

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS.

BY AUNT BECKY.

Dear Boys and girls: The letters seem to be few from our little friends...

Your loving friend, AUNT BECKY.

Dear Aunt Becky: Now that the Christmas and New Years holidays have gone by...

ROSE.

Dear Aunt Becky: I am back at school after the holidays. I got a toboggan for a Christmas present...

JERRY.

Oshawa, Ont. Dear Aunt Becky: I am a little girl twelve years old. My home is in Gananoque...

GRETA.

MY LITTLE BOY FOR SALE. A mother was busy with her work one day, when her dear little boy with his toys...

COUNTRY GIRLS IN THE CITY. Is there absolutely no encouragement for the country girl who would come to the city?

THE CHILD-GIVER. The child who, without suggestion gives pennies to promote pious works...

intended for the collection plate, though willing to give with good grace to the Child in the Crib...

At the children's Mass in a certain church when a special collection was taken up hundreds of little ones gave their mite willingly...

But this is getting away from the little spendthrifts, the lovable things whose small pockets would burn if a penny remained in them...

CHILDREN'S WITTICISMS.

THE INDICATOR. A very little girl and a yellow dog wandered into one of the big department stores recently...

WHY JOHNNY ATE THEM. Mrs. Billus (after the company had gone)—Johnny, you shouldn't have eaten those preserved fruits...

WOULD MAKE SURE ABOUT THE SOAP. A little boy who had been blowing bubbles all the morning, tiring of play and suddenly growing serious...

THE BUTTERED SIDE. A woman who is a close observer of children was out walking in the country one day...

POPE PIUS' IRISH CASSOCK. The proprietors of a mill in Douglas, County Cork, Ireland, have received intimation that the Pope has accepted a cassock of fine white Irish cloth...

THE COST OF A MISSED LESSON.

One bright December afternoon Gladys Arthur burst into the library where her mother was writing letters...

It was several moments before Mrs. Arthur grasped the fact that Miss Palmer, whose school Gladys attended, had offered a prize to be given at the end of the year to the girl who excelled in French...

Her father was informed of the wonderful news when he came home to dinner; and to add to the general excitement, he promised Gladys that if she won the prize she might accompany him to Europe the following autumn...

While Gladys was gifted with great intelligence, she had some serious faults, among them that of leaving until another time things which should be done at once...

Her father and mother were by no means pleased with this halfway style of doing things, and Mr. Arthur had an object in view when he made Gladys so generous an offer...

For several months she succeeded admirably; but as spring advanced with its many pleasures Gladys grew careless. The change was gradual, but it was none the less real...

There was, however, one exception to this rule—a girl who was a great student, and who, although lacking much of the natural talent which Gladys possessed, was more persevering and studious...

Ethel was not so great a favorite as Gladys, and as soon as the prize was offered she spent even less time than usual with her companions...

Warm-hearted Gladys had more than once discovered that Ethel was hurt by the unconscious ill-treatment she received from the very girls who should have been her friends...

Ethel was a boarding-pupil, but not one of the day scholars had ever invited her to dinner or to tea at their homes, although these permissions were sometimes accorded...

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One morning in early May Gladys accepted an invitation to a picnic; and, thinking it best not to interfere, Mrs. Arthur left her daughter to her own decision...

Now it happened that on this very day Mademoiselle Monpert had discovered a serious error in the textbook; and as she had explained it carefully to the pupils, the French lesson was especially important...

When the morning of the 22nd of July dawned, and Gladys, arrayed in her pretty white dress, with her essay, tied with white satin ribbon, held tightly in one hand, walked down the broad avenue...

Mr. and Mrs. Arthur, with Gladys' younger brother Hal, were to drive to Miss Palmer's later, to meet the invited guests at two. Before that time the ranks of the different classes were to be read, for much depended on the year's work...

A short oral examination was then held in that all-important subject, the girls standing in line, and each having a question asked her in turn...

Ethel made no attempt to conceal her feelings, as she nervously fingered a drawing pencil she had found at the blackboard; yet there was no outward sign of the inward tumult raging in the girl's heart...

Both girls answered every question which was put to them, but at last something was asked which related to the lesson Gladys had missed...

The examination was soon over, and the girls walked back to their seats; but, although they were now free to do as they wished, Gladys' heart was too heavy to allow her to join in the fun...

Ethel felt that her hard-won victory had done her more harm than good, and she was right. Gladys' misery was too obvious to be gainsaid...

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"I do not deserve the prize, and the girl who does is Ethel Morgan. It does not belong to me, for I-I cheated. I was prompted, and I took advantage of it; for I was absent when Mademoiselle explained the points I failed on..."

Poor Gladys! Her voice faltered, but her father's arm was around her, and he gently drew her to a seat. There was a buzz of excitement, and the little velvet box was given to its rightful owner—Ethel Morgan...

Gladys and Ethel grew to be fast friends, and Ethel had no longer cause to complain of loneliness. Late one afternoon, several weeks after Commencement, when the two girls and Hal were sitting together in the twilight, Ethel asked suddenly: "Are you never sorry you told Mademoiselle, Gladys, and so lost your trip abroad?"

"No, Ethel dear, I am not sorry, because it would have been acting a lie if I-I had done anything else. I would not have enjoyed the trip—or anything else, for that matter—with a lie on my conscience..."

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