

This truth is illustrated in the manufacture of expensive lace by hand. It is fascinating to watch the lace-makers in Brussels. This fine work is hard on the eyes of the lace workers, and to save the sight, it is customary for a worker to cover up all the design, with the exception of the little spot where she may be working for a few hours. In this way the worker toils for days or weeks, keeping the design covered until the entire work is finished. Then the cover is removed, and for the first time all the entire design is revealed. So we see only a fragment of our life at one time. The design is beautiful and divine, but the plan of our life is not revealed until our character is transfigured in immortality.—Warren G. Partridge.

There are many little tasks that a boy at home may take on himself for the relief of his parents. A strong, well-grown boy of twelve should be ashamed to let his mother lift a scuttle of coal, if he is in the room with her. As for kindling wood, the boys of the household ought to see that plenty of it is at hand for mother's use without obliging her to call their attention to an empty wood-box. Boys can help along, too, by shutting doors behind them, bringing letters from the mail and leaving orders at the grocer's. The task of the city boy and of the country boy are of a different order, but an obliging and accommodating spirit is the same wherever the boy is in the home.—Exchange.