



My dear Little People,

You know of course, that our dear and venerable Archbishop is celebrating his Golden Jubilee just now, which means that it is fifty years since he was consecrated a bishop. Everyone is rejoicing in Wellington where the celebrations are taking place, and, indeed, I quite believe some of our Little People will be telling us something about it later. Well, children, I knew so many of you would not be able to tell his Grace Archbishop Redwood your own good wishes and kneel at his feet for his blessing, so, a wire was sent to him in your name, all of you, just to show him that all his Little People, far and wide, remembered him, on his great and happy day.

We haven't many letters this week, but one is from a little person, whose birthday falls on the 29th of the month, and she wants to join our L.P.L.C. Now, who is going to wish this new friend a happy birthday? Nearly everybody I hope, because she will *not have another one for four years*. Think of it Little People, three blank years without a birthday. See now, what you can do. Two holiday essays have come in—one from Chatham Islands and one from West Taieri. Remember you've only got till the end of the month to get these essays done, so hurry up. We'll read our two letters and then get on with the story. Do you like it?

Dear Anne,—The holidays are now over and school has begun again. We have a new teacher her name is Miss Nicolson and she is very nice I wish she would stay all the year but she is just relieving for a month. On the third of March we are having Mr. Wallace. We are having the Missioner here next Thursday night; he is staying till Sunday. I am in Standard six now so I hope I will get my Proficiency at the end of the year. On Christmas Day it rained and we have not seen any since then. It is very hot and dry up here and the roads are very dusty by the time we get to school in the morning our boots are white. From your little friend, Irene Hanrahan, St. Bathans.

(Glad to hear from you Irene. Try hard for your Proficiency, now is the time to do the best work.—Anne.)

Dear Anne,—May I join your letter circle. I have three brothers and one sister, Ella. Two brothers Michael and Steve and Ella go to St. Joseph's School. I am going when I am five. I am only four now my birthday is on Feb 29th. Mum is holding my hand as I cannot spell any words yet. I will close now with best love to you from your little friend Mary Kennedy, Temuka.

(Welcome little Mary who only gets a birthday once in four years. Many many happy returns. Don't we all wish we could come to your party. I hope you'll get a lot of letters.—Anne.)

DIPPY THE DONKEY (continued).

You remember we left off last week just where Dippy's father Mokey, was saying that it made him very tired to go round and round in a circle so long and so often. I think now, instead of telling Dippy's story for him, I'll let him speak for himself. He won't be nervous now because he knows he is among friends. Dippy says:

"This was the first and last time I saw my dear father. Our masters and mistresses seem to love their families and keep them with them, but they part us from ours almost as soon as we arrive in the world, and that is what happened to me.

In the village we met a circus. Unfortunately, the owner saw me and came up to my mistress with a smiling face. He was a big good-natured looking man and drove a car like a Roman chariot that was drawn by a zebra. At least, I thought it was a zebra, but I discovered later that

the stripes were put on weekly and that under the paint there dwelt a darling Exmoor pony. The man wished to buy me and my poor mistress said if he were really kind to animals he could have me and of course as he wanted me, he assured her that he was. Oh! how easily human beings are taken in! I knew the moment I saw him that he was a cruel, hard man, in spite of his smiling face, and I shall never forget how I trembled when my mistress said that he could send for me in a fortnight. The time flew as swiftly as a swallow, and I was taken from my dear mother, my kind mistress and dear old Nigger, and put in a tent with a camel, an elephant and the painted Exmoor pony. That night we had hardly closed our eyes when my new master came in with a long whip. He flourished and cracked it savagely, growling something as he did so, struck the resting camel and unoffending elephant, and then slashed out at me. Fortunately, I missed the full force of the blow by cringing, but as it was, I received a slash that made me quiver with pain from head to foot.

Before I opened my eyes, which I had closed on seeing the whip swinging at me, I felt a pair of warm, soft arms round my neck, and when I opened them, I saw the sweetest and daintiest little fairy imaginable. She was about 14 years old, with beautiful golden curls. She was dressed in a dress bespattered with spangles, and if I had known anything at all about angels I would have been certain that an angel had flown to my assistance.

"Oh! how can you, father," she exclaimed, with tears in her eyes. "You promised you wouldn't be cruel again, and now you strike poor darling Dippy for no reason at all."

"Don't talk to me Maggie, or you'll get a taste of the whip yourself, the only way to make an animal useful is to make him fear you. You practice with your snakes." He was in a terrible rage, and I feared he would strike my new friend, but without another word, she went to a basket, opened it, drew a whistle from her dress and played a beautiful strange melody. From the basket rose three flat heads, and to my surprise I saw them sway backwards and forwards in time to the music and gradually writhe out of the basket to my little fairy. To my horror, because I instinctively hate and fear snakes, although I had never seen one before, I saw them creep up her dress towards her neck. But as I watched, the whip once more descended upon me, and as I whinnied with pain, a curious man rushed into the tent, snatched the whip from my master and dashed it to the ground.

"I won't stand for it Jack," he said, "I've told you so before. If I catch you using your whip on these dumb creatures I'll walk out of your show, and then we'll see how the circus fares without Joey the clown. It's my fun that keeps things going, and I'll tell you what, Jack, you put that Donkey in my hands to train and care for, and we'll be the hit of any town we strike. He's as intelligent as a dog, and a little affection will work wonders with him."

Joey took me in hand and taught me many tricks, and I soon grew to love the ring and the laughter and applause and the lights. The trick I loved best of all was the one where Jumbo, our biggest elephant, would pick me up in his trunk, and place me on his back where I balanced. Then he would pick up my fairy, and she would climb on to my back waving a wand. One evening a terrible thing happened.

(To be continued next week.)

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