

Pans and Pots all Lose Their Spots



happiness. At last Fluff laughed, and Duff laughed, and then Mother Loon laughed. You wouldn't have heard Fluff and Duff very far, but you could have heard Mother Loon a mile away or more.

"Well, really," said a Kingfisher, perched on a tall alder near by. "I don't see what you folks find to laugh about. And it's a shame, too. Don't you know that all good little birds are saying their prayers and going to bed? I'm just going home to put my babies to bed, and if ever I catch them behaving like that I'll teach them better manners."

With that he flew away, and the three loons laughed harder than ever. "The idea!" said Mother Loon. "If there is a better way of saying your prayers than by enjoying your blessings and being thankful for them, well, I'd like to know it. We laugh because we are happy, as every creature on this lovely earth was meant to be.

"Feel this soft, cool air," she went on. "Smell the scent of the flowers—that's the way a flower says its prayers, just by breathing out its sweetness. Look at those lovely colours in the sky, and in the water, and on the hills. They are all saying their prayers, and we are saying ours when we laugh to show we are glad." And then they all laughed again and forgot about the Kingfisher, who had gone home to his dark, little nest in a sand bank.

"Now, children," said Mother Loon, after a while, "I'm going to dive. Take a good, big breath, cling tight, and don't be scared."

They told her they wouldn't be scared, but all the same they were—just a little—when they went under the surface of the water. It was a queer feeling, and they were glad it didn't last long. "Don't do it any more, mother," Duff begged when he had got his breath again.

"Oh, nonsense!" she laughed. "You won't mind it so much next time, and it is very important that you should learn to dive, for that is our very best means of getting out of danger."

This was the first Fluff and Duff had ever heard of "danger," but somehow they didn't need to ask what it meant. They were very quiet for several minutes.

Suddenly on the stillness there fell the sound of a long, shrill call from far away. "Hush!" said Mother Loon—although, to be sure, they were all hushing for all they were worth.

"That's an old friend of mine," she said when the sound was repeated. "It means that I am wanted right away. I must go at once. You must stay here on this little island till I come back. It isn't likely I shall be long."

They slid off her back on to the soft moss of the island, and she rose

with a long, curving sweep into the air. They saw her, a dark speck against the fading sunset sky, and heard her answer the call: "Halloo! halloo! halloo!" Then, as they saw the darkness closing around them and found themselves alone on the little island in the middle of Lake Lonesome, they leafed for the first time what loneliness meant.

It grew darker and darker, and they were so frightened that they clung to each other and talked in whispers. Then they began to notice the stars in the sky, and got so interested trying to count them that they forgot their loneliness. There was so much in the world to learn, and they were such beautiful lessons. Why should they be afraid,

Then the moon rose from behind the trees, and the world, which a short time before had been all gold and rose and green, was changed to blue and silver and grey. They had never dreamed of wonders like this.

"Aren't you glad you are not a little kingfisher, buried in a sand bank?" asked Fluff.

"I tell you what," answered Duff, thoughtfully, "I'd like to go and wake up those little kingfishers and get them to come out with us. I don't suppose their stupid mother has ever given them a chance to see the world."

"I'd like to do that, too," said Fluff, "but how can we? It's too far to swim to shore, even if we knew how, and we haven't had any swimming lessons yet."

Just then a turtle swam close to their island. Fluff jumped up and called to him, "Oh, Mr. Turtle, won't you please take us ashore? We are all alone, and we want to get the little kingfishers to come out and play with us."

"What?" snapped the Turtle, crossly, and Fluff explained all over again.

The Turtle's wicked little eyes twinkled, and he said, "All right. Jump on."

They jumped on his back, but it was hard and smooth and awfully slippery, and they had a hard time to stay on. The fact is, they didn't stay on more than a couple of minutes, for that wicked young Turtle, who was fonder of a joke than you might think, to look at him, suddenly dived.

Poor Fluff and Duff found themselves struggling in the water, and they just had to swim without a single lesson. Being so young and tiny, they couldn't have swum far, but just as they were about to sink they heard a queer sound above their heads—which was nothing less than the foghorn of Swooper, the Night-hawk.

He swooped so low that his wings touched the water. Then he seized the two little, lonely loons in his claws—very gently—and carried them away to his own nest, which wasn't really a nest at all, but just a tiny hollow under a hazel bush.

He told them to lie still while he kept watch for their mother. This they were glad to do, and before long she came and carried them home.

As they were starting out Swooper said, "As soon as the little ones are a bit stronger, bring them to the Jolly Animals' Club. They nearly lost their lives trying to do a kindness to those little kingfishers, and there will be a welcome for them and you in the Cave of Fireflies whenever you care to come."

"You little darlings," laughed Mother Loon, softly, reaching her head around and kissing them lovingly. "I have wanted for a long time to belong to the Jolly Animals' Club, but haven't been able to get in."

Fluff and Duff didn't understand what Swooper and their mother were talking about, but they soon found that the Cave of Fireflies was just another wonder in this wonderful, beautiful world.

Help put it over, the Victory Loan.

Boys and Girls

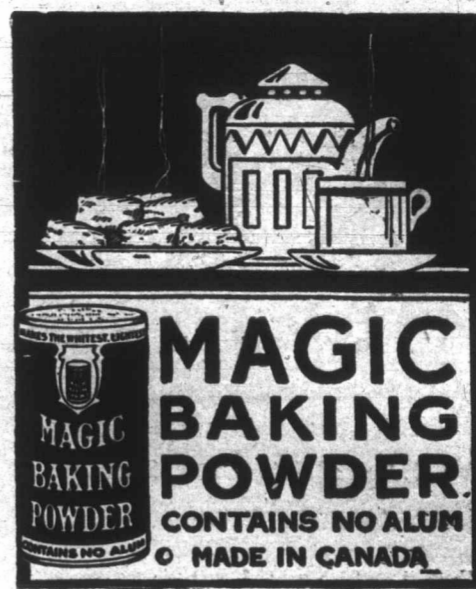
My dear Cousins,—

I looked eagerly in my mail on Saturday, wondering whether any of you had found time and energy enough to write to me, but no letters were there, and indeed, it was rather too bad of me to expect any, really, as the paper doesn't come out till Thursday, which means that many of you don't see it till Friday or Saturday. But you must forgive an old Cousin who didn't hear from his younger cousins for six months, and is very anxious to get into touch with them again. He has great hopes too, especially from Toronto cousins who have still another week's holiday from school, and so, possibly, may have more time to spare. I say "possibly," because I know that even if the epidemic isn't so bad now, there are still people who are sick or convalescent, and who need help and care, just as much as they can get. And it's almost more valuable when one is convalescent, for that's just the time when people are out of bed and begin to think that perhaps they ought to get busy and do things, though they really haven't the energy to start, and ought to take things very easy.

You may wonder what people under sixteen can do then. It's easy to see that a person in bed needs attention, but not so easy when they're up and dressed. Well, you can always run errands. If my memory of under-sixteen-days serves me right, there are always errands to be run in this world. You can do what a thirteen-year-old cousin of mine is doing—take charge of two little children for two or three hours a day, playing with them and keeping them out of the house, while their mother, who is convalescent, enjoys a good rest. This cousin is a girl, but upon my word, I don't see why boy-cousins shouldn't take care of children, too, if there's the need of it.

There are a hundred and one schemes for making things easier in your own home or somebody else's, once you begin to think about it. And if you can do nothing else, you can write a letter—nice, merry sort of a letter—to cheer them up, and, when there is no danger of catching the influenza yourselves, you can go and visit people, and that *always* counts—more than you know. I have a sister who had a great way of going to visit old people who were sick, when she was only about cousin-age, long before she had passed sixteen, and they all loved her. I used to wonder how she did it, because when I tried it, I used to find it rather difficult to find things to talk about, and I'm afraid I let a good many opportunities slip; but by the time I'd done a little more, I began to find out that it wasn't so hard. They wanted to hear about school and games and all the things I liked, even though they were so much older, because it gave them something fresh to think about after I'd gone. And you'll find that, too, if you try it.

Well, I hope you'll be sending me some poems and tales soon, and besides, I want to hear about what you did in the summer—who helped on farms, who stayed at home and looked after the garden, and everything. I went on a farm myself, but I fear I didn't do a great deal of strenuous work. Anyway, I did look after the baby chicks and I brought up four ducks right from the day they were hatched. You never saw such lovely ducks in your life. When I left them, they were so tame that they ate their porridge (yes, even the ducks had porridge!!) out of my hand, and when I went across and called out: "Ducky, ducky!" they said "quack-qu-a-a-ck, qu-a-a-ck," very loudly, and came running along to meet me from all sorts of hidden places. They liked the water—not like a duck I knew once, whose name was Joseph. He was very



fat and very white, but he was kept in a back-yard where there wasn't any water, so he didn't have much oil on his feathers. His mistress used to wash him by turning the hose on him, chasing him into a corner, and simply drenching him. One day, she thought she'd give him a treat, so she took him down to a park where there was a pond, and put him in it. But poor Joseph!! He'd never tried to swim since he was a baby. His feathers were all out of order, and after splashing about a bit, he actually began to sink!! And his mistress had to give two little boys a dime each to go and rescue him! Can you imagine it? I knew Joseph personally myself, but I never saw him try to swim. I also knew his mistress, and how fond she is of a joke, but still, she solemnly declares it's a true story. What's your idea about it?

Your affectionate

Cousin Mike.

GOING TO SCHOOL.

Down the lane to school we go,
Never too fast and never too slow.
Never a-stopping to talk or play,
Never a-loitering on the way,
Never a-halting for trees to climb,
Never a-guessing there's plenty of time.

Never a-pausing to see the view,
Never a-looking for something new,
Never a-turn from the road that's straight,
And that's the reason we Never are late.

ABOUT SQUIRRELS.

An observer says: Do you know that at home in the woods a squirrel has two cages, or dreys, as his nests are called? The winter one is placed in the cleft of a tree between two branches, and is often very large, for squirrels do not like north winds, and try to shelter themselves as much as they can. The summer nest is not unlike a bird's, and is perched high up on a waving bough, as far as possible from the reach of unwelcome visitors. Should the mother squirrel catch sight of one of these, she will leap from branch to branch with a squirrel cub in her mouth until all are carried away to a place of safety.

Kink in the Back

You bend over and can scarcely get straightened up again. This comes on you so suddenly you can't understand it.

This is lumbago. Like backache and rheumatism, it is the result of poisons in the blood. The kidneys are deranged, but the use of Dr. Chase's Kidney-Liver Pills will soon set them right. The pains and aches will disappear with the poisons when the kidneys do their work properly.