

THE  
**LITTLE POST-OFFICE;**

OR  
MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS.

A  
MOTHER'S OFFERING.



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NEW HAVEN :  
S. BABCOCK, — CHURCH STREET.

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1838.

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Mary Dutton  
from Geo. J. Dorr

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OUR COUNTRY-HOUSE.

THE  
LITTLE POST-OFFICE.

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It somehow strikes me, that perhaps my little readers would like to hear about my brothers and sisters, and myself, when we were such little children as you are now:—how we learned lessons as you do now—how we amused ourselves—how we did wrong and were punished for it—and how we were very happy sometimes, and other times miserable, just exactly as you are now!

I had three sisters and three brothers. We had a very good, kind papa and mamma, who did all in their power to make us good and happy children.

Our brothers never were allowed to tyrannize over their sisters, or be any way cruel or unkind to them. On the contrary, they were instructed to know and to feel, that there cannot be a greater disgrace, or mark of meanness or cowardice in a boy's character, than the being cruel to any thing that is weaker than himself, especially a girl; because both nature and the Bible teach us, that it is the duty of man to protect and sustain "*the weaker sex.*" And they were also taught to feel, that there is much more superiority of mind shown in being able to give up a trifle, than in contending about it, or gaining it by brutal force, as we too often see boys do. I must own, whenever I see a boy cruel or rude to his sisters, I think to myself—that boy, when he grows to be a man, will never be either a great or a good one; he will be just a mean cowardly fellow; and I can tell you more, *I have very seldom been mistaken.*

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There were of us four girls. Bertha, Mary, Ellen, and Harriet. I leave you to guess which of them was *me*. My brothers were Henry, Adolphus, and John. At the time I intend to tell you about, Bertha was fourteen years of age, and was in Edinburgh, at a boarding school: Henry was eleven; Mary was ten; Adolphus and Harriet, who were twins, were nine; and Ellen was eight; John was a little boy in petticoats.

We lived in a beautiful country-house, surrounded with fine old trees; we had a nice swing among the trees; we had rabbits; we had each of us a little garden; and we had a house, built by our own hands, and very nicely furnished. It had real glass windows, and seats, and a table. The boys made these of wood papa gave them. They were not very neat, but mamma gave us girls some nice pieces of cloth, and we shaped covers of it, and made the seats look quite smart; and then she gave us a cover for the table, and when it was hemmed and put on, we begged she would come out and see the house now, it was so finished and so lovely. I remember so well, it was a Saturday, and we had all been very good, and mamma was pleased with every one of us! She smiled on us so sweetly when we all came flying in with this request, and said, "Well, my darlings, have a little patience and I will go with you: but if you are boisterous, you know, I won't go. Wait here for a moment." So saying, she left the dining-room, and we tried to wait patiently, but we all thought mamma's *moment* was a very long one. At last she came back with



her shawl on, and off we set, jumping and capering round her as she walked, holding the two littlest ones by the hands. When we got to the house the door was so little that she could scarce get in, and then, when she was in, she was glad to sit down, for a very good reason, the roof was so low she could not stand upright! This vexed us a little at first; but mamma was always so good-natured, she just laughed, and said it was a *very* nice house, and quite a right size for *us* little bodies. We all run in after her, first the girls and then the boys; and when we were all in, the house was so full we had scarce room to turn round; but what was our delight and astonishment, when we looked at the table, to see that, instead of nothing but the white cover, as we had left it, there it was now covered with such lovely little blue dishes, filled with biscuits and fruit, and a little plate for each of us! Dear, dear mamma, this was what she had been doing during the *moment* we thought so long! I think I need not

tell you how happy we were; how we laughed and jumped, and talked, and ate! I just see mamma yet, sitting on one of our stools, and making so much fun, yet keeping us all so gently in order.

At last she said she must leave us. "Oh no, py; do sing us a song, mamma, we all cried out, "don't leave us yet, you always make us so happy; do sing us a song, mamma, before you go away." She had a beautiful voice, and we all delighted so much in hearing her sing, we could have sat forever to listen. "What shall I sing? shall I sing a song o' sixpence?" "Oh no, mamma," said Mary, "sing 'Weel may the boatie row that wins the bairnies' bread.'" Mamma sung it immediately;—but unless your mamma, my dear little readers, will sing this song to you too, you wont quite understand what I am going to say. When mamma had done singing, she looked round at us all so sweetly, but we saw there were tears in her eyes. "Have we vexed you, mamma?" said Henry. "Oh no, my dearest children, no, no; each of you come and kiss me;" and she clasped each in succession to her heart. "No, my darlings, I was not *vexed*; I only thought, as I was singing the last verse, will you, like 'little Sawney, Jack and Janetie,' try, when papa and I are old, to return to us the happiness and cares we have tried to bestow on your childhood?" "Oh yes, mamma," we all cried out earnestly, "that indeed we will," "Remember, my beloved ones," said she, "you cannot do so without God's blessing, and to have *that*, you must never cease to ask for it. Kiss



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me once more. Never forget this little cottage of your own making, this happy moment, or the promise you have made me, to the dying day of each and all." The rosy faces then turned on that dear mother with such fond affection, this scene, or these words, *never were forgotten*. But it was always thus with mamma; whenever we were particularly happy, she so sweetly and affectionately impressed some important lesson like this upon our minds, that it never could be forgotten; for whenever we thought of the pleasure, we naturally thought of the good lesson too.

Mamma kept two books, of which we all stood in the most dreadful awe.—The one—for I remember the appearance of those books as well as if they were before my eyes at this moment—the one was covered with black leather, and the other with pink. Every night, when we were about to go to bed, and just before we said our prayers, these two books were brought out, and mamma wrote in the black one the name, or names, of whoever had been bad, whatever faults they had been guilty of through the course of the day, and what way they had been punished. In the pink book, the happy names of the good children were entered, and if any of us had done any thing she particularly approved of, she wrote it down in it too; and on Saturday night, as soon as tea was over, she brought out the books, and papa read aloud all that had been written in them during the week. With what trembling hearts did those who knew that their names were in the black book await this reading, and the remarks

which our papa afterwards addressed to each of us upon our conduct!—I can truly say that we were more impressed and punished by the deep distress we saw it gave him when there was much in the black book, than by any thing else that could have been done to us; and, on the other hand, how very delightful were his smiles and words of affectionate encouragement to those in the pink book! But there was a farther punishment and reward for us. Papa always gave us a little pocket-money on Saturday night, and it was given in exact proportion to our goodness during the week,—the best child got most, and the worst got none. Any mark of ill temper to each other, any selfishness or greed, any fibbing, or want of integrity in any way,—these were the faults that *certainly* deprived us of any pocket-money. This money we were allowed to dispose of exactly as we pleased; but each of us had a neat little account book, in which we were obliged to put down every penny we spent, and on Saturday to cast up the sum and show it to papa. Saturday night was almost always a very happy one to us. It was the only night of the week that papa was able to be at home, and mamma used to play and papa danced with us, and made such fun; and if, during the week, we had all kept out of the black book, we had a little supper; and Henry sat at the bottom of the table, and Mary at the head, and acted a big lady and gentleman: papa and mamma sat at the fire, and often they took such fits of laughing at our little nonsense!

MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS.



One of the most delightful sources of amusement we had, was a little post-office. Papa and mamma were very anxious that we should all learn to write well, and easily:—I don't mean merely to write a pretty hand; but to express ourselves correctly, and without the great difficulty which so many children and young people feel when they are obliged to write a letter. They wisely thought that nothing makes this, or any thing else, easy, but constant practice; so they established a post-office. It was a drawer at the top of the nursery stairs; there was a slit in it, by which we put in our letters, and when we went to call *for* letters, we took the key and opened the drawer and took out what was for us. The rule was, that we were not to write more, nor less, than one letter in the day, and to each of our brothers and sisters in succession; so that we wrote a letter to each once every week. Supposing it was Mary that wrote, she wrote to Bertha on Monday—to Henry on Tuesday—to me on Wednesday—to Ellen on Thursday, and to Adolphus on Friday. John was too little to write or be written to, so we wrote none on Saturdays at all. Bertha's letters were not put into the little post-office, for you know she was in Edinburgh; mamma sent them all to her in a parcel every week, and she answered them the same way. At first the writing of these letters was a little difficult to us, but it soon grew quite easy, and so delightful, that it was a constant source of pleasure to us. If we saw or heard any thing curious when we were out, we took

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good care not to *tell* each other, but kept it as a good subject for our first letter. At the end of every month, papa looked over all the letters that had passed between us, and for every good one, that is to say, for every one that was clean and prettily written, well expressed, and no wrong spelt words in it, we got a white ticket; and whoever had most tickets, was allowed on the first day of the next month, to write a letter to papa and mamma, who answered their letter, and always sent some little pretty present along with it, as an encouragement to be still more attentive and careful.

I think it was Henry who most frequently got these, not only because he was the eldest, but because he was a very sedate, wise little gentleman, who spoke little and thought much. Mary was a gentle, modest little girl. Ellen was a great romp, and we thought her not very good-natured, and rather inclined to be greedy. Adolphus was a merry, thoughtless, good-natured little fellow, who was always getting into scrapes, and yet we were all particularly fond of him, he was so open hearted and so generous. Harriet was something like him, but she was very clever, and always saying such droll things that set us all a-laughing. She was very little of her age, and we used to make great fun of that; but for all her littleness, she sometimes outstripped us all at the lessons! I think you will almost be able to find out these different characters of the children, in the letters which I am now going to copy for your amusement. Mamma kept them all in a little box, and out of it I have picked a few to

show you the way we went on. The first is from

ELLEN TO HENRY.

*Rossville, 3d March, 1803.*

*My Dear Henry,*

I suppose you know that this is my birth-day, and that I am eight years old to-day. I went into papa and mamma's room as soon as I was dressed this morning, because I was quite sure—at least I thought—I would get some pretty present: for you know on Mary's birth-day mamma gave her a nice needle-book. I was in a great hurry to get in, but papa was not ready, and mamma was in the dressing-room, so I had to wait till the bell rang, and then I flew in; and papa and mamma kissed me, and bade God bless me, and wished me many happy, happy birth-days; and papa gave me a most beautiful silver thimble, with my name on it in shining purple letters. He said this present was to remind me I should be industrious, and keep my own dress neat.—Mamma gave me a little pocket, and a nice band to button round my waist, and in the pocket there was a needle-book like Mary's. I was quite delighted with my presents, and I have been running about all the morning shewing them, and begging every body to give me something to put into my pocket. Adolphus gave me a half-penny, and he said he would have given me more, but that was all he had left of his last Saturday's allowance: but I told him it was no matter, he could just give me what he intended after next Saturday; but then he is afraid he will get none next Saturday, because he got angry at Mary yesterday, and knocked her over, and broke her little new china jug that aunt sent her, and mamma has him in the black book. I am sorry, sorry for that. Mary gave me a penny, and her little painted box. Harriet had no money at all, but she gave me a little handkerchief she had from mamma lately for being a good girl. I have sent my pocket along with this, that you may see it, and put any thing in it you please; you know you are the oldest.

I wish you would pare Dolly's waist a little, for I have

made a pair of new corsets for her, and they are rather too tight for her. Just a little paring would make them fit nicely. Let me know by return of post if you will do it. I am, my dear Brother, your very affectionate Sister,

ELLEN.

#### HENRY'S ANSWER TO ELLEN'S LETTER.

*Rossville, 3d March, 1803.*

*My Dear Ellen,*

I have just received your letter of this date, and your pocket along with it. I admire the pocket very much; I think it must have given our dear mamma a great deal of trouble to stitch it so nicely with blue silk. I suppose she intended the pocket as a hint to you, little Miss Nell, to be more careful not to be losing your key and your thimble so often. I have not put any thing into your pocket, for two reasons, both of which I think very good ones. In the first place, I have nothing to put, because, as you know very well, I spent all my money I had on things for the cottage; and another reason is, that even if I had any thing I would not give it to you, for I don't admire at all the greedy way you have been going on this morning. I like very well when any body is so kind as to give me a present, but I would scorn to ask one, or force any body to give me things as you have done. Ah fie! to take poor little Harriet's handkerchief, and Mary's painted box, and Adolphus' only halfpenny, when you knew he would get none next Saturday—it was greedy, greedy of you. I think, indeed, I shall give you one thing, by the bye, and that is, a little good advice. Go away up to the lumber room, and sit down upon the old saddle, and think of all the sins you have committed since your last birth-day; how often you have vexed mamma, and how very little progress you have made in your lessons by what you might; and try to resolve to be a better girl by the time another birth-day comes. And I think this would do more good, than going about plaguing every body with your pocket; for though they gave you things, you may be sure they thought to themselves, "what a nasty greedy thing that Ellen is!" I am, my dear Sister, yours affectionately.

HENRY ———.

. S.—Send Dolly and I shall pare her waist if you wish it: but you know though paring will make the little corsets fit her, it will make all the clothes that fit her now too large for her, so I would advise you rather to make bigger corsets for her.

ADOLPHUS TO MARY.

*Rossville, March 3d, 1803.*

*My Dear Mary,*

I am very sorry now that I was so cruel to you yesterday; but, really, I didn't intend to tumble you down; and I was quite sorry when I saw your jug was broken. You squalled, I am sure, with all your might. I hope your wind-pipe doesn't feel the worse for it to-day. The worst of it is, mamma has me in the black book—and I was in it last Saturday, too. I am sure, I wish I could be a good boy.

I send you with this a little mill I have made for you. I wish it had prettier wings, but I gave Ellen the half-penny I intended to buy a sheet of colored paper with. You know the use of it is for winding up skeins of silk thread. I saw one Miss Beverly had, and I thought I would try and make one too. Mamma thinks it very neat. I am, my dear Mary, your affectionate Brother.

ADOLPHUS.

MARY'S ANSWER.

*Rossville, 4th March, 1803.*

*My Dear Brother,*

I am much obliged to you for your kind inquiries after the health of my wind-pipe.

I thank you Sir, it is pretty well to-day, notwithstanding the squalling exercise you made it take you day. I assure you, I couldn't help screaming out, for my arm was so hurt, and my poor pretty jug! but I won't say any more about it. I am sorry you are in the black book about it; that is a terrible book! I am much obliged to you for your mill, (mamma says it should be called a reel) and I shall be so glad to lend it to mamma when she needs it, or to Bertha when she comes home; but perhaps she won't care for our things, she will have so many fine things of her own.

Do you know, there was such fun in the dancing-school



to-day, after you went out. Johnny Orr was dancing with our Harriet, and he was giving a very fine skip, and he lost his balance, and over he went on the floor; to try and save himself, he made a grab at Helen Nicholson, who was nearest him, and pulled her down too; and there they rolled over one another, and the whole school laughed out. The master was very angry at us, but really we could not help it; the very fiddlers laughed. You had better inquire after Miss Helen's wind-pipe, for I'll assure you she did not spare the squalling; but I think it was more for anger than hurt.

My paper is quite done, you see, and I must stop: and I am ever, my dear Adolphus, yours very sincerely.

MARY.

HARRIET TO ADOLPHUS.

*Rossville, 6th March, 1803.*

*My Dear Adolphus.*

So, Mary went and told you of the melancholy shipwreck of my poor partner. Indeed, I never saw anything like it; his legs flew up like the spokes of the little reel you made for Mary; but mamma was rather displeased when she heard how we laughed about it, and said an accident was what might happen to any of us. But I will tell you something to laugh at. When I was down playing with the Rabbits to-day, I saw little Kitty, the kitchen girl, go into the goose's house and thieve an egg, and put it in her pocket; so, I let her walk away without seeming as if I had seen her, and then I ran after her with a stick, and just as I passed her I gave her a good smack over the pocket, and broke the great big egg all to mash. If you had seen how she looked when it came running down from under her petticoats! But there is Mary calling me to go to school, so I must stop. Believe me, my dear Adolphus, your ever affectionate Sister,

HARRIET.

ADOLPHUS' ANSWER.

*Rossville, March 7th, 1803.*

*My Dear Harriet,*

I laughed very much at you and the goose's egg, but I wish mamma may not be angry when she hears of it; for I believe, after all, it was what she calls mischievous.



ADOLPHUS.

But surely it was very bad of little Kitty to steal the egg. I wonder if she wanted to sit upon it, and try if she could hatch a gosling; because, you know, she could not eat it; at least I never heard of any body eating a goose's egg.

Do you know, my big rabbit has got six young ones this morning, and I am going to give you two as soon as their mother has nursed them enough; so you can give my best compliments to your old rabbit, and tell her to make ready her house, for two young ones are coming to live with her. Believe me, my dear Harriet, your very affectionate Brother.

ADOLPHUS.

HENRY TO BERTHA.

Rossville, 2d April, 1803.

*My Dear Sister,*

I am very happy to hear that you are so soon to be home; we shall all be very glad to see you, and I am sure so will mamma; for, as I suppose you have got a great deal of sense now, you will be able to assist her with the little ones, who are often troublesome enough to her. Adolphus and Harriet are two most thoughtless little things, and always getting into the black book. They are always very good at their lessons, but no sooner are they let out to play, than they are sure to be at some mischief.

Did you ever hear what they did one day last summer? It was a warm, warm day, and they were playing in the glen, and there they found a man lying sound asleep among the trees; he was dressed like a gentleman, and had a quite new hat lying beside him; so what did our worthy brother and sister do, but they took the poor man's hat down to the river, and they filled it: so full of water as ever it would hold! then between them they carried it back, and laid it down close by his head; and then ran off, laughing like to die at the thoughts of the man's astonishment when he awoke and tried to put on his good hat!

Mamma was very angry when she heard of it, and punished them both; but the best punishment of all was, that about a fortnight after, Adolphus was going to climb a tree, and he laid down his fine new leather bonnet on the ground, and when he came down off the tree, there

lay the bonnet full of water! He was in an awful rage, but no one was in sight, nor could he ever discover who did it. He came running in to mamma, but she just looked at him very coldly, and said, "Dear me, Dolphy, you were like to die of laughing when you filled the sleeping man's hat with water, why is it so much less diverting when done to yourself? Go, go sir, and let this teach you never, either in jest or earnest, to do to another what you would not like done to yourself." Poor Dolphy went away quite ashamed, and never said another word about his bonnet.

I intended, when I began, to have told you a great deal about our lessons, but this foolish story has taken all my paper and all my time. I have begun astronomy, and am perfectly delighted with it; I know almost all the constellations already, and can trace the zodiac. I got a prize at the quarterly examination on Monday; it was the one for assiduity and good behavior. Yesterday was the first of April; we had a great deal of fun; but Mary wants to tell you about it in her letter, so I won't say any more about it. They had very near got me sent a fool's errand; but just when I was going to scamper off to see a calf with six legs, I remembered what day it was, and said very composedly, that since the calf had such a number of legs more than I had, I thought it was but fair *it* should come to see *me*, instead of my going to see it. So they were disappointed of their trick upon "Old Sobersides," as they call me.

Farewell, my dear sister; please to give my kind remembrance to Uncle and Aunt when you see them, and ever believe me, your most affectionate brother,

HENRY \_\_\_\_\_.

MARY TO BERTHA.

*Rossville, 2d April, 1803.*

Oh, my dear Bertha, if you had but been at home yesterday, we would all have been so glad, for we had such laughing. I don't rightly know how to get you told about it, for it began the night before. We were all playing in the little parlor, and little Johnny said to Henry, "Enny, how big is a horse's egg?" We all burst out a-laughing at such a question, and Henry told him out horses didn't lay eggs. "Oh, siss," that's his way of saying yes; "Oh siss, horses lay eggs, Elly told me."

We laughed the double more at this, and Ellen got quite angry, and insisted that horses *did* lay eggs, for Kitty told her so. Henry said she was very foolish to believe every thing an ignorant little girl like Kitty told her, and that it was perfect nonsense; but you know Ellen will never give up a thing, so she insisted and insisted horses *did* lay eggs, and the young horses came out of them. Henry asked if the old horses clogged upon their eggs? but she was too angry to answer him, and said she would go and tell mamma how he was making a fool of her.— So away she went and we all ran after her. Mamma could not keep from laughing, and said she was astonished that a girl of Ellen's age could be so silly as to believe such abominable nonsense? but, would you believe it! instead of giving up at once to mamma, Ellen persisted in repeating that Kitty said it, and Kitty had seen a horse's egg. Harriet asked if Kitty put it in her pocket when she saw it, and that made us all laugh again. Mamma said very seriously to Ellen, that to have believed such absurdity was merely foolish, to persist in repeating it when told it was such, was obstinacy, and she had often been told that this fault in her character was one that would make her both ridiculous and unhappy through life, if she did not get cured of it.

Instead of begging pardon, Ellen grew sulky, and wouldn't speak; she kept quite sulkey all the evening, and wouldn't play any. When mamma came to hear us our prayers, she said nothing to her at all, but I thought mamma looked very sorrowfully at her, and she didn't kiss her. In the mean time, Henry had privately asked leave of mamma to play a trick upon Ellen for next morning, and she gave him leave. So what did he do, but took the great tremendous pumpkin, that grew in the garden last year, and has been all winter under the sideboard, and he whitened it with chalk mixed with glue and water, till it was quite as white as any egg, and you know it is the very shape of one; he left it all night to dry, and in the morning he got John the ploughman to help him carry it down to the field where the horses feed, and with some straw they made a great big nest by the hedge, and put in the pumpkin. Then John said to one of the other servants in Kitty's hearing, "D'ye know, I'm thinking the mare has a nest somewhere down

about the bottom of the park." Away went Kitty and told Ellen the great news, and off the two set to seek for the mare's nest, and to be sure they were not long of finding it.

Up came Ellen flying, to bid us all come and see who was right, she or we, about horse's eggs; we would surely believe it when we saw it! She was all panting with triumph over us. We all ran, and, to be sure, we could not conceive what great thing it was; but none of us would believe it was a horse's egg; and she would not let us touch it; she said she would go and tell Helen Nicholson and George. Henry begged of her not to do that, but she *would* go. It was in vain that Henry told her how Helen and George would laugh at her. "Laugh at her, indeed!" she said, "that was all the spite he had, because she was right and he was wrong."

Away she went, and, in a minute, back she came with George and Helen, running like to break their legs; and George laughing so, we heard him long before we saw him. You know George is a very boisterous boy, and so he was not so biddable as we had been about not touching the egg; he attacked it instantly, and in spite of her screams, that he would break it, "and kill the young horse," he rolled it out of the nest; the moment it came upon the grass, all wet with the morning dew, the chalk began to rub off, and the green colour of the pumpkin to shine through. George soon laid bare more by rubbing it with a bunch of wet grass. "The pumpkin,—the big pumpkin," we all cried out: and pumpkin, pumpkin, we squalled, till you might have heard that and our shouts of laughing, I am sure, a mile off! Poor Ellen, after all, I was very sorry for her, she was so ashamed and mortified; but mamma said, she hoped it would have the good effect of making her less obstinate, and more inclined to listen with respect to the opinions of those older than herself; and she bid her, when she felt inclined to fall into this fault again, remember "the horse's egg."

I had no great reason to be proud of my sense, for papa said, quite gravely, to mamma, when nobody was in the room but me, "the doctor will be here at 12 o'clock, to cut that horn off the cook's head." I stared: and never thinking it was a *trick*, off I ran, and asked cook when the horn grew out of her head? and then I was so



ELLEN.

laughed at. So, to revenge myself, after a while, I rushed into the nursery, crying out, "Oh, come, come out and see this horrible thing; there's a man begging at the door with five holes in his face!" They all ran down stairs, and there stood a man just like other men; but I laughed at them all, and told them, his mouth, and his two nostrils, and his two ears, made five holes in his face! They were almost going to be angry, but mamma said that wasn't right; they should take it in good humor, as I had done with the cook's horn.

We are all very busy with our gardens now, and we were much obliged to you for your present of flower-seeds. My lupins are up, and so are my cresses; but papa says, he fears Mr. Frost will come and nip their noses some of these nights. I am sure Ellen's seeds will never grow, for she digs them up every other day, to see if they are growing. Adolphus and Harriet have their gardens all in one, and in the middle papa planted a rose bush, that bears white moss roses on one branch, and red ones on the other; that is like their two little selves growing on one stem.

This is a most dreadfully long letter. I dare say you are quite wearied with reading it; so I shall add no more, but that I am, my dear Bertha, your affectionate Sister,

MARY ———

BERTHA TO HENRY AND MARY.

*Edinburgh, 8th April, 1803.*

*My Dear Brother and Sister,*

I was very much delighted and amused with both your kind letters, which I received by mamma's last parcel. I am obliged to answer them both in one, because this parcel goes away so soon, I have not enough of time to get over all my writing. I wish indeed that I had been at home on April day, for I can assure you there was no such fun going here; nor have I any thing to tell you in return that will make you laugh half as much as your letters made me do. Many a time I think about you all, and wonder to myself what you are doing; I wish and wish I were once more among you. Not but that I am happy enough, and Mrs. Farren is very kind to me—and so is the governess, Miss Kerr, but still they are not like mamma—nor a school like dear, dear home. It is on Sunday I feel the difference most, for though they are



very attentive in giving us Sunday lessons to get by heart, I am sometimes like to cry when I think how sweetly mamma explains every thing to us, and talks to us so affectionately about our duty to God and each other.

I am very glad to think I am coming home so soon, and yet there are some of my school fellows I shall be very sorry to part with,—they are such very nice girls, and so kind to me. There is, however, one girl that almost nobody likes; she is not good-natured or obliging, and she is very greedy. Whenever she gets any money she spends it all in sweet things for eating, and no matter how much Mrs. Farren or Miss Kerr say to her, about what a foolish and disgusting way this is of spending her allowance, she still does it whenever she can get the opportunity. The other night she had given one of the servants a sixpence to buy her a rhubarb tart, and she told the servant to put it into her bed, just under the folds of the clothes, and the greedy thing intended to eat it after she was in bed. We are only allowed fifteen minutes to get to bed, and then Miss Kerr comes to see that we are in bed, and takes away our candles, and she is angry if she does not find us in bed when she comes. This miss is very conceited as well as greedy, and she had put off a great deal of time curling her hair, and looking at herself in the glass, that night; and when she heard Miss Kerr at the door she was in a great fright, and jumped into bed in such a hurry she quite forgot the tart, till she felt that she had lighted just on the top of it; and it was squirting all about the bed. But this was not the end of her misfortunes, for in looking about the room, Miss Kerr observed her night-dress lying on a chair, and asked why she had not put it on? Miss tried to make some awkward excuse, but Miss Kerr turned down the bed-clothes, and ordered her to rise and put it on immediately. Miss refused, and in the scuffle a bit of the poor bruised tart peeped out; Miss Kerr seized hold of it, and the whole affair was exposed. Mrs. Farren was sent for, and such an uproar you never heard. Another girl and I sleep in the same room with her, and we had such an ado to keep in laughing; for Mrs. Farren allows no laughing at each other; we lay stuffing the bedclothes into our mouths while the tragedy of Tart was acting; and in spite of us some little squeaks got out; but the ladies were luck-

ily too busy to notice us. Poor miss had to wear the black badge (that is what we get on for bad behavior) for three days ; and what was worse for her, none of us could look at her without all but laughing out.

I have told mamma all about my lessons, so I shall not repeat it to you, as I asked her to read that bit of my letter to you. I was very happy indeed to hear of your getting the prize, my dear Henry, it would make papa and mamma so glad.

There is to be grand struggle for a prize of the same sort here too. It is a very beautiful bracelet of Mrs. Farren's own work ; it will be decided week after next. I wish, I wish I could gain it ; that I might bring it home to papa and mamma too !

I am sure you won't say I have given you a short letter this time. I have spent all my play-time in writing it. Kiss all the little ones for me, particularly dear little Johnny. And believe me ever and ever, my dear Mary and Henry, your affectionate sister,

BERTHA.

Such, my dear little readers, are a few of the letters that gave so much pleasure to our childhood. I do not say that they were all as good as these, because I have picked out the best and the most amusing ; but still there were none of them very bad, and even little Ellen's big text ones are clean and neatly written, and folded very nicely.

I would advise you to try a Post-Office ; for I am sure you would find it a great amusement ; and all your lives you will feel the advantage of the early facility it would give you in writing letters. I have often seen great big boys and girls in perfect misery when they had a letter to write, and I have thought to myself, they have no " Little Post-Office !"



