

Children's Column.

MATER'S LETTER BOX.

Teddy, North Invercargill.—Mater is pleased to hear from you and trusts to hear from you again. Your writing is very good.—Mater.

THE BRAVE DOG.

Pater was the name of a big collie dog who lived with a shepherd at a village in Russia. He helped his master to look after the sheep to see that no harm came to them, and to watch for the wolves which often prowled about.

One day the shepherd did not take Peter with him, for the dog had trapped his foot, and he thought it would be best to give him a rest. The dog waited patiently for his master's return. The night came on, but the shepherd did not come.

Headless of his wounded foot, the dog set out to find him. He had to travel a long way before he got to the place where the shepherd was, and his foot was very painful. Eventually he found him. The shepherd had got so tired that he sat down on the grass to have a little rest before making his way home, and had fallen asleep.

A few yards away was a wolf ready to spring on the man. The dog saw the wolf and immediately sprang at it. The noise of Peter's barking woke the shepherd, who seized his knife and waited his chance to kill him. The wolf managed to get the dog on the ground, and did not see the approach of the shepherd who stabbed the wolf, and it rolled over dead.

The shepherd took the dog home, and he will never forget how he saved his life, but for Peter he would not be alive now. Peter is well cared for, and I think he deserves it, don't you?

BETTY'S FAIRY TALE.

(By Teddy, North Invercargill).

There was once a little girl named Betty Elizabeth Brown who had a lovely lilac tree in her garden. One day as she was playing in her garden, what do you think she found? A little fairy crown. It was decorated with beautiful gems. She set it on her golden curls and began to dance around. Now, as you know that is the way to summon the fairies. She got a great surprise. They cried aloud to her and pulled her dress in wrath. "You naughty child, you've got the crown of our queen on your tousled mortal hair!" "It isn't tousled at all and take the crown!" cried Betty. She threw it in their midst and ran away. They chased her and caught her. They held her and called to some other fairies, "Bring the fairy flying ship. We'll put her in and send her off to a far away country. We'll also make her sail for the rest of the summer day." The ship was brought all rigged with blowing sails. A thousand fairies lifted her and placed her in the ship, and pushed it, and lo! poor Betty was afloat. The poppies in her garden raised up their heads and stared at poor Betty in the boat. Betty held the rope bravely and tried her hardest to steer, and the fairies above watched the frightened poppies. She had not gone far when she struck a fountain top and the sails came slowly drifting down and Betty fell ker—splash into deep water. Two hungry turtles were swimming there and when they saw Betty, tried to take a bite out of her leg. Some fairies flew and helped her out and wrapped her in a fairy robe. The robe was made out of sky blue velvet with snow-white fur collar and cuffs. Now you know fairies change their minds just like you or I. They dried her hair by fanning it and gave her the crown to keep. They then flew away to fairyland. Betty still keeps the robe and crown. She shows them to all her playmates who won't believe the tale of how she had a ride and fall. On some moonlight nights she wears the clothes and dances on the ground, under her lilac tree to bring the fairies down. Then they dance about with her where no one may see, while through the lilac tree the tiny stars peep.

The Home.

TO PICKLE ONIONS.

I believe if a consensus of opinion on this subject could be obtained it would be found that pickled onions are preferred by a large majority to pickles of any other kind soever. Allowed that some fastidious folk think it a vulgar taste, that I am sure will not deter sensible people from indulging their liking for this relish. An easy method is to peel them and if a little warm water be poured over them the task will be less disagreeable. As you do them throw the onions into cold vinegar. Put them into wide-mouthed glass bottles or

into earthenware jars. Place layers of spice with them, allowing an ounce of whole pepper, a teaspoonful of mustard seed, and a quarter of a teaspoonful of coriander seeds to each quart of onions. Cover with sold vinegar, and cork securely. As the vinegar is absorbed by the onions more must be added so as to keep them well covered. This is very essential.

ENAMELLED WARE.

Enamelled saucepans and other enamelled ware which have become discoloured through constant use may be rendered beautifully white by boiling for a short time in water to which has been added a little common washing soda and a small packet of chloride of lime. After boiling for about 1/2 an hour, wash very thoroughly in clean water, and the utensils will look like new.

If bright saucepans and kettles have to be used on a smoky fire, smear a little grease on the bright part; this will prevent the smoke from blackening it. If washed afterwards in hot water the pan will be as bright as ever. Fresh lard rubbed over new tin ware, and well heated in the oven before use, will prevent it ever rusting afterwards, no matter how much it is put into water.

TIGHT STOPPERS.

Who at some time or other has not been resisted by a firmly fixed stopper? Tightened fruit-tin lids, cruet stoppers, and screw tops are sometimes quite immovable. A simple plan is to take a piece of coarse sandpaper, cover the lid or stopper, turn sharply, and the top will at once be loosened. Should this fail, however, place bottle, etc., upside down in hot water, the water just up to where the stopper is. This will loosen it.

TO AVOID CHAPPED HANDS.

Take common starch and grind it with a knife until reduced to a very fine powder. Keep it in a tin box so as to have it continually at hand for use. After washing the hands, rinse them thoroughly in clean water, wipe them, and while they are yet damp, rub a pinch of starch over them, covering the whole surface. The effect is magical. The rough, smarting skin is cooled and healed.

BLACK HOSE.

Black hose are apt to lose their colour if washed in water with soda in it. If they are rubbed through soapy water, and afterwards rinsed in clear warm—not hot—water, in which a little vinegar has been added, the stockings will keep their colour as long as they can be worn.

TO REMOVE STAINS FROM WOOLLEN CLOTHES OF ANY COLOUR.

Boil two ounces of common tobacco in two gallons of water, strain, and apply with a stiff brush. Hang the garment in the open air to dry, and there will be no odour of tobacco.

A SONG.

Shall I count my life a loss
'Cause I see a woman cross?
Or unhappiness presage
'Cause she's in a towering rage?
Be she angry, sharp, irate,
Full of spleen or burning hate—
So she be not cross with me,
What care I how cross she be?

Shall I cease to be serene
'Cause I find a woman mean?
Haggling over all she bought,
Lending none, and giving naught;
And when others with her dine,
Scrimping on the food and wine—
If she be not mean to me,
What care I how mean she be?

Shall I think my chances slim
'Cause I see a woman prim?
Of success shall I despair
When I note her haughty stare?
Though she be demure and fair,
Prudish as a Quaker maid—
So she be not prim to me,
What care I how prim she be?

Shall I rave and lose my mind
'Cause a woman false I find?
When she seems to be, forsooth,
Soul of loyalty and truth,
Yet with diabolic arts
She can hoodwink trusting hearts—
So she be not false to me,
What care I how false she be?

Shall I sigh and wish me dead
'Cause I find a woman wed?
Or attempt my life to end
'Cause she's married to my friend?
Though she bears another's name,
She can charm me just the same.
So she be not wed to me,
What care I whose wife she be?

—Carolyn Wells.

THE CONVALESCENT HOME.

MEETING OF RED CROSS SOCIETY.

A meeting of the Red Cross Society was held in the Soldiers' Club House to-day to take into consideration the steps that should be taken in regard to the Convalescent Home. There was a large attendance of town and country delegates.

The President (Mr R. A. Anderson) said it was the continuance of a meeting that had been postponed to consider the question of the Convalescent Home. On the previous occasion they had decided to ascertain from the Minister controlling the expenditure of Red Cross funds whether the Society could continue the Home without the assistance received in the past from the Defence Department and use its own funds to continue the Home. Another question was that of dealing with the Y.M.C.A. and making an arrangement with them to take over the Home for any soldiers who might require treatment or rest. Both the questions had been submitted to the Department. The Department had written stating that as the soldiers who might be in the convalescent Home would be in receipt of the pension then it would be only reasonable they should contribute a portion of the maintenance. Then there would be no objection to the Red Cross Society supplementing the income to make the building which belonged to the War Funds' Association self-supporting. Mr Anderson said he would be very sorry to ask any individual receiving a pension to contribute some of it to his upkeep while there was Red Cross money available.

Mr C. S. Longuet (Y.M.C.A.) said their whole object in purchasing the building would be to use it for a hotel though they did a certain amount of soldiers' work. They could carry on very well and spare a few beds for soldiers.

The President said they would have to learn what cases there were to see if they should go on with the Home.

The Longwood-Oraki, Orepuki, Winton and Lumsden delegates said there were no cases in their districts for a Home.

The Dipton delegate mentioned one case that required attention at such an institution.

Mr W. J. Farrant said some of the newspaper correspondents seemed to think the building should be kept open as a veterans' home, but that would not be required for a considerable time. Most of the soldiers not in good health had homes of their own. As to the Convalescent Home, when the number of inmates came down to five the men had told him that they were lonely and the Committee considered it would be better from the financial point of view and in the interests of the men to put them in private houses that would provide them with the comforts of a home and give them the benefits of social life.

The Linchills delegate said the residents there were unanimously of the opinion that the Y.M.C.A. should take over the Home and make provision for soldiers.

The President said if they were able to show that there were sufficient cases, he thought they could with success bring pressure to bear to have the money found without asking the men to pay anything out of their pensions. From what had been said that day there was no chance of continuing the institution as a convalescent Home pure and simple. There might be cases that would receive assistance in the form of a change and it would be quite within the Society's rights, supposing men wanted to go North to help them. Seeing the position an arrangement should be made with the Y.M.C.A. and the Red Cross could use their funds to obtain the accommodation of cases and to support them when they were there. If any of the men desired a change the Society had plenty of money without asking any of the branches to do anything in the matter. The Defence Department had given their notice of one thing—that they wanted what belonged to the Home—a number of beds the Society had got from them. It was not a very big item and the beds could be replaced as the necessity arose. The Red Cross should maintain its hold on the Home and not hand it over until November, and if in the meantime, the branches found there were cases in their districts that had become worse it would be quite within the Society's rights on a general meeting being called to reopen the Home. Any cases of this kind should be referred to the executive.

Mr Longuet said if the Y.M.C.A. could not get that building they would have to acquire another or add a storey to the present building in Tay street.

Mr D. Guthbertson asked if there was no chance of the Y.M.C.A. renting the building.

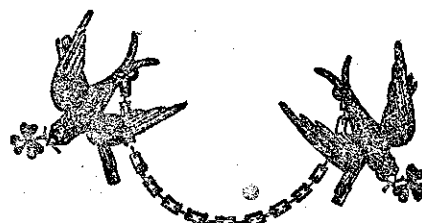
The President said the suggestion was worthy of consideration and Mr C. S. Longuet replied that the Y.M.C.A. might agree to that course.

Mr Gilbert (Returned Soldiers' Association) moved—That as in the opinion of this meeting there are not sufficient cases to warrant the re-opening of the Convalescent Home, this Society be authorised to arrange with the War Funds' Association and Y.M.C.A. to provide for cases as the need arises. The motion was seconded and carried.

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WIT AND HUMOUR.

WHAT DID HE MEAN.

Jones was a "hog." Yes! He had just purchased a motor bike. One boisterous March day, when scorching down a steep hill, his hat blew off, but a passing and polite yokel obligingly chased it, and handing it to him, saved him the trouble of dismounting.

"I really must get a piece of string to keep it on," remarked Jones, as he started off without a word of thanks.

The hornyhanded son of toil's answer was short but expressive, "Get a nail."

PAID BACK IN HIS OWN COIN.

Bill was going to the football match when he met Jim with a melancholy look on his face and hands deep in his pockets.

"Going to the match, Jim?" he cried cheerily.

"On the rocks."

"Well, I've got a bad sixpence," said Bill, "and, if you care, you can try and get in with it."

Jim seized the opportunity, and passed through all right. Bill followed, and having nothing but a shilling he planked it down. His feelings can be imagined when he was returned the bad sixpence as change.

A SERIOUS MATTER.

Ikey and Mossy went outside Solomon's pawnshop, and, noticing that Ikey carried a three days' shave, Mossy inquired the reason.

"Ave you not heard the news, Mossy?"

"No, Ikey."

"My little Moses was killed Saturday morning in the Synagogue."

"Shobbos! How vos that, Ikey?"

"Vell, ve vas all paying our devotions when one of those cursed protestant blokes yelled through the front entrance, 'Who'll lend two quid on the Ascot Gold Cup?' and my poor little Moses was trampled to death and Rebecca lost her diamond brooch."

"Vas the brooch worth much, Ikey?"

NOT QUITE.

"What is an anecdote, Johnny?" asked the teacher.

"A short, funny tale," answered the little fellow.

"Quite right," said the teacher. "And now, Johnny, you may write on the blackboard, sentence containing the word." Johnny hesitated a moment, and then wrote this: "A rabbit has four legs and one anecdote!"

"Although he overcharged me terribly," said the returned traveller, "the cab driver who took me over Paris was most polite."

"All Frenchmen are," his friend replied.

"Yes, but this one got off his box and helped me to find the necessary language in my French-English dictionary so that I might say what I thought of him."

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