

Our Boys and Girls.

DON'T FORGET THE OLD FOLKS.

Nay, don't forget the old folks—
they've not forgotten you;
Though years have passed since you
were home, the old hearts still
are true;
And not an evening passes by they
haven't the desire
To see your faces once again and
hear your footsteps nigher.

You're young and buoyant, and for
you Hope beckons with her
hands,
And life spreads out a waveless sea
that laps but tropic strands;
The world is all before your face,
but let your memories turn
To where fond hearts still cherish
you and loving bosoms yearn.

No matter what your duties are nor
what your place in life,
There's never been a time they'd not
assume your load of strife;
And shrunken shoulders, trembling
hands, and forms racked by dis-
ease,
Would bravely dare the grave to
bring to you the pearl of peace.

So don't forget the old folks, boys—
they've not forgotten you;
Though years have passed since you
were home, the old hearts still
are true;
And write them now and then to
bring the light into their eyes,
And make the world glow once again
and bluer gleam the skies.
—Tennessee Farmer.

THE GREAT MARBLE.

BY MRS. F. M. HOWARD.

Mary Ellen loved marbles. She had a little yellow bag with a drawstring run into the hem, and she had more marbles in it than she could count, still she wanted more, and when her mother called her in to do an errand for her that one day she begged for a nickel to buy marbles with in payment.

"Run along fast then," said Mrs. Pierson, "for Nora is in a hurry for the raisins." Mary Ellen had on her pretty pink dress with the ruffles over the shoulders, and a hat with long sash ends which streamed out behind her when she ran, so she felt very good and obedient, and skipped away so briskly that the wind carried her hat ribbons out like banners.

She gave her orders at the grocer's, then went into the drug store where a large jar stood on the shelf, filled with marbles. Her nickel would buy five of the handsome glass ones which she liked, but as the druggist turned them out she found six that she was sure she must have, they were all so lovely.

"Which will you have?" asked the druggist. He was getting tired waiting for Mary Ellen to choose between the green marble and the pink mottled one which she held in her greedy little hand, and another customer was coming.

"Please, sir, I want them all," said Mary Ellen.

The druggist laughed, for he had a little girl at home of his own, "Pick out the five you like best sissy, and drop the other into the jar," he said as he tossed her nickel into the draw-

er, and went to wait on the other customer. She was all alone, and the two marbles looked more and more beautiful as she tried to choose between them. Four had already been slipped into her pocket, and but one more was honestly hers.

Poor Mary Ellen, she had never taken anything which did not belong to her in all her life before, but—oh, they were so pretty—and there was no one there to see—and she turned and fled from the store with a very red face and with six marbles in her pocket. It was a very unhappy little girl who went slowly into the pleasant sitting-room where mother was hemming the strings for her new white apron.

"Did you buy your marbles, Mary Ellen?"

"Yes, ma'am." All the marbles but one came out of her pocket.

"They are real pretty, but what ails you child? Does your head ache?"

"No, ma'am."

"Did you leave the order?"

"Yes, ma'am."

Mary Ellen went out to the barn and took the green marble from her pocket. It did not look nearly so green and pretty as it had in the store, and the little girl most heartily wished it was back there again, safe in the jar. A little girl friend came to visit her a few days later, and she gave it to her, hoping to lighten her mind of its trouble.

"Why," said the little friend in surprise, "It's the very prettiest one you have. I wouldn't think you would give it away."

"I don't care very much for it," replied Mary Ellen, with a thankful heart, as she saw it going into her friend's apron pocket. A week after the little friend came back with the marble.

"I guess I don't want it," she said. "It's always rolling away, and getting lost. I think it is homesick for you."

Mary Ellen tried to laugh at the funny idea, but with a very sick heart; she was again the unwilling owner of a green glass marble.

She tried to lose it, but some one would always come running with, "Here's your green marble, Mary Ellen," until she hated the very thought of it. Mr. Sanborn, the druggist, was a friend of Mr. and Mrs. Pierson, and often came to the house for a friendly call, and Mary Ellen had always liked him and enjoyed his visits. She saw him at the gate one day, and almost shrieked aloud, in her fear that he had come to complain to her mother of the wicked little girl who had come to his store and stolen a marble, and she slunk away as fast as she could and hid in the barn.

"Why, Mary Ellen, I was real ashamed of you," said mother after the caller had gone, and the guilty little girl had come in.

"Mr. Sanborn likes to hear you say your verses, and I wanted you to sing that nice little song for him which you had learned."

Mary Ellen hung her head, and made no reply. She could never sing for Mr. Sanborn again, she knew, with that naughty heart of hers throbbing so fast and hard, and after that she would go a block out of her way rather than meet him or pass his store.

Mrs. Pierson awoke one night in alarm. Mary Ellen was moaning and crying in her cot, her face flushed, her hands hot with fever. "Don't

take me to jail, please don't, Mr. Sanborn. I stole your marble, but here it is. The green one —" and then her heavy eyes opened to look up into her mother's anxious face.

"You will take it back to Mr. Sanborn, and tell him how sorry I am," she sobbed after the story of her naughty act was told, and all of the sorrow and shame it had cost her.

Mary Ellen was a very sick little girl for many days, and even after kind Mr. Sanborn had sent her a bag of cool, sweet oranges as a token of his entire forgiveness, the green marble haunted her dreams. She never cared to play with her marbles after she was well again, and never, never did she take anything which did not belong to her.—*Christian World.*

AUNT MARY & CO.

BY A. F. CALDWELL.

It was a late November afternoon and the light was waning. A few struggling sunbeams were "wearing themselves out" in the Reynolds's sitting room, trying to hold their own in their little playground under the table; but little by little they were relentlessly drawn nearer the low west window, till, with a last lingering presence, they were suddenly snatched away — who can tell where.

It was a delightfully cosy room, and what, to my mind, made it especially attractive, was not the tastily furnished interior, but the three merry children, grouped in a semicircle around Aunt Mary, who was housekeeper today, Mr. and Mrs. Reynolds having gone to the country to bring back Grandma Johnson for the winter.

"I think," and Aunt Mary had on that "guess look" which Mr. Reynolds had often declared fitted his sister Mary better than anything else she wore, "we ought to form a partnership — you three and myself — and call it —"

"Aunt Mary & Co.," interrupted Carl, eagerly. "Wouldn't that be fine with us three for junior partners!"

"Yes; that would be a good name for the firm," smiled Aunt Mary, "or it might be called the To Protect Character Co. How would that do?" "Tisn't so good as the other," exclaimed Beth and Ralph; "besides you aren't mentioned in it, and the founder's name shouldn't be left out."

"I don't quite understand your way of calling it, Aunt Mary," and the "pucker spot" was plainly visible on Carl's face. "To Protect Character Co. — what does it mean?"

"That I haven't explained," replied the senior partner, mysteriously. "Can any of you guess?"

"No!"

"I never could!"

"Nor I," and the three junior members of the new firm looked puzzled, indeed.

"Not if I give you a hint?"

"We might," said Carl, doubtfully, "but I don't know."

"What did Beth say — do you remember?—when Alice Brocton came in for the 'Harper's'?"

"I know," and Ralph raised his hand, as though he were in school. "That she never wore anything but that blue-checked gingham—and it's true, Aunt Mary, since, O, since — 'most long's I can remember!"

"Then I heard some one make an unnecessary remark, I thought, about a boy I'm not acquainted with — Jack Randolph, I believe."



To the Weary Dyspeptic.
We Ask this Question:

Why don't you remove
that weight at the pit of
the Stomach?

Why don't you regulate that
variable appetite, and condition the
digestive organs so that it will not
be necessary to starve the stomach
to avoid distress after eating.

The first step is to regulate the
bowels.

For this purpose
Burdock Blood Bitters
has no Equal.

It acts promptly and effectually
and permanently cures all derange-
ments of digestion. It cures Dys-
pepsia and the primary causes lead-
ing to it.

"I said he had a horrid way of
speaking. It's *justlikethis* — all to-
gether! But our company — aren't
we going to organize?" and Carl be-
gan to look anxious.

"Yes; and for just this reason,
dear, to keep us from saying dis-
agreeable and unnecessary things
about our acquaintances and friends.
That's why I thought To Protect
Character Co. a good name for our
little organization."

"O, I see now!"

"And I!"

"But I like the other name best,"
persisted Ralph.

"So do I; because you're in it,"
explained Beth. "May we not have
the Aunt Mary & Co.?"

"If you wish it, certainly. Now
that's decided, we want a corporation
by-law; perhaps one will be enough.
Let — me — see. Suppose we for-
mulate it somewhat like this: 'We,
joint members of the Aunt Mary Co.,
do hereby agree never hereafter to
make any remark derogatory to a
single person's character, or ways of
acting or doing; that we will not
only guard ourselves against such a
violation of good conduct, but will
use our influence, whenever possible,
to destroy the pernicious habit in
others.' Suppose we write it down."

"Then we can remember," said
Beth.

Carl ran into the library for pen
and ink.

"I think I have some cards up-
stairs, just about large enough for
our by-laws," and Aunt Mary went
up to see.

"Did you find them, Auntie," ask-
ed Beth.

"Yes, I have just enough. Now
suppose each one writes his own
and we'll all sign them — the four
members of the firm. Beth first."