

## OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

### CHOOSING A KITTEN.

There were five, and they found them in the hay—  
Five little kittens, stowed away  
So snug and warm  
And far from harm  
That, had it not been for the children's play,  
They'd have lived in secret to this day.

Jack put the yellow one in his hat;  
The black one nimble, the white one fat,  
He claimed beside.  
Then Teddy cried:

"I speak for this!" and "I speak for that  
(None left, you see, for the poor old cat!)"

Old Pussy had thought herself so wise,  
But what can you hide from the children's eyes?  
"So beautiful!" said  
The breathless Ted,  
"They're all asleep, and all of a size!"  
And they bore to the house the wondrous prize.

Did mamma smile? Ah, no! she frowned;  
And the rest of the children gathered round;  
And Teddy heard  
The dreadful word:

"'Tis very fortunate they were found—  
Keep one; but the others must be drowned!"

Then each would choose! So down they sat;  
'Twas this one first, and then 'twas that;  
Each making choice  
With an eager voice,  
Of the white or the gray, the slim or the fat—  
Just which he chanced to be looking at.

Ted said, at last: "We can't spare none!"  
(His grammar was poor, but his tactics won).

"We'll hide them away  
Again in the hay!  
Put two in your hat and run, Jack, run!  
We'll save them all!" And it was done.

### TOTTIE'S FIRST LETTER.

Sitting at the table there,  
Tracing every word with care,  
Little Tottie's writing:  
Pressing close her rosy lips,  
As her pen in ink she dips,  
Loving words inditing.

To mamma, as is most right,  
Her first letter she will write,  
Every effort making  
To thank her, in a loving way,  
For all the care that every day  
She of her is taking.

You have heard of "the snake in the grass," my boy  
Of the terrible snake in the grass;  
But now you must know  
Man's deadliest foe  
Is a snake of a different class  
Alas!  
'Tis the venomous snake in the grass

### "DON'T THROW STONES,"

PERHAPS when the pigs are rooting in the potato field, or the hens making themselves busy in the garden, it may be right enough to throw stones; but even in these cases it ought to be done with great care, for the stone-thrower's little brother or sister may be hidden among the corn, or behind a fence, and get struck. When you are on the street or in any place where, for anything you know, there may be people moving about, don't throw stones. Don't throw stones at a stray cat, or at a dog that has no master; and, oh dear, don't throw stones at the poor little bird that sings in the tree-top. How would you like a giant, thirty or forty feet high, to pick up a rock as big as yourself and a great deal heavier, and throw it at you? If you are a good marksman you will kill the bird; and what good will that do you? It is wrong to kill one of God's creatures if it is doing no harm and if you do not require it for food. And if you are a bad marksman, and miss the bird, you may kill or hurt some one that you did not see when you threw the stone. Once

a stone has left your hand you cannot stop it, you cannot change its direction, and you cannot recall it, any more than you could recall that hasty word you spoke the other day and for which you are now so sorry. Consider well before you speak, and take a course of lessons in gunnery before you throw stones.

### WATCH YOUR WORDS.

KEEP a watch on your words, my darlings,  
For words are wonderful things;  
They are sweet, like the bee's fresh honey;  
Like the bees, they have terrible stings.  
They can bless, like the warm, glad sunshine,  
And brighten a lonely life;  
They can cut, in the strife of anger,  
Like an open, two-edged knife.

Let them pass through your lips unchallenged,  
If their errand is true and kind;  
If they come to support the weary,  
To comfort and help the blind.  
If a bitter, revengeful spirit  
Prompt the words, let them be unsaid:  
They may flash through a brain like lightning,  
Or fall on a heart like lead.

Keep them back if they're cold and cruel,  
Under bar, and lock, and seal;  
The wounds they make, my darlings,  
Are always slow to heal.  
May peace guard your lives, and ever,  
From this time of your early youth,  
May the words that you daily utter  
Be the beautiful words of truth.

### BOTH HANDS.

A VERY little boy reached out to take a large orange that a lady offered him, but his hand was not big enough to hold it. His brother, who was standing by, said, "Take both hands, Arty," and Arty took both hands and carried off the orange easily. Why, isn't that a good way, boys and girls? If you find something too large for you, take hold with both hands. Of course you can't do that if one hand is full, but one hand should not be full when you come to your work. "One thing at a time," is a safe rule. Give your whole mind to your work, and you will succeed. Take hold with a will, and let it be seen that when you reach out to grasp a thing you do not mean to fail.

### THE INVITATION.

"Suffer the little children to come unto Me and forbid them not."

Jesus, how tender were Thy words,  
When mothers brought to Thee,  
In humble faith, their little ones,  
Thy heavenly face to see!  
Thou didst not scorn the children's prayer,  
Nor send them weeping home;  
No; Thou didst say, "forbid them not,  
But suffer them to come."

Jesus, I am as one of these,  
And I would fain be Thine;  
Lord, fold me to Thy loving heart,  
And Thou shalt dwell in mine.  
I think that all my song will be,  
When I am safe at home,  
That Thou hast not forbidden me,  
But suffered me to come.

### THINGS EASY AND NOT EASY.

IT is the easiest thing in the world to find fault. It is easy to say that nobody is honest. It is easy to say the church is to blame for it. It is easy to say that the church would be all right if the minister would preach and do as he ought. But it isn't easy to look on the best side, to see that there are hundreds of faithful preachers, thousands of honest, sincere men and women, countless acts of justice, charity and humanity, which outweigh all the grumbling of all the grumblers, so that it is really only the

finest dust in the balance. Let us be fair and cheerful. The world is not all wrong. Everybody isn't a rascal. Our neighbours are not trying to cheat us. The church is doing a good work for the world, and even the growlers are not half as disagreeable as they seem.

### MOTHER.

HOW little do we appreciate a mother's tenderness while living! How heedless we are of all her anxieties! But when she is dead and gone—when the cares and coldness of the world come withering to our hearts—when we experience how hard it is to find true sympathy, how few love us for ourselves, how few will befriend us in our misfortunes, then it is that we think of the mother that we have lost.

### THINGS WE SHOULD HOLD FAST.

1. "Hold fast that which is good.—1 Thea. v. 21; Phil. iv. 8.
2. "Hold fast the form of sound words." 2 Tim. i. 13.
3. "Hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing."—Hebrews iii. 6.
4. "Let us hold fast our profession."—Hebrews iv. 14; x. 23.

Go where you will, and your soul will find no rest but in Christ's bosom. Inquire for Him; come to Him; and rest you on Christ, the Son of God. I sought Him and found Him; and I found in Him all I could wish or want.—*Rutherford*.

CHILDREN, do not form the habit of making excuses. If you have done wrong be willing to confess it. Do not try to hide it or throw the blame on another. A person who is quick at making excuses is not likely to be good for anything else. Be honest, be frank, be truthful.

A GOOD man will find friends everywhere Joseph did in prison. So the prisoner Paul found a friend in the governor of the island. There is no better capital for a young man entering life than a faithful though modest Christian character. Even the noblest in rank respect such a man, and he finds friends.

A LITTLE boy had two cents given him by a friend, one for his missionary box and one for himself. He lost one of them, and concluded it was the missionary cent that was lost. There are a great many children of larger growth who, if they lose some part of their income, also conclude that it is the money which was to be devoted to religion or charity that has been lost.

CHEERFULNESS has been defined to be "sunshine in the heart." Don't keep it bottled up in the gloomy in-doors weather, but let it shine! Good eating, good sleeping, good air, and a habit of starting the day right and closing it well, will enable most people to be as sure of their supply of good nature as the farmer is of his winter stores. First among your house plants, good wives, cultivate cheerfulness. Chief among all your family supplies, father, plan to have amiability. As for the dear children, they take to merriness as naturally as a dog's tail does to wagging, if you give them half a chance.