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Young People

The Empty Place.

A homeless Bad Habit went searching one day For a spot where it snugly could settle and stay; It hung round Fred's door for three hours by the clock, But never found courage to step up and knock.

The place was too busy and crowded, you see; There was really no minute that seemed to be free; There were lessons and games, there were books to be read, And no time to be idle from breakfast to bed.

"I might push my way in," thought the Habit, "but then, Every corner is filled; I'd be turned out again, It's no use to hang round; this is no place for me!" And it went off as downcast as downcast could be.

But Jim's door stood open not far down the road; No crowd was about it, no bustle it showed; The hall was deserted, the study was bare, And the Habit stepped in with a satisfied air.

"Ah, here's what I want," it remarked with a grin, "I can settle in peace, and grow into a sin, Jim's life is so idle and empty, I see. That it's just the right home for an inmate like me!"

So it stayed and it grew till it filled the whole place, And owned Jim in the bargain, and brought him disgrace, Poor Jim! Other boys, too, should keep a lookout, For many Bad Habits go searching about!

—Priscilla Leonard

Billy and the Dwarf

Billy was called a bothersome boy. His brothers and sisters thought him a bother because he was always teasing them. The neighbors closed their doors when they saw him coming, for he was sure to get into mischief. The chickens all ran into a corner of the yard when he came, for he was likely to chase them; and the kittens ran and hid, too, for he was not good to them.

Billy sat one evening on a hassock. He was lonely, and he was thinking.

"I guess nobody likes me," when suddenly a funny little man, about as big as his thumb, hopped upon his knee. "Do you want me to help you," said the funny dwarf.

"Yes," said Billy, "if you will make people like me."

"I will," said he. "But you must promise to do everything I say. I will get into your own coat pocket, and you must listen and obey."

Billy thought it would be very nice to have the tiny creature always with him, so he promises. Then he lifted him gently into his pocket.

Just then his father called: "Billy run into the house for my newspaper."

Billy was just on the point of saying, "Can't somebody else get it?" when the dwarf called in his sharp little voice: "Run, Billy, run on tiptoe." Then Billy ran on tiptoe, found his father's paper, and brought it with a smile.

Just then Billy heard the voices of his brothers and sisters, who had been to the woods for flowers and birch. They had gone without inviting Billy, for they thought he would be in the way. Billy ran to meet them.

"I think you're real mean," he was about to say, when the dwarf whispered, "Billy, share your apples."

Now, Billy had a bagful that his uncle had given him. He had meant to eat them all himself, but when he heard that tiny voice, he skipped away to the shed, got his bag of apples, and gave a big rosy one to each of his brothers and sisters. They were surprised, and they gladly shared their birch and flowers with the little brother, who had been so generous to them.

Early the next morning Billy remembered that the old hen had a coopful of fluffy yellow chickens. As soon as he dressed he ran out to see them. He found them all running to hide under their mothers wing. One chicken lost its way, and Billy began chasing it. But the dwarf, still resting in his pocket, whispered: "Give them some breakfast, Billy."

Billy heard the little voice. Then he ran quickly and shelled an ear of corn for the mother hen. He mixed some Indian meal with water in a big yellow bowl for the little chickens. They all gathered around while he fed them, and, as he did not try to catch them, Billy knew that they were afraid of him no longer.

On his way to school that morning Billy met Sambo, a little boy in a big straw hat. Billy's hand went out to snatch the big hat and throw it over the fence, when the tiny dwarf called out: "Ask him to play ball with you?"

"Sam, Sambo, will you play with my new ball at recess?" said he.

"Yes," said Sambo. "Do you mean it?"

"To be sure," said Billy, with a smile.

The boys had a fine game of ball at recess, and in a few days Sambo had learned that Billy was always good to him now.

As Billy walked toward home that afternoon he remembered a pond where the fishes played. He whispered to his little brother, "Let's run away to the pond," though his mother had often said: "Never go to the pond unless I am with you." The tiny friend in his pocket said: "Go, ask your mother."

Billy's mother was sitting on the porch, and the boys, politely raising their caps, asked her: "Will you please go with us to the pond?" Mother was pleased to see the children so courteous, and she gladly left her sewing to go with them again.

One night Billy sat again on the big stone at the bottom of the steps. He was saying to himself: "Most everybody likes me, I guess."

The dwarf whispered from the pocket: "Shall I stay with you, Billy?"

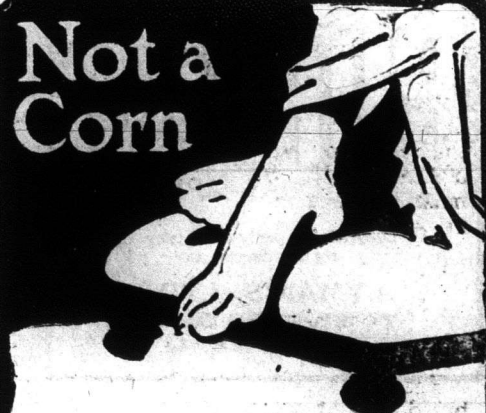
"Yes," said Billy. "I will not let you go."

Billy grew up tall, straight and handsome, and, best of all, he grew to like every one, and every one liked him.—Elizabeth Stol, in "Kindergarten Review."

How Dogs go to Sleep

Every reader, we should think, at some time or other has watched a dog lying down and preparing to go to sleep. Most dogs, large and small alike, twirl or turn themselves round and round several times before they keep still. It is a strange habit, and people have puzzled their heads a good deal in trying to explain it. Some cats, too, have been noticed to have this habit, but not all of them, for cats are not quite so fidgety as dogs.

The famous naturalist, Darwin, had his idea about it, and many people think he was right. What he said was, the early home of the wild dog, ancestor of all other dogs, was on the prairies, covered with long grass, and to lie down comfortably the dogs had to turn round and round till they got a resting-place they liked. But then somebody who had travelled over several prairies pointed out that, supposing a dog did curl himself under the long grass, he would find it a rather difficult matter to get up again! There is to be seen, too, on some prairies an animal called the prairie dog, though it is not exactly like



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