

cushions and push chairs back into their proper places.

"It isn't any fun at all if we can't 'magine things", pouted the boy, as he climbed down from the imaginary "tree" and helped Beth out from beneath the big armchair.

"Don't you think you could imagine something that would not cause others so much trouble, son?" replied mother, gently. "Ann is still cross because you bent her new toasting fork all out of shape when you imagined you were spearing salmon in the water-barrel yesterday; and it will be a long time before Uncle Jim is able to walk about on his sprained ankle, because some one forgot to put back the chair that made the barricade on the back stairs when you imagined yourself a besieged army last week."

Two rather shamefaced little people made their way out of the room when mother had finished speaking, and as she gathered up the last of the scattered toys and went to her darkened room to rest, Beth,—the usually silent Beth,—was holding forth to an audience of one in the back yard.

"P'raps we *could* 'magine other things", said Ralph at last, in answer to her suggestions, "but I'm sure it won't be much fun."

"Let's try", proposed Beth; so that is why, when mother awoke after a long nap, the headache gone, but still tired, she was surprised to find two quiet little people waiting to escort her downstairs to tea.

"We're the queen's bodyguard", explained Ralph, as he pompously walked down the stairs on one side of his mother, "and we've come to escort her to the banquet." Beth ran on ahead to put a cushion in the big armchair at the head of the table, and laughing, they all sat down.

Ralph's bump of imagination seemed to grow with wonderful rapidity, and the more matter-of-fact little Beth was always ready to follow out his wonderful ideas.

Mother smiled, but did not make any remark when, as a "special delivery boy", Ralph ran errands for the busy Ann and herself all the next week without the usual grumbling, or when Beth, her round eyes dancing, and looking as much like a "fairy queen" as was possible for a very substantial small girl, rode slowly past the window

and across the lawn in Ralph's express cart, holding carefully the troublesome Simpson baby from across the street, while tired Mrs. Simpson rested.

But when, on the very day of Dorothy Keen's birthday party, Beth woke with a sore throat that meant she must stay at home, a sturdy little figure in the doorway called out, "Never mind, Beth, I don't 'magine I'd enjoy the party so *very* much, so we'll have one of our own at home", mother took the little fellow into her arms, as she whispered: "Imagination is a splendid thing to have after all, isn't it, Ralph,—when we are quite sure that we have the right kind?"

Toronto

Play

By Professor O. J. Stevenson, D. P. ed.

Very many people, teachers as well as others, seem to have the idea that in order that a child may play to the best advantage, he must be provided with a multitude of ready-made, expensive toys. But if we stop to consider what play really is, we shall see that this idea is a mistaken one, and that there is a very serious danger in the abundance of ingenious mechanical devices which tempt the buyer at the overcrowded toy counter.

These mechanical toys may serve to amuse the child, but they do not give him a chance to play. Play is the expression of an inborn feeling, an instinct that prompts a child to do things,—to live over again the activities of his ancestors and to imitate the actions of those about him. It is as natural a thing at certain periods for children to want to build houses, to make clay pies, to weave straws and grasses, to play soldier and hunter, or to nurse dolls, as it is for them to breathe. It is through these simple constructive activities that the child comes to get control of himself and to learn for himself what the actions of others stand for. The mechanical toy does nothing to supply the material for this inner craving. It simply amuses the child, without calling forth his powers, and it is small wonder that, when the amusement ceases, the child tires of the so-called play. A pile of sand, a few empty