

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS. BY AUNT BECKY.

Dear Girls and Boys: The tinkle of the school bell has been heard in every nook and corner of our land, and already the small girl and boy have filed in, each to the appointed task. Perhaps there is something irksome in the daily grind, but when one thinks of the way ahead and of the great men and women who have sat poring over books, just as you all are doing, and to whom the task was no more pleasant than it is to our own present day little ones, and when we also realize the mark they have made and the positions they fill, we must remember that it was not in every case the result of a superabundance of brains, but the capacity of putting to good use what intelligence had been their share. Courage, little ones. There is any amount of room at the top of the ladder. No necessity of getting shoved to the wall at the foot with the crowd who have not gumption enough to put one foot before another. The rounds of the ladder are not any further apart to-day than years ago, so go ahead and mount. It was really too bad that Ethel's letter was delayed, but better late than never. I certainly join with Lillie T. in hoping that all the cousins will be regular contributors. I appreciate Lillie's very kind invitation to call on her; but must add that I have a very limited amount of time on my hands, but would be very pleased to have any of my nieces and nephews come and see how the True Witness is turned out. I am sure it would be very interesting for them. Agnes is in the midst of fruit picking. It really must be lots of fun, and makes me wish I could be with you. Of course the cousins are interested in Joseph's letters. And why not? I am sure they join with me in hoping that very soon Joseph will be strong enough to run around and play. How jolly that Annie O'N's picnic was a success and what a nice sum was realized for the church fund. Love to all the cousins, AUNT BECKY.

Dear Aunt Becky: You cannot imagine what fun we are having after we come home from school these nights picking apples, plums and pears up off the ground which fall from the trees. My brother went gathering butternuts in the woods to-day and got a bag full. They are nice to have in the winter, much nicer than this time of year, but I cannot wait that long for them, as I like them so well. We are having very nice weather now, but the mornings and evenings are very cool. We had a very bad electric storm last Sunday night when my sister left for Rochester. She went by boat, and the water was very rough after the storm. We were lonesome to see her go, for we will not see her again until next summer. We are getting along fine with our new teacher; we like her very much, she is so kind to us. Well, Auntie, the summer is about gone again and all my flowers are about dead. I think I will start and do some fancy work to pass the evenings. Well, as I have nothing more to write I will close with lots of love to you and cousins. Your niece, AGNES McC. Lonsdale, Sept. 8.

Dear Aunt Becky: You cannot imagine how delighted I felt when I saw my letter in print, so I resolved that I would write again. School opened on Tuesday, the fourth, much to the delight of teachers and pupils, I think. I hope that all the cousins will be more regular in writing to the corner. In a few days our retreat will be starting. In a little while our catechism classes on Sunday will be opened and I am very glad. My little sister goes to catechism every Sunday when it opens. I would love, dear Auntie, if you would come up to see me. I live in the north end

and you would not have so very far to come, as both of us are living in Montreal. I would just love to see you, dear Auntie, for I am just fascinated with your name. It does seem so funny to have an auntie and never to go to see her, or her to come and see you. I think, dear Auntie, if you will not come and see me I will have to go and see you. I felt very proud when Agnes C. gave me the credit of giving her the example to write, but I do not think it is true, do you, dear Auntie? I do not forget the good times we had together, Maude, for I often speak of them. I think, dear Auntie, you must be weary of this letter, so I shall close, with love to dear Auntie and all the cousins. I am, dear Aunt Becky, Your affectionate niece, LILLIE T. Montreal.

Dear Aunt Becky: I was disappointed that my letter was not sent in time for publication last week. I had it all written but my sister forgot to mail it. I mean to be a very punctual correspondent for, dear Aunt I watch every week for the True Witness to come until I hear what all my little cousins have to say. Agnes C. said such kind things about me. I did not think I had made such a friend in Quebec, and also Maude C. I hope I shall meet these nice girls next year at vacation. I hope they will visit Montreal. Dear Aunt Becky, I think as my letter is already long, I will close with love to all my cousins and remain, dear Aunt, Your loving little niece, ETHEL T. Montreal.

Dear Aunt Becky: Another week has passed and I have not much news to tell you. Our picnic that we had last week was a very great success. The priest made over five hundred dollars for the benefit of the church. Rev. Father Hartigan had a picnic in Deseronto last Monday. They had a lovely day for it, and it was largely attended. The men are cutting corn and gathering up the pumpkins now. My papa intends putting up a wood shed and kitchen next week. I expect we will have lots of fun in the evenings when we come home from school looking at the carpenters. We will soon have to pick the apples now. Well, dear Auntie, as my letter is getting rather long I guess I will close. Love to the cousins and Aunt Becky, Your loving niece, ANNIE O'N. Lonsdale, Sept. 10.

Dear Aunt Becky: I am quite pleased to see the cousins have an interest in my letters. I wish I were able to write something interesting. I can sympathize with Agnes on the death of her little brother, for I lost my oldest brother over a year ago. He never was healthy, which made him the favorite in our family. I miss him a great deal. I wish I were able to go with papa to see my sisters, but I cannot walk nor would not be able to ride, but am in hopes of being well some time. Why don't some of the other boys write? As ever, your nephew, JOSEPH. Granby, Sept. 7.

Round the world a wizard goes, Creeping soft, old Tippy Toes! Oh, curious things to us all he does! The baby's hair was a yellowish fuz, But Tippy Toes, with a magic twirl, Turned it into a golden curl. He stretches the children, one and all, The thin grow fat, and the short ones, tall; O'er small boys and girls such a spell he weaves, Their arms shoot out of their jacket sleeves. He played on grandpa a saucy trick, Why, grandpa's hair was once brown and thick. Ah, now it is thin and as white as the snows— All the work of old Tippy Toes!

He tiptoes about in his silent way, And changes yesterday into to-day; Listen, you'll hear him, tick-tock, tick-tock— Tippy Toes at work with the clock. Some day he will cut off my curls, no doubt, With the scythe mamma says that he carries about; For, would you believe it? he's made a plan To turn me into a great, big man! —Pauline Frances Camp.

AN UNTALENTED GIRL. "It seems too bad that such a girl as Beth should be simply buried alive in a little town like this! Why, with such talents as she has, it does seem as if she ought to be making herself felt in the world!" Beth's friend, Alice, spoke with girlish enthusiasm and unbounded loyal admiration. "Just think of her music to begin with—dear me! Wouldn't I feel too happy for words if I could play and sing as she does? You'd think that was talent enough for one girl's share, but that isn't half what she has! Her essays at school were so fine we always said that way—some time she'd be making herself famous as a writer. And, as if that wasn't enough, what must she do but have a real, marked talent for sketching and painting, too! Why Aunt Minnie, when our class went to the zoo and we tried drawing some of the animals from life, her's were so far ahead of the rest of us—well, you wouldn't look at ours in the same day with hers. She's really the brightest girl I know."

"She's a remarkably gifted girl, I have no doubt," smiled Aunt Minnie; "but I know another girl who isn't excelled by anybody in one way, at least, and that is a generous feeling for her friends. I believe you are as proud of her talents as if they were every one your own." "I'm so clumsy and commonplace beside her!" Alice snuggled up a little closer to her aunt. "I haven't a talent in the world—positively I haven't." But Aunt Minnie smiled as she put her arm around the girlish form. "I'm not so sure of that," she said. "Alice, Alice!" It was her brother, Gordon, calling in stentorian tones through the hall. "Oh, Gordon, dear, don't wake mamma!" Alice went toward him hurriedly. "I just persuaded her to lie down for a little while—she was up so much in the night with Benny! But I don't believe you've wakened her," she added, reassuringly. "Say, Alice!" Gordon's voice was dropped now to a stage whisper, which gradually waxed louder and more emphatic as he proceeded. Alice rose to shut the door, but so quietly that he hardly noticed the motion. "Do you know I can't get anybody to play the tunes for us for Friday night—those gleees, you know, we thought we'd have at our entertainment? It does seem as if folks ought to help us out when we've worked so hard to get it up, but we've asked everybody we know who's any good at music, and they all have an excuse ready. So I told the boys I guessed I could count on you, at a pinch."

And Alice carefully suppressed a smile. Gordon spoke so ingeniously and with so little notion of the unconscious slight offered her musical powers. "Why, of course you can, Gordon," she said. "I'll do the best I can, anyway. Let's see—how much time is there before you boys give your entertainment? Just a week?" "Yes; you see we thought we could surely get somebody else, or we'd have given you more time. I expect you'll have to do some practicing, won't you?—seeing you can't read much at sight, if that's what you call it." Aunt Minnie's arm rested with involuntary tenderness on her "untalented" niece's shoulders, as she looked into the sweet, self-forgetful face. "Oh, and say, Alice!" Gordon went on, eagerly. "We find it's going to cost like everything to get our printing done. I don't see how we're going to have a cent left for posters. It'll swallow up the profits like anything to get the tickets printed and that 'ad' in the paper. We thought Beth Anderson would probably help us out. I tell you, she knows how to make beauty posters! But she wasn't any more ready to bother with that than she was with the music." I suppose she thinks it isn't worth while to put herself out for such an affair as we're getting up, but she might do it, seeing her own brother's so interested. He felt real cut up about it. He'd been bragging about what a lot of talent she had, and she refused as coolly as you please. 'Really hadn't time!' Well, all the artistic girls we know 'didn't have time' to bother with it. I told the fellows perhaps you'd try to get something for us; do you suppose you could, Allie, even if it isn't anything very fine and fancy?" "Why, I'll do my best, Gordon. If you'll give me some idea of what you want. You know drawing's not my strong point. In fact, I'm afraid I haven't any 'strong points.' It's funny, but that's just what I was saying to auntie before you came in."

Gordon looked at her with a sudden accession of personal brotherly interest. "Well, I'll tell you what I think," he said. "I'd rather take my chances with you than any girl I know. A fellow always knows where to find you, and that's—that's—" He did not finish his sentence. He was rummaging among his pockets for some paper he wanted to show Alice—some boyish outline of what his notion was for the "poster." But Aunt Minnie took up his unfinished sentence. "That's as beautiful a talent in itself as a girl can have, and as rare a one," she said. "And it makes the possessor of it a most delightful person to live with." "Why, auntie!" said Alice. But a little, pink flush of pleasure rose in her face as it bent over Gordon's outline.

MOTHER AND CHILD. During the reign of the Roman Emperor Valens, there were many Christians in the City of Edessa. The Emperor, who was a Pagan, had issued an edict commanding all the churches, to be closed. But notwithstanding the edict, all the people went to Mass, for the priest sent word to them that he would celebrate in a field outside the city walls. The Emperor was told of this, and greatly enraged, he ordered the Mayor of Edessa to massacre the whole of them the next time they should assemble for Mass. Now the mayor was a kind-hearted man although he, too, was a Pagan, so he sent word secretly to all the Christians that he had received these orders, thinking they would stay away. But lo! when Sunday came—the streets were thronged at an early hour, and there were more people than ever before at Mass. The mayor put himself at the head of his troops, in compliance with his orders, and marched toward the field where the Catholics were assembled in immense numbers. As they were passing, with measured tread, and clang of armor, by a low-roofed house, a poor woman issued hurriedly from it leading a little boy by the hand. She was in such great haste that she noticed nothing, looking straight forward, and passed with the child directly through the file of soldiers. The mayor, astonished, instantly caused her to be arrested and brought before him—then halted his troops. "Woman," he asked, "what ails you? Why are you in such a desperate haste?" "Sir," she replied, out of breath, "I am going to the place where the priest is to celebrate Mass to-day." "You are not, then, aware that I am on my way to put to death all the Catholics I shall find there?" The woman then perceived that it was the mayor; so looking around upon the soldiers she replied: "O yes, sir, I know it, and that is why we are in such a hurry. I feared we should be too late." "Late! late for what?" "Too late to die for Christ." "What! and would you sacrifice also your child?" "My child, sir, would not be left behind. He is to share my happiness and joy." The mother again took the hand of her boy and both hurried away to the field to assist at the Mass. The mayor and his soldiers stood a while mute with astonishment, gazing on the rapidly retreating forms of the mother and child—then sheathed their swords and vowed that they would never execute so cruel and barbarous an order. Thus the lives of many Catholics were saved by the faith and heroism of a mother and child.

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THINGS NOT TO DO. To contradict your friends when they are speaking. To say smart things which may hurt one's feelings. It is bad to make remarks about the food at dinner. To talk about things which only interest yourself. To grumble about your home and relatives to outsiders. To speak disrespectfully to any one older than yourself. To be rude to those who serve you either in shop or at home. To dress shabbily in the morning because no one will see you. To think first of your own pleasure when you are giving a party. To refuse ungraciously when somebody wishes to do you a favor. To behave in a street car or train as if no one else had a right to be there.

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