

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS.

BY AUNT BECKY.

Dear Girls and Boys:

I am sure Annie O.N. and Agnes McC. must have had a lovely time at the lawn party. Why, Annie has about a month yet before school commences to visit, still she seems to think the time very short. I am glad to bid Maude C. welcome to our corner. She wrote such a nice long letter. I hope she enjoyed the circus as much as she expected to. Joseph is improving very much in letter writing. I am sure he was delighted with the nice presents his cousins brought him. I wonder what his papa will say when he sees this letter. Ethel T. should try and stay as long as she can with her grandmamma in Quebec, for it must be a great pleasure to have the little ones go down to visit with her. How kind Uncle Jack must be to humor Ethel and her sister as he does, and what delightful trips they have had. Just think sometimes of Aunt Becky and the cousins who are slowly wasting in the city and draw in some nice long breaths for them.

Your loving
AUNT BECKY.

Dear Aunt Becky:

As my sister and I were to a party Wednesday afternoon I thought I would write and tell you what fun we had. We did not leave home until about two o'clock as it was very warm. As we got there part of the children were coming up to the woods, where they had a nice swing to amuse the children. We were in the swing part of the afternoon. Then we went down the river until supper time. We had our supper in the woods near the swing. There is a lot of hay and grain out in the fields just at present. It is raining pretty heavy here just now, but no thunder or lightning. The berries are just about gone. My sister and I were out Thursday for our last picking. We got about a pint. I intend going away Sunday afternoon for a little visit. I expect my visits are nearly over, as the holidays are growing short. Well, dear Aunt Becky, as my letter is getting long I guess I will say good-bye.

Your loving niece,
ANNIE O.N.

Lonsdale, Aug. 3.

Dear Aunt Becky:

As it is raining this afternoon, and having nothing to do at present I thought I would write to you. The harvest apples are ripe. We have six trees of them. My sister and aunties came home Sunday morning. I was glad to see them. They brought me some presents. I was at a lawn party Tuesday afternoon. There were about eighteen there. We had tea out in the woods, and we had a very pleasant time. I expect to go visiting my cousin next week. It will not be long until we are going to school again. We have no teacher for our school yet, but I hope we will get one, as I expect to try the entrance next year. Well, dear auntie, as I have no more to tell this time, good-bye.

Your loving niece
AGNES McC.

Lonsdale, Aug. 3.

Dear Aunt Becky:

As this is my first attempt at writing to you I will ask you to make allowances for me. While reading the letters in the True Witness I took a fancy to write and hope to see my letter published next week. School has finished, and we look forward once again to the happy holidays. I have enjoyed them so far and only hope they shall end as happily as they commenced. Mostly all our school companions have departed for the country, and I hear from them frequently. I went down the country intending to remain till school commenced, but I soon found it was too quiet and returned in a few days. My sister has just returned from Tadoussac, and enjoyed her trip very much. We play a good deal of games here and have plenty of fun. We are all looking forward to the circus, which is to arrive August 4th. I have never been to a circus in my life and I am looking forward to it with great pleasure. I am very fond of reading, which occupies most of my time. No-

thing gives me such pleasure. I shall be lonesome this month, for my sister is going to Montreal, and although there will be five at home, they are not like her; she is my particular chum.

Well, dear Aunt Becky, I will induce my little friends to write to you to fill up the corner next month. Well, good-bye, dear Auntie,
Your loving niece,
MAUDE C.

Quebec, Aug. 3.

Dear Aunt Becky:

Do you remember I wrote to you about my cousins who were coming to see me this summer. Well, they really came last Tuesday morning. I used to ask mamma every day when they were coming, and she would say, "Oh, some day, soon." But I just think she had decided they were not coming. My cousins, you know, Aunt Becky, are young ladies. One I saw last summer, but the other cousin has not been here for nine years, so I did not know her. They brought me some books and games, so I am playing all day long with the games. The books are quite hard for me to read. I like to hear mamma read, she is the best reader in the family. I hope papa doesn't see this letter; he thinks he can read as well as mamma, but there is one thing he can do better, and that is mow hay. I do think mamma can't drive as well as he can. Good-bye for this time.

Your loving nephew,
JOSEPH.

Granby, August 3.

Dear Aunt Becky:

I am still at Quebec and having a lovely time. My grandmamma is such a good kind old lady I just love her. I have been to Ste. Anne de Beaupre and we had a lovely drive to Lorette, went to Montmorency Falls and so many other lovely places. I am sending my letter to mamma in Montreal to send to you, dear Aunt Becky. My grandmamma has a very large dog, and he is so very friendly with me I am not afraid of him. My uncle Jack is so good. He takes sister Lillie and me every place we ask him to. I am so lonesome for papa and mamma I think I will soon have to go home. Thanking one of my cousins for kindly wishing I would enjoy my trip to Quebec, I will close by wishing to see my letter in print. Good-bye, dear Aunt Becky.

Your loving niece,
ETHEL T.

GETTING INFORMATION OUT OF PA.

My pa, he didn't go to town last evening after tea. But got a book an' settled down. As com'f' as could be, I'll tell you I was af'ul glad to have my pa about. To answer all the things I had been tryin' to find out.

And so I asked him why the world is round instead of square. And why the piggies' tails are curled. And why don't fish breathe air? And why the moon don't hit a star. And why the dark is black. And jest how many birds there are. And will the wind come back?

And why does water stay in wells. And why do June bugs hum. And what's the roar I hear in shells. And when will Christmas come? And why the grass is always green. Instead of sometimes blue? And why a bean will grow a bean. And not an apple, too?

And why a horse can't learn to moo. And why a cow can't neigh? And do the fairies live on dew. And what makes hair grow gray? And then pa got up an' said, "The awful words he said, I hadn't done a thing, but he jest sent me off to bed."—Council Bluffs Nonpareil.

DILLY AND DON AND THE DUCK'S EGG.

Something very wonderful had happened to Dilly. Now she was running "cross lots" just as fast as her two eager feet would take her. Dilly was bare-headed. Her hat lay forgotten on the floor of Farmer Brown's barn. Her pretty ruffled apron was gathered up and held firmly in both hands. The wonderful something was in Dilly's apron. All the way up the back streets to

her own pretty street ran Dilly. Faster than ever she flew from the corner home. The nearer she came to mother the more she knew she never could wait to tell her all about it. She burst into the house. "O mother!" she cried. That was all she had breath for. But she opened her apron carefully. Mother peeped in. There, round and white and shining and big, lay an egg! "What a big egg," said mother. "Where did you get it, Dilly?" "Let Don see," begged Don. "Careful, Don," said mother. Eggs break so easily, you know. Where did you get it, Dilly?" she asked again.

"Mrs. Brown gave it to me." At last Dilly's words tumbled out all in a breathless heap. "One of the hens came off her nest with six honest true teeny-weeny chicks. They are going to be in Marshall's window for Easter. Will you go with us and see them, please, mother?" And Mrs. Brown had put this duck's egg in with the hen's eggs. But it hadn't hatched. So she gave it to me. May I color it for Easter? O mother, please hurry and say yes."

Mother said yes. Someway Dilly's mother did have the sweetest way of saying yes whenever it could possibly be said. Behind the kitchen stove were two cupboards. The top one was Dilly's. The lower one was Don's. In the top cupboard in a pretty basket Dilly put her precious Easter egg.

The next afternoon she went down town to buy the dye. Mother was busy. Don went to Dilly's cupboard to find a ball. He and Tinker were to have a big game of ball.

There, with soft pink wool all about it lay Dilly's big egg. Very carefully Don took down the basket. The egg would roll beautifully. How Tinker would chase it! But if it should break!

Don shut the cupboard door. He would go and ask mother if he might take the egg a little while. Just then from outside the window came the sound of a hurdy-gurdy. Don was a careful little fellow. Of course, he must go and see the hurdy-gurdy man.

But first he must take care of Dilly's egg. The cupboard door stuck fast. Where could he put the egg? Quick as a flash he pushed the basket, egg and all, under the stove. It would be quite safe there.

When Don came home from following the hurdy-gurdy man, it was almost dark. As soon as he ate his supper, mother put him to bed. Next morning early Dilly stole downstairs. She had thought out a beautiful plan. She would color the Easter egg the loveliest blue, and give it to mother for an Easter gift. Blue was mother's favorite color.

The kitchen was warm and cozy. Dilly laid the dye on the table. Then, like a little Old Mother Hubbard, she went to the cupboard, and when she got there, still like Old Mother Hubbard, she couldn't find what she wanted. There was no egg. There wasn't even any basket. A bit of pink wool lay on the shelf. And, look as she would in her cupboard, in Don's cupboard, all over the kitchen, this was all she could find of her precious egg.

When mother came, Dilly was still looking. Mother looked everywhere Dilly had looked, and everywhere else, it seemed. The egg might have been one of Dilly's dreams so completely had it vanished.

"Never mind, dear," said mother. "It must be somewhere. Anyway, you shall have another egg."

But mother didn't quite understand. How could she? She couldn't know that it was over her part that Dilly felt the worst.

The duck's egg was to have been mother's Easter gift. Now, even if mother did give her another egg, she couldn't very well give it back to her.

Dilly ate a roll which had big lumps in it. She drank milk which tasted salty. Then, when it seemed that a sob must come anyway, something else came instead. It was an odd, tearing, cracking noise. It came again, and then again. Dilly looked up at mother. Mother looked down at Dilly.

"Crack-crack-crack!" The sound came from the direction of the kitchen stove. Then before mother or Dilly could do more than think and wonder, there was a queer quavering, questioning little "Quack!" After a second it came again, "Quack!" Then out from under the stove, dragging itself slowly along, bits of broken shell sticking to its funny feathers, came a forlorn little duck.

in pink wool and taken care of. Every minute it seemed he grew bigger and stronger.

When Don came into the room a while later he was greeted by a lusty "Quack! quack!"

"O Dilly," cried Don. "What a pretty chicken! Where did you get him?" "It's a duck, Donnie," said Dillie. "It's Dilly's own dear little duck, Donnie," she exclaimed suddenly, "did you take Dilly's egg?"

"I didn't play wiv it, 'cause it would break, Dilly," said Don. "I only just took it down. Then the hurdy-gurdy man came, and I put it under the stove. Did it get broken, Dilly?"

"The duck broke it," laughed Dilly. "Don't scold him, mother. I'd so much rather have my duck than a colored egg. Wouldn't you, mother?" she added, anxiously. "He'll last longer, perhaps," said mother.

"I'm so glad you like him, mother," said Dilly. She brought the duck in his basket to mother's side—"cause he's really yours. I was going to give you a blue Easter egg, but instead it's a white duck—for your Easter present."

Mother laughed as she took her queer gift. But she kissed Dilly. "I know so little about ducks," she said, "I'll have to ask you, Dilly, to take all the care of him just as if he was yours. Will that do?"

"Exactly," said Dilly. "You do think of the loveliest plans, mother! And when I don't know, I can ask Mrs. Brown. What shall you name him—will Easter do, or Lily?"

Mother looked at her ugly, awkward little Easter duckling. "No, Dilly," she said. "No, I shall name him hurdy-gurdy."—Alice E. Allen, in Christian Register.

FUN AMONG ANIMALS.

Animals with a sense of humor, or signs of one, anyway, are described by a writer in the "Strand." He tells of a female baboon that delighted in teasing a certain watch dog.

As soon as the dog settled himself for a doze the baboon would steal up and give the canine tail a vicious tug. Of course, the dog would go for her, but she would simply wait till he got close enough, then leap over his head and from behind give his tail another pull.

A Siamese monkey was being brought to Europe on a steamer with several other monkeys, who, for some reason, would have nothing to do with him.

This ostracism exasperated the Siamese, and whenever he got a chance he would grab one of the others by the tail, drag him all over the deck and finally climb into the rigging and drop his victim with a dull thud.

Darwin tells of a female orang-outang that took hold of a dish in which her food was served and put it on her head as if it were a hat. Thus adorned she provoked roars of laughter, to her evident gratification, from the crowd around her cage. Another naturalist saw a baboon get even with an officer who had often teased him. Seeing the officer approaching, the baboon poured some water into a hole in the ground, mixing it with earth so as to make mud. When his enemy came up he splashed the muddy water on the officer's uniform. For a long time after this every time the animal saw the officer he indulged in what had every appearance of being laughter.

Saville Kent declares that dolphins are fond of teasing other fish by seizing their tails and dragging them through the water. He once saw two dolphins attack a big skate swimming near the surface of the water. The skate tried to escape them by raising its tail out of the

water, but the dolphins got hold of it and dragged the skate in every direction. Foals will often tease human beings by galloping toward them, as if intending to run them down, then stopping short within an uncomfortably short step or two. Grogs, the naturalist, relates se-

veral amusing instances of a similar nature about dogs. He had once a dog, who, when given a piece of bread that he did not care to eat, dropped it, and then, lying upon it, pretended to look all around with the most innocent air, as if wondering where it had fallen. Another case he speaks of is that of a terrier whose greatest pleasure it was to catch flies on the window panes. Nothing annoyed the animal more than to be laughed at when he missed his prey.

"In order to discover what he would do," says Grogs, "I purposely laughed immoderately each time he was unsuccessful, and the more I laughed the clumsier he grew."

"At last he was so unmistakably annoyed that, in his despair, he pretended to capture a fly, and made the appropriate movements of tongue and lips, finally rubbing his neck on the ground, as if to crush his victim; after which he regarded me with a triumphant air."

"So well had he played his little

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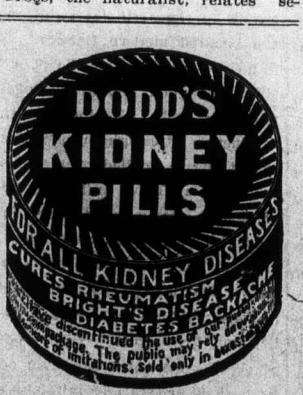
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By Order,
FRED. GELINAS,
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Department of Public Works,
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comedy that, had I not seen the very fly still on the window, I certainly would have been taken in by the trick. When I called his attention to the fact that the fly he had chased was still at large, and that there was no dead fly on the floor, he perfectly understood that his hypocrisy had been discovered, and was so ashamed that he slunk away and hid under a couch."

In every union there is a mystery—a certain invisible bond which must not be disturbed. This vital bond in friendship is esteem.—Amiel's Journal.