



FOR THE CHILDREN



AUNT JEANNETTE'S STORY

BY ANNIE H. DONNELL.

"I WISH I didn't have any hands, so there!" snapped Clem. "Then nobody'd say, 'Won't you please to pick some string beans for dinner?' and 'Won't you please to pick some currants for tea?' an' 'Won't you please to pick some—some—'"

"Chickens for Thanksgivin'!" finished Danny, gleefully. Clem laughed, and then, of course, she felt better.

"But you couldn't make those lovely currant buns out o' mud 'thout any hands," little Doris remarked, gravely. She smacked her lips as if her mouth watered for a bun.

"Then I'd make 'em with my feet!" laughed Clem. She had put on her "broad-brimmer" and picked up her baskets, ready for the currant-picking. The little rain-cloud had quite blown over.

Aunt Jeannette was writing a letter to her soldier. The children thought she was away off in the Philippine Islands, and it almost startled them when her sweet voice sounded suddenly in their ears.

"I saw a little boy making mud pies with his feet," said Aunt Jeannette.

"Aunt! With his feet?"

"Yes, with his two little feet, and he did it in a very workmanlike way, too. You would have been surprised."

"O aunt, don't stop! Tell us the rest!" pleaded the three children, eagerly.

"But I'm afraid to keep Clem waiting—it will be so hot in the currant patch soon," Aunt Jeannette objected.

"Hot! I'd rather pick currants in—in Vanilla, aunt, than not hear that story!" Clem cried. So aunt slipped her soldier's letter into her portfolio and told them the story.

"I think he must have been on his way home from school. He was a bright-faced little fellow about as old as Clem, and he had on a little blue cape like a soldier boy. It hung round him in loose folds. There was a new house going up on the street, and he was making his pies out of a little heap of sand beside the great box the men were mixing mortar in. I wish you could have seen the neat way he made them!"

"O aunt, with his feet!" breathed Clem.

"With his feet. He drew the moist sand toward him into a little pile with one foot, and worked it and stirred it and patted it with the other. He was so busy he didn't notice anybody watching him until I said, 'How much do you ask for your pies?' and then he looked up into my face and smiled. We felt quite acquainted then."

"Then I s'pose you shook hands," little Doris said.

Aunt Jeannette's sweet face sobered.

"No, but we both smiled. That's a beautiful way to get acquainted."

"They are beautiful pies," I said, 'but why do you make them with your feet? It's such a funny way.'

"Oh, if I hadn't said that! I am sorry for it still, and I said it years ago. For when the little fellow looked up at me gravely, I knew all at once why he stood there patting his little sand pies with his feet. He need not have told me. There were no hands under his little blue soldier cape."

"O aunt!"

"O no, please no, aunt!"

The tears were in Aunt Jeannette's eyes.

"But I don't mind—huh!" the little fellow said cheerily. "There's heaps o' things a fellow can do with his feet. There's run an' walk an' skip an'

—this.' And he went back to his pies again, whistling. I bought a dozen pies, and went away and left him there. Whenever I think of him now, it's standing there still, whistling and molding his little round, wet pies."

There was silence in the big, bright nursery for a minute. Danny broke it with a soft little whistle that had quivery-quavery notes in it. Clem was shuffling her stout little boots about, as if she were trying to make imaginary sand pies on the carpet. They were clumsy little feet at that work.

"I couldn't do it, aunt—I couldn't!" she said, soberly.

"Is that all of the story, aunt?" little Doris asked.

"Why, no, not quite. I used to see the little fellow often after that, and I found out some other things he could do. He could print and add sums on the blackboard."

"Now, aunt!"

"Now, aunt! But it was true that he could. Wait till I tell you how. His brother went to school with him every morning and took the shoes and stockings off his little pink-and-white feet. Then the teacher lifted him up on a high stool and let him take the chalk in his bits of toes and go to work. That is truly what happened every day. And they told me he was a real little scholar. That's all, little Doris."

Clem picked up her baskets again and started across the room. At the door she stopped.

"I'm going to pick the currants first and then the string beans," she said. "An' then, aunt, don't you want me to pick you those red clovers to dry? You needn't say 'Won't you, please,' she added, softly, looking down at her little brown hands, "because I feel just exactly like picking things." — *Youth's Companion*.

THE MORNING SUN

BY ISABEL ECCLESTONE
MACKAY.

I LIKE the sun of
afternoon,
So golden and so mel-
low;
I like the sun who goes
to bed

Wrapped up in red and yellow;
But I don't like the morning sun,
I never get my dream-thinks done—
He's such a saucy fellow!

When I am just, say, half awake
He's at my window, peeping,
And, though I shut my eyes hard-tight,
I feel him coming, creeping
Across the carpet to my bed,
No matter how I turn my head,
It means "good-by" to sleeping!

He dances on my eyes, and shouts
"Hi, there! get up this minute!
There's something doing out of doors;
Look sharp! You won't be in it!
I do so hate to hear you snore.
The birds are up this hour or more—
Hark! Don't you hear that linnet?"

Now that may be all right, you know,
If one were really lazy;
But when one only likes to lie
With thoughts all dreamy-hazy
And misty-queer, it seems a sin
To have that Mr. Sun dance in
To drive a person crazy!

—St. Nicholas.

Gladys, who was very rough in her play, when asked if she had a nice time at the children's party, answered: "I just had a perfect splendid time. I knocked down two boys."



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