

FOR EVERY BOY AND GIRL

A SAILOR OF SEVEN

By Gerald Brennan.

My sailor of seven, your ship be a clipper,

And sturdy the heart of its dear little skipper!

Remember,—lest later you learn it with wailing,—

The oceans of life are not always plain sailing.

If just be your cause, and the foe's in the offing,

Nee'er haul down your flag for his threats or his scoffing

But stand to your wheel; do not show the white feather,

Through seas rough or smooth, be it war or bad weather

From haven of Home unto harbor of Heaven,

Your voyage be happy, my sailor of seven!



Where Surprise Came In

By Charlotte Sedgwick.

THAT cooking-club pretty nearly ruined the digestions of the small cooks who composed it, and it also seriously injured the dispositions of the big cooks in whose kitchens it caused a fortnightly recurrence of much fussing and musing and upsetting of things generally.

"Sure, now, Miss Sally," coaxed Mrs. Comstock's Norah, on the eve of the first supper of the club, "if it's Parker House rolls you're wantin', you'd better let me make them for you; they're putterin' things for a girl to be botherin' with. Run away, now—there's a darlin'; and when I get me table cleared off I'll mix them up in no time; and in the mornin' I'll knead them, out and bake them for you—and there you are."

"No, thank you, Norah," Sally replied with dignity. "It is entirely contrary to the rules of our cooking-club—I am the president, you know, Norah—for any of us to have any assistance whatever in the preparation of anything for a club supper."

"Oh, indeed, then," sneered Norah, "and it is not myself that is wantin' to assist the president!" And she whisked away into the dining-room with her head held high in the air.

Norah was in a hurry, and she felt hindered. But Sally, absorbed in a cook-book, was deaf to battle alarms. Recipes, she was thinking, were more perplexing than compound proportion.

"One pint of cold boiled milk," she read. "Two quarts of sifted flour."

At that stressful moment the door opened and Mrs. Comstock looked in.

"Why do you try to make anything so difficult the first time, dear?" she asked. "I know some experienced cooks who hesitate to attempt Parker House rolls. Don't imagine that they are simple just because those that our Norah makes are always so delicious."

"But I know they're not simple, mama," responded Sally. "For, you see, we girls thought we would do the hard things first, and then the easy ones would not be any bother at all—they would just come to us naturally."

"Well, you must not expect Norah to help you at all—it would be contrary to your regulations, you know. Go on with your work, Norah; Miss Sally will find whatever she wants, and when she is through she will wash her own dishes and put them away."

"Huh! that's a gray horse of another color, is n't it?" scoffed Jack, who, with thoughts turned on offensive warfare, happened into the kitchen by way of the back porch just as his mother happened out of it by way of the dining-room; such coincidences were a common thing in the house of Comstock. "My! Sally, but are n't you just too lovely in that apron—I don't think!" he continued. "Let's have a towel, Norah, and I'll show you how to wipe dishes. It's such a pleasure to see her ladyship, Miss Sally, working that I'm inspired to try it myself."

Norah laughed, her good nature quite restored. Gay, tormenting Jack Comstock had a way of finding the kind side of most people, including Norah. She supplied him with towels, and he carefully dried all the dishes for her, while he kept up a lively fire of remarks aimed at Sally, who scorned to return his shots. Long and wearing experience had taught her that silence was her surest defense against attacks of that sort, and now she went quietly about her work, collecting necessary things from the pantry, putting milk over the fire to boil and then on the ice to cool, and sifting flour with impartial hand over everything within range. But she had her weapons, and when Jack, his occupation gone, insisted on showing her "how to fix up those P. H. rolls," she opened the door into the dining-room and called, with the rising inflection of sustained patience:

"Mama? Please come get Jacky."

Returning to the kitchen, Mrs. Comstock captured her reluctant son and marched him playfully away with her, while Sally politely bowed them out, saying sweetly, "Good-bye, Jacky; do come again when you can stay longer."

Sally, by virtue of office, was to entertain the club on the occasion of its first supper, and the next afternoon, almost before Norah had finished her Saturday's work, six excited girls in dainty frocks and blue aprons invaded her kitchen, which she promptly left vacant as the first summons. At six o'clock, having convinced herself by reconnoitering that the club's attention would be engaged in the dining-room for an hour at least, she slipped back and hastily prepared supper for the other members of the family, who very obligingly came around by the outside way to eat it in the kitchen.

For it suited the club's notions of importance to hold its banquets in strict privacy without observers and without guests. That arrangement was regarded as grievously unfair by the masculine half of the "Jolly Dozen," who kept life in Brinton from jogging along at too even a pace, and saw to it that their teachers earned their salaries. Jack, in fact, had hospitably bidden the fellows to come around Saturday night and help the girls eat. But Sally had informed them with dignity and finality that she guessed they could manage to get along for once without a lot of boys bothering around.

"Just get along for twice, then!" Jack had retorted. "Wait until we fellows get along at a coasting-party without any girls bothering around! Say, fellows, you'd better keep away to-morrow night; the 'presidents' is cranky."

Sweet little Serena Morris had hastened to explain to him that they would like to ask the boys to come, only they did not dare have any company until they knew how to cook better; by and by, when they were more experienced, they were going to give a big supper, and each girl was going to ask a boy—Serena was blushing shyly—and they were going to dance afterward, and she—Well, the first supper might not be a perfect success.

And, in strict truth, that first supper was not a flattering commentary on cook-book lore. Emily Hunt's angel-cake did not rise to the demands of its name and reputation; Serena's chicken croquettes were of a mayonnaise wafly lumpy and incoherent; and as for Sally's rolls—Jack came in during the feast, and proclaimed that he had found out why they called them the Parker House rolls: they were made of the same stuff as the Parker House.

Often in life, as in an old-time spelling-book, we have to learn failure before success is pronounced to us. Chagrined but not discouraged by their first tumble, the young cooks picked themselves up pluckily and proceeded to climb the culinary ladder from the bottom. The next supper was at Jeannie Cameron's, and the bill of fare included boiled eggs, baked potatoes, custard baked in pretty cups, and a simple cake. Everything was an inspiring success except Mary Burton's bread, and she declared her brave intention of making bread every time until she knew all about it.

"Let's have that for a rule, girls," suggested Emily Hunt. "If any one fails on a thing she's got to make it over again the very next time."

This rule was rigidly enforced, with the happy result that, when the time of adjourning for the summer drew near, every mother's daughter of them secretly felt that it would be no calamity to her particular family if the cook should take an indefinite vacation; and then they began to plan for their great final supper, which was to be a beautiful object-lesson to the makers of other feasts in Brinton.

Everything in connection with this festivity was to be kept a profound secret until the event proclaimed it, and, after eating their last supper but one, the girls retired to a cozy corner in Mrs. Comstock's parlor, where they held solemn council, while the twilight darkened into night.

"Let's have a yellow tea," suggested Katherine Flemming. "We can decorate the table with yellow ribbon and yellow candles, you know, and—"

"Oh, yes!" agreed Jeannie Cameron, eagerly; "and I'll ask grandma for her lovely old yellow bowl, and we'll put yellow roses in it for a centerpiece."

"But we can't eat ribbons and candles and roses," said Mary the practical. "What are you going to have to eat at your yellow tea?"

"Oh, lemon sherbet, and cakes with yellow icing, and salad, and cheese sandwiches, and—"

"And custard-ple!" came in ecstatic tones from the library.

There was a fluttering chorus of "How long has he been there?" "Oh, that awful boy!" "Let's choke him!" while Sally flew and brought the sliding doors between the rooms together with a bang. Then they continued their discussion in subdued voices until the details of the supper were settled to the last course thereof.

"And now," said Emily, "let's decide about our

than she cared about guarding her own purpose from prying eyes. She meant to ask Philip Howland, and she knew that Jack would extract much enjoyment from that fact if he knew it. Furthermore, she knew that the girls, in a definite arrangement of invitations, would simply take it for granted that she wanted to ask Ned Burton, who had taken her to all the sleigh-rides and skating-parties that winter; and, bold as she was, Sally felt that she was not bold enough to declare other intentions, especially in the presence of Ned's sister.

Philip Howland enjoyed the distinction of being "the new boy from New York." His father, the chief engineer of a new line of railroad which was being put through that part of the State, had chosen to establish his headquarters in Brinton, the quaint old home of his boyhood, and one day in the preceding September Philip had made his appearance at the village academy. He was a bright, manly lad, with wonderfully pleasing manners, and everybody liked him at once; the teachers because he was intelligent and courteous; the boys because he was a "good fellow" and made them feel as if they had always known him; and the girls because they had not always known him. In exactly two days and a half he was adopted into the Jolly Dozen, where he took the place of Harry Reeves, who had gone away to a military school.

It never occurred to Philip to feel flattered by all this popularity. He liked everybody and everybody liked him, that was all; it was as simple and intelligible as Axiom I.

In his attentions to the girls he was genuinely impartial. If he walked to school with Serena, as he often did, because he lived next door to her, he was pretty sure to be found sitting by Mary's desk at recess. If he took Katherine tandem-riding one afternoon, it would be Emily the next afternoon, and Jeannie the afternoon following. He was seldom "nice" to the same girl twice in succession, and the result was that he seriously interfered with the Jolly Dozen's old trick of definitely pairing off. Another result was that no one could safely guess which girl would ask Philip to the club supper.

On the Friday morning before the supper Serena happened to leave her gate just as Philip left his, and they walked to school together. He was about to leave her at the girls' entrance, when she stopped him and said with shy dignity:

"I should like to have you come to our club supper

"Who's going to the supper to-morrow night?" he asked by way of opening.

There was silence for a minute, and then Ned Burton said rather gloomily:

"Well, I'm not; I haven't had a bid."

Four faces brightened visibly.

"Well, neither have I," said four voices in chorus. "I wonder what those girls are waiting for," Gerry Hopkins went on. "What do you suppose they're up to? They've been looking mighty coy and mysterious all day."

Then Philip told his story, with careful attention to particulars, and before he was half through most of the boys were chuckling with keen delight over the joke. No jealousy of the favor shown Philip disturbed their glee.

"I know it was mean of me," he finished, "and I suppose the girls will never forgive me; but I had to let it go—it was too good to spoil."

"Oh, my!" groaned Jack, weakly, when he could speak without laughing. "I seem to recognize Sally's footprints in this thing," he said; "that child has a conspicuous talent for getting her foot in it. She wanted a surprise, you know, and I guess she'll get it. Now you fellows listen. You go to the supper, Phil, and keep mmm until the girls find how the land lies. Then, of course, they'll chase you out after the rest of us, and when you come after us we'll all be at my house; do you see?"

"I don't believe I care to go where I'm not invited," said Arthur Hammond, who was rather sore over Mary's defection.

"Oh, come, Art!" said Jack, philosophically. "You know there's no use on earth in getting mad at girls; they can always make you think you're the one to blame in just about three minutes. And, besides, a joke's a joke, and a supper's a supper; this one is going to be a dandy, too. You be at the house to-morrow at six, and you may be sure we'll show you some fun, my boy."

As the clock struck six the next evening the girls, who had been lingering about a beautifully set table in Mrs. Morris's dining-room, gave a final look of pride at the result of all their plans and labor, and flattered into the stately old parlor, which seemed suddenly to break into bloom with their bright presence. They had hardly time to form in a prim little line on the hearth-rug before the bell rang. They expected did on similar occasions, and they felt a little disappointed when only Philip Howland entered. He was overflowing with fun, and not at all abashed by the formal, grown-up courtesy with which he was received. Beginning with Serena as chief hostess of the evening, he bravely met the ordeal of that stiff little line, making

to each girl what seemed to her a particularly pretty speech. By the time he had reached the end the ice was decidedly broken, and the girls were chattering as freely as if this was any ordinary occasion.

Ten, fifteen minutes passed, and the girls began to grow a little quieter. What made those boys so late? Twenty minutes, and still the bell was silent. Philip could see that his hostesses were getting nervous, and he redoubled his efforts to be entertaining. But they seemed to be lacking in appreciation, and only looked at one another with anxious, wondering eyes. Finally, when the clock struck the half-hour, Sally's patience snapped.

"I should think, girls," she cried in a voice shrill with indignation, "that you might have told those horrid boys to be on time! Didn't you tell them six o'clock sharp?" Then, suddenly seeing that this speech left no doubt as to who had invited Philip, she suddenly ceased speaking and blushed crimson with confusion.

"Wha-a-t?" faltered Serena, also flushing painfully. "Oh, Sally!"

"Why, Sally Comstock!" Katherine began, and stopped short, looking from Serena to Sally, and back again to Serena, while Mary's keen eyes were on the three of them.

"Is there any one here who didn't ask Philip to come to this party?" she asked in calm desperation. "Emily? Jeannie?" Then she turned to Philip, who was uncomfortably realizing that the end of a joke is not always so funny as the beginning.

"I should think," she said, with ice in her tones, "that you would—" But the absurdity of the thing suddenly struck her, and she began to laugh. "No, Philip," she gasped; "it was all our own idiocy—I don't blame you a bit. This is where the surprise comes in, Sally."

"But think of all that supper, girls!" groaned Katherine. "We'll make you eat enough for six, Mr. Philip Howland, you sinner!"

"But he can't dance enough for six!" grieved Jeannie, looking ruefully at her pretty slippers.

"We'll never, never hear the last of this!" exclaimed Emily, looking tearful. "And our fun is all spoiled."

"Oh, of course we've got to have those boys," said Mary, cheerfully. "Where are they, Philip? Do you happen to know?"

"At Jack's; I'll go and round 'em up—have 'em here in five minutes."

"Those awful boys know all about it!" wailed Emily, as the door closed behind Philip. "Oh, we never shall hear the last of this!"

And there are six unfeeling boys in Brinton who seem determined that her prophecy shall be fulfilled to the very letter.



THEY HELD SOLEMN COUNCIL

invitations. Who is going to ask whom? Or why not just send an invitation to each one in the name of the club?"

"Oh, that would n't be half so much fun!" objected Katherine. "They ask us separately to attend their treats, and I think it's nice to have a chance to return the compliment."

"I'll tell you!" cried Sally. "Let's not any of us tell which boy we mean to ask. That will make it like a surprise-party, you know, and it will be lots more interesting."

"I don't see where the surprise comes in," said Mary, doubtfully. "There are just six boys anyway, and so it does n't matter who asks them—they all will be there. I suggest we have the whole thing all settled beforehand; then there will be no misunderstanding, and nobody will be left out."

But Serena Morris, to whose shy soul it was torture to think that everybody should know what boy she wanted to ask, decidedly favored Sally's plan, and that settled it. Quiet little Serena seldom took sides in the discussions of the club, but when she did she always seemed to make a majority, somehow. Perhaps it was because she lived in the biggest house in town, and her grandfather had been governor of the State, and she herself had been to Europe. In our early teens we pay frank respect to pomp and circumstance. Or it may have been because there was about Serena, unconsciously to herself, an air of sweet and gracious dignity which made deference and homage seem to belong to her by a sort of queenly right. So her support carried Sally's absurd plan, and the meeting was soon after adjourned. As the girls started to go homeward under Jack's escort, Sally called after them from the doorway:

"Now, don't you tell! And be sure to tell the boys not to tell a soul, either—that would spoil the surprise. And say let's not ask anybody until the day before the supper."

But in fact Sally cared much less about a surprise

to-morrow night, Philip! it's going to be at our house, and we're going to dance afterward, you know."

"Thank you, I'll be glad to come," he returned. "What time?"

"Six o'clock. And, oh, Philip, you must not tell anybody that I asked you—we're keeping our invitations secret."

"What did you say? Oh, all right!" And, lifting his cap, he was gone.

It just happened, also, that Sally was at the head of the stairs as he went up, and before he reached the last step she blurted out:

"I say, Philip, you must come to our supper to-morrow night—at Serena's, you know—six o'clock. Don't tell who asked you."

"Thank you," he began. "But see here—hold on a minute!"

But Sally had fled into the assembly-room, and before he could overtake her the bell rang and he was obliged to go to his seat.

"Come to our supper to-morrow. It is at Serena's," whispered Mary, offering him a share of her song-book during the opening exercises; "and you are not to tell who asked you."

"Thank you, I'll come," he murmured, and went on singing, while a naughty light glimmered in his eyes for a minute. It was wicked of him, but he liked a joke even better than he liked pleasing the girls, and he wanted to see how far the absurdity would go. It went just as far as six girls could take it. Emily whispered an invitation to him on the way to the algebra class; Katherine passed him a little note in the class-room; and Jeannie casually mentioned on the way out that his presence at that supper was a thing to be desired. All these invitations he shamelessly accepted with a simple "Thank you—all right"; and after school that afternoon he called the other five boys to a private conference in the farthest corner of the campus, out of range of girlish eyes.

I. Jack:
"I think I'll take a ride."



II. Billy:
"I hardly think you will."

