



THE GIRL'S OWN ORDER OF MERIT.

"Pretium laborum non bilet."

WE have to propose a scheme in which we want every girl who reads THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER to help us.

The object of it is to establish a fund, the interest of which will provide three gold medals every year.

These three gold medals it is proposed are to be given by the votes of the subscribers to THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER to those girls or women (being British subjects) who during the year have distinguished themselves most by either their actions or their words.

The money is to be invested in doing honour annually to goodness and ability. It is to be spent in giving public recognition to those who have touched our hearts and awakened our admiration most.

The world-wide circulation of our paper and the enormous number of our subscribers fully justify the starting of such an Order of Merit. They give it a real value and importance.

It is proposed, we have said, to give three medals.

The first is to go to whoever has distinguished herself most in good deeds. It will be in recognition of heroism, loyalty, benevolence, devotion to the suffering, self-sacrifice in the cause of duty—in short, of whatever is praiseworthy in point of character.

The second is for the most distinguished in the fine arts of music, painting, or sculpture.

The third will be awarded to the most distinguished in either literature, science, or education.

The only conditions will be that those who receive the medals are worthy of the honour in the eyes of those who vote, and that they have specially distinguished themselves during the preceding twelve months. They must have come prominently forward during the year.

The right to a vote in awarding each of these medals will be possessed by every subscriber for a year to THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER. That is to say, every girl who has taken our paper for the preceding twelve months will be entitled.

A special benefit, however, is proposed for all subscribers who have taken prizes at any one of our competitions. These, who represent the aristocracy of our circle, are to have two votes in awarding each of the medals, instead of one.

A voting paper will be inserted in one of the weekly numbers and in one of the monthly parts for each year. These papers will be filled up by subscribers, and returned to the office,

when the votes will be counted and the result published as soon as possible thereafter.

Unless thought and discretion are exercised, voting is worth little. In order, then, that it may be gone about with intelligence, and on the basis of accurate information, we shall occasionally insert articles giving such particulars as may be useful regarding the distinguished girls and women of the day, but keeping clear of in any way influencing voters. Our wish is that girls should make up their minds for themselves, and be strong in the exercise of private judgment.

To start such a scheme as this we must have united effort. There must be a solid foundation laid in the shape of a fund sufficient to meet the expense. Without that our project cannot be undertaken.



By way of heading the subscription list the proprietors will give the sum of £10.

The remaining funds required we propose should be found by the readers of THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER, of whose good feeling and enthusiasm in a good cause we have every reason to be proud. All may give something, remembering that every little helps, and that there is a wonderful power in the addition of a long sum in sixpences, shillings, and half-crowns.

The amount collected will be invested under trustees; and girls who subscribe may be sure that they are lending their aid to start a lasting work, and that their contributions will be permanently devoted to a praiseworthy object.

It is proposed to purchase the medals out of the interest of the capital sum raised.

Our Order of Merit will be useful in many

ways. To all to whom the medals are given it will furnish a subject of gratification and encouragement. "The applause of a single human being," says Dr. Johnson, "is of great consequence." How much more so the enthusiastic recognition of thousands of those who represent the intelligent girlhood of the country? We may be sure of making brighter not a few hard-working, and perhaps even struggling, lives; of cheering many in a career of well-doing; and of having our medals looked upon as welcome honours by all who follow the path of duty.

The influence of the Order of Merit on ourselves, girls, cannot but be favourable. It will have a good effect on everyone who assists in establishing it. Taking note of noble deeds and well-spent lives will assist in perfecting our own being. Good examples have a wonderful power of winning over people to imitate them, and it will be surprising if the search for those who are to be honoured for doing their best does not rouse some of us to try to do as well, or perhaps even better.

Everyone, too, will find her interest in the world and its doings increased by such a scheme. We shall look about us with more eagerness, feeling that this new subject has quickened all our faculties, and that it may have an important effect on our own destiny.

At the annual election everyone must try to exercise her vote intelligently, and that will have the best possible effect on her own mind. It will help her in every decision she has to make later on in life, and will go a long way to assist in building up a character of discrimination and good sense.

We hope to make the awarding of these medals an annual event of real importance, to be awaited with interest and eagerness by all our subscribers. By your aid, girls, it can be managed, and we therefore look confidently forward to the time when the Girl's Own Order of Merit will boast of a roll of honour including all the good and illustrious women of the day, with whom every girl will feel as if she had come personally in contact.

The first thing is to lay a solid foundation for this useful scheme, by doing our very best in the way of subscriptions. We should never half-do what we take in hand, and we can do anything if we only make up our minds so to do.

Subscriptions for the Girl's Own Order of Merit should be addressed to the Editor, THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER, 56, Paternoster Row, London, E.C.

The names of subscribers will be published from time to time in THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER.

THE GIRLS' OWN ORDER OF MERIT.

TO WHOM ARE WE TO AWARD THE FIRST MEDAL?



THE proposal for founding a GIRLS' OWN ORDER OF MERIT has been received by our readers with an unusual amount of interest. Many kind things, as we mentioned three weeks ago, have been written to us about it, and many subscriptions have now been received.

The Editor has been specially gratified at finding that such a large number of girls have entered with intelligence and enthusiasm into his views as to the usefulness of such an undertaking. Not a few have been influenced by the fact that the medals will please and encourage those who receive them, and may come in time to be looked upon as welcome rewards by all who follow the path of duty. But perhaps the larger number have spoken of the probable favourable effect on themselves, seeing clearly enough that "taking note of noble deeds and well spent lives will assist in perfecting their own being."

A sufficient foundation having been laid, the question comes now to be asked, with what name are we to begin our new enterprise? Who is to receive the first medal and stand at the head of our roll of honour, which we hope will come, in the natural order of things, to include all the good and illustrious women of our time?

This question will, invariably, be left to you, girls, yourselves to answer, the awarding of the medals being your own special affair. We have already said

that we wish to keep clear of in any way influencing voters, and rather to encourage you to make up your minds for yourselves and be strong in the exercise of private judgment.

But we must take it for granted that every one of our readers will agree with us that the first name in the roll of the GIRLS' OWN ORDER OF MERIT should be that of the first lady in the land. The first medal might be given with special appropriateness to

HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN.

It should be given to the best, and, in the case of Her Majesty, the best and the most distinguished seem happily to meet.

In laying our first medal at the feet of the Queen it would not be a mere matter of form; it would be an act of homage based on reflection, and an evidence of admiration and love as well as of loyalty.

In thinking the matter out for themselves, girls will find that, though in the offering of our medal a new deed may be done, nothing new on the subject of Her Majesty is left to be said. The character of our Queen has been judged throughout a long reign of over fifty years, and its many praiseworthy features have recently had additional attention directed to them, during the complete and beautiful triumph of her Jubilee.

The motto, "Well Done!" is inscribed on the medal of the GIRLS' OWN ORDER OF MERIT, and this motto we may repeat with emphasis in the case of Her Majesty.

She has *done well* as a ruler. The great object of a queen's life must ever be her people's welfare, and this she has

always and often laboriously striven after. She has had power, and—what is not a common thing—used it judiciously and to the advantage of all her subjects. Indeed, it is no exaggeration to say that no previous monarch of this country can compare with Her Majesty as a pattern of prudence, and an example of public usefulness and devotion to duty.

But it is not only in affairs of state that the Queen has distinguished herself. She has set an example in all private virtues, and in this way has given an impulse to much that is best in our time. Her influence has been far reaching in promoting purity of life, and also in furthering genuine and undemonstrative piety, and she has given perhaps the most striking example the world has ever seen of the truth of the saying, that to have a good queen there must be a good woman to begin with.

It is not so much by doing well as a ruler that the Queen has secured the affections of her people; we love her most because she has *done well* as a wife; *done well* as a mother; *done well* as the mistress of a household. These features even more than her royal excellences have secured to her the devotion of all who can appreciate a noble life.

These are the grounds then on which we suggest that the first medal of the GIRLS' OWN ORDER OF MERIT should be awarded to Her Majesty, and the more girls discuss the matter with themselves, the more we believe will they see that in no other way could we make a wiser commencement to our scheme than by doing honour to one who is not only highest in place, but who has *done so well* in all her actions.

NOTICES OF NEW MUSIC.

F. PITMAN.

Volume I. of *The Violin Soloist* is a marvellous shillingsworth, containing, as it does, over a hundred selected solos beautifully phrased and fingered.

Pitman's Musical Monthly. The volume for this year (No. 4) is, in quantity and variety, quite equal to its predecessors. We cannot find the portraits of musical artistes advertised on the cover of contents.

PURCELL AND CO.

The Babe in Bethlehem. A carol. Composed by Edwin Bending.—This is a curious combination of old and new, both in the printing and the material. To use the diamond and old block-notes for modern harmonies, even for dominant sevenths, seems an anachronism.

ROBERT COCKS AND CO.

Prince Bismarck. March for the piano.—Is full of dignity and diatonic power, as anything bold enough to bear the German Chancellor's name should be.

"*Oh, Heart of Mine*." Song. By Howard Talbot.—A graceful, poetical setting of sad, broken-hearted words.

STANLEY LUCAS AND CO.

Come to Me Again. Music by Oliver King.—A good musically song, in a compass suited to mezzo-soprano or light contralto voices.

To the Storm-wind. A simple bass song, in which a chance for effect seems to us to have been lost. The accents are not always suitable to the English words; e.g., the second bar of the voice part.

The Wish of My Heart. Song. By Fred-eric E. Weatherly, to music by Frank L. Moir.—Another broken-hearted affair, with an offer of very poor consolation in it. But both composer and author are well represented in this song. It is published in three keys.

It was Nothing but a Rose. Romance. By Mary Travers.—We have had occasion before this to recommend this clever lady's writing, and the song before us adds considerably to her reputation as a song composer. It is full of graceful and eminently vocal passages.

Festival March, for the piano, by the same composer, has been played by our best military bands. It is superior to the majority of these marches, and bears a solemn and dignified character.

Berceuse, for piano, by L. Schytte.—A charming cradle song, to which an extra attraction is added, for its having been played by the wonderful boy-pianist Josef Hofmann.

HUTCHINGS AND ROMER.

Light. ("I arise to seek the light.") By Sir George A. Macfarren.—We know of nothing more touching and full of earnest feeling than this song, by the lamented professor and theorist, who has so recently been removed from us to find that light which he yearned so deeply and followed after so diligently in his lifetime.

To Laura. Song. By Claude Barton, to the quaint words of Passmore.—For baritones who know how to sing and appreciate good music, no better gift than this could be suggested.

AN "ORDER OF MERIT" IN FRANCE.

REPORT READ BY THE DIRECTOR OF THE ACADEMY FRANÇAISE ON THE PRIZES AWARDED TO VIRTUE AT THE MEETING HELD LAST AUTUMN.

GENTLEMEN, it is now 104 years since the French Academy first publicly awarded prizes to virtue, so that this ceremony cannot pretend to any degree of novelty. When it took place for the first time on August 25th, 1783, it excited great curiosity.

A chosen few thronged the narrow hall of the Louvre, where the Academy held its meetings. Everyone listened with emotion as the Director, M. De Boisgelin, Archbishop of Aix, related the good deed about to be rewarded. It is even said that tears flowed from all eyes; but emotion was at its height when the poor woman who had won the crown rose from her seat and passed through the ranks of the assembly to receive her prize. . . . If, however, our prizes for virtue have lost their novelty since first awarded, they have gained much in importance. . . . Instead of a single prize, we have now fifty to give, and there are not wanting candidates to receive them. . . . Demands have come to us this year from almost all the Departments of France—some even from the Island of Mauritius and from Guadeloupe. No doubt we shall have some soon from Tunis and Tonquin. Everywhere—wherever a devoted or virtuous action has been performed, those who have witnessed it have hastened to tell us of it. The neighbours assemble—talk it over—and the Municipal Council exerts itself. All these good people have no other interest in the matter than the pleasure of seeing virtue rewarded. But this is a very keen, wide-spread pleasure. This year we have received 210 documents, accompanied by most honourable signatures, which it has been necessary to examine most carefully, and among which, I assure you, it has not been easy to decide.

The first prize is awarded to a Calais sailor, Adolphe Delannoy, for a whole life of devotion and courage. . . . Two prizes, little less in importance than the first, are awarded to Madame Dorvan Lalande and to André Bonneyrat. Madame Dorvan Lalande belongs to a good family of Poitou. Being left a widow in 1882, after a well-spent life in which benevolence had always filled a large space, her duties as wife and mother over, she judged herself at liberty for the years that remained to her to live where and how she pleased. Her tastes did not lead her to pleasure or repose; she had a passion for being of use, and dreamt of devoting herself to the aid of suffering humanity. In order to become an efficient nurse, she walked the hospitals, and followed the medical courses and lectures. It was at the time when France was threatened with a speedy invasion of cholera. Madame Dorvan Lalande thought that it would be a good thing to learn to know and fight it, before it reached home. She set out for Egypt, where it was raging, visited Alexandria, Cairo, Ismailia, and Port Said, staying longest in the towns most affected, and conducting herself throughout with a courage and a zeal to which the doctors of the country have rendered homage.

The following year, when the plague broke out at Toulon with violence, as you know, Madame Dorvan Lalande was ready. She obtained permission to go there and establish herself in the Hospital Bon Rencontre, as a common nurse. "The patients at Bon Rencontre," the president of the administrative board wrote to her later, "will never forget the cares you have lavished on them during our cruel trial. As for us directors and doctors, we cannot cease thanking you for your generous help." In her devotion to others Madame Lalande forgot herself, and on return-

ing to Paris she was attacked with pneumonia, which endangered her life. As soon as she could be moved, she was admitted to the Vesinet Convalescent Home, where on July 13th, 1885, she received the medal of honour, which the Home Secretary adjudged to her for her heroic conduct. The Academy thinks that this conduct merits a still higher recompense.

Besides these three prizes, the Academy awards eleven medals of 1,000 francs (£40) and twelve of 500 francs (£20) each—the interest on M. de Montyon's legacy. I wish it were possible for me to place before you details of the virtuous actions which have merited these rewards. You would feel, I am sure, deep interest in seeing quite poor women—a florist—a village schoolmistress—needy workwomen—lavishing their care on the sick, the infirm, the indigent; sometimes even gathering them together—and though almost without means, offering them a shelter—even keeping them there until their death—by dint of prodigies of industry and charity. I should like to have time to mention all. I am forced to choose among them almost indiscriminately.

At Blaye, in the Gironde, Mlle. de Morineau, who had inherited nothing but a large house, founded there a hospital for aged women. Then, in order to cause no jealousy, built on unoccupied land an asylum for old men, and she found means, by begging on all sides, to maintain eighty-four persons there.

Elsewhere in one of the poorest parts of Auvergne, some sisters named Chaband, who possessed only a tiny cottage that their father, an old gamekeeper, had left them, became the benefactors of the whole neighbourhood. Hearing of illness in any place, they go there, care for the sufferer until the last, and if some little child is left desolate in the empty hut, they take it to their own home. Everything in the story of these poor girls is surprising and extraordinary. By spinning, weaving, knitting all day, they are barely able to maintain themselves, nevertheless they nourish the poor from their superfluity. Their cottage seems too narrow to hold them all three, and they house five orphans also; and yet we are told that miracles no longer take place.

But there is something still more marvellous. Marie Pauline Larrony, deaf-mute from her birth, was educated at the National Institution for the Deaf and Dumb at Bordeaux. Full of gratitude for an education which permitted her to mix a little in society, and which gave her back in part what nature had denied her, she resolved to devote herself to the task of teaching others. Chance having led her to Oloron, a small town in the Lower Pyrenees, she took first one little deaf and dumb girl to live with her, then a second, and finally received all who came. Almost all were poor; on her part she had no private fortune, and consequently no means of clothing and feeding them. If we were to reason after the wisdom of men, we should judge her wrong to attempt more than she could perform, but when once one has tasted the secret satisfaction of doing good, one becomes insatiable—enthusiasm carries one away. Virtue as well as vice has its enticements. It is possible to do headstrong, almost frantic, acts of charity. When Mlle. Larrony saw that she had exhausted her resources, she did not for a moment contemplate sending away the children she had received. But it was necessary all the same that they should not die of hunger. She decided to beg for them. To beg, when one is a deaf-mute, to ask alms from people to whom one cannot speak, and whom one cannot hear, is no easy

task. Think, moreover, that people at Oloron are not rich, and that those to whom Mlle. Larrony appealed found it a hard matter at times to live themselves. Nevertheless, she was not discouraged. For three years she went from house to house, from village to village. "It seemed the image of misery, knocking at the door of poverty," says the report which was sent to us. What a pity, gentlemen, that poverty is not the least bit richer! It is generally most charitable; none give with a more willing heart than those who have scarcely anything to give. Mlle. Larrony never went away empty-handed. She took all that was offered to her—old clothes, eatables, even pieces of black bread. Those sad times have gone, thank God. The Department and the parish have taken Mlle. Larrony's school under their protection. But do not imagine from this that it is rich. The mayor sends us the accounts of the small establishment. They balance, it is true, but at the cost of much economy and many privations.

There remains to be spoken of the category of good servants, who are devoted to their employers, who, receiving no wages, work for them, care for them, and sometimes even support them. . . . And we crown women—daughters who spend their lives labouring for the ungrateful, receiving for all thanks bitter reproaches, sometimes blows, without losing patience or ceasing their devotion for a single day; add that for the most part they are very poor, and therefore cannot aid others without suffering painfully themselves. . . . Louise Germain, for example, has been employed for thirty-seven years in lace-making at Dieppe; she lived alone with her mother, whom she supports by her work. She has refused to be married, in order not to be separated from her; she cares for her with a zeal and tenderness which has never been surpassed. Life, however, is hard in this poor household. The old woman, now 76 years of age, is full of pains, and half paralysed. Her days are passed in suffering; at night she is ill at ease on the hard, narrow bed, which mother and daughter share. She has been heard to say, "I should like not to die before I have lain on a mattress." Notwithstanding, the garret is clean and well arranged. Louise Germain, with clothing pieced and mended, is still scudily dressed that no one round her suspected, to what fearful straits she was often reduced. She has never complained, she owes nothing, asks nothing, and, by working 14 hours a day, she earns 75 centimes (7½d.). That is her sole resource for herself and her mother, and for many years she has managed to make it sufficient. Bread is not always abundant, and it frequently happens that, having to pay some unexpected expense, one of the two meals is suppressed. But Louise, the one who works, is also the one who starves—the old mother lacks nothing. Do you not think, gentlemen, that duty performed under such circumstances approaches nearly to heroism?

And we ask, girls, do you not think that our own G. O. O. M. will be equally useful in rewarding virtue among all English-speaking girls throughout the world?

We hope next month to place before our readers some names of girls whom they may consider to be deserving of our Gold Medal, and we hope on their part that they will be always ready to send us particulars of cases of heroism, or to suggest names of talented girls who, by their prominence, are deserving recognition at our hands.—ED.

Then he would fain have led Lettice away from the others for a short monopoly of her gentle presence, and Bessie tried to help him; she engaged Mrs. Colston in an eager conversation, and did her utmost to interest her. But she could not help observing how that lady's eyes followed her stepdaughter the whole time, and how now and then they caught her glance, and seemed to convey some rapid signal even in the fast-increasing distance.

Bessie tried to interpret that signal, but she could not do so to her own satisfaction; it looked like a warning, but it could not be a warning where there was nothing to warn against.

Tom led away Lettice into the copse where the primroses bloomed in such golden luxuriance, and he walked there beside her, with her hand on his arm, and her sweet face bent low, listening to his words, to the pictures he drew of what their life would be in the beautiful coming future, of how the sun would always shine, and the soft dew enrich the earth, and the grain swell and ripen to harvest in the glory of their happiness.

Mrs. Colston put her hand through Bessie's arm, and followed them into the wood.

"Lettice is not strong," she said uneasily. "I am afraid of these spring days, they are treacherous; the wind is in the east."

"They are so happy together," said Bessie. No, she did not understand; and she understood less than ever much later in the day.

Tom had gone to order the horse to be harnessed that was to take the Colstons home again. Bessie saw Lettice put her hand on her stepmother's arm, and draw her to one side with a vehement gesture; and she saw her speaking to her very low and passionately, and she could not help catching

these words, uttered with a kind of wail in them: "I tell you I must speak! I must!" Bessie heard no answer, but she saw Mrs. Colston stoop down and say something in a sharp whisper, which must have stung like a knife, for a look came over the beautiful face that haunted Bessie—a kind of wild, hunted look, with an anguish in it that frightened her.

It was gone in a second, and when Tom came in Lettice was her own self again, and she passed her hand over her eyes, wondering whether that look had only existed in her own imagination. The brother and sister stood together to watch the carriage, until the cluster of oaks at the far end of the Springfield pasture hid it from sight, and then Tom turned to his sister, the glow of the fast-setting sun lighting up his good, handsome face.

"Well, little sister," he said, "have you chosen the day?"

"The fifth of June, Tom," she answered gaily. "And that will leave little enough time to be ready. How lovely, how beautiful she is!"

"Yes," answered Tom. Then he walked about restlessly, following her as she went her way to the farmyard with the food for her feathered flock.

"Did she look happy, do you think, Bessie?" he said at last.

Bessie flung the grain right and left. "Yes, when she looked at you, old Tom."

"And she liked the place?"

"She thought it perfect."

"Bessie, you are sure that we can make her happy?"

"I should think so!" cried Bessie. "Come, Tom, don't worry yourself; some happiness is too deep for joy, and makes one almost cry!"

Her voice choked, and she flung the grain again.

Tom walked away, and the red light shone all over him in a great warm glow.

Bessie turned homewards. The cocks and hens were eating as fast as they could swallow; a little weakly hen was getting tamped underfoot. Bessie indignantly flew to the rescue.

"Miss Bessie, dear!"

"What, you here, Mrs. Coppin? What is it?"

The woman stood curtsying and twisting her apron; there was an odd, uneasy look in her face.

"Might I make so bold, miss, as ask who that young lady was as drove away just now?"

"Miss Colston, that is engaged to marry my brother."

"No, don't say that, not nohow, if you please."

"It is true, Mrs. Coppin; and she is as good as she is handsome."

"Save us and preserve us!" said the woman under her breath.

"Do you know her, Mrs. Coppin?"

"Me know her? Why, bless you, I knowed her from a child, down Brainton way."

"And she is beautiful, is she not?"

"Handsome is as handsome does; there's some as likes one thing, and some another; and one ain't got no call to say as one's taste ain't as good as his'n wot don't agree with him, and thinks otherwise. She looks wonderful pale-like."

"You are accustomed to our sunburnt visages," said Bessie, laughing as she went indoors.

"Save us and preserve us!" ejaculated Mrs. Coppin, with a face of such concern that the cowman's wife as she passed her in the rickyard cheerily asked her, "Why, law! Mrs. Coppin! whatever's the matter wi' you?"

(To be continued.)

THE GIRL'S OWN ORDER OF MERIT.

JUST as we are sending this number to press we find ourselves inundated with letters from our readers, suggesting that Nurse Finns, mentioned in the following paragraph from the newspapers, is worthy of receiving our gold medal of the Girl's Own Order of Merit. In reply to our correspondents we beg to say that we are investigating the incident, and hope to give further particulars of the case in our next number.

What a brave deed!

And what a glorious example!

A BRAVE HOSPITAL NURSE.

A few days since a child aged two years was removed by order of Dr. Watson, medical officer to Lieut. Williams's Infectious Hospital, Rochester, to hospital suffering from a bad form of diphtheria. Upon the child's arrival it was found that the symptoms were of a virulent character, necessitating an immediate resort to tracheotomy. During the night the tube became clogged, and the poor little sufferer was found gasping for breath. Death being imminent, one of the senior nurses, a young woman named Finns, bravely offered to suck the tube, a task attended with almost certain risk of her life. Notwithstanding urgent representations made to her as to the danger attending such self-sacrificing conduct,

Nurse Finns applied her lips to the tube, and thus prolonged the child's life for several hours. The heroic act has excited warm admiration, and the medical staff propose to represent the case in the proper quarter.

THE GIRL'S OWN CONVALESCENT HOME.

SUBSCRIPTION LIST.

Amount previously acknowledged in No. 439 of THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER £145 15s. 8d.

Three Factory Girls, 1s., A Quille Pen, 2s., Auntie, 2s. 6d., Lily (1s. per annum), 1s., "C. B. 5," 2s., Trotty, 1s., Beatrice Gilliat, 2s., Alicia Cummings (collected), 3s. 1d., G. L., 1s., Margaret D. Learmont (collected), 2s. 9d., E. J. F., 2s., C. Schellenberger, 1s., "One who wishes it every success," 2s. 6d., Nessie, 5s., Two Sisters, 6d., Nellie Wilkinson, 4d., Vivien Stannard, 6d., "A girl of 27," 1s., "That Imp," 2s. 6d., "Appreciative" (5s. per annum), 5s., Daffodil, 7d., Margaret S. Hall, 5s., Some Readers of the "G.O.P.," 6d., Florence, 1s., Eiseb Esor (2s. 6d. per annum), 2s. 6d., Working Girl, 2s. 6d., E. A. (collected), 7s. 6d., E. M. S., 2s. 6d., "Auntie," 2s., P. and F. Donkin, 2s. 6d., Elizabeth Grierson (collected), 7s., Maria L. Hall, 2s. 6d., Stock-

well Violet, 12s. 10d., Jessie J. Deacon, 1s., S. B. J., 1s., Allie, 2s. 6d., A Sincere Well-wisher (collected), 1s. 6d., Only a Servant-girl, 1s., Nurse Linven, 2s., Housemaid, 2s., K. P. (collected), 15s., Nurse Agnes, 2s., May Day, 5s., An Overworked Governess, 1s., M. H., 1s. 6d., Miss Williams, 1s., H. R. C., 1s., Rose Savory (collected), 1s. 6d., E. T. Norman (collected), 5s., Mignonette, 1s., "Girl's Benevolent Society, Coxhoe," per S. Cowburn, 5s., M. H., 5s., Margaret Turnbull, 5s., Loo (Australia), 10s., Collected by M. Smith, Beech Cottage, 8s., Carrie Senior, 1s., Emma Pugh, 2s., Edith F. Cross, 1s. 6d., J. H. B. M., 1s. 6d., Emily C. Boyle (collected), £1 6s. 6d., J. B. and E. N. T. (10s. per annum), 12s., Anon (in stamps), 1s., A. J. B., 1s. 3d., M. Wiles, 1s., F. S. H., 2s., M. G., 6d., Little Nellie (2s. 6d. per annum), 5s., Rosina (5s. per annum), 5s., Agnes C. (3s. 6d. per annum), 3s. 6d., Lilly Samuel (collected), 11s. 6d., Primrose, 2s., Ivy Snowdrop, 2s., Riverside, 5s., Kitty, 1s., Two Anglo-Indians, 2s., Bertha and Edith, 2s., Miss Hall, 2s. 6d., Teresa, 1s., A. D. B., (Manchester), 1s. 6d., M. H., 1s., Ginty, 1s., Alice S. Wright (annual), 2s. 6d.

Total amount received up to May 30, £159.



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JULY 28, 1888.

[PRICE ONE PENNY.]

THE GIRL'S OWN ORDER OF MERIT.

"Pretium laborum non bibe."



THE proposal to found a GIRL'S OWN ORDER OF MERIT was made in the first number of the current volume, and during the ten months since then, not only, as we have mentioned before, have innumerable letters been received expressing the warmest sympathy with the idea, but many

girls have generously aided us by subscribing to the fund needed for carrying it out.

The time seems now to have come for putting our scheme into practice. During the last few weeks we have been inundated with letters referring to what our correspondents all assert is an incident deserving recognition at the hands of those entitled to vote for the conferring of our newly-founded decoration.

The case is that of Nurse Finnis, who, in St. William's Hospital at Rochester, in Kent, was recently reported to have risked her own life in the hope of saving that of a little child, a patient entrusted to her care.

The deep feeling of enthusiasm which this incident had evidently aroused made us, in our number of the 30th of June, undertake to ascertain full particulars, and the satisfactory result of our inquiries has now to be laid before the reader.

It appears that in the early part of May a little child, a boy of five years of age, was lying at home in Rochester, ill with the dreadful malady of diphtheria, than which few diseases are more dreaded either by doctors or patients.

When the doctor called to see him, on the 11th of May, the breathing of the poor little fellow was not only difficult, it threatened to become impossible; he was "gasping his last," said his mother.

The only way to prevent suffocation was to perform the operation of tracheotomy, and with this in view he was at once conveyed to St. William's Hospital. The operation of tracheotomy, the name of which has grown familiar to us in connection with the illness of the late Emperor Frederick of Germany, consists, we may as well explain, in opening the windpipe and inserting a tube or



NURSE FINNIS.

cannula, through which breathing may be carried on. The tube is double, so that the inner one can from time to time be removed for the purpose of being freed from secretion, or otherwise cleaned.

The operation was successfully performed, and at first the little patient seemed to progress satisfactorily, the nurse to whose constant watchfulness the boy was entrusted from the time of his admission to the hospital being Nurse Laura Finnis.

The second night, however, did not begin favourably, and about twelve o'clock the child was again struggling for breath. Removal of the outer tube gave no relief, and he was evidently on the threshold of death.

A brave resolution was at once taken by Nurse Finnis. She resolved to suck the remaining tube, in hopes to save the life of the child, even though it might be at the expense of her own.

She knew the terrible risk she ran, and those about her did not allow it to be forgotten. "Urgent representations," we are told, "were made to her as to the danger attending such self-sacrificing conduct."

It was a case, however, of choosing between life and duty. The duty of a nurse, she felt, is at all hazards to save the patient she has undertaken to tend.

She then, without shrinking, applied her lips to the tube.

Unhappily, the little sufferer, for whose relief this brave deed was done, did not long profit by it. He breathed his last soon afterwards. But this does not lessen the heroism of Nurse Finnis, who, it is pleasing to add, escaped by a miracle, with no ill consequences except a slight sore throat.

No wonder her courageous act has excited warm admiration! "Surely," says one girl writing to us, "there can be no deed more heroic than risking one's life to relieve a sufferer." And to this remark we shall add the saying of

an old philosopher, who when asked what virtue was, replied, "Noble and brilliant virtue is that which exposes itself to danger, in order to be useful to others without expecting any recompense."

To make a cheerful sacrifice of oneself for the benefit of another is the noblest possible exhibition of Christian love. A nurse's calling tries what mettle a woman is made of, and this display of self-devotion on the part of Nurse Finnis makes plain to everyone her real worth and sterling quality.

Another example of a noble deed has brought us several letters.

In this case the heroine is Miss Ione Macdonald, of Liphook, who is thirteen years of age, and who distinguished herself recently by saving a young lady—Miss A. Arthur by name—from drowning in Portsmouth Harbour.

Miss Arthur, who is twenty-two years of age, was swimming near the yacht *St. Bernard*, which was lying in five fathoms of water, about two hundred yards from the shore. The yacht took a sudden sheer, and the young lady grew frightened, lost her presence of mind, and was in evident danger of drowning.

Miss Macdonald was on the deck of the yacht at the time. She saw Miss Arthur struggling, and, without a moment's hesitation, jumped, fully clothed, overboard and swam to her assistance.

She succeeded in getting hold of Miss Arthur, and supporting her till help arrived, and in this instance of heroism everything ended well.

This brave deed has been recognised by the Royal Humane Society, who have presented Miss Macdonald with their bronze medal.

It is a pleasure that by means of our ORDER OF MERIT we are able in a practical way to show appreciation of such noble examples as the two we have just given.

No doubt, reward or no reward, risks should be incurred and good deeds should be performed. But recognition is sweet, and "Well done!" uttered by the lips of thousands of our girls, and emphasised by the presentation of the gold medal of the GIRL'S OWN ORDER OF MERIT, may prove a source of lasting joy to her whose intrepid spirit or self-sacrificing conduct has been held worthy of such notice.

Whether either of the heroines whose brave deeds we have told are entitled, as has been suggested by scores of our correspondents, to receive the medal of the GIRL'S OWN ORDER OF MERIT, must be left to the decision of our readers.

Every subscriber to the current volume of the GIRL'S OWN PAPER is entitled to a vote in awarding the Gold Medal, and we hope that all who have the right will exercise it, and thereby add to the importance of our recognition of true courage and humanity.

Each girl must send her vote on a postcard in the following form:—

(Address.)

I,, subscriber to the current volume of THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER, hereby vote that the Gold Medal of the Girls' Own Order of Merit be awarded to

(Signed).....

(Date.)

This is to be addressed to the Editor of THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER, 56, Paternoster Row, London, and must be posted so as to reach him not later than Monday, the 30th of July.



WEE ELSIE.

By M. HEDDERWICK BROWNE.

O' a' the bonny wee bit lasses
That e'er I've kent, not ane surpasses
My Elsie.

An' O she has sic denty ways,
Auld furrant a' she does an' says;
Just watch the bairnie as she plays
"At mither," dressed in mither's claes.

Like twa sweet rosebuds on ae stalk,
Her lips pert in her guileless talk;
She hauds a key that wad unlock
Yer hert, were't hard as granite rock.

Sae fearless are her een o' blue,
They seem tae look ye through an' through;
But though sae brave, an' frank, an' true,
Wi' happy fun they're brimmin' fou.

Adoun her shoulders floats her hair,
Sae long, sae silken, an' sae fair,—
In truth it seems a verra snare
That's caught an' kept a sunbeam there.

But better faur, those graces meet
Aroun' a nature just as sweet;
Methinks the bairnie is complete
Frae wise wee heed tae willin' feet.