

Our Boys and Girls

IF I WERE YOU.

By Etheldred Rose.

"If I were you," said Elberta, "I wouldn't let my temper go like that."

"You don't know what you would do if you were I," her sister answered impatiently; then added wistfully, "it's easier for you to be good than it is for me."

And maybe it was. No spyglass ever has been invented which would show one person the inside of another person's mind. The nearest approach to it is the spyglass called imagination, yet some people who would tell you if you asked them, that they have the liveliest imagination, fail miserably when this is the picture they ask it to paint.

"If I were you," or "if I were in her place," is on our lips very often, and that shows at least that we are trying to think how it feels to be the other person. "If I were Alice, I would not wear such a dowdy hat. Her father is able to buy her another," says one girl. She has at least tried to understand, for she has thought about Alice's purse before she spoke. But she did not know that Alice's father's money is tied up in some houses which he cannot sell, and that Alice and all the family are trying loyally to help him not to fail in his business until better times come.

"If I were you, I'd go in for basket ball, and get some muscle," said vigorous Jane to slender Martha. She does not know about that weak heart, which has kept Martha out of active games all her life, although her whole being longs for them. One of the most difficult feats a healthy girl can ask of her imagination is to teach her sympathy with a girl who is sickly. "You could if you only thought you could," she says impatiently. With every muscle in trim and her whole being a thrill with vitality, what can she guess of the tortures of the girl who suffers a severe headache for the least overstudy, and drags heavy feet through the way that is a mere step to her?

It would be easier to keep the Golden Rule, and do to others what we would that they should do to us, if we could always be sure of putting ourselves in their places and knowing what "we would." Not any of us can do this without a mistake now and then, but if we start out with a great fund of love and sympathy in our hearts we shall come near to the truth. There is so often that little something we do not know about in the other person's life that we may safely make allowance for it and touch gently the spot which may be sore. As we grow older, we, too, shall suffer more defeats and make more mistakes, so that we shall grow more sympathetic with others; but even now we may give a little prayer for sympathy before we say, "If I were you."—Selected.

I THINK I CAN.

By Helen Argyle.

The engineer didn't know what on earth to do. He was not half way through his journey and the engine simply refused to go a bit further. The engine said it had been working so hard that it had a hot box and couldn't go any more. But it was very important for the train to be carried on, so the engineer went up to a great big new engine and asked it to help him take the train to the end of the jour-

ney. He told this engine how his own engine had worked so hard coming up the mountain that it was all worn out and needed a little rest.

But this big new engine said, "I'VE DONE ONE DAY'S WORK, I'VE DONE ONE DAY'S WORK."

Nearby was a little engine that was used to going on all sorts of little journeys and used to helping other people out of trouble, and this time it wanted so much to help the man because he looked so worried. The little engine knew it must be very important to get that train to the end of its journey.

"I wish he'd let me try," said the little engine.

The engineer came nearer and the little engine puffed away,

"Let me, let me."

Then the engineer saw the little engine and thought he'd have to ask it, but he hardly expected any help. "Can you help little engine?"

Quickly and cheerily the little engine answered,

"I think I can! I think—I can."

Away it went, working very hard to pull the big heavy train. All the way it sang,

"I think—I can! I think—I can! I think—I can!"

On and on it went working and singing all the way

"I think—I can! I think—I can!"

When it got to the end of its journey it was very tired and very warm, but very happy. It had changed its song. Now it sang,

"I thought I could! I thought I could!"

Don't you think that was a nice little engine and don't you think it went about helping some one else in a very good way? Ever try it yourself? Suppose you try playing engine this way and see what a good game it is.

WHY THE EVERGREEN TREES KEEP THEIR LEAVES IN WINTER.

One day, a long, long time ago, it was very cold; winter was coming. And all the birds flew away to the warm South, to wait for the spring. But one little bird had a broken wing and could not fly. He did not know what to do.

"Perhaps the trees will keep me warm through the winter," he said.

So he went to the edge of the forest hopping and fluttering with his broken wing. The first tree he came to was a slim silver birch.

"Beautiful birch-tree," he said. "Will you let me live in your warm branches until the springtime comes?"

"Dear me!" said the birch tree, "what a thing to ask! I have to take care of my own leaves through the winter; that is enough for me. Go away."

The little bird hopped and fluttered with his broken wing until he came to the next tree. It was a great, big oak tree.

"O big oak tree," said the little bird, "will you let me live in your warm branches until the springtime comes?"

"Dear me," said the oak tree. "If you stay in my branches all winter you will be eating my acorns. Go away."

So the little bird hopped and fluttered till he came to the willow tree by the edge of the brook.

"O beautiful willow tree," said the little bird, "will you let me live in your warm branches until the springtime comes?"

"No, indeed," said the willow tree; "I never speak to strangers. Go away."

The poor little bird did not know where to go. Pretty soon the spruce tree saw him, and said, "Where are you going, little bird?"

"I do not know," said the bird; "the trees will not let me live with them, and my wing is broken so that I cannot fly."

"You may live on one of my branches," said the spruce; "here is the warmest one of all."

"But may I stay all winter?"

"Yes," said the spruce; "I shall like to have you."

The pine tree, which stood beside the spruce, said, "My branches are not very warm, but I can keep the wind off."

So the little bird fluttered up into the warm branch of the spruce, and the pine tree kept the wind off his house; then the juniper tree saw what was going on, and said that she would give the little bird his dinner all winter, from her juniper berries.

The little bird was very comfortable in his warm nest sheltered from the wind, with juniper berries to eat.

The trees at the edge of the forest saw it all.

"I wouldn't take care of a strange bird," said the birch.

"I wouldn't risk my acorns," said the oak.

"I would not speak to strangers," said the willow. And the three trees stood up very tall and proud.

That night the North Wind came to the woods to play. He puffed at the leaves with his icy breath, and every leaf he touched fell to the ground.

"May I touch every leaf?" he said to his father, the Frost King.

"No," said the Frost King, "the trees which were kind to the bird with the broken wing may keep their leaves."

So the North Wind had to leave them alone, and the spruce, the pine, and the juniper tree kept their leaves all winter. And they have done it ever since.—Selected.

HOW TO CARE FOR GUINEA PIGS.

Before I tell you how to care for a guinea pig, let's find out something about his history. In the first place, he isn't a pig at all, and he doesn't come from Guinea. (Do you know where Guinea is?) The guinea pig really belongs to the rabbit family, and he comes from South America. Years ago, before Columbus set sail for the Indies, a tribe of South American Indians, called the Incas, kept guinea pigs for pets—and ate them, too!

Perhaps you will not care to eat your guinea pigs, but you will want to make friends with these queer little squeaky animals, anyway. Dealers in guinea pigs will show you four kinds to select from: English, Angora, Abyssinian, and Peruvian. Each of these varieties has a number of different colors. The English is short haired, the Angora has long straight hair, the Abyssinian has long curly hair, and the Peruvian has such long hair that you cannot tell which end is his head and which his tail. Sometimes guinea pigs are called cavies. Remember that "cavy" is just a new name for our old friend the guinea pig.

Guinea pigs cannot stand the cold, so you must keep them in some room where the temperature never goes below the freezing point. The size of their house will depend upon the number that you have. If you have only one guinea pig, a box a foot square will do, but if you have two or more, a larger box is needed.