

## OUR BOYS AND GIRLS

BY AUNT BECKY.

Dear Girls and Boys:

Our numbers seem to be keeping up and now that school closing will be so soon my girls and boys will have no excuse for not writing to me. I am pleased to learn that Joseph is a great deal better. I hope he will be able to go to Ste. Anne de Beaupre this summer. Annie O.N. seems to take real pleasure in writing. I am so glad that she and her brother did not take the birds' nests they discovered. That is about the meanest thing to do. Just think what sorrow the poor little mother bird must feel when she returns to the tree top and finds that the tiny nest she was so diligent in building had been taken away. Clare B. has quite a nice little family of turkeys and goslings. Agnes McC. is braver than I would be in a thunder storm, which is a pet terror of mine. She says they were all out in a bad storm but did not mind it. Too bad Fred B. does not go to school regularly; but he says he has to stay at home to help in the fields. I am sure Winnifred D. would be delighted to see Winnifred E. and the other cousins. She has not written lately. Poor little girl, I am sure we all hope she is getting better and are anxiously awaiting news from her. Mary D. takes pride in the renovation of her church. It must, indeed, look very well. John D. sends his first letter. He has a very fair number of studies for a little boy of his age. There are some names missing. Which ones are they?

Your loving,  
AUNT BECKY.

Dear Aunt Becky:

As my two brothers have written to you I thought I would write also and tell how I am getting along. I don't go to school much in the summer. I have to stay home and help my father in the fields. We had bad thunder and lightning storms this year already. We only have three more weeks to go to school and it will be holidays. Then we can go to the river fishing. This last week there has been a concert in the village and I was down one night but did not win any prize.

Your loving nephew,  
FRED B.

Lonsdale, Ont.

Dear Aunt Becky:

I am going to tell you I have fifteen little turkeys and I have four more little goslings. So you see I am having better luck. We had a heavy storm last night. We were going to plant potatoes to-day, but it was so wet we could not plant them, but to-morrow they will plant them. I guess this is all for this time.

Your loving nephew,  
CLARE B.

Lonsdale, Ont.

Dear Aunt Becky:

How nice it is when the time comes every week to write to the corner. We are going out to church to-morrow to be examined in catechism for first Communion. When we come home from school we have to do our home work and then get the cows. As we are coming home with the cows we look for bird's nests. My brother found three birds nests yesterday evening and twelve eggs, but we did not disturb them. We are expecting the inspector at our school every day. The grain is growing nicely now and the birds are singing happily in the air. There is a baby show every night this week in Lonsdale a mile from our place. Which ever baby gets the most votes will get a set of dishes of forty pieces for a prize. I like when it is vacation, for when it is hot we can sit in the shade. Well, Auntie, I guess I will say good-bye for this time.

Your loving niece,  
ANNIE O.N.

Lonsdale, Ont.

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Dear Aunt Becky:

As this is a beautiful day I thought I would write you another letter. All the boys and girls who are going to get first communion here are going out to church Saturday to be examined. I was to a show last night in Lonsdale. It was there all week so far and will be there some of next week. It was thundering and lightning when we were there but we did not mind it. It is free every night. There are prizes given to the baby who gets the most votes. There are about five babies in the contest. There was a prize last night given to the homeliest man, and one to-night for the laziest. There was one given Wednesday night for the boy who could eat pie the fastest, and one Tuesday night for the boy who put on his boots first. There was no prize yet for the girls, but I think there will be one to-night or to-morrow night. Good-bye.

Your loving niece,  
AGNES McC.

Lonsdale, Ont.

Dear Aunt Becky:

I am feeling much better this week. The farmers around here are nearly all done sowing and planting. Grass and grain look well. The vegetables in the garden are going well, too. Our goslings are growing fast; the old geese take them down to a brook that is in the pasture not very far from the barn and come back in the evening. The convent closes 25th of this month. I will be so glad for my sisters will be at home with me then all the time. If I get strong enough this summer I will go on a pilgrimage to Ste. Anne de Beaupre. I have been saving my pennies for St. Anthony's shrine of the South. I have one more card to fill then I will be a life member of the Union. We had a hard thunder storm last night; it did no damage in our neighborhood. Good-bye for this time.

Your nephew,  
JOSEPH.

Granby, June 9.

Dear Aunt Becky:

How many new cousins we are getting. I am very sorry for the other Winnifred D. I am sure she must be lonesome in the hospital. If she were near me, how glad I should be to go see her every day. I wish she could have some of our lovely flowers. We have about fifty kinds. I like to sit in the front garden and sew where I can watch the flowers and hear so many birds singing. I think we never had so many sweet singing birds as we have this year. Every night a whip-poor-will comes near our home. When you come to see Joseph and Kit, will you not come and see us too. Good-bye.

Winnifred A. E.  
Warden, Que.

Dear Aunt Becky:

It is a lovely day and I have just come from church. Such a sweet little church we have. It has been painted and made to look ever so nice. We have trees in front of it and very nice walks on all sides. How I wish you could see it. I visited the cemetery to-day and prayed at mamma's grave. It is a nice quiet place, but I always feel sad when I see all these great monuments which mark the homes of our dear ones. When you come to see us we will show you our cemetery and church, our school and our home, but now good-bye.

From your affectionate niece,  
MARY E. D.

Warden, Que.

Dear Aunt Becky:

Papa takes the True Witness and I like to read the letters in it so I thought I would write one too. I have three brothers, Richard, Bernard and James. I am nearly nine years old. I go to school. Our teacher's name is Miss Feeny. I study Catechism, geography, arithmetic and reading and writing. We have a nice little colt. We call it Bessie. As this is the first letter I have written I have not much news. So good-bye.

Your nephew,  
JOHN J. D.

New Erin, Que.

ONE, TWO, THREE.

It was an old, old, old, old lady. And a boy that was half-past three And the way they played together Was beautiful to see.

She couldn't go running and jumping. And the boy, no more could he; For he was a thin little fellow, With a thin little twisted knee.

They sat in the yellow twilight, Out under the maple tree; And the game they played I'll tell you, Just as it was told to me.

It was wide and go seek they were playing, Though you'd never have known it to be— With an old, old, old, old lady, And the boy with the twisted knee.

The boy would bend his face down On his one little sound right knee, And he'd guess where she was hiding, In guesses one, two, three!

"You are in the china closet!" He would cry and laugh with glee— It wasn't the china closet, But he still had two and three.

"You are up in papa's bedroom, In the chest with the queer old key!" And she said: "you are warm and warmer, But you're not quite right," said she.

"It can't be the little cupboard Where mamma's things used to be— So it must be the clothespress, gran'ma!" And he found her with his three.

Then she covered her face with her fingers, That were wrinkled and white and wee, And she guessed where the boy was hiding, With a one, and a two and a three.

And they never had stirred from their places, Right under the maple tree— This old, old, old, old lady, And the boy with the lame little knee—

This dear, dear, dear old lady, And the boy who was half past three. —H. C. Bunner.

MADGE'S FUDGE.

Tilly had finished her work and gone upstairs for the night. The kitchen table had been scrubbed until it was as white as snow, the floor was spotless. That was the way Tilly always kept it.

"I wonder if there's any fire," remarked Madge in the sitting-room, pushing her algebra back. "If there is, I believe I'll make some fudge."

"Do," said grandma, smiling from her easy-chair. "You make it better than anyone I know."

Madge went over and kissed the wrinkled cheek. "Grandma," she cried merrily, "is it possible, really possible, that you, with a big granddaught like myself, own to weakness for fudge?"

Grandma laughed. "Yes, I'll confess, Madge," she answered smilingly. "I'll make it, then," said Madge. "that is, if there's any fire."

There were only these two, Madge and grandma, and how they did love one another! Seventy and seventeen, and yet they were such good comrades.

There was a fire, for Tilly, like the thrifty little maiden she was, had closed the drafts, and there was a good hot bed of coals.

"Oh, I don't care about the party at all now," she said happily. "If you only like me, I shan't be, I'm some any more."

"I more than like you," answered Madge. "I love you, Tilly."

And though there were tears in Tilly's eyes, they were tears of joy, for Tilly's good times had begun.

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"Tilly's a treasure," said Madge, as she measured the sugar. "There's a fine fire, grandma."

Grandma had risen and came into the kitchen, too.

"Isn't she!" she answered in a pleased voice as she looked about, "so faithful and honest, and, indeed, everything that is good."

"I wish, Madge," she added thoughtfully, "that you'd let her know you appreciate her just a little dear. Young people are apt to be thoughtless, and I want my Madge to grow up straight for God, and in doing that, it includes a great many things—kindness, patience, unselfishness toward everyone about us, whether high or low."

"But, grandma, I never said anything to her," protested Madge, quickly.

"Ah," protested grandma, "that is just the trouble, dearest. She took such pains with your shirt-waists last week, yet you never thanked her. She made you your favorite pudding yesterday, but you forgot to tell her how you enjoyed it. She swept your room for you on Friday, but you remember you did not tell her how well it was done. Remember, dear, that though Tilly works for a living, she is but little older than you. Only a girl, too."

And though you are so differently situated, yet the cases might have been reversed. Put yourself once in a while in her place, dear, and imagine how you would feel. And, Madge, she is as fond of you as possible. I wish you could have seen her face when you came down dressed for the party at Wallace's last week. It was so full of admiration and love. It quite surprised me. Perhaps, dear, when you think of it, you will try to be a little kinder."

Madge was stirring her fudge energetically, but her face was thoughtful. "I will, grandma," she cried earnestly; "and to prove it to you, I'll take her up some candy as soon as it is done."

Madge was as good as her word. Armed with a little china plate full of her own delicious fudge, she mounted the steep steps to Tilly's room. She knocked.

There was a moment of silence, then Tilly opened the door.

Madge gasped, for Tilly was arrayed in an old white dress, a blue bow peeped coquettishly from out the soft, pretty hair, and there were slippers on the small feet, and about her neck was a circlet of beads.

"Why, Tilly," cried Madge, "are you going out?" "I didn't know it," Tilly blushed. "No," she answered. "I just thought I'd see how I looked dressed up like you were the other night for the party, you know. I never thought of you coming up to my room to find me out."

"I don't go any place, you know, and it came to me that I'd like to know, for once, how it felt to be pretty and happy, like you, and have things, and go to parties. Mother's dead, and I've always had to work, but it's hard, sometimes, though I do try to do my work well."

Madge reached impulsively and took the rough little hand.

"My mother is dead, too, Tilly," she said softly, "and I know just how it feels—that part of it, I mean. And as to the work, you're the best little worker in the world. Grandma and I were talking about it only this evening. Tilly, perhaps I never said so, but I do appreciate all you do for me, even if I don't show it. And, Tilly, I've brought you up some fudge, and after this I'm going to do better to you. You shall have my ticket to the concert for next week. And Tilly—"

"Yes," for Tilly's eyes were shining.

"I've a much prettier white dress than that. Since you like white so well, you shall have it. And some time, Tilly, I hope you can go to a party in reality, instead of just pretending," Tilly smiled.

"Oh, I don't care about the party at all now," she said happily. "If you only like me, I shan't be, I'm some any more."

"I more than like you," answered Madge. "I love you, Tilly."

And though there were tears in Tilly's eyes, they were tears of joy, for Tilly's good times had begun.

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WHEN TO CRY.

There are millions of little boys and girls in the world who want to do just the right thing, and the very best thing, says Mary Elizabeth Stone, in one of the children's magazines. But they do not always know what just the right thing is, and sometimes they cannot tell the very best thing from the very worst thing.

Now I have often thought that there are little boys and girls who cry, now and then, at the wrong time; and I have asked many of the

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older people, but none of them could tell me the best time to cry.

But the other day I met a man older and wiser than any of the rest. He was very old and very wise, and he told me this:

"It is bad luck to cry on Monday. To cry on Tuesday makes red eyes."

"Crying on Wednesday is bad for children's heads and for the heads of older people."

"It is said that, if a child begins to cry on Thursday, he will find it hard to stop."

"It is not best for children to cry on Friday. It makes them unhappy. Never cry on Saturday. It is too busy a day."

"Tears shed on Sunday are salt and bitter."

"Children should on no account cry at night. The nights are for sleep."

"They may cry whenever else they please, but not at any of these times, unless it is for something serious."

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AT THE BLACKSMITH'S.

"Say, Mister Blacksmith, I have come; I'm Ethel. Do you see? I've brought my shoe—that's got all torn— To have you mend for me. For papa says he'd rather have (You shoe our Mollie horse Than anybody else; so you Can mend a shoe, of course!"

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