

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS. BY AUNT BECKY.

Dear Girls and Boys: I have received only two letters from my little nieces in Warden this week. Winnifred says she is enclosing pieces of her summer frocks as she promised to do some time ago, but I guess she will find that in the haste of mailing her letter she forgot to put them in, so I am still expecting them, Winnifred. I am sure you must be disappointed not to be able to make your first communion this year. I hope, dear, you will have many, many happy birthdays. Mary E. wishes to know did I have to study when I was a little girl? Well, yes dear, I had to, and sometimes it was much against my will, for playtime was so much pleasanter, just think, than study hour. Still, you will look back, as I have done, with pleasure to the time of rigid school discipline, and appreciate the opportunity of your dear young days. Mary expresses a wish which I fear must fall of realization, and that is that she would like to see my picture in the corner. Well, dear, your Aunt Becky has grown too venerable to indulge in the frivolities of sitting for a photograph. Maybe some time you will visit Montreal, if so I will expect you to come right up to my sanctum and see me, which will be very pleasant for me and save me the exertion of sitting in a photographers and "looking pleasant."

Your loving, AUNT BECKY.

Dear Aunt Becky: It is a long time since I wrote to you, but I read every letter and wish I had time to write often, but oh, Aunt Becky, we have long lessons and then we practise an hour every day. We did find time to have two birthdays last week. We had a great many presents and went to the sugar woods that day, too. Here are the pieces I promised you. I wanted to have a piece of my First Communion dress for you, but our priest thinks we are too young to make our first Communion yet, so I cannot send it. I would like to hear from the other Winnifreds. What are they at? I will close. From your loving niece, WINNIFRED A. E. Warden, P.Q.

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Dear Aunt Becky: You must not think we are not interested when we do not write. No, we love the corner, and would be sorry if you doubted our love. We are only little girls and have so many to write to. Did you ever study when you were little? We are so sorry for Joseph C. His mamma was up to our place last spring. I was glad to see cousin Mary's letter. Grandma's home was in Sherbrooke when she was little. You once asked what we would like best in the corner, and we waited to see if any of the cousins spoke, but no one has said it yet. We would like you to put your picture in the corner, oh, so much. Will you? Good-bye, from Your loving niece, MARY E. Warden, Que.

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A SONG FOR SCHOOL. Some boys, when they come to school, (And some girls, too!) I grieve to be obliged to say That this is what they do: They wriggle And jiggle; They hang their heads And giggle; They twitter And titter; They bounce and flounce And flitter. Whatever thoughts their minds may fill, They've no idea of keeping still. Some boys, when they take up their books, (And some girls, too!) I weep to be obliged to say That this is what they do: They batter them; They tatter them; They crumple, rumple, Scatter them; They scrawl them,

And maul them. They snatch and pull And haul them. It makes me very sad to state A school book's is a wretched fate. Some boys, when they stand up in class, (And some girls, too!) Imagination will not pass To see the things they do! They shuffle And scuffle, They sneeze and wheeze And snuffle; They splutter And mutter And stut-tut-tut-tut-tutter; They fumble And stumble; They grin and gasp And grumble. Oh, if they knew how they appear, They'd try to mend their ways, that's clear!

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JIMMY: A STORY. He was a dear old priest, with silvery hair, and a pair of the kindest eyes in the whole wide world—eyes so full of pity and tenderness, and lit up with such heavenly fire that one felt that even as this Christ Himself must have looked. Father Tim had never been known to speak an unkind word in his life; even the biggest, burliest farm hand instinctively lowered his voice in his reverence's presence, and a gentle word of remonstrance was sufficient to restrain a quarrel. His parish was a model of what a parish should be, for every one loved the old saint who had lived all his life amongst them, and who shared their joys and sorrows in a simple, humble way and helped them in the time of trial. His old, shabby coat testified to the little he bestowed on himself, for he gave all that he had in charity. The children were his especial favorites, and they learnt sweet lessons of self sacrifice and love as they listened to his stories and received his blessing.

And there was one little penitent that was dearer to Father Tim than all—little Jimmy Fitzgerald, who had had an accident in his baby days which left him with one leg shorter than the other, so that he walked with a decided limp. He was a quiet little dreamer, with a beautiful little face, and large, expressive eyes; and, though he was joyful and bright at times, yet he loved his books more than his toys and knew all the stories off by heart, for he was never tired of hearing about them from the gray-haired old priest. Open as the child's heart was, there was still one little secret which lay in its most secret recesses, and which he had not even yet dared to breathe to his dearest friend. Sometimes he would creep out of his little bed at night and kneel alone in the dark, asking God that when he grew up to be a man he might become a priest like his hero, Father Tim. The child knew not that there was one terrible impediment that would prevent his wish from being granted. In the service of God only men of sound physique are wanted; to be lame meant that the trials and arduous life of a priest would be impossible. But the child knew nothing of this, and prayed on with an innocent trust in the good Father Whom he loved so much. Then, one day, Father Tim found him in the church sobbing as if his heart would break. He went up to him in surprise, and laid his dear old hand on the bowed curly head, and the boy looked up with streaming eyes, which brightened, however, at the sight of the comforter. He slipped his hand into the priest's and let himself be gently led into the vestry.

The old priest sat on a chair and drew him close to him. "Tell me what it is, child," he said, in his low, sweet voice. "Have the boys been stealing birds' nests, or what has happened?" Jimmy tried to quiet his sobs, but it was some time before he could tell his story, and then it came out that some of the boys were making fun of his lame leg, and said it was a good thing that that would never let him be a priest. "But if I am good, God will let me be one, won't he, father?" he asked, with childish eagerness. The tears came to the old priest's eyes. This was a question that he found harder to answer than anything that had ever been asked him before. Then he tried to soften his

reply by saying that God wanted good people to serve Him in the world as well as in the Church. But the child was inconsolable. It was such a shock to be told this after all his years of waiting and hoping. The old priest's heart ached with sympathy, yet he could only beg the child to be brave and try and grow up good and noble.

It was Christmas eve, and Father Tim had arrived to give benediction and hear the confessions afterwards so that all of his congregation might receive the Christ-Child on the morrow.

The altar was a blaze of light, and the little church was crowded. The "O Salutaris" was sung by all and the voices of young and old blended sweetly in the hymn of pleading. The "Tantum Ergo" followed, and every head was bowed in adoration. Then there was a blaze of light, and a cry of fire, for a lighted taper had caught the boughs and drapery, and in an instant the altar was enveloped in flames and smoke. Father Tim's vestments were blazing, for a lighted bough had fallen on him, and he fell down, overpowered. A couple of men rushed forward and lifted him out, and there was a scene of wild disorder as every one endeavored to get out of the building as quickly as possible. Children screamed in terror, and men ran hither and thither trying to find water to quench the flames; but the drought had only left a small supply in the tanks, and the few bucketsful of the precious liquid which they obtained was of little use in stemming the roaring, angry fiend which was devouring the interior of the building, largely composed of wood.

In the sudden panic no one had noticed the little lame child; some one had pulled him out of the building, for he was serving on the altar when the fire occurred, but after that he was forgotten in the anxiety for Father Tim, who had been completely overcome by the smoke.

Then a thought struck Jimmy—the monstrance was forgotten. Could he leave his God in there in the flames? With a prayer for strength, and unobserved by any one, he made his way into the burning building. He had caught up a cloth and made his way to the altar. The smoke was nearly blinding, and everywhere around him charred pieces of wood and sparks were falling; but the child heeded them not. On, on he hurried to the altar, and found that where the monstrance stood, with its sacred contents, the flames were miraculously prevented from approaching. With a glad little cry, and stretching forth his arm, he rose to his full height, and wound the charred cloth around his hand. Then he lifted the sacred vessel with bowed head and tried to hurry out of the building. But the fire had grown fiercer, and his progress was barred by the great tongues of flame which leapt out on every side, singeing his hair and burning him cruelly; but a wonderful joy was in his heart, and he limped on with a prayer of thankfulness. Outside the people were huddled in groups. Father Tim had slowly regained consciousness and gazed with dazed eyes at the burning pile. Then he started to his feet as a child's shrill scream fell on the air, and he rushed forward in time to receive the sacred vessel from the hands of the little hero. Then there was a crash, and, before any one had time to save him, the unfortunate boy was pinned to the ground by a great burning beam. There was a cry of horror from the crowd. Then willing hands lifted him out, a poor little burned wreck, with just enough life in his to look up and smile at Father Tim. The old priest bent and kissed him, and while the people knelt sobbing, took the Blessed Eucharist in his fingers and laid it on the child's tongue, and the little spirit fled to God, to dwell with Him forever in

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an ecstasy of bliss, for greater love than this no man hath than that he lay down his life for his friend.—Adelaide Primrose, in the Austral Light.

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WHY CAN'T YOU? Be helpful. Be sociable. Be unselfish. Be generous. Be a good listener. Never worry or whine. Study the art of pleasing. Be frank, open and truthful. Always be ready to lend a hand. Be kind and polite to everybody. Be self-confident, but not conceited.

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Never monopolize the conversation. Take a genuine interest in other people. Always look on the bright side of things. Take pains to remember names and faces. Never criticize or say unkind things of others. Look for the good in others, not for their faults. Forgive and forget injuries, but never forget benefits. Cultivate health, and thus radiate strength and courage. Rejoice as genuinely in another's success as in your own. Always be considerate of the rights and feelings of others. Have a good time, but never let fun degenerate into license. Have a kind word and a cheery, encouraging smile for every one. Learn to control yourself under the most trying circumstances. Be respectful to women and chivalrous in your attitude toward them. Be as courteous and agreeable to your inferiors as you are to your equals and superiors.—Success.

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BOYS WHO HATE TO GO TO SCHOOL. The following order, issued by a prominent railway company of the West, may suggest something to the boy who "doesn't intend to go to school longer than he can help," and who is a perfect pest to his parents and teacher while he goes—to learn lessons simply to oblige some one else.

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"The Wabash railroad issued a positive order that no boy or young man shall be employed in its shops or other departments for the sake of learning any trade or skilled work unless he brings a certificate from his instructors stating that he completed the studies of the second grammar department of school work. The reason for this order is that the company has found that young men who have completed the English branches of study learn skilled work more readily than those who have not."

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COURTEOUS TO PARENTS. Parents lean upon their children, and especially their sons, much earlier than either of them imagine. Their love is a constant inspiration, a perennial fountain of delight, from which other lips may quaff, and be comforted thereby. It may be that the mother has been left a widow, depending on her only son for support. He gives her a comfortable home, sees that she is well clad, and allows no debts to accumulate, and that is all. It is considerable, more even than many sons do, but there is

a lack. He seldom thinks it is worth while to give her a caress; he has forgotten all those affectionate ways that kept the wrinkles from her face and made her look so much younger than her years; he is ready to put his hand in his pocket to gratify her slightest request, but to give of the abundance of his heart is another thing entirely. He loves his mother? Of course he does! Are there not proofs enough of his filial regard? Is he not continually making sacrifices for her benefit? What more could any reasonable woman ask?

Ah, but it is the mother-heart that craves an occasional kiss, the support of your youthful arm, the little attentions and kindly courtesies of life, that smooth down so many of its asperities, and make the journey less wearisome.

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ONE WORD MORE. Don't go—barefooted waiting—for your father's shoes when he dies, but go to work and earn enough money to buy you a pair.

Don't think yourself so important that you really should have been given a better chance to develop than those less consequential people—your neighbors. "Don't get the notion in your head that if the world will not devote itself to making you happy you will devote yourself to making the world unhappy.

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Don't imagine yourself a novelty because you are pretty. There are others equally as handsome. Don't be too quick to judge, and don't be so full of comprehension that you would have to be knocked down to take a hint. Don't forget that when you die this old world will still wag on and not one in ten million will attend your funeral or even hear of your death.

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HE WAS KIND. The other day a horse was trying to get a very small quantity of oats from the depths of a very small nose bag. In vain the poor fellow tossed his head and did his best to rain his dinner.

But at last, just as he was settling down to dumb and despairing patience, a bright-faced boy of perhaps ten or twelve years of age happened along. Seeing the dilemma of the horse, the little fellow stopped and said: "Halloo, can't get your oats, can you? Never mind, I'll fix you!" And straightaway he shortened up the straps that held the bag in place, and with a kindly pat and cheery word which the grateful horse seemed to appreciate, went his way.

I would like to be the mother or the aunt or even the first cousin to that boy. I would rather that she should belong to me than own a Paganini violin or a first-water diamond the size of a Concord grape. Bless his heart, whoever he is, and may he long continue to live in a world that needs him. Kindness of heart, and tenderness, consideration for the needs of the helpless and the weak, and the courage that dares to be true to a merciful impulse, are traits that go far toward the make-up of angels. We need tender-hearted boys more than we need a new tariff to bring up and develop the resources of the country.

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All of us have among our friends at least one girl who, although not a bit pretty, always looks attractive. Have any of you ever tried to think of the reason for this? It's simply because she is always neat. Perhaps she has only a small dress allowance, yet she looks smart beside other girls with twice the money.

What, then, is her secret? Nothing more or less than taking care of her clothes; she has a place for everything, and everything is kept in its place. Her ribbons, gloves, handkerchiefs, veils, are not all huddled together in one drawer, neither do they lie about on the tables and chairs until they are required. Every article of apparel is put away with the most scrupulous care, first being dusted, shaken, folded and mended as the case requires.

There is a great difference, too, in the way in which girls put on their clothes, and very often a girl dressed in a shirt waist and a plain skirt will look twice as neat as one clad in an expensive gown, the reason being simply and solely this—the one has put her dress on anyhow, the other has taken care that all shall be neat and fresh.

It is the duty of all parents to see that their children are taught from their babyhood to take proper care of their wearing apparel; for the child who lets her clothes drop from her shoulders and lie in a heap on the floor invariably grows into a careless, untidy woman.

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