

Children's Column.

"BAD BOY."

(By Florence E. Lee.)

Bad Boy was a little pup, who looked forward very much to the day when he would be a real grown-up dog, because he thought to be a puppy was one of the worst things in the world. But, then, Bad Boy didn't know very much, although he would have told you he knew everything.

There were two things in the world he hated very, very much indeed. One was his name, and the other was Ruff, the collie dog, but of the two things Bad Boy hated his name the most, because as he said, it was always there, but he could get away from Ruff now and again.

One day Bad Boy sat down in the middle of a bed of pansies, and he thought, and thought, and thought.

"I know what I'll do," he said, after a long time. "I won't answer to my name. When they call me Bad Boy, I'll have to change my name," and feeling that all his troubles were over, he wagged his tail very hard, beating down three little pansies, and then scampered away.

That evening Bad Boy saw the cook standing in the doorway with his supper.

"Bad Boy! Bad Boy!" she called.

Bad Boy took no notice.

Cook called again, more loudly.

Bad Boy walked away, but he looked round once or twice, wondering what there was for his supper that night.

"Oh, all right," cook said, "If you don't want it Ruff might as well have it," and she put down his supper in front of Ruff, who quickly ate it up.

"You should come when you're called," cook shouted to Bad Boy.

Bad Boy sat down and began to think again.

"Cook's quite right," he said, after a while. "I think as soon as she calls me for breakfast, I will go to her. But, oh! dear, it seems a long time to breakfast."

THE TWO SISTERS.

By "Ethel," Tibbury.

One day Mary and Daisy were playing in the backyard. Mary had a pretty frock on, and her step-sister wanted it. Now Daisy's mother liked her best, because she was her own daughter and Mary was not. Daisy ran to her mother and told her she must and will have it, but her mother only told her to be quiet. When Mary came in her mother told her to go and take off her frock and put another one on. Mary did this and took the jug her mother handed her and went to draw the water. When she was at the well she saw a little old lady trying to draw some water. Mary asked the old lady if she might draw the water for her. So Mary drew the water and carried it to the lady's home. When the dame reached home, she told Mary that every word she spoke pearls, rubies, diamonds, sapphires, opals, and many other precious stones would drop out of her mouth. When Mary went home her mother scolded her. When Mary opened her mouth to speak all the precious stones dropped out. Her mother was quite surprised and asked how the stones lay on the floor. Mary told her all that had happened and she sent her own daughter for some water. She thought her daughter would be able to speak jewels too, but she made a mistake, for when her daughter was walking along the road to the well she was wild, and when she reached the well the same old lady was leaning over trying to draw some water, and looked up. She asked Daisy to draw some water for her. When Daisy heard this she said, "I did not come here to draw your water." She drew some water for herself and as she was turning away the lady said, "Every word you speak, toads, eels, frogs and snakes, will come out of your mouth." When Daisy got home her mother asked her what the old lady had said. When she heard the story she was quite shocked at the eels, toads, and things that crawled about the floor. Mary got her sister and they had a beautiful home and kept their mother. Her mother loved them better now and they lived happily till the end of their days.

BLUEBELL'S ADVENTURE.

By Olga, Teviot street, Invercargill.

All Fairyland was steeped in sorrow. Even the bees had forgotten to make their daily call on the flowers. The fairy queen, herself, had forgotten to chide Puck for his mischievous pranks of yesterday, and the fairy guards had forgotten to polish their green grass spears. The wicked ogre could have destroyed all Fairyland; but he was occupied elsewhere. Why were the fairies so sad? Ah! little Bluebell, the merriest and prettiest little

sprite in all Fairyland was lost, and this is how it came about.

Early that morning, Bluebell had started out from the Queen's palace, to do her daily work. As she walked along, she was so deep in thought that she walked straight into a large spider-web which stretched across the path, and in her surprise dropped her fairy ring.

"Oh! Mr Spider," she cried, "please pick up my ring, so that I may wish myself free of your web."

Before the spider could do so, however, a loud, rumbling sound was heard, and Bluebell instantly knew that the wicked ogre was approaching.

"Step in front of me and hide me," she cried to the spider, who instantly did as he was bidden.

The ogre, however, was not looking for fairies, for he was gazing intently at a glittering object which lay on the ground. When he reached it, he stooped and picked it up, crying out, "A fairy ring! Now will I be truly great, for I will have power over all fairies!" and he went on his way rejoicing loudly.

Poor Bluebell's heart was nearly broken but she was not beaten yet. "Set me free quickly," she said to the spider. "I have a plan."

When she was free, she hurried after the ogre, and when she was as near to him as she had anticipated, he saw her, and stopped in amazement, saying, "So you are the fairy who lost her fairy ring, are you? But you shall not get it back, and I think you would make a dainty dinner," saying which he picked her up, and carried her away.

It was a hard thing for Bluebell to put herself in the way of the ogre, like this, for she knew that in the ogre's castle were deep, dark dungeons, in which he kept his captives. But she would suffer anything, if she could only get her ring back, and so save the fairies.

It all turned out as she had expected. She was thrown into the deepest dungeon, where she was to be kept until next day.

All that day she racked her brains to try to find some plan by which to get back her ring; but no idea came. At night she sat and listened to the gambolling of the rats and mice, and cried, "I am a fairy, could any of you carry me through your passages into the ogre's bedroom?"

Silence fell for a moment, then a little mouse said: "My passage leads to the room, and I shall carry you there on my back."

Then was Bluebell happy, and she set out on her journey through the mouse's passage with a light heart.

When she reached the bed-room, she stepped lightly off the mouse's back, and hurried across the room to where the ogre lay asleep; there also lay the ring, shining brightly on the pillow, and Bluebell stretched forth her hand with a glad cry.

Unluckily the cry awoke the ogre who seized Bluebell's hand before she could reach the ring, and cried, "You have escaped out of the dungeon, but you shall not escape me," saying this he raised his hand to kill her. He had not, however, seen the little mouse, who, seeing Bluebell's danger, ran up to the bed, and bit the ogre in the leg, causing him to drop his captive.

Seeing her opportunity, Bluebell picked up the ring, and quickly turned the ogre into a pillar of stone. Then, after rewarding the brave little mouse, she hurried back to Fairyland.

Ah! I cannot describe her welcome there, so I shall leave it to the reader's imagination; but it is sufficient to say that she was amply rewarded for her brave deed.

The Home.

REMEDY FOR PERSPIRING HANDS.

1.—Wash frequently in weak alum and water, and well rub into the skin the pure juice of a lemon. At night, after washing as above, smear the hands with vaseline or cold cream, and powder rather thickly with flower of sulphur. Put on a pair of old gloves (from which the palms have been cut) to prevent soiling the bed-clothes. This done twice a week will bring about a permanent cure. 2.—Wash in tepid water in which club moss has been mixed.

STOPPING CRACKS IN WOODWORK.

1.—Melt two parts beeswax and one part resin, colour with any kind of amber or ochre to desired shade to match wood, run on to cracks by means of a hot knife, scrape of residue, and finish with fine sandpaper, and they will be hardly discernible. 2.—Make a paste of slaked lime one part rye meal two parts, with a sufficient quantity of linseed oil, or dissolve one part of glue in 16 parts of water, and when almost cool stir in sawdust and prepared chalk or varnish thickened with a mixture of equal parts of white lead, red lead, litharge, and chalk. In using these cements take as small a quantity as possible

and bring the cement itself into intimate contact with the surfaces. If glue is employed the surface should be made warm so that the melted glue is not chilled before it has time to effect a thorough adhesion. Cements that are used in a fused state, as resin or shellac, will not adhere unless the parts are heated to the fusing point of the cement.

A SPLENDID USE FOR CELERY TOPS

1.—A most valuable medicine can be made from celery tops by boiling about a dozen in a quart of water until quite tender, then strain and add to the liquid 1lb of prunes, and 1oz of senna leaves (tied in a muslin bag). Stew these well together, then remove the muslin bag, and leave till cold. Dose, two or three prunes with a tablespoonful of the syrup. 2.—To make a decoction of celery tops. This can be done by macerating for an hour the celery tops fresh or dried, in hot water sufficient to cover them. Then pour off the liquor for use. It is very prone to fermentation, and special precautions are required to prevent this. It is better to prepare it in small quantities as required.

BACON.

Bacon should be steamed, not boiled. Put it in a steamer over a pan of boiling water, and steam, allowing twenty minutes to each pound of bacon.

MELON JAM.

Ingredients:—20lb of melon, 12lb of sugar, 6 lemons, 3oz of dry ginger, a teaspoonful of pounded citric acid.

Method:—Peel the melon and remove the seeds, or use only the outer part where there are no seeds. Cut into inch pieces. Grate the lemons or cut the rind up very finely; squeeze out the juice and place all in a basin. Cover with the sugar and let it stand all night. Keep the lemon pips and place them with the ginger (crushed) in a muslin bag and boil with the jam. Boil the melon slowly for three or four hours; on no account let it boil quickly. Add the citric acid before dishing up the jam. The more it is stirred the better the jam will be.

THE NURSE.

A RETROSPECT.

(By W. A. Crawford.)

Here in this hospital I have seen innumerable patients passing to and fro. For four years I have watched a constant stream of people coming and going. All kinds and conditions of humanity, some with kind faces and glad hearts, cheering up others whenever they could, casting sunshine around them on every side, and whenever possible doing good. Others with sorrow upon their faces, weighed down with a great heaviness under the yoke of sickness.

Day after day, year after year, they come and go. Men and maidens, young and old, pass through here, and I see and know them all. And it often happens that in some serious cases, when there does not seem any particle of hope and no offer of comfort could be given, that the patient would quite suddenly recover and go home again, well and hearty. While others, where the symptoms seemed not at all dangerous, with little or no need for alarm, there occurred a sudden collapse and all is over! "Out, out, brief candle."

I can remember a returned soldier, a really splendid fellow, who was very lame at first. He could walk just a little, but he was always very lively and cheery, and most grateful for all we did to help him. "Number 33," he always liked to be called. That was his cot number and he said his mates always called him by his other official number all through the war. He liked to deal in numbers in preference to names, they were shorter and saved time. He looked so happy and well the day he was discharged and said, "Good-bye, Nurse, I'm going to make a bit and come back and marry you some day," at which I only laughed and said, "Well, keep well now whatever you do." And how much we missed him after he had left. Like ships that pass in the night, with us a while and then go into silence.

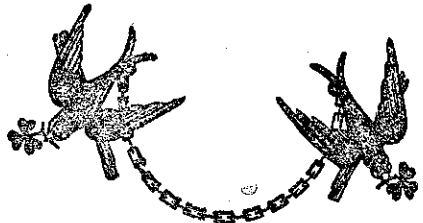
And I recall the young mother of three little girls. She was very ill and her children used to come to see her, sometimes when she was so bad she hardly knew them and they would look with round, earnest eyes at everything, and wonder what was going to happen! We were all glad when she recovered swiftly and went back home again to her little girls.

Yes! I often think I could write an interesting story of all the different sights

I have seen, and the different people I have met here, some of the noblest characters amongst them were those who have gone beyond recall. As Dante, says, "Natural death is, as it were, a haven and a rest to us after long navigation, and the

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noble soul is like a good mariner; for her, when he draws near the port, lowers his sail and enters in softly, with gentle steering.

And it is strange to-night as I sit here, after so long a time, that my thoughts go back to "Number 33." I think I have almost forgotten his name but not himself. I wonder if he will ever come back again? Yes! Somehow I think he will.

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