

OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

THE OPEN DOOR.

Within a town of Holland once
A widow dwelt, 'tis said,
So poor alas, her children asked
One night in vain for bread
But this poor woman loved the Lord,
And knew that He was good;
So, with her little ones around,
She prayed to Him for food.

When prayer was done, her eldest child,
A boy of eight years old,
Said softly, "In the Holy Book,
Dear mother, we are told
How God, with food by ravens brought,
Supplied His prophet's need."
"Yes," answered she, "but that, my son,
Was long ago, indeed."

"But, mother, God may do again
What He has done before,
And so, to let the birds fly in,
I will unclothe the door."
Then little Dick, in simple faith
Threw open the door full wide,
So that the radiance of the lamp
Fell on the path outside

Ere long the burgomaster passed,
And, noticing the light,
Paused to inquire why the door
Was open so at night.
"My little Dick has done it, sir,"
The widow, smiling, said,
That ravens might fly in to bring
My hungry children bread."

"Indeed!" the burgomaster cried,
"Then here's a raven, lad;
Come to my house, and you shall see
Where bread may soon be had."
Along the street to his own house
He quickly led the boy,
And sent him back with food that filled
His humble home with joy.

The supper ended, little Dick
Went to the open door,
Looked up, said, "Many thanks, good Lord,"
Then shut it fast once more.
For though no bird had entered in,
He knew that God on high
Had hearkened to his mother's prayer,
And sent this full supply.

THE IVY AND THE ELM.

A tall elm tree grew in a lovely glade of a green English forest. It was as healthy a tree as you could have wished to look on. For many a year it had flourished, and it seemed likely to become in girth and height and in spread of branches a giant among the trees, for the soil was deep and rich, there was plenty of water to nourish it, the climate too was of a kind that favoured its growth. Under the shelter of this elm many kinds of plants that loved the shade grew beautifully. There in spring you would have found the sweet-smelling violet. Ferns of different sorts uncurled their fronds and spread them out to the light. The honeysuckle sent out its wandering sprays and opened its pale blossoms. Mosses and beautiful tufts of feathery grass covered the ground.

Amongst the others a little plant of ivy grew near the elm. It seemed very quiet and modest, and without the least ambition. Pushing its way among the grasses and ferns, it appeared quite contented with the lowliest place. As for any harm being in it, you would have thought that impossible. It seemed to say to the other plants, "Let me live here in the shadow, close to the ground, and I will

trouble none of you. My dark green leaves will only set off your brighter foliage and lovely flowers."

Slowly all through the first year of its life the ivy crept nearer to the elm. If it could not get straight to the stem of the tree, it went to the right or the left, and so round the plant or stone that was in its way. So zigzag was its course that you could hardly have told in what direction it was really advancing. But when the second summer came it had reached the trunk of the elm, and at every joint of its thin pliant stem it had sent roots into the ground to make its progress secure.

By this time a wise tree would have had some suspicion of the ivy. Though it seemed very quiet and humble, it had a cunning way of gaining its object. Its long, lithe, tortuous stem looked very like a serpent. But the elm tree, tall and stately and vigorous, thought no evil of a plant so lowly and unassuming. And when by-and-bye the ivy raised itself a little from the ground, leaning against the great stem of the elm for support, it was allowed to do so without rebuke.

Another summer came, and the elm and ivy seemed to be fast friends. The feeble plant, clinging to the great tree, had climbed upwards several yards. The elm, thinking itself improved in appearance as the shining green of the ivy leaves gradually covered its bare stem, looked in a kindly way on its dependent. Still it seemed quite impossible that so gentle and unobtrusive a plant could have any evil designs.

Ten years afterwards what a change there was! The ivy had grown up to the high branches of the elm, and was groping its way along them. It had woven a network of strong cord-like stems about the trunk. It had sent its roots through the bark, and was living, not on the moisture it drew from the ground, but on the sap that should have nourished the great tree it had so cunningly used for its own ambitious ends.

In other five years the elm was dead; the ivy hung in great festoons from the black, leafless branches of the hapless tree, and flourished luxuriantly on the decaying substance of its stem.

Sin is like the ivy. An evil habit does not at first seem dangerous, but when it takes hold, and is allowed to grow, it utterly destroys the noblest life.

SUSAN TAYLOR AND THE ROSE.

Susan Taylor was a very discontented girl; she was never pleased with anything—always looking out for what was disagreeable, and not for what was pleasant in anything. She was going away from home, and her grandma asked her if she would have a rose to stick in the bosom of her dress. So, being fond of flowers, she told her that she would like one. Away went her grandmother, with her cane in her hand, into her little garden, and gathered the finest rose that grew there. There were two buds growing on the same stem with the rose, and the leaves were as fresh and as green as the leaves of a rosebush could be. You may suppose that Susan was not a little surprised when her grandmother snipped off the rose, the two buds and the green leaves

with her scissors, and offered Susan Taylor the stem alone, all covered with thorns.

"O, grandmother, this is not a rose. Do you think that I will stick that ugly stem in my dress, without a single flower or leaf upon it? No, that I never will! You do not deserve to have roses growing in your garden if you spoil them in this way."

"Perhaps not," mildly replied her grandmother, "but there are other people in the world besides me who spoil their roses."

"Then," said Susan, "they must be very silly people."

"I think so too," replied her grandmother. "And now I will tell you the name of one of them: it is Susan Taylor."

Susan reddened to her very ears while her grandmother said. "It has pleased God, Susan, to mark your life with many blessings, mingled with a few cares, and you are continually neglecting your blessings and remembering your cares. If, then, you thus wilfully despise your comforts and repine over your troubles, what is this but throwing away the flowers and green leaves of your life and sticking the thorns in your bosom?"

Who is like Susan Taylor?

GOD'S CARE.

There is no money quite so small
But mother mouse comes at his call,
And brings him many crumbs of bread,
With which the little one is fed.

There are no birdies quick and bright,
Who through the garden take their flight,
But have their thick warm feather clothes,
To shelter them from rains and snows.

There is no fitting butterfly,
No little worm so soon to die,
But finds a bud or finds a leaf,
And eats of it and knows no grief.

No creature is there on the earth,
But has its chimney-place and hearth,
With food and bed within its house,
From highest man to tiny mouse.

And who has thought of all of this?
The loving God! The work is His!
He rules o'er all with gentle sway,
And makes for us both night and day.

ARE YOU SAFE?

Two little girls were playing with their dolls in a corner of the nursery, one day not very long ago, and as they played they were softly singing to themselves

Safe in the arms of Jesus,
Safe on His gentle breast,
There by His love o'er-shaded,
Sweetly my soul shall rest.

Mother was busy writing, only stopping now and then to listen to the little ones' talk, unobserved by them.

"Sister, how do you know you are safe?" asked Nellie, the younger of the two.

"Because I am holding Jesus with both my two hands—tight!" promptly replied sister.

"Ah! that's not safe," said the other child. "Suppose Satan came along, and cut your two hands off!"

Little sister looked very troubled for a few moments, dropped poor dolly, and thought deeply. Suddenly her face shone with joy, and she cried out, "Oh I forgot! I forgot! Jesus is holding me with His two hands, and Satan can't cut His hands off; so I am safe!"

Yes, my dear young friends, that is the secret. If you want to be happy, you must not be thinking about yourself, and your "feeling safe," but rest in the happy knowledge that Jesus has got you safe.