

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS BY AUNT BECKY

Dear Girls and Boys: The never-falling signs of spring are with us—the merry groups of little folks here and there, intently bent on marble playing, and the rasping voice of the crow. How glad we all are, I am sure. Mable is most welcome to the corner. I am sorry Joseph C. is still an invalid. I was just beginning to think that my little friends from Kouchibouguac had forgotten me when Julia's letter came. I have not yet to divulge my little plan, rather recompense, for the regular contributor to the Corner, as not one of my little friends seemed interested. Love to all my nieces and nephews, AUNT BECKY.

Dear Aunt Becky: I promised to write and tell you all about St. Patrick's day, but I did not go, for it was too stormy. My father and sister went. They had a lovely time. There was a high Mass at ten-thirty, and a nice sermon preached by Father Doyle. Then there was a lovely dinner. In the evening there was a very nice concert; the hall was crowded. Well, dear Aunt, my sore leg is getting tired, so I will have to come to a close. From your loving nephew, JOSEPH C. Granby, March 26.

Dear Aunt Becky: May I enter your club? I enjoy reading the letters every week. We have taken the True Witness ever since I can remember. I am fourteen years old, and have four brothers and two sisters. We live on a farm. My papa keeps a store. The snow is about all gone here. Have you had any new sugar yet? I haven't. I am in the fourth reader. Our teacher's name is Miss Cora Healey. I got the prize in arithmetic last term. I spent St. Patrick's day at home; it was a stormy day. Today is my mamma's birthday. I gave her a pretty fruit dish and my sister gave her a vegetable dish. I remain, hoping to see my letter in print, Your niece, MABEL. St. Cyr, April 1st, 1906.

Dear Aunt Becky: As I have not written you this long time, I thought I would write you a few lines and I hope to see my letter in print next week. I guess I and my brother have forgotten to write to you. I saw three letters in print this week. As news is getting short, I will close, saying good-bye. From your loving niece, JULIA R. Love to all my little cousins by me and my brother. Kouchibouguac, March 24.

MY ANGEL GUIDE. He walks beside me all the day, And tells me what to do and say, And when my wicked thoughts arise He gently points up to the skies— My angel guide. When tempted oft to go astray Rebellious temper has its sway, He kneels with sweet uplifted eyes— An angel robed in human guise— My angel guide. He holds me from the path of sin; He purifies my soul within, And, tho' my heart may ache with pain, Tells me no cross, no crown I gain— My angel guide. He's ever whispering at my side; He does my every footstep guide, And leads me with a hand of love To realms of peace—to God above— My angel guide.

It Will Prolong Life—De Soto, the Spaniard, lost his life in the wilds of Florida, whether he went for the purpose of discovering the legendary 'Fountain of perpetual youth,' said to exist in that then unknown country. While Dr. Thomas' Electric Oil will not perpetuate youth, it will remove the bodily pains which make the young old before their time and harass the aged into untimely graves.

The Tragedy of Little Red Tom

(By Henry Van Dyke.) He was the youngest of the family, a late-comer at the feast of life. Yet the rose-garlands on the table were not faded when he arrived, and the welcome that he received was not colder, indeed it was probably several degrees warmer, because he was so tardy, so young, so tiny. There was room for him in the household circle; joyous affection and merry murmurs of contentment greeted his coming. His older brothers never breathed a word of jealousy or unkindness toward him. He grew peacefully under the shelter of mother-love; and it would have been difficult to foresee, in the rosy promise of his youth, the crimson tragedy in which his life ended.

How dull, how insensible to such things most men and women are! They go their way, busily and happily, doing their work, seeking their daily food, enjoying their human pleasures, and never troubling themselves about the hidden and intricate sorrows of the universe. The hunter hunts, and the fisher fishes, with inconsiderate glee. A man kills a troublesome insect, he eats a juicy berry or a succulent oyster, without thinking of what his victims must feel.

But there are some tender and sensitive souls who are too fine for these callous joys. They meditate upon the tragic side of all existence, and to them there will be nothing strange in this story of the Tragedy of Little Red Tom.

You have guessed that he was called 'red' on account of his color. It was a family trait. All his brothers had it; and strange to say, they were proud of it.

Most people are so foolish that they speak with ridicule, or even with contempt of this color, when it is personally evolved. Have you ever asked yourself why it is that the cold world alludes derisively to a 'red-headed boy,' or a 'red-headed girl'? The language is different when the locks are of another hue. Then it is a 'black-haired boy,' or a 'golden-haired girl.' Is not the very word 'red-headed,' with its implied slur upon an innocent and gorgeous color, an unconscious evidence of the unreasonable prejudice and hard insensibility of the human race?

Not so the family of Tom, the redder they grew the happier they were, and the more pride their mother took in them. But she herself was green. And so was little Tom, like all his brothers, and he made his first appearance in the world—green—very green.

Nestled against his mother's side, sheltered by her embracing arms, safe and happy in the quietude of her maternal care, he must have looked out upon the passing show with wonder and pleasure, while she instilled into him the lessons of wisdom and the warnings of destiny.

'Grow, my little one,' we can imagine her saying to him, in her mysterious wordless language, 'your first duty is to grow. Look at your brothers, how big and round and fat they are! I can hardly lift them. They did what I told them, and see what they have become. All by growing! Simple process! Even a babe can understand it. Grow, my Tommykin, grow! But don't try to grow red; first, you must grow big.'

It is quite sure, and evident to every mother-heart, that Tommy's mother must have told him something like this, for this is precisely what he did—obedient, docile, clever little creature! Who can trace the subtle avenue by which intelligence is communicated from the old to the young, the treasured lore of the ages handed down from one generation to another? But when we see the result, when the little one begins to do what its parents and grand-parents have done, is it not evident that the teaching must have been given, though in some way beyond our ken? If Tommy's mother had not taught him, there is at least an even chance that he would have tried to grow red before he grew big. But he laid her lesson to heart, and day by day, week by week, his rotundity expanded, while his verdancy remained.

It was a very beautiful life that they lived in the garden; and if the thoughts and feelings that unfolded there could be known, perhaps they would seem even more wonderful than the things which the old German gardener cultivated. Away at one end were the beds of old-fashioned flowers, hollyhocks and phlox and stocks, crocuses and calliopsis,

calendula and campanula, fox-gloves and monks-hoods and lady-slippers. At the other end were the strawberry-bed and the asparagus-bed. In between, there were long rows of all kinds of vegetables and small fruits and fragrant herbs.

Who can tell what ideas and emotions were produced in those placid companies of leguminous comrades? What aspirations toward a loftier life in the climbing beans? What high spirits in the corn? What light and airy dreams in the asparagus-bed? What philosophy among the sage? Imagine what great schemes were hatched among the egg-plant, and what hot feelings stung the peppers when the raspberries crowded them!

Tommy, from his central place in the garden, must have felt the agitation of this mimic world around him. Many a time, no doubt, was he tempted to give himself up to one or another of the contagious influences, and throw himself into the social tide for 'one glorious hour of crowded life.' But his mother always held him back.

'No, my Tommykin, stay with me. It is not for you to climb a pole like a bean or wave in the wind like an asparagus stalk or rasp your neighbors like the raspberry. Be modest, be natural, be true to yourself. Stay with me and grow fat.'

When the sunshine of the long July days flooded the garden, glistening on the silken leaves of the corn, winking the potato blossoms, unfolding the bright yellow flowers of the okra and the melon, Tom would fain have pushed himself out into the full tide of light and heat. But his mother bent tenderly over him.

'Not yet, my child; it is not time for you to bear the heat of the day. A little shade is good for you. Let me cover you. It is too soon for you to be sunburned.'

When the plumping afternoon showers came down, refreshing every leaf and root of every plant, Tom shrank from the precipitate inundation.

'Mother, I'm all wet. I want to come out of the rain.' But the mother knew what was good for him. So she held him out bravely while the streaming drops washed him; and she taught him how to draw in the moisture which she gathered for his nourishment.

In late August a change began to come over his complexion. His verdant brilliancy was 'sickled' over with a pale cast of thought, whitish, yellowish, nondescript. A foolish human mother would have hurried to the medicine closet for a remedy for biliousness. Not so Tom's wise parent. She knew that the time had come for him to grow red. She let him have his own way now about being out in the sunshine. She even thrust him gently forth into the full light, withdrawing the shelter that she had cast around him. Slowly, gradually, but surely, the bright crimson hue spread over him until the illumination was complete, and the mother felt that he was the most beautiful of her children—not the largest, but round and plump and firm and glowing red as a ruby.

And then—the mother-heart knew that the perils of life were near at hand for Little Red Tom. Many of his brothers had already been torn from her by the cruel hand of fate and had disappeared into the unknown.

'Where have they gone to?' wondered Tom.

A WOMAN'S BACK IS THE MAINSPRING OF HER PHYSICAL SYSTEM. The Slightest Backache, if Neglected, is Liable to Cause Years of Terrible Suffering.

No woman can be strong and healthy unless the kidneys are well, and regular in their action. When the kidneys are ill, the whole body is ill, for the poisons which the kidneys ought to have filtered out of the blood are left in the system. The female constitution is naturally more subject to kidney disease than a man's; and what is more, a woman's work is never done—her whole life is one continuous strain. How many women have you heard say: 'My, how my back aches!' Do you know that backache is one of the first signs of kidney trouble? It is, and should be attended to immediately. Other symptoms are frequent thirst, scanty, thick, cloudy or highly colored urine, burning sensation when urinating, frequent urination, puffing under the eyes, swelling of the feet and ankles, floating specks before the eyes, etc. These symptoms if not taken in time and cured at once, will cause years of terrible kidney suffering. All these symptoms, and in fact, these diseases may be cured by the use of

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That pain in the Back is Kidney Trouble

GIN PILLS WILL CURE IT

A strain or severe cold, or a dozen other causes may have started it—but the Kidneys are at the bottom of it. Backache (especially in the "small" of the back) means Kidney Disease. Plasters and liniments give some relief, but they never cure. Lots of people, with swollen hands and feet, are treating themselves for rheumatism, when, in fact, their sick kidneys are causing the pain and swelling. GIN PILLS cure that pain in the Back every time, because they cure the Kidneys.

St. Joseph's Home, St. Cloud, Minn. June 29th 1905. I received the Gin Pills safely and am taking them every day I have suffered intensely from kidney trouble for many years. Since I took your pills, I have a very good appetite and sleep soundly. I feel no more pain. Enclose please find money order for \$1 for which please send me two boxes of Gin Pills. FATHER BONIFACE, Moll, O. S. B.

If you have tried plasters, liniments and doctors, save your money and try GIN PILLS, FREE. Write us your name and address, and in what paper you saw this offer, and we will send you a free sample box of GIN PILLS. These famous Pills for Sick Kidneys are sold by all druggists at 50c a box, or 6 boxes for \$2.50. THE BOLE DRUG CO. - WINNIPEG, MAN.

dered Tom. But his mother could not tell him. All that she could do was to warn him of the unseen dangers that surrounded him and prepare him to meet them.

'Listen, my child, and do as I tell you. When you hear a step on the garden path, that means danger, and when a thing with wings flies around me and comes near to you, that means danger too. But I will teach you how to avoid it. I will give you three signs.

'The first sign is a rustling noise that I will make when a bird comes near to you. That means droop. Let yourself down behind the wire netting that I lean on, and then the bird will be afraid to come close enough to peck at you. The second sign is a trembling that you will feel in my arms when the gardener comes along the walk. That means snuggle. Hide yourself as close to me as you can. The third sign—well, I will tell you the third sign to-morrow evening, for now I am tired.'

In the early morning of a bright September day, while the dew was still heavy on the leaves and the grass and the gossamer cobwebs glistened with little diamonds, a hungry robin flew into the garden, and Tom heard the signal 'Droop!' So he let himself down behind the wire netting, and the robin put his head on one side and looked at Tom greedily, and flew to find a breakfast elsewhere.

A little before noon, when the sun was shining broadly and the silken tassels of the corn were shivering up into make-believe tobacco for bad little boys to smoke, there was a heavy step on the garden walk, and Tom felt the signal 'Snuggle!' Then he hugged as close as he could to his mother's side, and the gardener with his sharp knife cut off all Tom's surviving brothers and put them in a box full of vegetables. But he did not see Tom, hidden close and safe.

How glad the mother must have been, and how much Tom must have loved her as he remembered all her wise lessons. It was a long, beautiful afternoon that they spent together, filled with pleasant reminiscences, touched by no shadow of gloom, no dream of parting. A golden afternoon—the last.

Just before sunset a fair creature, clothed in white, came into the garden. She moved for awhile among the flowers, her yellow hair gleaming in the low rays of the sun, her eyes bluer than forget-me-nots. Who could think that such a creature could be cruel or heartless? Who could dream that she would pursue her pleasure at the cost of pain to the innocent? Who could imagine that she would take life to feed her own?

Gently and daintily she came down the garden walk, past the raspberry patch, past the tall rows of corn, past the egg-plant and the peppers, with steps so light that the ground hardly felt them, with bright eyes glancing from side to side—yes, with all these, and also with a remorseless thought in her heart and a basket half full of cut flowers on her arm.

No signal to droop or snuggle came to Tom. The third signal—ah, that he had not yet learned! So he basked his rosy sides in the sunlight as the lovely apparition drew near to him. She looked at him with delight. She put out her delicate hand to embrace him. Then, without a tremor, she tore him ruthlessly from his mother's grasp, from the home that he loved, and dropped him in her basket. 'Oh, you little red beauty!' she

cried. 'You are just what I wanted to fill up my tomato salad.' That night, as she sat at supper, with her father and mother, and her brothers and sisters, she was smiling and serene, for the table was well furnished, and the feast was merry. There was white bread that had been ground from thousands of innocent blades of wheat, once waving in the sunlight, and a juicy fish that had been lured and unwillingly drawn from the crystal waters. There was a brace of grouse that had grown plump and savory by feeding on the spicy berries in the woods. And there was Little Red Tom, in the centre of the salad, deliciously sliced, surrounded by crisp lettuce leaves and dressed to the queen's taste.

Are there not some who would have shed tears at that sight, and lamented even while they ate? But do you suppose the young girl was one of that kind? Do you imagine that she had played a part in a tragedy? Not a bit of it. She was simply grateful that her salad was so good, and glad that the others liked it.—Outing.

MARY AND RUTH.

Two young girls, Mary and Ruth, met out at the park one day late in August, and Mary said:

'I'm so glad vacation is nearly over. I want to go back to school.'

'Where are you going to go to school this next term?'

'Why, back to the Sisters, of course. Ain't you?'

'No. I want to go with Amy and Jennie. Mamma says I may. They are so stylish.'

'But you haven't made your first communion yet.'

'Well, I don't care. I don't want to have to be studying the catechism all the time. And then, some of the girls in the parochial school are so poor. I want to meet only nice people.'

'And do you call 'nice people' only those who wear fine clothes?' asked Mary, indignantly.

'Well,' said Ruth, defiantly, 'fine clothes help. And when I grow up I want to marry a rich man, and live in a fine house and keep servants.'

'You're in a hurry,' replied Mary. 'Thinking of getting married and you only eleven years old. I'm not going to get married at all. I'm just going to stay at home and be papa's and mamma's girl.'

'My, how good you are!' sneered Ruth. 'Well, I guess I can be as good as you are, without going to church every day and studying the catechism all the time.'

And she went home without saying another word.

When school opened, Mary went back to the Sisters and Ruth went to a public school.

During the year Mary was prepared for her first holy communion, received it, and was confirmed. She was as happy as a girl could be. In school she was a favorite with the teachers and pupils, and at home she was dear to her parents because she was obedient, gentle, truthful and industrious.

Toward the end of the school year Ruth was taken sick with scarlet fever and died before she received the sacraments. Her mother, who was not a Catholic, said that she feared to distress the child by summoning the priest, lest he should tell her she was about to die.

So Ruth did not realize her earthly ambition.

Mary is still at home, the joy of her parents, and is happy with them. Every one who knows her loves her, because she is so kind and good.

JUST A WORD.

Don't shun the truth under any circumstances.

Don't imagine a thing is so simple, because you think so.

Don't trust any person who can not win the love of a child.

Don't forget that the world is older than you are by several thousand years.

Don't worry about your father because he knows, so much less than you do.

Don't forget that for several thousand years the world has been full of as smart young men as yourself.

Don't blow the packing out of your cylinder-head trying to dazzle other people with your wisdom.

Don't be too fresh to keep from spilling without being put in a cool place.

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