

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS.

BY AUNT BECKY.

Dear Girls and Boys:

I was so pleased last week to see the nice lot of letters. You have made a good beginning for vacation time. Surely there must be accounts of school closings. Why not send them along. Write as many letters as you like. There will always be room in the corner.

Your loving
AUNT BECKY.

THE BEST HOUR.

"Get down on the floor here, daddy. Get down on the floor and play." And that is the song that my baby sings to me at close of day.

"Get down on the floor and tumble. Get down with me, daddy, do; Get down on the floor now, daddy. Me wants to sit down on you."

Then overboard goes the paper, And down on the floor goes dad; And onto him clatters baby, And baby is more than glad; And daddy's a horse and wagon Or daddy's a ship at sea, And rolls with a little baby As happy as she can be.

Yea, rolls with the babe and tumbles, And grumbles and haws, and goes, And always a dimpled baby With rounded and dimpled knees Sits perched aloft unfeared, And laughing with childish glee As the daddy ship goes tossing And tumbling across the sea.

And, oh, but that ship is careful; The waves may foam and curl, But never the ship goes plunging Too much for the baby girl, And never the horse gets fractious, Or plunges or jumps aside So much as to mar the pleasure Of the wee little girl astride.

Oh, good is the hour in the gloaming, When labor is put aside And daddy becomes a horsey A wee little girl may ride; Or daddy becomes a plunging Big ship on the stormy seas, And is guided and captained onward By the baby with dimpled knees.

OUR DOG.

From Lippincott's Magazine we take the following story of "Our Dog in Church."

"He was a little flustered on first entering the chapel—so many people there, and all sitting so quiet. In this there was something awesome for our dog, and when out of this unnatural quiet they rose suddenly to sing, our dog was frightened and would have run out of doors, only the doors were closed. He soon recovered himself. They were only folks after all—such as he saw every day in street and house.

"He began to recognize one after another. He tried to get up a little sociability with them, but they took little or no notice of him. Every body seemed strangely constrained and altered. Our dog is a pet, and this cut him. But his is a self-reliant, recuperative nature, so he threw himself on his own resources for amusement. He was dreadfully ignorant of the proprieties of church or church service. The choir is separated from the congregation only by a raised platform. On this walked our dog. Again there was singing. He smelt first at the organ; he then smelt of the organist and wagged his tail at him. The organist looked with an amused and kindly eye, but he could not stop. Our dog then smelt of the basso-profundo; he smelt of the tenor; he smelt them on one side and then on the other. Then he went back and resmelt them all over again; also the organ. That was a little curious. There might be a chorus of dogs inside and that man at the keys tormenting them. To him, at any rate, it was not melody. He walked around it, and smelt at every crack and corner to get at the mystery. He tried to coax a little familiarity out of that choir. They seemed to be having a good time; of course he wanted a hand or a paw in it himself. It was of no use. He stood and looked and wagged his bushy tail at them as hard as he could. But selfishly, they kept all their pleasure to themselves. So he let the choir and came down again among the congregation. There, sure enough, were two little girls on the back seat. He knew them; he had enjoyed many a romp with them. Just the thing! Up he jumped with his paws on that back seat; yet even

they were in no humor for play. They pushed him away, and looked at each other as if to say, 'Did you ever see such conduct in church?'

"It was rebuff everywhere. Our dog would look closer into this matter. The congregation were all standing up. So he walked to the open end of a pew, jumped on it, and behind the people's backs, and walked to get in front of the little girls, that he might have an explanation with them. Just then the hymn ceased. Everybody sat down with the subdued crash of silk and broadcloth. Everybody on that bench came near sitting on our dog. It was a terrible scramble to get out.

"Still he kept me employed. There was a line of chairs in the aisle. In one of these deliberately sat our dog. If everybody would do nothing but sit still and look at that man in the pulpit, so would he. But somehow he moved one hind leg inadvertently. It slipped over the chair's edge. Our dog slipped over with it and came as near tumbling as any being with four legs can. All this made noise and attracted attention. Little boys and girls and big boys and girls snickered and snorted and strained as only people can snicker, snort and strain where they ought not to. Even some of the elders made queer faces. The sexton then tried to put our dog out. But he had no idea of going. He had come with our folks and he was not going until they went. The strange man grabbed for him and he dodged him time and again with all his native grace and agility. This was something like; it was indeed fun. The sexton gave up the chase; it was ruining the sermon. Our dog was sorry to see him go and sit down; he stood at a distance and looked at him, as if to say, 'Well, ain't you going to try it again?'

"Then, in an innocent and touching ignorance that he was violating all the proprieties of time and place, our dog went boldly up on the pulpit stairs while our minister was preaching, and stood and surveyed the congregation. Indeed, he appropriated much of that congregation's attention to himself. He stood there and surveyed that audience with a confidence and assurance which, to a nervous and inexperienced speaker, would be better than gold or diamonds. He didn't care. He smelt of the minister. He thought he'd try and see if the latter were in a mood for any sociability. No; he was busier than the rest. The stupidity and silence of all this crowd of people who sat there and looked at him puzzled our dog.

"He could see no sense in it. Some little girls and boys did smile as he stood there; seemingly those smiles were for him. But as soon as he reciprocated the apparent attention, so soon as he made for them, the smiles would vanish, the faces become solemn. And so at last, with a yawn, our dog flung himself on the aisle floor, laid his head on his fore paws and counted over the beef bones he had buried during the last week. Not a word of the sermon touched him; it went clear over his head."

BOYS ARE WATCHED.

When you see the boys on the streets and public places we often wonder if they know that business men are watching them. In every bank, store and office there will soon be a place for a boy to fill. Those who have the management of the affairs of business will select one of the boys. They will not select him for his ability to swear or smoke cigarettes. Business men may have a few loose habits themselves, but they are looking for boys who are as near gentlemen in every sense of the word as they can find, and they are able to give the character of everybody in the city. They are not looking for rowdies. When a boy applies for one of these places and is refused they may not tell him the reason why they do not want him, but the boy can depend on it that he's been rated according to his behavior. Boys cannot afford to adopt the habits and conversations of the loafers and rowdies, if they ever want to be called to responsible positions.

JUST A SHOE BUTTNER.

Willie was an honest boy, and all good people who knew him loved him. One day his mother gave him two dollars and sent him to the store to buy a pair of shoes. When the merchant tied up the bundle he

put in two buttoners instead of one. As soon as Willie reached home and opened the box he found the extra buttoner, and asked his mother if she thought he ought to carry one of them back. She said she supposed the merchant intended for him to keep both of them, but to go and see.

On his way back to town he met some of his boy acquaintances, who asked where he was going. He told them how the merchant had made a mistake and that he was going to return one of the buttoners. One of the boys said:

"What's an old shoe buttoner? They don't cost a cent. The store-keeper will laugh at you."

Willie went on his way and returned the buttoner to the merchant, who told him it was put in by mistake but that he need not have troubled to return it.

Next morning at school several of the boys when they met Willie said:

"Hello, old Shoe Buttoner!" At first he thought he would cry, but he said to himself:

"I did right, and there is no use in crying about doing right."

The vacation came; the same merchant from whom Willie had purchased the shoes some months before advertised for a boy. Willie was anxious to make some money of his own, and his mother allowed him to apply for the place. When he walked into the store one of the boys, who was waiting his turn to be the proprietor, said to another boy:

"Well, here comes 'Shoe Buttoner'."

The merchant looked around and recognized the honest face of his former customer, and employed him immediately. He was so faithful and honest that he has been in that store from that day till this, and is now one of the proprietors.

One of Willie's old friends, who recalled the circumstances which I have just related, said the other day:

"Will, didn't it make you feel good when you got your position because you had returned a shoe buttoner?"

Mr. Will replied: "Of course, I was glad to get the position, but most of my feeling good over it was because I knew I had done right."

DOG AS A MAIL CARRIER.

Mr. Jonathan Radcliffe, of Vale Summit, Allegany County, Md., has a very intelligent dog that acts as a mail carrier for him. The dog regularly meets the early morning passenger train on the George's Creek and Cumberland railroad, and as the train speeds past Mr. Radcliffe's place, on its way to the station, the little black terrier, known as Carlo III., waits patiently about forty feet from the track for the brakeman to throw the bundle of papers off the train. Carlo usually catches the bundle in his mouth. He knows the engine whistle, and when it is sounded, about half a mile below the station, Carlo may be seen racing for his place along the track, sometimes from the house, and sometimes from the mountain side, where he has been chasing small wild animals. Several days ago while the regular passenger engine was in for repairs, Carlo failed to appear for his bundle, and it is thought the strange engine whistle fooled him. He makes no attempt to go to any other train, and on its down trip to Cumberland, the whistle of the regular engine does not disturb him. At times the brakeman will hold the package a little longer than usual and Carlo will impatiently run after the train, barking furiously. He never fails to meet the regular morning train when the regular engine pulls it up to Vale Summit.

HARRY AND THE DOCTOR.

"Papa," said Harry, "what does a man mean when he says to another man, 'I'll fix you'?"

Now, Mr. Bonsall was reading the evening paper and didn't want to be disturbed, so he answered rather impatiently.

"Don't bother me, Harry. Don't you see that I am reading?"

"But, papa," said the boy, "I wish you would tell me for I want to know, and I won't bother you any more."

"Oh, it means 'I'll do you up'!"

"I'll do you up," repeated Harry, and then, after thinking a moment—"but, papa, what does 'I'll do you up' mean?"

"Now, I'll tell you," said his father, "and then you must not ask me another question this evening. It means that some man is going to kill another man."

And Harry, who was only five, opened his eyes wide, looked stupefied and presently walked away.

About a week later the little man was taken ill, and as Dr. Ainslie, the

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family physician, was not within easy reach, a strange doctor was called in. This doctor had a solemn face and a solemn manner, and Harry did not feel altogether sure of him.

Presently Mrs. Bonsall left the room to get something that was needed, and Harry thought he would make friends with the doctor by opening a conversation with him.

"Going to give me some medicine, doctor?"

"Oh, yes," answered the doctor, "I'm going to give you some medicine. Don't worry, my little man; I'll fix you."

Suddenly there came to Harry the explanation that his father had recently given him of those fearful words, and, throwing off the covers, he leaped out of bed, rushed for the door, and, before the doctor could recover from his amazement at the boy's astonishing behavior, the little fellow was clinging to his mother out in the hall and begging to send away the man who was going to "do him up."

It took half an hour to get Harry quieted down and another half hour to persuade him to take the strange doctor's medicine.

THE IDEALS OF YOUTH.

It is easy to promise ourselves, when starting out in life, that we will never lower our ideals, that we will always go onward and upward, and that we will ever be found abreast of the times, in sympathy and co-operation with the leaders of progressive thought. We do not dream of the constant vigilance that must be exercised in order to keep our ideals in sight; we do not count on all the influences from without and within against which we must struggle if we would remain true to the high and beautiful aspirations of youth.

ANXIOUS MOTHERS.

The summer months are a bad time for little ones and an anxious time for mothers. Stomach and bowel troubles come quickly during the hot weather, and almost before the mother realizes that there is danger the little one may be beyond aid. In every home at this season there should be kept a box of Baby's Own Tablets, and at the first symptom of illness they should be given. They promptly cure cholera infantum, diarrhoea and stomach troubles, and are just the thing the mother needs at this time to keep her children well. Mrs. Frank Moore, Brookfield, N.S., says: "I always keep Baby's Own Tablets on hand in case of emergency. I do not know any other medicine that can equal them in cases of stomach or bowel troubles. And this medicine is absolutely safe—it is sold under a guarantee to contain no opiate or harmful drug. You can get the Tablets from your medicine dealer or by mail at 25 cents a box by writing the Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont."

It is well, and most cheering to us indeed, if we find the marks of saintly footsteps on the same road by which we have ourselves been led. They have been left there merely to give that assurance the traveler feels, as he goes into an unknown region, when he finds the footprints of one who has explored the way before him. He does not follow their leading out of a foolish desire to imitate the fatigue and sufferings that the painful and difficult journey must have cost to him who went before. He simply takes the road with the same end in view that the other had, and blesses and praises him for having blazed the way.—Lex Amaldi.

AT THE STATION.

He stood before the sergeant's desk in the Harrison street police station, his ragged old cap in hand. He had no overcoat and his clothes looked the worse for wear. When the sergeant looked up from his work the old fellow shifted his cap from one hand to the other and said in a broken voice:

"Could you give me a night's lodging?"

The weather was bitter cold that evening, and the sergeant's heart was warmer than usual.

"Well, my good man, what is your name?" asked the sergeant.

"My name is Patrick McHugh. I've lived in Chicago for fifty years and to-night is the first time I ever had to apply to a police station for lodgings."

"Well," said the sergeant, "how does it happen that you have to apply for lodgings this evening? Have you no money?"

"Devil a cent," answered Patrick, with a good-natured laugh.

"I gave my last twenty cents to a young lad who had befriended me once when I was looking for work. He was a clerk in the office of an employment agency where I applied for a job; he spoke a good word for me. He told me afterward that I reminded him of a friend of his father. I guess that is why he took such a liking to me. Poor fellow, he lost his job somehow and couldn't find anything to do. All his money was spent; his clothes became old and worn, he was ashamed to look for office work, so he hustled coal and odd jobs around a restaurant. I haven't seen him for a long time until to-night. He was standing in a warm hallway, but the officer on the post chased him out. He had no money and no place to go. The poor fellow had a bad cold, and I guess he ain't long for this world. I bought him a hot drink, and paid for a night's lodging, so I came down here to take pot luck with you. Sure you won't turn me out a night like this, will you, sergeant?"

"No," answered the sergeant, "Go downstairs and see what the lockup keeper can do for you."

The old man started down stairs, but suddenly he stopped, and, returning to the desk, drew a small purse from his pocket and said, "Sure I almost forgot! I found this on the street to-day and maybe you can find an owner for it."

"Is there any money in it?" asked the sergeant as he proceeded to open the purse.

"I don't know, sir, I did not open it."

The sergeant turned it upside down and out dropped a little wad of bills and some silver.

"Eight dollars and seventy cents," he said as he finished counting the money, "and you looking for a night's lodging!"

"But, sergeant, you see it wasn't mine, and I had no right to it."

The sergeant took an envelope from one of the drawers in the desk, and wrote "\$8.70, found by Patrick McHugh" upon it. He put the purse into the envelope and locked it in the safe. Taking a quarter from his pocket he handed it to the old man.

"Go and get a bed somewhere. You're too honest to sleep in a police station," he said. "I'll advertise the purse, if no one calls for it in a week it belongs to you."

Patrick went off with a happy smile and a "God bless you, sergeant."

As the door closed behind him the sergeant felt the cold blast of the night.

"Poor, but honest," he muttered, "I wonder how many of us could stand that test?"—W. P. Riordan, in New World.

THE RETURN.

Among the few passengers who alighted when the train drew up at the small station was an old man. There was no one to meet him. He stood for a moment and watched some friends greet each other; then his kind face became lit with a hungry longing and he moved with a steady step from the platform, breathing gently to himself, "Forty years! Forty years!"

Though a stranger, he evidently knew the little town. He moved up the main thoroughfare for a block, then turned down a side street along whose broad sidewalk many shade trees were growing. No one had spoken to him, for no one knew him, and he had seen no one he knew.

There was a pleasant row of cottages facing the street. Most of them were old and vine-grown, with funny little gables and quaint stoops. He knew who lived here, there, everywhere—at least, he knew who lived there forty years ago, and to-day it seemed that time had turned back

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for him. As he neared the end of the street, an expression of joy, alloyed with pain, crept to his face, and the emotion which swelled in his breast suffocated him, so that he stopped for a moment and leaned on the stick he carried. Words, spoken by a woman two-score years ago, whom first he had loved, and then doubted, came to his mind: "Some day you will realize your mistake. When you do, come to me; I shall wait." Those were her parting words.

The last house was hers. He could see it through the leaves of the trees in the adjoining yard. Would she know him? Would she receive him? With a low sound in his throat he went on, and presently was fumbling at the latch on the gate. He raised his eyes to the window where she used to sit and wait for his coming. The window was shuttered, barred! The front door was closed. The yard had run wild with orchard grass and weeds, and the neatly kept gravel walk, which he knew of old, was overrun with creepers. Only the row of hollyhocks by the fence bloomed bravely, as they used to do. He moved up the walk in a dazed way till he came to the stoop. Then he saw a pine board tacked to one of the posts, and on it the words, "FOR RENT."

Sitting wearily upon the steps, he placed his hat at his side and looked around. Everything was the same, except that everything was untended and wild. His eyes rested vacantly upon the mischievous face of an urchin who, through the palings of the front fence, was covetously regarding some apples on a tree in the yard. Presently the old man lifted his hand and beckoned to the boy. He came willingly, casting side glances at the apples as his bare feet rustled the gravel. The old man put his finger and thumb in his waistcoat pocket, and deposited a piece of silver in the grimy hand of the boy.

"What was the lady's name who lived here?" he asked, in a strangely gentle voice.

"Miss Upton," the lad responded with alacrity.

"Where is she now?" was the next query, spoken so softly that the boy turned his head to catch it.

"Oh, she's dead! Died in the Spring, early. Took colic from settin' by a winter—that un, there. She opened it fore the weather's warm enough, 'n' she kep' it open too late of evenin's, folks said. I've heard older people say she's waitin' for somebody, or somethin'." She died, 'n' they took her away somewhere where she had some kin. We all miss her." The boy dug at the rough gravel with a calloused toe.

The old man placed another coin in the boy's hand.

"Thank you," he said, more gently than ever. "Can you tell me when your next train comes through?"

"Goin' which way?" asked the lad, alertly.

"Any way."

"Two o'clock; you've got nearly an hour."

"Thank you; that's all—good-bye."

Thirty minutes later a stooped figure crept slowly back up the board sidewalk toward the little station.—Edwin Carlisle Litsey, in New World.

AGAIN THE CONFESSIONAL.

Le Figaro, of Paris, says that a priest who had been a member of one of the disbanded religious congregations recently had an interview with the chief of police, in the course of which he handed over to the police official a magnificent gold bracelet, enriched with emerald and diamonds, and with embossed figures representing winged horses and hunting dogs.

The bracelet, which was stolen two years ago, was given the priest by one of his penitents, in order that it might be restored to its owner. The priest refused to give the name of the penitent, pleading the secrecy of the confessional. Le Figaro adds that the bracelet has been placed in the bureau of lost articles to await reclamation by the owner. L'Univers, a Catholic organ, commenting on the incident, says: "This is a splendid opportunity for the radical sheets to revise their eloquent tirades against the greediness of the members of the religious congregations and the pernicious influences of the confessional."

There are three kinds of people in the world—the wills, the won'ts and the can'ts. The first accomplish everything; the second oppose everything; the third fail in everything. To which class do you belong?