

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS.

BY AUNT BECKY.

Dear Boys and Girls:

Some little folks down by the sea are taking an interest in the children's page. It is gratifying to know that it is so much appreciated.

Your sincere friend, AUNT BECKY.

Dear Aunt Becky:

No doubt you will be surprised to hear from one of your friends so far away as Douglas, Ont., but as I was reading all the letters, I thought I would write to tell you about myself.

MARGUERITE.

Douglas, Ont. (Aunt Becky will be very much pleased to meet her little niece Marguerite.)

Dear Aunt Becky:

Perhaps you would like to hear from a little girl in Douglas. I have read all the letters since they started and I find them very interesting.

CELIA.

Dear Aunt Becky:

I am longing for Santa Claus to come. I hope he will bring me a coasting sleigh and a book. It is pretty cold here now and we are skating every day.

Your little friend, JACK.

Smith's Falls.

Dear Aunt Becky:

I am a little girl eight years old, and I like to read the letters on the children's page in your paper. We are having lots of fun since the snow has come.

Your friend, HATTIE.

Aylmer East.

Dear Aunt Becky:

We are hoping we will have a big

put away your dreams of greatness. You cannot succeed unless you are willing at every step to pay the price of success, and the price of success is dare.

HE FIGURED IT OUT.

"I've got an eight year old boy at home that will make either a metaphysician or a detective, I'm not sure which," remarked a lawyer as he entered his office the other morning.

"His mother thought the nurse might be confused, but she wasn't." "How do you know so much, Willie?" she asked.

OUR DOG SPOT.

There are few happier little dogs than Spot. He lives out in the country, where he can scamper to his heart's content along the shady lanes and over the green meadows.

But although Spot looks such a peaceful little bow-wow, he is, I am sorry to say, a great fighter, and gives his mistress a lot of trouble to keep him in order.

NORA.

I saw her first in New York as she tripped from the Atlantic liner, which had borne her from her Irish home in the shadow of Slieve-namon, to the land of her dreams.

And what a sweet face she had—so fresh, so tender, and so pure! What music could compare with the voice when the red lips opened, and the words issued forth in the soft brogue of Munster, from between two rows of pearly, glistening teeth?

Such is human nature. A great chance came to Maude that summer in fruit and in berry-picking. She saw it, and, though it was a way of thorns and pain and inconvenience, she was strong enough and brave enough to go ahead and win.

How shall it be with you? You have in you the making of a great woman, but have you the priceless dare of the great? Have you the lion heart? If you haven't, I want to tell you right now you had better

vital necessity she should keep cool in order to preserve it. Little Nora Murphy from Tipperary, as she looked up at it from her seat on her little trunk, thought to herself it was beautiful.

"I do not think, my dear, that your brother can come for you," said the lady; "so what you should do is to come along with me. My carriage is here waiting"—pointing to a cab in the distance—and as you have your brother's address, I will get my coachman to drive you to his place."

"Oh, nonsense," exclaimed the lady; "it would only delight me to be of service to you, and I could hardly sleep to-night if I thought of leaving you to go and look for your brother, alone and unprotected as you are."

She turned and found herself face to face with a pale-faced and over-worked priest, whose face wore a stern and angry look as he withdrew his hands from her garments, as if polluted.

"Come, child," said the priest, taking Nora Murphy by the hand. "I know your brother, and will keep you safe until he arrives." Then, turning to the other woman, he pointed with his finger, and uttered one word—"Go!"

THE MINIATURE.

How the Term Came to Mean a Very Small Portrait.

Miniature painting originated in the practice of illuminating manuscript books, when small pictures were introduced with the initial letters or upon the borders. These initial letters were usually printed in red, Latin minium; hence these small pictures were termed *miniatures*.

After the invention of printing and engraving this art entered upon a new phase. Copies in small or celebrated pictures were made, and the demand was particularly great for portraits, and so the term *miniature* came to mean a very small portrait.

SAYINGS OF THE CHILDREN.

Photography checked miniature painting for a time, but of late there has been a notable revival of the art. In olden time miniatures were often painted on vellum or on copper or silver plates. Now ivory is the medium commonly employed.

Mamma—I wonder if the carriage will ever be at the door? Alfred—Yes; it will be here pretty soon now, for I just saw Michael putting the suspenders on the horse.

A parent was examining his young first grade hopeful in geography. "What is land with water all round it called?" "An island."

"Then what is water with land all around it?" "After a pause—"A puddle."

Baby Harold came into the house, holding a dripping snowball. "You ought not to eat that, Harold," said his elder brother. "It might make you sick."

One morning four-year old Margie had pancakes and syrup for breakfast. After she had eaten the cakes there was some syrup left on her plate, and she said: "Mamma, please give me a spoon, my fork leaks."

"Jessie, I have told you again and again not to speak when older persons are talking, but wait until they stop." "I've tried that already, mamma. They never do stop."

THE FIRST BLESSING.

The young priest had celebrated his first Mass. The long procession of choristers and servers had wound into the sacristy. Presently the celebrant would come forth again that his hands might be kissed by the congregation, who sat meanwhile in a hush of expectancy, touched into unwonted stillness by the solemnity of the occasion.

In the front seat in the nave sat the young priest's mother, clasping and unclasping her nervous fingers, dazed with unearthly happiness in this the supreme moment of her life. Like Simeon she could have sung joyfully "Nunc Dimittis," now that her eyes had seen the glorious consummation of a quarter of a century's hopes, labors, yearnings and desires.

In the opposite bench sat a tall, proud-looking man in late middle life. Black brows marked a face of clear pallor; hair and beard, once jet-black, too, were almost white. He sat very erect, as was his wont, and stared hard at the sunlit altar, and his heart was heavy with the thought that no son of his would ever stand there robed for the Holy Sacrifice.

THE TWO-HEADED SNAKE.

A Boa Constrictor That Has a Very Deceptive Tail.

Every now and then some traveller tells of a two-headed snake which exists in Egypt, and whenever the narrator hasn't seen the snake himself, he is more or less disposed to assert there really is a snake with two heads in Egypt, because he has been told about it by many reliable persons.

Indeed, sometimes a traveller who has actually caught a glimpse of the snake is likely to declare that it truly is two headed, for the serpent certainly appears to be so when seen only by chance.

The two-headed snake is not a poisonous serpent. It is only a boa constrictor, and it is fairly common. But it is so secretive that it hides away in its sandy burrows almost constantly. It is strangely formed in so far that its tail, instead of tapering off to a point as the tails of other snakes do, widens out into a bludgeon shape, thus making it look so utterly unlike a tail that it is almost impossible to think it is anything but a head when the snake is seen only for a moment.

"My!" said the first boy, "don't the teacher ketch you an' punish you quick? It wuz just like lightning." "No, it wuzn't like lightning," replied the victim. "He hit too often in one place."