

## OUR BOYS AND GIRLS.

BY AUNT BECKY.

Dear Girls and Boys:

It just gives me a new lease of life to feel I have so many dear little friends. Eugene McC. seems to have a real nice garden. Of course he must take diligent care of it or it would not yield him such good returns. He speaks of a large family of little chicks, too. Agnes McC. has entered the corner as a competitor. She is very welcome indeed. I am glad Joseph likes the stories. I always try to get something that I am sure the little readers will like. What a lovely time they must have had at Annie O.N.'s school on Arbor Day. I was pleased to read about Clare B's pets, specially about his pet lamb. I am sure he was sorry he could not save the tiny chicks. Patrick M. can try with the rest for the prize. Seeing he is such a busy boy, working hard on the farm, that would be taken into consideration, providing he fulfilled the rule, writing neatly, on one side of paper, interestingly, and as far as he is able, regularly. I think Nellie O.N. should induce her friends to subscribe for the "True Witness." She would not then have to wait until she got to school and had the teacher read it to the class. Nellie is gardening, too, and owns twenty-three chickens. I think her time must be very well occupied outside of school hours. Stella sends her first letter. The rain evidently didn't spoil her picnic, as she seems to have enjoyed herself and had to milk when she got home. Some of the letters made mention of the writers making their First Communion. That day is always a bright happy memory in our lives. May my little friends receive the choicest blessings of that day of days is the sincerest wish of their

Loving  
AUNT BECKY.

Dear Aunt Becky:

We got the True Witness to-night. I was pleased to see so many letters. I hope we will all continue to write, you have so many nice stories in it. The weather has been so cold and wet that the farmers have very little grain sowed. Some have their potatoes planted. The Bishop is coming the 24th of this month to bless the bells for our new church. He will not give Confirmation till later. The children are to make their first Communion on Thursday next. Sister Lizzie is going to make hers. I hope you will not think I am writing just to try to get the book, for I like my Aunt and all the cousins very much.

Your nephew,  
JOSEPH.

Granby, May 11.

Dear Aunt Becky:

I was so glad to see all the nice letters last week. We do not take the True Witness, so I had to wait till the teacher brought it to school and read them for us. I am going to start Catechism next Sunday. When I come home from school I am busy making flower beds. Some are round and some long, and I planted asters and poppies. The poppies are up, but the asters are not up yet. I have a doll. It has yellow hair and I call her Susan. We were over to the woods this week and we got a bunch of May flowers for our teacher. I have twenty-three little chickens, and I feed them every morning before I go to school. As my letter is getting long I will say good-bye.

Your loving niece,  
NELLIE O.N.  
Lonsdale, May 10.

Dear Aunt Becky:

I think all the boys and girls will be very eager to write now to try to win your nice prize. I should like to win it, but I'm afraid I would not have time to write in the holidays. I am quite a big boy, and help my brothers on the farm.

I horse-draw, cock hay, help to build the load and drive the horses to the barn. As they do not quit work till very late, I have to milk the cows and do all the other work and bring in the wood and cedar.

Your loving nephew,  
PATRICK M.  
Lonsdale, May 10.

Dear Aunt Becky:

I was so glad to see my letter in the paper and I thought I would write to you again and tell you about my nice little pet lamb. I call her Bess. I give her nice, warm sweet milk to drink. I have very poor luck with my little chicks. I have only one yet. It has been so cold they have all died. We are raising five little calves, and I am quite busy feeding them. I guess this is all for this time.

Your loving nephew,  
CLARE B.  
Lonsdale, Ont., May 11.

Dear Aunt Becky:

As last Friday was Arbor Day the boys got a lot of lilac trees and our teacher planted them in our school yard. While the boys were after the trees the girls swept all the yard and the little boys carried chips into the wood shed. The boys then fixed up the fence where it was broken and nailed up the steps. In the afternoon we went to the woods and got a lot of flowers. The scholars are going to bring plants to school and put them in the windows. I am going to try for the prize, and I hope all my cousins will try also. We are going to have first Communion in June. I am going away for a week in holidays to visit my cousin. I guess I have told you all the news for this time. I remain,

Your loving niece,  
ANNIE O.N.  
Lonsdale, May 10.

Dear Aunt Becky:

As I was not at school last week when the other boys and girls wrote I am going to write to you this week. I am going to tell you about the good time I had last summer at a picnic. My friend, Aggie McC. and I, went in the afternoon. About supper time it began to rain, and Aggie and I went under the table where there was a lot of baskets and we ate supper. When it stopped raining we went out and got some candies and sat on a stump and ate them. After a while we went home. We had a lot of fun going home too. I had to milk when I got home. Well, I guess I will close for this time, hoping to see my letter in the paper next week. I remain,

Your loving niece,  
STELLA M.

Dear Aunt Becky:

As there is going to be a prize for the best and most regular writer, I would like to compete with the other nieces and nephews. I won a prize last Christmas at school for regularity in attendance. The teacher gave me a nice book, "Black Beauty." I liked it very well. She is going to give another prize to the one who comes most regularly. As I did not miss a day so far, nor do I intend to miss a day, if I do not get ill, I think I will have a fair chance of getting it. I feel so sorry for Edna, Kensington, Quebec, for losing her mother. I lost my mother when I was two years old, and I do not remember her. My father died two years ago this August. We were very lonely for him. I have three sisters and three brothers. One of my sisters is in Rochester. She comes home every summer. I am always so glad when she comes home and she always brings me a present. I am preparing for first Communion and Confirmation this summer. I think it is going to be in June. Well, dear Auntie, I guess I will close, as my letter is getting long. Love to all my cousins.

Your loving niece,  
AGNES McC.  
Lonsdale, May 10.

Dear Aunt Becky:

As my first letter came out in the True Witness I thought I would write another letter to you this week

telling you how I am spending my time now. You know I go to school every day, and when I come home from school I have all my chickens to feed, about forty of them. Yesterday we went to the woods and gathered a lot of May flowers for our teacher. I have started to make a garden and I work in it every morning before I go to school. In my garden I have rhubarb in one part, horse-radish in another, and strawberries in the rest. The horse-radish is up about five inches and the strawberries are in blossom. There are nine in our school preparing for first Communion and Confirmation, which will take place in June. We have had a very cold spring so far. It rained to-day and has turned quite cold. If it rains on Saturday I am going fishing in the salmon river. With love to Aunt Becky and all my cousins.

From your nephew,  
EUGENE McC.  
Lonsdale, May 10.

Dear Aunt Becky:

Irene E.'s letter of two weeks ago from Quebec has prompted me to write a letter to you also, thus making for myself a new relation. I daresay you must find pleasure in having so many nephews and nieces. I am an auntie, too, and feel very proud, and yet I have only four nieces and two nephews—all excepting one niece live in Montreal; and this little girl, just a month old, lives only a few doors from us.

I go to the Good Shepherd Academy and am studying very hard, and for this reason I know, dear old Aunt Becky will excuse this hasty letter.

Once more I must away to my studies, and thanking my namesake for her good example, and with love to aunt and cousins, I remain,

Yours truly,  
IRENE K.  
GROWING UP.

When I was five I used to believe in fairies, and I wouldn't leave my mother for a minute. I didn't want to go at night. In any room 'cept where a light was burning brightly in it. When I was six I really thought The world was flat and stopped off short.

With just high walls around it. And when I lost my doll I cried. And couldn't stop, although I tried, Till Sister Mary found it. But now I know what things are true, And I go visit Cousin Lou Alone—she's 'most eleven. Dark rooms don't frighten me, and I Just only very seldom cry, For now I'm almost seven! —Youth's Companion.

A "GOLDY GIRL."

It did not seem much to Bess Winton to break a cluster of golden-rod for the little girls leaning out of the outboard train, and pass it quickly to them before the snorting engine bore them away. But if she could have followed that golden-rod, she might have found that, like other things we do on impulse, the harvest gathered is seemingly out of all proportion to the deed done. "I think," said Elsie Clive, slipping back upon the velvet cushions and straightening out her dress to make room for the golden-rod, "that was the nicest girl I ever saw."

"I think," said her sister Lena, smoothing out her dress to hold a second bunch of golden-rod that Bess had thrown into the moving car, "she was a nicer girl than I ever saw before."

Mrs. Clive, hearing the two, laughed. "And what is to hinder our having two just as nice girls here on this train?" she said, looking down upon her two daughters.

"But she was so smiley, mamma," said Elsie.

"And can't you smile?" answered the mother.

"But it's so hard when the dust comes in," said Lena.

"But that little girl stood right in the dust, and she pulled the flowers right out of the dirt, and she wore an apron as though to guard her dress from dirt, but this did not seem to take away her smile, did it?"

"Oh, mamma, you do always so turn things on to folks!" said Elsie, with a long-drawn sigh.

"But you know you have been rather fretful this morning," answered mamma, brushing the little girl's braids.

"And do you think that little girl would not have been fretful?" said Elsie, holding up a spray of golden-

rod admiringly, putting her head first on one side, then on the other, to get a good view.

"She wasn't fretful, now was she? For all the heat and dirt and dust, she thought of two little girls in the train and reached out lovingly the golden flowers to them; in fact, was a real little goldy girl, I think."

Elsie drew a long sigh, as though she felt it very hard that mamma should always "see into things so," as she styled it. But a moment later her face lighted and she reached and pulled her mother down to her shyly.

"Maybe she'd like some, too, mamma. She looks tired, doesn't she?"

Glancing in the direction of Elsie's eyes, Mrs. Clive saw a weary little body looking aimlessly through the window in a seat near. "You can try," she said.

Elsie slipped away with her best branch of golden-rod.

"Maybe you'd like his. We like it," she said timidly.

The old lady turned, and how her face lighted!

"Bless you, dearie! The little girl gave it to you back at the station, didn't she?"

"Yes, and mamma says—" Then followed the story of the "goldie girl."

"That's nice," the old lady said, as Elsie slipped from her arms.

"Maybe I can be an old goldy girl, even if it does seem tejus gettin' out to California."

"Oh, the end will come!" Elsie said, happily. "Mamma says so."

More than one in that crowded car during the next two days' travel, heard of the little "goldie girl" from the lips of either Elsie or her sister, Lena. And more than one face brightened, and more than one felt weariness lessened.

And all the time, Bess Winton, back in her home by the dusty car tracks, kept on making her hands and feet follow the quick impulses of her loving heart, and never even dreamed she was a "goldie girl."

THE TWO DREAMS.

"Did you sleep well last night, my son?" inquired Jacob's father, one morning.

"Yes, but I had two very strange dreams. I thought a little dog was turning a wheel in a nail-maker's shop. The workman thrust pieces of iron into the blaze, and when they were red-hot he hammered them into spikes. When the little dog grew tired, the wheel would turn slowly, and then the man would hold a red-hot nail close to the poor animal and frighten him very much. He would jump ahead, and the wheel would fairly buzz around. At last the dog sank down and could not go a step further. The cruel master then took him out of the cage and began to beat him. He did not cry out, but at every blow he seemed to grow larger. First he was as large as a shepherd dog, then as a wolf, then a tiger, then a lion. At last he was a monster breathing fire out of his mouth. The nail-maker and the forge were consumed, and then I woke up. Wasn't that a dreadful dream?"

"Yes, it was," answered Jacob's father. "But there was in it a meaning that you will understand some day. You should never ill-treat any one. Injustice will turn men into wild beasts; these grow more and more ferocious, until they end by destroying everything. Now tell me your second dream."

"I was afraid of something that was coming behind me. I did not know what it was, but I ran as fast as I could so as to get away from it. The faster I ran, the closer it seemed to get and the larger it grew. I thought I was surely lost, when there suddenly appeared before me a calm figure, which said to me: 'Do not be afraid. Stop. Turn around, and take fresh courage. Look

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steadily, and even took some steps toward it. The nearer I got, the smaller it became, and finally it disappeared in mist. Then I woke up. "Your dream was a true one," said Jacob's father. "When you are afraid, it will seem as if all sorts of dangers were close behind you. But if you take courage and turn about and face them, they will disappear in smoke, just as they did in your dream."—Translated from the French of Charles Wagner for the Ave Maria.

A WONDERFUL CANARY.

A wonderful canary bird belongs to a family in Everett. The little fellow has the freedom of the house, flying whithersoever he listeth at all times. While good friends with every member of the family, he is particularly attached to the child of the house, a little girl four or five years old. When the child comes where the canary is he rushes excitedly to meet her and begins the most frantic caresses, perching on her head and shoulders and finally under her ear, where he reaches round to the rosy chin and ear and kisses them in true bird fashion. But, not content with this ardent demonstration, he insists on making the little girl open her mouth, and then he daintily taps each tooth with his tiny beak. If she refuses to part her lips, to see what the bird will do, as she says, he scolds and flutters and even pecks at her cheek until he finally obtains his own way again. What the idea can be, unless Mr. Canary thinks the white teeth are bits of sugar or cuttlefish, it is difficult to conjecture. That he has some method in his caprice is quite evident. To no one else does he show any such marked attention.—Boston Herald.

Horses are easily trained to step proudly to sound of fife and drum. At the zoo in Paris a learned professor has been examining various animals with regard to their musical ear. He found monkeys very partial to ragtime, particularly if played on a violin or flute. They stop eating, scratching or jumping about to listen. Elephants or rhinoceroses took no notice of either ragtime or symphony, but the hippopotamus raised his head out of the water and listened with the keenest enjoyment apparently to a waltz by a famous composer—Offenbach.

THE PERSIAN ZOO.

Did you ever see a two headed cat, With five legs that are black and blue, And horns like a cow and elephants ears And neck like a mutton stew?

Did you ever see a mouse with wings, Its tail like a kangaroo, Its nose like a couple of scrambled eggs?

I often have—haven't you?

Just lie on the floor near a Persian rug, And the figures that stare at you Are the strangest animals ever seen Either in or out of the zoo.

—Washington Star.

THE MAGIC OF SILENCE.

You have often heard "It takes two to make a quarrel." Do you believe it? I will tell you how one of my little friends managed. Dolly never came to see Marjorie without a quarrel. Marjorie tried to speak gently, but no matter how hard she tried, Dolly finally made her so angry that she would soon speak sharp words too.

"Oh, what shall I do?" cried poor Marjorie.

"Suppose you try this plan?" said her mamma. "The next time Dolly comes in, seat yourself in front of the fire and take the tongs in your hand. Whenever a sharp word comes from Dolly, gently snap the tongs, without speaking a word."

Soon afterward in marched Dolly to see her little friend.

It was not a quarter of an hour before Dolly's temper was ruffled and her voice was raised, and as usual she began to find fault and scold.

Marjorie flew to the hearth and seized the tongs, snapping them gently.

More angry words from Dolly.

"Speak," said she.

Snap went the tongs.

"Why don't you speak?" screamed Dolly, in a fury.

Snap went the tongs.

This snap was the only answer Dolly cried out, "I'll never, never

come again, never!"

MODEL CATHOLIC BOY.

The Catholic Standard and Times tells of a little boy of Trenton, N. J., named Raymond Shannon, who, by denying himself candy and other delicacies liked by children, has saved \$12 in pennies during the past two years and has given the money to St. Francis Hospital. He gave his last donation a week ago last Sunday when he presented \$23 in pennies to the Sisters. Master Shannon first began to save when he heard that a new wing was to be erected at the hospital. He told his mother at that time that he was going to give all his pennies to the hospital, and he has since adhered to his resolution.

A LIFE FOR A LIFE.

A well known man was recently saved from death by a mouse. One of these troublesome little pests was nibbling in the room where the gentleman slept. A trap was set. In the night the mouse came, the bait was seized and the trapdoor fell with a crash. The man awoke to find the room full of gas, which had escaped from a half-turned burner. The nicest part of this story (which is a true one) is that the gentleman said he believed that a life demanded another life. Consequently the mouse was released with only a sprained paw. Let us hope that the incident taught him to beware of traps in the future, no matter how good the cheese smells.

THE SNOW FLOWER.

A traveller in Siberia tells us about a wonderful plant found in the northern part of that country, where the ground is perpetually covered with a coating of frost and snow. It shoots out of the frozen soil on the first day of the year and attains a height of three feet. On the third day it blooms, remaining open only twenty-four hours. Then the stem, the leaves and the flowers are converted into snow—in other words, the plant goes back to its original elements.

The leaves are three in number, and the flower is star-shaped. On the third day, the little bloom appears, little glistening specks appear on the extremities of the leaves. They are about the size of the head of a pin and are the seeds of the flower. It is said that some of these seeds were gathered once and taken to St. Petersburg, where they were buried in a bed of snow. The first of the following year the plant burst forth and bloomed, just as it does in Siberia.

BE KIND TO YOUR PETS.

Rabbits.—You can make a good hutch for your rabbits from a grocer's box. Raise it from the ground at the four corners, and make some holes in the bottom. All you need put in is some nice clean straw. Feed them on bran, grain, peas, parsley, carrots, turnip-tops, but not much cabbage.

Birds.—Remember always to keep the cage clean. A thick layer of red sand should be sprinkled on the tray, and a shallow glass dish with water for a bath should be put in every day. Never let your birds be in a draught. At night cover the cage with a white cloth, and in cold weather put a shawl over that.

Dogs.—Give your dog plenty of exercise, and let him always have some clean water to drink. Do not bathe him too often, but keep him well brushed every day. When you have washed him and rinsed the soap out of his coat, let him shake himself well, then rub him dry, and let him have a good scamper on the grass.

Guinea Pig.—A guinea pig is one of the cheapest pets to keep, for it will live and thrive on green food—lettuce, cabbage, watercress—and oats, hay, bran, with a little milk occasionally. Give him only very little of anything at a time. It ought not to cost you more than five cents a week to most to keep one.—Pictorial Review.

These two desirable qualifications pleasant to the taste and at the same time effectual, are to be found in Mother Graves' Worm Exterminator. Children like it.