



EDITED BY COUSIN MAUD.

[Canadian boys and girls are invited to make this corner their own. The editor of the department is anxious to come in touch with the young people from Victoria to Halifax. She would like them to write her brief accounts of their home life, on the prairie or in the big cities, among the mountains or down by the sea. Their letters will be published, and their questions answered in as far as possible.]

It is not so much what you say
As the manner in which you say it.
It is not so much the language you use
As the tones in which you convey it.

The words may be mild and fair,
And the tones may pierce like a dart,
The words may be soft as the summer air
And the tones may break the heart.

ONLY THISTLES.

IT was a warm summer evening and in a neglected corner of a great field, grew some tall thistles and broad-leaved burdocks.

The thistles were covered with their sweet-smelling purple flowers and the burdocks hung, heavy with great clusters of green burrs.

Some children, an hour since, had passed that way, and stopped to gather the daisies and golden rod that grew in the same corner.

One of them, a boy, pulled some burrs and proceeded to make a basket, but growing playful, began tossing them at the others.

A little bunch caught in the golden curls of a small girl, and she made a brave effort to keep back the tears while her sister took out the burr and several hairs with it, scolding the mischievous brother the while.

"A big thistle stuck me, nasty old thing!" This from another sister, who had kept on gathering flowers, and she held up a finger from which hung a tiny crimson drop of blood.

After a few words of sympathy from the big sister, the little group passed on, and the last words the thorny weeds in the fence corner heard were, "What do thistles and burdocks grow for, anyway?"

This made them feel very sad, and they began grumbling to one another at the uselessness of their existence.

"Everything seems made for a purpose but us. Here we stand," said the thistle, "of no use to anyone, and only permitted to live because this corner is too rocky to plough."

And thus they murmured, too dissatisfied and unhappy to even hear the contented hum of the honey bees as they gathered sweet drops from the purple thistle tops. Presently a wise-looking robin, who had lit on the fence and had been listening to their conversation, addressed them.

"Why, friends, you must certainly be feeling blue, else you would never talk like this. Why, old burdock, you are of great use. In your root is valuable medicine, and how often do you provide shelter to the butterflies from the heavy rains.

"Then old dame Brown, in whose apple tree I have my nest, might have had no cabbage and tomatoes this year, had she not covered the tender young plants with some fine

large burdock leaves to protect them from the hot sun until they got a start."

"And as for you, friend thistle," kept on the kind comforter. "Why, what would the bees do without you? And it was only yesterday I heard a lady who was passing say, 'Smell the sweet thistles; we shall soon have some delicious thistle honey!' So cheer up, my friends; you are both of great use in the world, else you would not be here."

With these words he flew away, leaving the thistles and burdocks a good deal happier for his kindly words.

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OUR STORY.

I am only an old book with faded covers and worn, uneven edges, and I scarcely remember when I was bright and new.

My earliest recollections are of living together with hosts of other books, in the professor's library.

I had been there for years and would likely have been there still—for the professor had no children—had it not been for a young girl, a niece of his who had come to make him a visit. She it was, little Nell, who had taken me down from the high shelf on which I had lain so long.

Nell was fond of reading, and spent most of her time in the library, and one day, while she was hunting for another book, she came across me.

"Folks and Fairies!" she exclaimed, "Oh, good!" and soon was sitting on the floor, eagerly scanning my story titles—"Mini and the Butterfly," "The Fairy Silverwing," "The Silver Penny," "The Tree of Treasures."

Here was a treasure, a book of fairy tales she had never read before, and from then until the end of her visit, Nell and I were very seldom apart. On her return home, her uncle said it would be a pity to separate two such friends, and the consequence was, I was snugly packed, with her other belongings, in Nell's little trunk.

Soon I was in my new home, on a shelf in a bright little bedroom, far different from the professor's sombre library, and many a happy afternoon Nell and I passed in the comfortable branches of an old apple tree.

For a while I had a happy time, but trouble was in store for me. My little owner loaned me to her best friend and playmate, who promised to take good care of me. And she did; she handled me almost as tenderly as my own little Nell, but she had an orphan cousin, who lived with her, a rough, harum-scarum of a girl, who insisted on having instant possession, the moment she spied me.

"Folks and Fairies," that sounds good! Where did you get that book? Let me read it, won't you?"

And now my troubles began. She turned me back to back, wet her fingers when she turned a leaf, threw me down with a bang when she was tired reading, turned down my pages to

keep the place, and in other ways made life miserable for me.

One evening, when she should have been studying her lessons, she was sitting on the edge of the verandah, deep in the mysteries of "Giant Thunderscal," and on hearing her aunt approach, hastily threw me under the verandah and took up a school book.

Here I lay all night, and before morning a horrible rat attacked me and gnawed several leaves.

"One-Eyed Dick" was nearly all gone, and several pages of "The Silver Penny" destroyed. What a terrible night it was!

When my little owner got me back again, many were the tears shed over my altered condition. Like the owner of "Dapple Gray," she vowed never to lend me again, and has kept her resolve.

After several years, I find myself in my present quarters, a cheerful nursery. Nell is now in a home of her own and leads around by the hand another little Nell, to whom I, in time, expect to be as much a companion as I was to her mother, for already in the twilight bedtime, she listens with delight to the oft-told tales read first so long ago by the other little Nell in the professor's library.

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Little Charlie, who had been listening to his auntie's account of a trip to the sea shore, with most intense interest, at last in great earnestness exclaimed, "Aunt Lily, Aunt Lily, I really think the right time to go to the sea shore is when you're young! Now, what would big persons care about getting a crab fastened to their toes?"

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The following letter has been received by the matron of the Children's Aid Society Shelter. It comes from a little girl who was sent by the society to a foster home in the North-west. I am sure our little readers, who are happy in the love of real parents, will be glad that one poor little girl has found so happy a home:

Dear Mrs. Chapman,—I have a lovely home here. We have lots of flowers. I have two little gardens of my own and a little calf. Auntie is going to give me a hen with some chickens. I am going to learn to milk cows. We have five pig lates and we are going to get a boat. I have had a row already. I have a little pup called Toby. We have lots of horses and cows and chickens and ducks and dogs and calves. I am going to Sunday-School to-morrow. My little red cap was not in my parcel. I am going to learn to ride horse-back. I have a little colt of mine. The girl's towel got lost on the train. We have a nice house. I got some little adopted cousins. We are going to a picnic at Pelican Lake, some twelve miles from here, later on in this month. We have a very large farm with lots of trees and wild fruit bushes. There is a swing and a hammock. I have a little baby cousin living with me. I had a lovely time coming up on the train. The conductors were very good to us. They took us off at every restaurant that we came to. Tell me how many children in the shelter that I know. Is Laura there? and is little Johnny still with you? Uncle calls me Toodles. Give my love to Mr. Wotton and the nurses and to you. I remain, your affectionate,

VIOLETT.