...Our Boys and Girls...

EDITED BY AUNT BUSY.

This department is conducted solely in the interests of our girl and boy readers.
Aunt Busy is glad to hear any time from the nieces and nephews who read this page, and to give them all the advice and help in her power.
Write on one side of the paper only.
Do not have letters too long.
Original stories and verses will be gladly received and carefully edited.
The manuscripts of contributions not accepted will be returned.
Address all letters to Aunt Busy, Intermountain Catholic, Salt Lake City.

Ethel May's Reward.

(By Maud Walker.)

There were three of the Anderson children, Gracie, aged 15; Jack, aged 13; Ethel May, aged 11. And all three were spending the summer with an aged aunt in the country, on a beautiful farm near to a small and interesting village.

As the Anderson children's home was in a very large eastern city, they found a great deal of pleasure, and many surprises in the country. There seemed no end to the variety of sights and sounds. There were the domestic animals, fowls in the barnyard, the fields, gardens, meadows, woods and hills. And then there were the brooks and ponds, full of fish, the meadows and woods full of birds and noisome insects.

One day during the last week of May the children's Aunt Mary called them to her, on the big front saying: "My old friend, Mrs. Jones, just called me by phone this morning and says she is arranging a picnic in the woods for her grandchildren, who are visiting her from the city, and she begs me to allow you three youngsters to be of her company. Would you enjoy a picnic the day after tomorrow?"

"Oh, yes, Auntie," exclaimed all three children. Then one spoke at a time: "I don't think there'd be anything nicer, Aunt Mary, than a picnic in the wild woods." So spoke Gracie. "Oh, I'll take along my fishing tackle, and fetch home enough finnies for dinner," cried aJck. "And I think it would be perfectly splendid," agreed Ethel May. "I do love a picnic more than anything."

"Then all be prepared to start at 9 o'clock on the day after tomorrow," said Aunt Mary. "I'll see that a fine luncheon is prepared for you to carry with you. John, our man, will take you in the carriage to Mrs. Jones' house. From there you'll go afoot to the woods—which is only a mile distant from Mrs. Jones' place."

Of course, the children talked of nothing else all that day, except the coming picnic in the woods. They had never enjoyed a country picnic, and this one held much pleasure for them.

On the day of the picnic theAn derson children were ready to start to the home of Mrs. Jones long before John had the carriages in readiness. And their baskets were filled with luncheon, the very best that Aunt Mary's fine old colored cook could prepare.

It was wanting a quarter of an hour till 9—the time set for starting—when Jane, the housemaid, called to Gracie: "Come to your aunt's room at once, Miss. She's taken suddenly ill."

Gracie, accompanied by her brother and sister, ran upstairs to Aunt Mary's room and found that good old lady lying on her bed very pale and ill-looking. After a few inquiries Aunt Mary explained that she had been very miserable all night, but that she had tried to dress in order to come down and see the children off for their day's outing; but she had become so faint that she was obliged to lie down, and to call to Jane to come to her assistance. "I have asked her to phone to my doctor, who lives in the village, and he'll be here within an hour. I am sorry to have spoiled your starting, children, dear." So spoke old Aunt Mary.

"But shall we go to the picnic?" asked Ethel May, solicitously. "I don't think we should leave aunty when she is ill."

A cloud passed over Gracie's face. It was plain she did not wish to be disappointed in the picnic. She turned toward Jack, who stood looking his displeasure at Ethel May for having made such a blunder. He, too, did not wish to remain away from the picnic. Then he spoke up:

"I really don't see what we kids could do for Aunt Mary. There is Jane to wait on her, and the doctor will be here directly. I think we'd better go to the picnic, for Mrs. Jones and the Jones kids will be looking for us."

"Yes," said Gracie, adding her argument to Jack's; "Auntie will be well cared for by Jane and the doctor. We—as Jack says—can be of no use to her. We'll be in the way, only."

Ethel May's face reddened, and she turned a sharp look on her brother and sister: "Well," she said, "we may not be of any use as far as waiting on Auntie is concerned, but we can be company for her, and try to cheer her up. I, for one, won't leave her while she's ill.".

Aunt Mary put out her hand and touched Ethel May's hair gently. "Dear little girlie," she said feebly. "You shall not sacrifice your day for me. I shall get on very well with Jane to nurse me. And as Jack and Gracie are so anxious to go to the picnic, I would not for the world detain them here. No, all of you go. And it is time you were off. John is at the gate now with the carriage."

"Well, Aunt Mary, I hope you'll be O. K. when we get home this evening," exclaimed Jack, hurrying from the room. "I'll get the luncheon baskets in the carriage, girls, while you are getting on your jackets and hats. But hurry."

"All right, Jack, we'll follow immediately," called out Gracie. Then, stooping, she kissed her old aunt's cheek. "Good-bye, Auntie!" she said. "I hope you'll be well soon. The doctor will fix you up all right, I'm sure. Come, Ethel May, don't stand there and worry Aunt Mary. I fancy she wants to be left alone. Come." And Gracie was off down the stairs like a flash, all thought of the aged, sick aunt banished as she saw the carriage waiting at the gate.

"Why don't you go, child?" asked Aunt Mary, turning to Ethel May, who still lingered in her room.

"Because, Auntie, I just can't go off and leave you sick in bed. And I wouldn't enjoy the picnic were I to go ,knowing you were here alone and ill. I know just how Jane will do. She'll come to you when called and perform just the little errands you require of her. Then she'll hurry down to the kitchen to gossip to the cook and the gardener. I know her, and the other servants, too. They'll neglect you. So I mean to stay and look after you."

Tears trickled down old Aunt Mary's cheeks, and she caught Ethel's hands in her own and pressed them tenderly, saying, "Thank you, dearie. It is sweet to have some one with you who loves you. Servants want only money. You stay with me because—"

"Because you are the dearest old Auntie in the world, and I love you," declared Ethel May. "And now I shall see about making you more comfortable." And the little miss soon had her auntie in a loose robe and back into bed, where the pillows were xed just right, and the window shades were so adjusted that the morning sun and air came into the room but did not fall on the bed. Then, running to the garden, Ethel May picked a bouquet of roses and placed them in a vase of water near to her aunt's bed.

The doctor came and found Aunt Mary feeble and "run down," as he expressed it. Nothing serious, but a sort of breakdown. He advised a change of scene and climate.

"How would California do?" asked Aunt Mary. "I've long thought of making a nice trip there."

"Just the place, my dear woman," declared the doctor. "And go as soon as you are a bit stronger. You'll be able to start next week."

After the doctor had departed, Aunt Mary turned to Ethel May, saying: "You and I will start for California this day week, dear. So you may make your plans accordingly. I'll write your parents to have you accompany me on this enjoyable trip."

"And brother and sister—will you take them, too?" asked unselsh Ethel May.

Aunt Mary shook her head. "No, childie, only you shall go with me. You have proven your unselfishness this day, and deserve a reward. It shall be in the form of a visit to all parts of interest on the Pacific coast as far as we can go and remain in our own country. And maybe next year we'll go to Old Mexico—you and I. You see, dearie, love—disinterested love—is a rare thing, and when one finds it, as I have found it in you today, one must value it dearer than all else. In future you shall be my dearest one, and I shall try to repay you for your sweet, youthful devotion and self-sacrificing kindness."

And Ethel May's Aunt Mary kept her word, and that time next week found them driving to the railroad station in the village, where they would take the train for the great and glorious west. And Jack and Gracie returned home to the city, and had ample time to ponder over why Ethel May should be taken and they left behind.

To Daddy.

I've had a sweetheart "true as steel"
Since I a child was wont to kneel
Beside my tiny bed of white
To lisp my prayer at close of night,
'Twas Daddy.

Along this borderland there grew
Red roses wet with pearls of dew.
I wished to pluck them, sweet and rare;
I gathered them with tender care
For Daddy.

Within his steadfast heart alway
These roses lived from day to day.
Through years of sun and storm and woe
This one dear knight hath loved me so—
Dear Daddy.

Now distance weaves a lengthened screen
This loyal knight and me between;
But white-winged messengers come oft
To fill my heart with music soft—
From Daddy.

The sun, the moon, the stars, the sky,
The flowers, the birds in passing by,
The clouds that dim the air with rain,
All speak within this deathless chain—
Of Daddy.

Ella Rall.

TRILL'S EXCURSION.

Herman was going to Virginia with his father and mother, and he was talking about it to his friend, Karl.

"The only thing that makes me sorry to go is that I don't know what to do with Trill, my canary.

"Why can't he stay with me?" asked Karl. "I'd like to take care of him."

"Should you really?" cried Herman. "He makes a good deal of trouble, you know. I don't mind, because I love him; but he has to have a bath every morning, and fresh seed and water. And it is quite a little job to clean his cage and do it all. I'm afraid you wouldn't like that part of it." He watched his friend's face anxiously.

"Oh, I'd just as lief!" answered Karl. "He is such a beautiful singer I'd love to have him here."

So Trill came over to stay with Karl, and his cage was hung up in the dining room.

"One of these hooks that fastens the bottom of the cage on," explained Herman, "is a little loose; so you have to be very careful to twist it this way, or Trill might get out. You will be sure to remember, won't you?"

"Of course I will," promised Karl.

Karl felt quite important with his little charge; but he was not used to having the care of pets, and after a few days his mother had to remind him of his duties. Otherwise Trill mght have gone hungry or thirsty. But Karl had meant to be a good master, never allowing the other children to tease or annoy the bird by sticking their fingers into the cage for the fun of seeing him ruffle his feathers and fly at them with his sharp bill.

"Herman won't let anybody do it," Karl argued. "He says it isn't kind to him, and I 'm going to take just as good care of him as Herman does."

But one morning Karl was in a great hurry when he gave Trill his bath, and as soon as it was over he put the cage together, fastening on the bottom without heeding the warning which Herman had given him. Then he raced off, and did not return to the dining room for half an hour or more. When he did go he glanced up at the cage and was dismayed to see the bottom hanging by one side—and Trill was gone! Looking wildly around the room, he discovered an open window, and his heart sank. The bird was lost! He rushed across the room and spied a bit of yellow up in the maple tree near by—yes, it was Trill.

He set the empty cage in the window, calling to the bird in his most coaxing tones; but Trill did not come. Instead, he flew to the tree beyond.

"Oh, mama, mama!" screamed Karl, "Trill's lost! Come, help me catch him!" But mama was not within hearing and, snatching the cage, he ran with it out on the street, under the tree where Trill was hopping about. He put the cage on the ground and at a distance watched the bird.

Several people joined him and Trill lifted his wings and flew across the street to a maple tree.

Karl followed with the cage, and tried to keep track of him as he fluttered about in the thick foliage. But all at once the bird could not be seen, and although Karl watched and watched the trees he did not catch sight of him again. Karl went in to dinner, leaving the cage on the piazza, in hopes that Trill would get hungry and return to his home. But it was still empty when the meal was over, and Karl went out on the street again, calling the bird by name.

After a while he went into the house, and upstairs to his own room. As he opened the door he heard a soft whir of wings and then—there was Trill perched on the top of the bureau!

The window went down with a thump, and it was not long before the bird was safe in his cage.

"I guess I'll be careful after this!" cried Karl. "You won't get another excursion, Mr. Trill.—Emma C. Dowd.

IMPRESSIONS OLD AND NEW

(Continued from page 1.)

comfortable homes either with the Sisters of Charity or in establishments under government nurses, and old age pensions have long been established. These institutions are models of comfort, and where the home is broken up early, as is the case in Belgium, are very serviceable. The interests of Belgium are safeguarded by the powers; still she is bound by treaty to keep up an army of a certain strength, and this in time of peace consists of 60,000 men. She has recourse to conscription to obtain her soldiers and I believe that it is the custom of the government to give half the soldier's pay to his parents. Belgium is well off in the matter of education. She has numerous technical, industrial and engineering schools, with three first-class universities—Leige, Ghent, and the world-famous Louvain. I will write at further length about these universities in treating of the cities. The religion of Belgium is the Catholic. The bishops and priests are paid by the state. I cannot help thinking that the church would be far better separated from the state, for you always find the most virile church in these lands in which she is supported by the people. Belgium has a pretty fair system of railways, and these, especially the ones constructed along the public roads and running from village to village, are a great benefit to the country people. The government has control of the railways, which fact is a great matter for any country. The Belgian is like his neighbor, the Hollander. He is a silent, plodding personage, with the utmost conservatism for old manners and customs. They fought for their independence and gained it, and their country ever since it became free from the Dutch yoke has advanced by leaps and bounds. In the summer time the tourists from all lands is a great source of revenue to Belgium. It is a most interesting land for the visitor. Aptly called the "cock pit of Europe;" every city and village in it has a history; and what great names are connected with that little land! Julius Caesar, the grandson of Charlemagne; Charles V., owner at one time of half the world; Philip II. of Spain, Maria Theresa. Napoleon I., Blutcher and Wellington, and so many more. The visitor will find the people hospitable and courteous, and in the country there is a great amount of simplicity and piety still to be found, though in the cities the French element introduced of late years has done away with a great deal of that reverence for God and religion which so distinguished the Belgian of another day. The hotels are numerous and the accommodations are good. You will get your board at a very moderate price, and I believe there is no place else that you can spend a holiday at such little expense as in Belgium. In fact, many settle down altogether to live there because it is best suited to their moderate incomes. This is especially the case in the city of Bruges. You will find a great many English-speaking people living in that city. Having given my readers a general description of the country. I will now enter into particulars about the different sights and scenes to be met with in the principal cities, and next week I will begin with the now very fashionable and some would add very fast place, Ostend.

NAPPER TANDY.

WHERE TOM FOUND HIS MANNERS.

Tom's father was a rich man, and Tom lived in a large house in the country. He had a pony and many other pets, and wore fine clothes. Tom was very proud of all the fine things his father's money bought. He began to think that being rich was better than being good. He grew very rude, and was cross to the servants. Once he kicked Towser, but the dog growled and Tom was afraid to kick him again.

One day when Tom was playing in the yard he saw a boy standing at the gate. He was ragged and dirty, his hat was torn and his feet were bare. But he had a pleasant face. In one hand he carried a pail half full of blackberries.

"Go away from here," said Tom, running to the gate. "We are rich and we don't want ragged boys around."

"Please give me a drink," said the boy. "If you are rich you can spare me a dipper of water."

"We can't spare you anything," said Tom. "If you don't go away I will set the dogs on you."

The boy laughed and walked away, swinging the tin pail in his hand.

"I think I will get some blackberries, too," said Tom to himself. He went out the gate into a lane leading to a meadow where there were plenty of berries.

Tom saw some fine large ones growing just over a ditch. He thought he could leap over it very easily. He gave a run and a very big jump. The ditch was wider than he thought, and instead of going over it, he came down in the middle of it.

The mud was very thick and soft, and Tom sank down in it to his waist. He was very much frightened, and screamed for help. But he had not much hope that help would come, for he was a long way from any house.

He screamed until he was tired. He began to think he would have to spend the night in the ditch, when he heard steps on the grass. Looking up he saw the ragged boy he had driven from the gate.

"Please help me out," said Tom, crying. "I will give you a dollar."

"I don't want the dollar," said the boy, lying down flat on the grass. He held out both hands to Tom and drew him out of the ditch.

Tom was covered with mud, his hat was gone, and one shoe was lost in the ditch. He looked very miserable.

"Who is dirty now?" asked the boy.

"I am," said poor Tom; but I thank you very much for helping me out of the mire. And I am sorry I sent you away from the gate."

"Then next time I come perhaps you will treat me better," said the boy. "I am not rich, but I am stronger than you are, and I think I have better manners."

"I think so, too," said Tom.

The next day when Tom saw the boy going by the gate he called him in, showed him his rabbits, doves and little ducks, and gave him a ride on his pony.

"You have good manners now," said the boy.

"Yes," said Tom, "I found them in the ditch."
—Florence B. Hallowell, in Sunday Companion.

ASK THE PRICE.

A lesson had been given on the composition of minerals of different kinds, and, after it was finished the schoolmaster put a few questions to the class, to test how far they followed his teachings.

"Now, children," he said, "can any of you tell me what a diamond is?"

"Carbon," was the prompt reply that issued from every throat in the class.

"Yes," the teacher explained, "a diamond is pure carbon; but you must remember that coal is also carbon. That was taught in our lesson, wasn't it?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, then, how could you be sure to tell the difference between the two kinds of carbon?"

"Ask the price!" lustily piped a little fellow in the front seat, who will most likely make his mark in business some day.—Christian Register.