

**BOYS AT
CHEQUASSET; OR,
"A LITTLE LEAVEN"**

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Boys at Chequasset; Or, "A Little Leaven" by Mrs. A. D. T. Whitney

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MRS. A. D. T. WHITNEY

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BY

Mrs. A. D. T. WHITNEY



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"A LITTLE LEAVEN."

CHAPTER I.

OFF TO THE COUNTRY.

THE Osburn family was in all the bustle of moving. Delightful bustle! better than any possible perfect order to ten-years-old Johnnie, who stood, at seven in the morning, on his father's door-step, in Pinckney Street, watching the great van, or furniture-wagon, upon which was piled, and being piled, an apparently confused mass of boxes, baskets, chairs, tables, bedding, and all the multifarious plenishing of a long-established household.

Behind him, doors stood open away through the house; and bare floors, littered with straw, from the packing of the big crates in the

china-closet, bundles of carpeting, trunks of clothing, buckets and barrels from the store-room, occupying every possible bit of space, offered a strange vista to the view.

John had not been standing still long. He had been up and "helping," since six o'clock; sometimes quite effectually, and sometimes the wrong way.

"We've *got* to go to-night, father," he said, gleefully, as Mr. Osburn came out to the door-way, "for the beds are all off."

"Yes," his father answered; "we shall sleep in Chequasset to-night."

"But, father," said the boy, again, "how *old* everything looks! It seems to me nothing looks nice, as it did in the rooms."

"The effect of disorder, Johnnie,—of things being out of their proper places and use. But, somehow, it seems to me that Johnnie himself looks a little out of his element. No collar, and hair beseeching for a brush!"

"Yes, father; but I was in such a hurry; and I could n't look very nice to-day, you know."

"Ah, why not? At least why not *begin* by being nice? Here comes your mother. I don't see that she has found it necessary to leave off her collar, or that her hair is not as smooth as usual."

"Oh, but mother always looks nice! And her hair has got used to keeping smooth. I don't believe anything ever does rumple it."

"Give yours a little of the same discipline, then, since you see what education can do."

Johnnie disappeared among the packages, and up the stairs.

Mrs. Osburn joined her husband, for a moment, at the door.

"Shall you go down to the counting-room this morning?" she asked.

"Oh, yes; I must be there for an hour or two, at least," he replied.

"Then, will you remember to call in at Blake's on your way, and tell them to send up that little wardrobe immediately? It ought to go with the next load."

"They promised to send it early; but I

will look in, and remind them of it. How soon do you think you will be ready to go, yourselves?"

"Not until afternoon. I made arrangements there, as far as possible, yesterday; and it will be important now for me to remain here until the house is cleared."

A couple of hours later John was standing on the sidewalk, in the midst of a little curious knot of neighbor-children, who, with books in hand, were on their way to school, but had stopped to listen eagerly to his glowing description and anticipation of his new country home, thinking what a very lucky boy John Osburn was, to be out of school, and exempt from duty, and moving out of town, too!

"I suppose you won't go to any new school till after vacation?" said Charlie Robins.

"I don't know. I guess not. Hallo! here comes another wagon! Furniture in it, too. I wonder if folks are coming to move in, before we get out!"

A cart drew up behind the one that stood to be loaded, before the door.

"Mr. Osburn's?" inquired the driver.

"Yes, sir," answered Johnnie.

The man unfastened the tail-board of his wagon.

"Lend a hand here, somebody, will you? Where's this to go?"

John sprang up to the steps, and found his mother at the foot of the stairs.

"Mother! there's some furniture come! What is it? The man's in a hurry."

Just then two men came out from the front-parlor, each carrying two piano-legs, which they set down in the corner of the vestibule.

"Stand back, John; or run out! They are coming with the piano now. What did you say? Some furniture come? Oh! that's the little wardrobe for your room. Tell the man to wait a moment, and they will put it in after the piano."

Well, Johnnie had got about enough, now, ' think, to crown the day's delight! A little