

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS

BY AUNT BECKY.

Dear Girls and Boys:

One sided correspondence is not very interesting, so, while hoping that the corner has not been deserted for good, I will defer my letter until I hear that some of you are alive.

Your loving AUNT BECKY.

SAVED SISTER BY A FISH HOOK

Eric Williams, the six-year-old son of Mr. H. Williams, merchant, of Fort Francis, Ont., was fishing at the lower dock at that place last week, accompanied by his sister, Agnes, aged 5 years, when the latter fell into the water.

With rare presence of mind, Eric dragged his line along till he hooked the little girl's dress, and so pulled her along in the water to the edge of the wharf, whence he reached down and assisted her to safety.—From Forest and Stream.

MANY WHITE ROBINS IN MICHIGAN.

White robins, a large number of which have been seen in southern Michigan during the past few weeks, have attracted considerable attention. The birds have only a small red spot on the breast. With the exception of the light feathers, they resemble the native species in every way.—Sturgis Journal.

BIRD'S NEST IN BANANA BUNCH.

While pulling bananas from a stalk Buck Chance discovered a bird's nest with three eggs. The nest is in the centre of the bunch, and so cozily had it been constructed that neither the nest nor the eggs had been disturbed in transit.

The bananas are part of a shipment received from Florida a few days ago. The nest is constructed of fine moss and the fibre of a banana tree.

PATRON OF ALTAR BOYS.

On the last day of August the Church celebrates a feast of a staunch hero, St. Dominic Val, who suffered martyrdom at an early age. He was born in Saragossa, Spain, in the year 1243, about ten years after the canonization of the great St. Dominic de Guzman, and in whose honor he was named. He was remarkable for the devout manner in which he served at the altar, and hence he is venerated as the special patron of altar boys and choristers. On Holy Thursday of the year 1250 little Dominic was passing from out the cathedral of his native city when he was seized by the infuriated mob and was nailed to the very walls of the cathedral. His heart was pierced with a dagger, and the poor little martyr expired, as did his Master, amid the jeers of the frenzied mob. The body was taken down and cast into the river Ebro. An unusual splendor played on the water, and thus was marked the spot where the body lay. Many miracles were wrought by his intercession.

THE CABMAN'S HORSE.

Some people think that cabmen are all coarse, rough men, who are always beating and ill-using their horses. But I have found many of them quite different, and I like to have a quiet chat with them.

Some little while ago, whilst a cabman was waiting at my door, I saw him fumble in his pocket, and at length get out a paper of sweetmeats—such as little folks know by the name of "all-sorts." There were pieces of almond-rock, hard-bake, barley sugar, and various other things; he selected a couple of almond drops, and, placing them on the palm of his hand, held them out to his horse, saying: "Now, Jerry, my boy, here's a treat for you!" Jerry pointed his ears, gave a gentle snort, and whipped up his beautiful sleek face against the cabman's shoulder, just as if to say, "What a kind old fellow you are!" "That's the sort of whipping I give my horse, sir," said the cabbie to me. "He knows if he goes well he gets his 'all-sorts,' and when I think he is just beginning to lag, I only put my hand in my pocket and rattle the paper; the sound freshens him up, and he is off like a shot."

But now I will tell you how some little folks taught their father to be kind to his horse, and how, through this, he was led to observe the Sabbath day.

who seemed to think his little voice was very important in the matter, whilst old Cappy, hearing the hubbub, gave a lot of sharp barks, just as if to say, "Hear, hear, hear!"

"Well, sir, I saw there were tears in Janey's and Tommy's eyes, and I felt there was nothing else to do but to give them their way; so I promised, and there was joy in the house such as had never been seen before."

"When the Sunday morning came we all went to the stable to look at Browney. There he stood, as proud as could be, and Janey said to him: 'Ah, Mr. Browney, no work for you to-day. Don't you know why? It's Sunday.'"

"When we got back into the house, my wife said to me: 'Father, why shouldn't we take all the little folks to church?'"

"Don't know any reason against it, mother," I said. "Well, they were dressed in a very short space of time, and off we all went; and that was the best day's work I ever did. I never work my horse now on a Sunday. We go regularly to church, and I feel better and happier than I ever did before."

"It is wonderful, sir, isn't it, what a deal of good kind little folks can do?" I quite agreed with him; don't you?—Margold, in Our Young People.

HOW THE CHIPMUNK GOT HIS BLACK STRIPE.

As everybody knows, the Chipmunk has a black stripe running up and down his back.

According to the red Indians he did not have any black stripe on him at all originally. They say that he got the one he now wears in the following manner:

The animals used to meet once a year to elect a leader, and, once upon a time, the porcupine was chosen for that position.

The first thing the porcupine did was to call a great council of all the animals. Then he placed before them the following question: "Shall we have day all the time or night all the time?"

It was a very important matter, and the animals began to debate it earnestly. The bear said he wanted night all the time, for then he could sleep, and sleep was much the most pleasant thing he knew of.

But the little chipmunk said: "No, I want night part of the time and day part of the time, for then we can have time to eat and time to gather nuts and hop around among the trees."

The big bear and the little chipmunk got into a violent discussion over the question, and the other animals became silent and left the two to argue it out.

It was night while they were debating, and when they got out of breath arguing, they began to sing. "Night is best; night is best. We must have darkness!" sang the big bear.

"Day is best; day is best. We must have light!" sang the little chipmunk.

"Night is best; night is best. We must have darkness!" growled the bear in a deep, thunder tone.

"Light will come. We must have light. Day will come," piped the little chipmunk in his shrill voice. And just as he was singing the day began to dawn and the light of morning to illumine the world.

Then the bear and the other big animals on this side of the question saw that the little chipmunk was prevailing, and set up an angry chorus, so that the chipmunk was afraid and ran for his hole in a neighboring tree.

The bear and his followers ran after him, and, just as the chipmunk was diving into his hole, the big bear reached out his paw to catch him. But the chipmunk was so quick that the paw of the bear only grazed his back, and he got into his hole in safety.

But you can see to this day in the black stripe on the back of the chipmunk where the paw of the bear who loved darkness just grazed the fur of the little fellow who loved the light.—The American Boy.

HOW CHURCH BELLS ARE MADE.

"No silver is used in church bells," said the bell-founder. "People claim there is, but I have assayed many an old bell that came here to be broken up and never an ounce of silver did I find in one of them."

"For the best bells we use old cannon. They give us the purest amalgam we can get. The tenor bell I am making now is composed of twelve tons of old cannon from Spain."

"These two moulds, the core and the cope, are what give the bell its sweetness. It is in their cut that the secret of bell-founding lies. The

core is the inner mould; it has the exact shape of the bell inside. The cope, or outer mould, has the exact shape of the bell's outside.

"We fit the cope over the core, and into the space between the molten metal is run. When the metal has hardened and cooled the bell is finished, save for its clapper."

"To tune bells it is necessary to chip little pieces out of them. Our bell tuner is a good musician. He has composed a number of hymns."

A GRATEFUL STORK.

A story of a stork is told by a German paper. About the end of March, 1891, a pair of storks took up their abode on the roof of the schoolhouse in the village of Poppenhofen. One of the birds appeared to be exhausted by its long journey, and the bad weather it had passed through. On the morning after its arrival the bird was found by the schoolmaster lying on the ground before the schoolhouse door. The man, who, like all Germans, considered it a piece of good luck to have the stork's nest on his house, picked up the bird and took it indoors.

He nursed it carefully, and when it was convalescent used every morning to carry it to the fields a short distance from the house, where its mate appeared regularly at the same hour to supply it with food. The stork is now cured, and every evening it flies down from the roof and bravely walks by the side of its friend from the schoolhouse to the meadows, accompanied by a wondering crowd of children.

Sunshine and Shadow.

(Frances Campbell in Westminster Budget.)

We met her at the Five-Ways coming down the track from the hills: a slim girl, with a frightened little face and great velvety brown eyes. She looked pathetically young and childish, and she carried a little bundle of snowy white muslin and lace on a cushion which was half on her right arm and half supported on the saddle. Her big black horse paced along with a smooth, even motion, as if he felt there was need of caution in his progress. She pressed the bundle against her breast as we came up and pulled alongside, devouring the track behind us with oddly anxious eyes. "Is the mail past yet?" she asked breathlessly. "No," replied The Lady, smiling, "not yet, Essie. Is that the baby you have with you?" The girl looked round at Joe, and then her look wandered off to Mimi riding beside her father down the sandy track. "Yes," she replied in the far-away voice of the bush. "It's the baby; an 'an'—Mrs Guthrie dear. I've had Doctor Bob for these two nights, an' he says the only thing is just to be thankful; an' I'm not thankful." Her eyes seemed to burn into The Lady's face. "Would you be thankful if 'twas your little girl?" The Lady shuddered and shook her head. "So I come on, hopin' I'd catch the coach an' get her christened," she continued; "it would sort of comfort me to think of her bein' safe to get to heaven. Mother says the children that die unchristened have to stay here—an' I couldn't bear that!"

"Have you come the seventy-five miles from Springsure alone?" asked The Lady, "and is Doctor Bob sure about her? Children are so—" Her voice died away in a little tremulous shake as the girl stooped forward in her patched saddle and lifted the filmy handkerchief off the baby's face. It was like some blighted flower, a snowdrop frozen in the winter wind, so purely white and sweet, lying in a soft foam of drifted muslin. Its long eyes closed beneath the moonlight fairness of its silky curls, and the tiny baby mouth curved in inexpressible purity. "Not very long," gasped the girl. "Oh, I hope Jack Dallas won't be late!" The Lady put back the scrap of fine linen over the motionless face and gazed up, the mail-track. "The Bishop is going to Texas," she said, "to open the church; no, the coach isn't down yet, Essie; get off and we'll make you a cup of tea—you need it."

The girl slipped off her saddle, holding on in some miraculous fashion to the little white-clad form on the cushion, and stood weakly leaning against her horse, which turned his head to watch her and whinnied softly. The Lady took her by the arm and, placing her with her back against a big stringy-bark, sent Joe to the bullock-wagon for a cushion, and me for the tea-things, and settling down to make a fire and boil the billy. The girl removed her handkerchief from the baby's face, and its



pure coldness seemed to chill the fragrant air.

"Ah—h—h!" sighed The Lady. "And where is your husband, Essie?"

The girl lifted a tiny perfect hand and pressed it to her lips. "Drovin'," she replied briefly. "Won't be back till Christmas," and her eyes fixed themselves on the Boss as he rode up, with Mimi by his side, her knees swaying backwards and forwards as if hushing the baby to sleep. "The mail ain't passed, is it, sir?" she asked quaveringly.

"No," said the Boss huskily, as he looked down; "due now, we're waiting here for our mails. Expecting a letter from Jim, Mrs. Lister?"

The girl shook her head, flapping the frills of her sun-bonnet over her eyes. "No," she said. "It's the Bishop I'm waitin' for," and she nodded at the white baby lying so still on her knees.

"Oh!" murmured the Boss, and he went back toward the bullock-wagon. Presently it came crawling to a standstill, with all the stock behind it. Fair Peak exhibits were camping on the track to wait for the Bishop also. The coach came swaying and lumbering down the steep path, dodging the ruts and roots in Jack Dallas's usual dexterous fashion, while Jack whistled like a butcher-bird on the box. He gave one quick glance over the Five-Ways, and pulled up the greys, and somehow the Bishop was instantly among us. A tall, ascetic-looking, young-old man, with a handsome, abstracted face, wide, melancholy eyes, full of a deep spirituality, and with a glance that pierced one through and through. His hair was streaked with silver, and his clean-shaven face thin with prayer and fasting.

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The girl nodded dumbly; the fountains of speech seemed frozen in her. The Bishop turned and looked at Posy, who went away and presently returned with a basin of clear water between his sunburnt hands. Jack Dallas got down and stood between his leaders, his cabbage-tree hat in his hands. Ted Lawless went on one knee beside the wagon, and behind The Lady the boys were kneeling in the dust. The girl-mother tried to rise, but failed; she laid her head against the trunk and closed her eyes weakly; while Mimi, her little soul bursting with sympathy, put a pair of soft arms around her neck. The Bishop stooped and lifted the baby on his arm, laid his ear against the hardly moving chest, and gently put his forefinger between the curving mouth, then sighed with relief. The baby still lived. "Name this child," he said, when the first part of this simple rite had been gone over. The girl's mouth opened and shut, but no sound came. There was a little space through which the sweet-smelling wind blew softly away and the Bishop looked with anxiety on his face. Then he bent towards Mimi. "What is your name, dear?" he asked softly. Some instinctive sense of fitness must have prompted Mimi's reply. "Mary," she said, giving a name seldom applied to her. "This little child," said the Bishop, "is going back to heaven. Will you give it your name, so that her mother will be able to call her among the angels?" Mimi moved swiftly to his side, and looked with quivering lips at the baby's little white face. "Ess," she said. The Bishop's expression was luminous with love as he regarded the little human flower by her side, and looked upon that which was so soon to be transplanted. As the water fell from his long fingers, the baby opened its dark eyes and looked up, past the Bishop, past the swinging tree-tops, past cloud and sky, to something far beyond, and a smile of inexpressible sweetness spread over the tiny face. Then the long lids quivered and fell, and the eyes that had seen but so short a time of earth, closed on its

sunny greenness forever. Instinctively the Bishop gathered the tiny figure closer to him, as a shepherd might have gathered a little lamb, and, like some echo from between the gates that had opened to let the little child go in, his words came soft and low. The girl, who had been stark upright, frozen with grief, slowly folded her work-worn hands across her breast and let the great tears drop unheeded on her calico dress. Joe and Mimi, with their blue eyes fixed on the melancholy face, drank in the melodiously uttered words. Ted Lawless, by the bullock-wagon, was suddenly changed into something strange and unfamiliar, so great was the transformation of his grim countenance. The boys hid their faces, and Posy, kneeling with the dripping basin between his hands, was like some holy acolyte serving at the altar. The coach-horses jingled their harness and stamped impatiently. The black horse whinnied softly, and the shadows chased the sunlight in alternate flickerings. The balmy winds swept through the bush with the slumberous sounds of multitudinous leaves, and soft and low through it all sounded the Bishop's voice, and against his shabby sleeve the little white child, smiled on.

At last he rose, and the girl-mother came to her feet and faced him. "I wis," said Mimi tremblingly, "Oo would yet me divy ut dead baby to sees movvie." The girl nodded, and the Bishop placed the little still figure in Mimi's arms. She carried it across to where the girl stood, "Why is see still?" she asked.

The Bishop answered, with his eyes on the mother's face, "because," he said in his thrilling whisper, "she is asleep in the Everlasting Arms. Who she wakes, my child, it will be in heaven."

Mimi looked up at the girl's streaming eyes. "I wis," she said clearly, "oo would be glad ut sweet little baby is gonod away to heaven."

The girl swayed backwards and forwards for a second. "I wish I was," she cried desolately. "I wish I could be, but I loved her so much, an' Jim's away. Ahaps," said Mimi delicately, "our Little Lord 'ill yet her tum bat aden, I'll ask Him." The Bishop took her hand in his and lifted her chin. "Do not ask that, dear child," he said. "Ask for what she needs most."

"Anyhow," said the girl, in a husky, changed voice, "I feel safe about her now she's christened an' God's got her; an' I never thought to see her go back smilin' like that."

Mimi's long gaze encountered hers. "I fink," murmured she, "what see sawed the uvver 'ittle angels. Ahaps see'll tell oo when oo get to heaven."

"When I get to heaven!" cried the girl, passionately, straining the dead baby to her heart. "Oh, when I get there!"

The Bishop stood aside, but Mimi held her. "Oo must dot dere," she remarked quietly; "else oo 'ittle baby 'll be waitin' all ee time."

The girl suddenly dropped down on a level with Mimi's face, and kissed her fiercely. "I will, I promise you," she panted, "there, now." Mimi kissed her promptly, and the Bishop helped her on her horse. "I will take you back home," he remarked quietly, and we watched them out of sight up the steep bush track. Jack Dallas came out from between the big greys and blew his nose loudly. "That little 'un," he said to Posy, "has done more'n she knows; she's mabbe saved Jim Lister's wife from the short cut, down."

And it may have been so. We went on, and told the Texas folk the Bush Bishop had gone eighty-five miles out of his way to bury a little baby.

Mrs. Kyndlay—But you promised that if I gave you your breakfast you would cut the grass and rake the lawn.

Homeless Holmes—And I lied. Let this be a lesson to you, lady, not to put your trust in strange men. They are all gay deceivers.—Cleveland Leader.