

PRIZE WINNERS (£1 IS. Each).

Holling, Lillie (13), Cawthorne.
 Fordham, Alice (21), Regent's Park, N.W.
 Swete, Florence E. (18), Lee, S.E.
 Squire, Gertrude B. (9), Bitterne, S. Hants.
 Jones, Selina Lloyd (17), Liverpool, S.
 Noltin, Mary Anne (23), Alford, N.B.

FIRST CLASS CERTIFICATES.

Stapleton, Metta Carolina (13), Reigate.
 Dearnley, Annie (13), Cawthorne.
 Webster, Marian (16), Hammersmith.

Kinch, Fanny (21), Woodcock Hill.
 Meir, Flossie (15), Burslem.
 Todd, Amy Rebekah (14), Cornhill-on-Tweed.
 Bennett, Mary G. (10), Doncaster.
 Kitson, Mary Jane (12), Cawthorne.
 Badger, Amy C. (17), Birmingham.
 Johnson, Millicent (19), New Kent Road, S.E.
 Burton, Mary E. (18), Hailsham.
 Oakeshott, Lilian K. (20), Thornton Heath.
 Barnes, Jessie E. (23), St. Heliers, Jersey.

SECOND CLASS CERTIFICATES.

Barnes, Rosa A. (21), St. Heliers, Jersey.
 Priest, Annie (12), Barnsley.
 Woollett, Fanny E. (14), Barnsbury, N.
 McFarquhar, Jane (10), Banff.
 Collins, Mary Frances (17), Southsea.
 Cooper, Lily (19), Uppingham.
 Forwood, Emily (18), Stanford-le-Hope.
 Hartridge, Elizabeth (20), Chatham.
 Cocking, Emma (24), Gainsborough.
 Williams, Edith (18), Wolverhampton.
 Brindley, Caroline A. (19), Birmingham.

THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE COMPETITION GARMENTS TO THE CHILDREN OF THE BOARD SCHOOLS.

BEING entrusted by the Editor with the pleasant task of attending to the distribution of garments which had been contributed by the competitors of our last two competitions in plain needlework, he has thought it well that I should make a report of the method of distribution, and also gather a few facts together, which would show the great need of clothing "these little ones," so helpless, and generally so uncomplaining and quiet in their distress, for the benefit of our girls of the G.O.P.

Great care is always to be exercised in the dispensing of other people's charity; and this is especially the case where a large quantity has to be given away, and where the recipients are of the poorest class. One then has to guard against any misappropriation of the articles given, and to select, in as short a time as possible, from the numbers of poor the best objects of charity to whom they should be given. The wisest plan appeared to be to obtain the aid of the head mistresses, and accordingly I endeavoured to see all of them to whom we intended to send garments, making a selection from the poorest schools in the most over-populated districts in London, both in the West-end and East-end.

Of the kindness and the desire to aid in this charitable work shown by the head mistresses of the different schools I cannot speak too highly. Notwithstanding their busy lives, they all suggested and undertook the work of stamping each small garment with the School mark, so that they could neither be sold nor pawned. Each gave an idea of the number of articles which would make "an appreciable difference in the nakedness of her poor little scholars," which was the shape in which I thought it best to put the question. All of them were quite willing to undertake the responsibility of selecting the children; and the knowledge which they displayed of their several family circumstances, sorrows, and wants, showed the kindly hearts and womanly sympathies that are habitual to them, and which evidently govern their lives and conduct. There was no doubt on my mind but that much judgment would be used in giving away anything committed to their discretion, with so complete a knowledge of the needs of each case, as well as its deserts.

About 380 articles in both competitions were sent in—*i.e.*, 290 and 99—and these were divided in proportions between ten schools; the opinion of each head mistress being asked as to how much, or rather how little, she could manage with; and in each case the reply was given after a short period of thoughtful consideration.

BOARD SCHOOLS.

Nightingale Street, Portman Market, Marylebone, N.W.—40 articles.
 Latchmere School, Battersea, S.W.—40 articles.
 St. Clement's Road, Notting Hill, W.—40 articles.

"Ben Jonson" School, Stepney, E.—100 articles.

Cayley Street, Limehouse, E.—50 articles.
 Barrett Street, Oxford Street, W.—30 articles.
 Stephen Street, Lisson Grove, N.W.—41 articles.

Middle Row, Kensal New Town, W.—20 articles.

Saffron Hill, Farringdon Road, E.C.—14 articles.

Johanna Street, Lower Marsh, Lambeth, S.E.—14 articles.

Nightingale Street School,
 Portman Market, Marylebone,
 February 1st, 1888.

The generous gift of forty articles which arrived at the above school safely last week will be immensely acceptable to the fortunate possessors. I wish to take sufficient time to distribute them judiciously, and will then send an account of the children to whom they are given. The master was very glad to have the twelve shirts.

With many thanks,
 Believe me, yours respectfully,
 C. WILKINS.

Board School,
 St. Clement's Road, Notting Hill, W.,
 January 26th, 1888.

The box of clothes came quite safely yesterday. I thank you so much for it. The garments are so beautifully made. I have not yet distributed them, as I intend marking them first with the name of the school. I will write again after distributing them.

I am, yours obediently,
 E. M. NICKLESS.

Stephen Street Board School,
 Girls' Department,
 Lisson Grove, N.W.,
 February 15th, 1888.

We must thank the Editor heartily for the garments sent some time since, and now again for several this morning.

We have distributed them where we thought they would be appreciated, and the surprise depicted on the different faces would have done you good to have seen. Most mothers sent a note of thanks afterwards. One said, "Will you please thank the ladies who so kindly gave my girl the under-garments? and I thank you—Miss Church—for thinking of her."

Another said, "I do heartily thank the ladies; it is the first things my girl has had given her since her father died."

In infants' department one mother has been trying for some weeks to buy a little shirt, but had not the means. Mrs. Bull measured her boy, and he went home and said, "Mother, I've saved you a few pence; Mrs. Bull wants to see you; and I am sure she has a shirt to give me." The mother wishes her hearty thanks to be given.

Again thanking you for your kindness to our little ones,

We remain, yours respectfully,
 ELIZABETH A. CHURCH,
 MARGARET E. BULL.

"The Ben Jonson" Board School,
 Girls' Department,
 Harford Street, Stepney, E.,
 February 3rd, 1888.

I beg to convey to you, to the Editor of THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER, and to the makers of the garments, the most sincere thanks of the children who have received the gifts of warm, useful underclothing you so kindly sent us.

I wish you and those who made the garments could have seen the looks of pleasure on the faces of the children, and heard the messages of thanks with which I have been almost overwhelmed.

Again thanking you,
 I am, yours faithfully,
 S. E. HARRIS.

Latchmere Girls' School,
 Battersea,
 February 3rd, 1888.

The gift of forty garments kindly sent by the Editor of THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER were most acceptable to the poor children attending this school. They are for the most part underfed and badly clothed. Many of their parents are in almost the last straits of poverty—struggling, often unsuccessfully, to keep their homes together, and having to come to the workhouse at last.

The distress is chiefly brought on by inability to find work, and in some few cases by drink; but the sufferings of the little children, whatever may be the cause, are painful in the extreme.

On a bitterly cold day in January I proceeded to distribute the garments to the poorest and most deserving of my scholars. A little girl of eight years, who is only of the same size as a properly-fed child of four, was one of the recipients. She came to school crying with cold and hunger, and had had no breakfast. Why not? "Because mother had no money." She was given a cup of cocoa and a slice of bread and butter. She had on no clothes worth the name, and her chemise was the colour of mahogany, with filth.

She was dressed in a suit of your warm unbleached garments, and was so comfortable she scarcely knew herself. In the afternoon she pulled my dress as I passed her class, and said, "Mother says she is very thankful for the clothes." Another child, whose starved condition is only too apparent, was the next case. Her poor body is only skin and bone, and her matted hair shows only too plainly the neglect she meets with at home. I may say she has been given a meal a day at school for months.

Janey was shown the garments, and was asked if she would like some. When sending her to my room to change her things, I told her to bring me her old chemise and drawers to see.

She whispered, "I ain't got none, governess." Her other clothes were so reeking with vermin we had to give her a petticoat, dress, stockings, and boots, to make her attire complete.

The latter articles were the cast-off clothes

of some of the more well-to-do of the scholars, who take great delight in helping their less fortunate schoolmates; but this supply unfortunately does not meet the demand. The boots taken off were found to be without bottoms, the stockings without feet. This poor child had paddled to school in the snow, and would have patiently sat, with soaking feet and starving body, but for the kindness, amongst others, of the readers of THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER.

One of your garments was sent by a beaming happy child "to show father," who, with a broken rib, lay at home unable to work, and whose two little girls take it in turns to stay there, attending to him and the baby whilst their mother goes out washing. The family of seven live in one small room, the father's and

mother's bed in one corner and the children's shakedown in the other. How they all manage to stand up in the space is a puzzle to me.

Another article was given to a girl whose father had deserted her mother and four children, and gone to America, leaving them to live as best they can, all the children being too young to earn, whilst the mother's hands were tied with her infant child. The poor woman, already so heavily handicapped, has had the misfortune to dislocate her ankle.

A few garments were given to children whose parents, although poor, strive to make a good appearance, keeping their little ones neat and clean.

These people are to my mind well deserving of help.

The best behaved girls in each class were

chosen out, a garment falling to the share of the one who had lost one or both parents.

A few articles remain to be distributed as occasion requires, and I may mention that all those given away are stamped with the name and address of this school, so that they can neither be sold nor pawned.

In conclusion, please convey the very best thanks of myself, my staff, and the children, to the Editor of THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER, and the readers thereof.

From your obedient servant,
S. LEE.

** We hope to print in our next number the particulars of a new and interesting Competition in Needlework.



MELICENT ;

OR,

PARADISE GARDENS .

By SUSAN LARA HANDS, Author of 'The Wrong Made Right,' etc.

CHAPTER IV. MELICENT'S RESOLVE.



WING to the scene she had witnessed there, very serious questions concerning the well-being of the persons living in Paradise Gardens would, at times, thrust themselves upon Melicent.

But she had a wonderful knack of hushing the "still small voice," though she wished more earnestly than ever "that someone would see after that district." She would have sought a visitor for it herself had she only known where to find one, but most of the available inhabitants of Craydensfort were already provided with districts of their own; and they who had not would very naturally ask her why she did not take it herself.

"Ah! why did she not do so?" But at this stage of her musings she folded her work, glanced at the clock, and ran upstairs to the nursery to play for half an hour with those dear little nieces of hers.

She was on a visit for a few days to Mrs. Ferguson. But it happened at that moment that the children were out walking, and instead of carrying out her previous intentions, she put on her hat and went with her sister to the latter's district, a very different place from Paradise Gardens.

It was a neat little colony of houses, forming a square, and by the tasteful arrangement of their front windows the inhabitants evidently made the best of their small dwellings.

Melicent was quite delighted with their appearance, and expressed her wonder that such an attractive-looking neighbourhood wanted a visitor.

"Why not?" asked her sister.

"Why, I thought it was only very poor persons who needed one, such as those we saw in Paradise Gardens the other afternoon."

"Ah! they want one badly enough; but there are others besides those who thankfully receive such visits as we are able to pay them. There are many subjects on which advice is required; and often a person, who has not had the opportunity of attaining the knowledge herself, is glad to learn it from one who has. So much on that subject," smilingly said Mrs. Ferguson; "but there are other matters to be attended to as well; but you shall see for yourself."

And Melicent did so. She noted what universal pleasure her sister's visits seemed to give; how she was regarded in the light of a friend by the inhabitants of these little dwellings, and with what gentle sympathy she listened to all the small details of their homes and families.

The babies were a great item of interest, and in most cases were as lavish of their smiles as were their mothers. Indeed, all the children were on a friendly footing with the visitor,

and gladly answered all the questions as to why they were not at school, or whether they attended Sunday-school regularly. Ah! the number of children that Mrs. Ferguson had been instrumental in getting to the Sunday-schools out of that locality; children who, otherwise, might have grown up without the blessings of Christianity. For though all looked so attractive to Melicent, her sister, who knew the histories of most of the families, was painfully aware that all were not perfection in her district. But it was not her office to blazon their faults and failings to another, who could in no way remedy that. That would scarcely be acting the part of a friend, nor following the steps of the Master, for love of whom she did the work.

So Melicent heard nothing of that other side of the picture; for Mrs. Ferguson would consider it as great an offence to gossip about the affairs of her district—the imperfections and ignorances of those who confided in her—as she would to betray the secrets of her dearest friends. This, perhaps, was one reason that she inspired such perfect trust, and why many a weary-laden, sorrowful soul lightened her trouble by confiding it to the "visiting lady." But the latter could not restrain a smile when Melicent commented on the pleasantness of one woman in particular. "How really glad she seemed to see you!" she added, warmly.

"Yes, she welcomes me now," assented Mrs. Ferguson, "but that was not formerly the case. Indeed, you must not imagine I have