

Our Boys and Girls.

GIVING.

I would not be a selfish child,
For early I was taught
To give a part of all I have,
As generous children ought,
Not keeping everything myself,
But sharing it with others.
So, when I had the whooping-cough,
I gave it to my brothers.

Last winter I was kept at home,
The doctor came each day.
We had a card outside our door
To warn our friends away.
No one might come to visit us;
Yet, doing what I could,
I gave my scarlet fever
To half the neighborhood.

And so it was with measles,
And so with chicken-pox.
I gave them to my little friends
On three surrounding blocks.
And now that we are well again,
It makes me laugh—ha! ha!—
To think that, when I had the mumps,
I gave them to papa!

—Harper's Bazar.

AUNT ANN'S TOAD.

BY ETHEL S. YOUNG.

Roy was in bed. He had been sent there for trying to throw a stone around a corner the way Charlie Brown did. How was Roy to know that the stone would break a window? Mamma would have believed him when he said he didn't mean to. Aunt Ann was not so gentle and patient as mamma, who had gone away for the summer.

It was past dinner time now, and little Nan was coming upstairs sobbing. She had played "be a chicken," and had tried to drink her milk by throwing her head far back, and making little fountains when she found she could not swallow comfortably. This behavior was too bad table manners to go unpunished. So Aunt Ann had promptly sent her to her room.

"Don't cry, Nannie," called Roy, soothingly. But the little girl, refusing to be comforted, crawled into bed and cried herself to sleep. Roy could see her through the half-open door; her tousled head of downy yellow curls making her look not unlike the chicken she had been imitating.

"Aunt Ann is too mean to live," thought Roy, sitting up and giving the pillow a hearty thump.

It was a warm afternoon. Roy turned and tossed in bed until he heard carriage wheels on the gravel. Looking out he saw Aunt Ann driving away. There was no one else in sight except Bess. She was sitting under a shady bush in the garden, playing with the fat toad Aunt Ann kept to eat the bugs.

"Gobble is cross to-day," Bess called to her brother, seeing him at the window. "He keeps trying to bite me."

"Put him to bed," suggested Roy. "It's naughty to be cross."

"I don't believe he's got any bed."

"Then put him in Aunt Ann's. It's her toad."

"Bess sprang to her feet. "You wouldn't dare, Roy Parker," she cried. "Wouldn't I, though. Aunt Ann deserves to be punished. I hope Gobble'll bite her. You get a trowel and bring him in."

Bess stood still and thought a minute. She knew it was wrong. Yet she

was strongly tempted to "get even" with her aunt for many an hour spent in bed. She was not long in deciding, and Gobble was soon cosily tucked in between Aunt Ann's sheets.

The sound of a carriage turning in at the gate sent Roy scampering back to bed. Bess ran downstairs and met Aunt Ann coming in with Aunt Emily. Now, Aunt Emily was much beloved by all the children. They always tried to be good when she came. Bess forgot all about Gobble in her joy at her favorite aunt's arrival, and sat beside her all the afternoon as she lay on the sofa resting after her journey.

"I'll have you sleep in my room instead of in the spare chamber, sister," said Aunt Ann after supper. "My bed will be softer for your poor tired back." Bess's thoughts returned to Gobble with a bound, and then her heart almost stopped beating. Suppose he should bite darling Aunt Emily! More likely Aunt Ann would find him first, and then she, Bess, and Roy would be disgraced when they particularly wanted to show how good they could be. If she could only get up stairs! She was trying to slip out of the room when Aunt Ann stopped her.

"Get your Bible, Elizabeth," she said, "and show Auntie how you have improved in your reading. We'll sit out on the veranda where it's light."

Poor Bess felt as if she could put her mind on nothing except toads. But she obediently read the chapter on the moral virtues which Aunt Ann selected from Proverbs; then explained a few verses to prove that she understood what she read. When she came to the passage, "The way of the transgressor is hard," she hung her head, feeling that she understood it better than ever before.

"It means," she said, "that when you do wrong you always have trouble."

"Always," repeated Aunt Ann decidedly. "Remember that, Elizabeth. Now sit by Auntie and entertain her like a little lady while I get my room ready for her."

The dreaded moment was at hand. Bess caught her breath. Aunt Ann had risen to go when the gate clicked, and three ladies came up the path.

"Why, good evening, neighbors," cried Aunt Ann, stepping forward to meet them.

Bess breathed more freely. Here was her chance. Upstairs she sped and into her brother's room. "Roy," she whispered excitedly, "Aunt Emily is going to sleep in Aunt Ann's room. We must get Gobble."

Roy bounded out of bed in alarm. Together they ran into their aunt's room and opened the bed. No Gobble was to be seen! The children looked at each other blankly. Where could he be?

Just then Aunt Ann startled the guilty pair by coming into the house and calling, "Elizabeth, where are you?"

"Run quick," whispered Roy. "Don't let her come up here till I find that toad."

Bess hurried away, and Roy began to hunt. He felt the bed all over carefully; then groped around on the floor. Still no Gobble could he find.

It was growing dark. Roy must get a light—a thing easier said than done, for Aunt Ann was terribly afraid of fire. She allowed no matches or lamps to be kept anywhere except in a disused iron sink in the kitchen. To get a light meant a trip downstairs with the risk of being caught and questioned.

Roy went to the top of the back stairs and listened. Peter, the hired man,

was in the kitchen eating his supper, while cook was washing the dishes. It was clearly a bad time to go down. He seated himself on the top stair and waited. It was now his turn to suffer. Where was that toad? He had been cross, and putting him into a warm bed was not likely to improve his temper. There was no telling what he might do to dear Aunt Emily if he were not found and unt outdoors. In a cold sweat Roy strained his ears for every sound. He could hear Peter talking in his slow drawl to cook, and scraping his knife on his plate. The minutes dragged by.

Finally Peter pushed back his chair and went out. Cook rattled on with the dishes and began to sing Coronation at the top of her voice. Under cover of the noise Roy crept downstairs, through the entry and out onto the back porch. Happily, the old sink was on the opposite side of the room from the cook. By reaching through the window from the porch, Roy succeeded in getting a lamp and matches without detection.

But even with a light the search for the missing toad was in vain. Roy was obliged to give up in despair. Probably Gobble had hidden himself somewhere, and would pop out on Aunt Emily in the night and scare her to death. It would be all his fault, thought Roy; he who loved Aunt Emily next best to mamma.

"I never thought I should get into such trouble," he sighed.

Then the fear seized him lest Aunt Ann should find him there with a lamp. He blew it out hastily, and started downstairs again. All was still in the kitchen. Roy quickly replaced the lamp and ran back. At the head of the stairs he was met by Bess.

"It's all right, Roy," she whispered. "Only we must hurry to bed now."

"Have you found him?" gasped Roy.

"Yes," she assured him. "I was sitting on the veranda by Aunt Emily. They were all talking. I heard a little soft 'plump,' and there was Gobble hopping down the steps. He crossed the path right in the moonlight and went into the garden. He must have got out of bed long ago and hopped downstairs himself. O, I'm so glad. I did get a fright! It is true that when you do wrong you have trouble, isn't it?"

"I should say so," replied Roy. "We've got out of it now, but I'll never do such a thing again."

Next morning right after breakfast, Aunt Ann called the children to her.

"There were dirty marks on the sheets of my bed," she said solemnly. "Do you know anything about them?"

Poor Roy and Bess hung their heads in shame. To be disgraced before Aunt Emily was dreadful. There was no help for it, and out came the whole miserable story. Aunt Ann, not realizing how much they had already suffered, sent them to bed to repent. So all the long morning the children had to stay in bed. By and by the voice of little Nan came up to them from the garden.

"Naughty, naughty Gobble," she was saying. "Next time you want to take naps in my aunty's bed, you wash your feet clean."—*Congregationalist.*

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MINNIE'S TROUBLES.

She had been to church and heard the missionary, and she sat on the floor at grandpa's knee and looked sober. Pretty soon she sobbed these words:

"It's too bad, anyhow! I've saved up my money for 'most a hundred years, just on purpose of a pink and white fan; and every single time I get 'most enough some man comes and tells a dreadful story about little girls who can't go to Sunday school, and who haven't anything to eat, or something dreadful—and I think it is too real mean! I've got exactly enough money for the fan, and was going for it in the morning, and now that man told about that little missionary girl just a purpose, and I don't know what I shall do."

So she leaned her dear little brown head on grandpa's knee, and cried with all her might. There wasn't much to be done with her that night but to put her to bed. In the morning she came to grandpa for advice.

"You must do what is right," said grandpa.

"But, grandpa, maybe I don't know what is right."

"You know what you think," said grandpa.

"The clerk has been saving up that fan for me a long time," she said, after a few minutes. "I'm afraid I might disappoint her if I didn't buy it; and the summer days are most gone; if I buy it at all I shall have to hurry."

"You might wait till next summer," said grandpa.

"Oh, but then it might be out of fashion!"

"Well," said grandpa, "all I can say is, you must do just what you think is right. It isn't a question that a one but you can settle."

It was a dreadful question! We heard a great deal about it all day. She asked everybody for advice, and seemed to get