

## OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

### "IS IT YOU?"

There is a child, a boy or girl,—  
I'm sorry it is true,—  
Who doesn't mind when spoken to:  
Is it you? It can't be you!

I know a child, a boy or girl,—  
I'm loath to say I do,—  
Who struck a little playmate child;  
I hope that wasn't you!

I know a child, a boy or girl,—  
I hope that such are few,—  
Who told a lie; yes, told a lie!  
It cannot be 'twas you!

There is a boy, I know a boy,—  
I cannot love him though—  
Who robs the little birdie's nest:  
'That bad boy can't be you'

A girl there is, a girl I know,—  
And I could love her, too,  
But that she is so proud and vain:  
That surely isn't you!

### MINUTES AND YEARS.

Sixty seconds make a minute,  
Sixty minutes make an hour,  
Twenty-four hours make a day—  
Long enough for sleep and play.  
In every month the weeks are four,  
And twelve whole months will make a year;  
And when you are four or a little more,  
You must work as well as play, my dear.

### THE SPECKLED AXE.

"WON'T that do, mamma?" and Ruthie held up for inspection, with great apparent satisfaction, a small garment she had been fashioning for her doll Hyacinth.

Mamma looked at it, with a bit of a smile lurking about her mouth, at the oddly-shaped little dress. But then Ruthie was but a little maiden, and she really had done very well, and mamma said so.

But the stitches! She *could* have taken those more neatly, for Ruthie was a nice little seamstress, if she chose to have the patience. So her mamma said,

"But how about the stitches, Ruthie? Why, see, they shew like rows of big teeth!"

"Oh, never mind," said Ruthie. "I like 'em so."

"Ruthie, you make me think of a man Benjamin Franklin tells about," said mamma. Ruthie liked a story, if it was ever so much against her, so she said at once,

"What was it, mamma, please?"

"Well, this man bought an axe at the store, and left it to be finished up and a handle put into it. In a day or two he called for it. It was nice and sharp, with a good strong handle, that could not fail of doing the best of service. But the axe-head, that was just black; so he said to the storekeeper, 'Why didn't you brighten it up?' 'I will now, if you will turn the grindstone.'"

"So they went about it in good earnest. But the stone was hard to turn, the axe polished very slowly, and the man's patience began to give out. By-and-by he stopped to look at it. The axe-head was very rough at first, and the grinding had only taken off the black in spots, and now it was as speckled as the feathers of your old speckled Biddy.

"That isn't half done yet," said the storekeeper.

"That will do," said the owner of the axe.

"But," said the storekeeper, 'you wont

have it so. It looks worse now than before we began.'

"Oh, I prefer it so," said the man warmly; and away he went with the speckled axe."

"Did he really like it?" asked Ruthie.

"Do you rer'ly like your doll's dress with the long stitches?" asked mamma.

Ruthie turned the little dress over in her hand for a good long minute, and then she said, bravely,

"No, mamma, I don't."

"Right," said mamma. "The speckled axe was little more a thing of beauty than the rough black axe that it was as the man found it. In other words, a thing that is worth doing at all, is worth doing well."

"And worth finishing," added grandpa, laying down his paper. "There's many a life spoiled because the person hasn't patience enough even to get ready for it."

"That's very true," said mamma.

Ruthie didn't quite understand grandpa, but she concluded that she wouldn't be like the man with the axe, but that in the future her work should always be well finished.

### THE LITTLE SEED.

A feathered seed that lifted is  
By a soft summer wind,  
On a bare rock, amid the sea,  
A resting place may find.

And years may come, and years may go,  
And few may tarry there  
To see how it has started up,  
Except the fowls of air;

Yet day by day, and year by year,  
It grows, it scatters seed,  
Till many a tree is dropping fruit,  
A multitude to feed.

One Holy Book a child may send  
Where it was never read,  
And who shall say how far and wide  
The blessed truth may spread."

### FRANKIE'S PRAYER.

FRANKIE had been taught to always kneel down when he said his prayers. The other day he was taken quite sick, and his mamma put him to bed right after dinner. When the time came for him to go to sleep, he wanted to get out of his crib and say his prayers. But his mamma thought the room was too cold, so she said, "I guess, Frankie, for to-night, you can say your prayers in bed."

So Frankie knelt down in his crib, and said his prayers, just as he always did. When his mamma had kissed him good night, and was going down stairs, he called her back.

"Mamma," he said, "I forgot to ask God to make me well." So he knelt down again, and said: "Please, God, make Frankie well, for Jesus' sake." In the morning he was able to be up. "God made me well again, didn't He, mamma?" And you may be sure he did not forget to thank Him for answering his prayer.

### THE SOFT PILLOW.

LITTLE Mary, before going to bed, lifted up her heart in prayer to Jesus and gave herself into His keeping, while Nettie, her sister, was thoughtlessly undressing herself and jumping into bed without prayer. Mary at once fell asleep, and was resting peacefully in the arms of Him to whom she had committed herself, while Nettie was restlessly turning over. At length she awoke

Mary, complaining that the pillow was so hard and flat that she could not sleep upon it.

"I know what is the matter with your pillow," said Mary; "there is no prayer in it."

Little Nettie thought a moment, then crept quietly out of bed, prayed, lay down again, and found her pillow softer. She then said to herself, "That is what my pillow wanted; it is soft now;" and she, too, was soon sweetly sleeping.

Are there not thousands of other pillows in the world which might be softened by prayer?

### PROVE IT BY MOTHER.

WHILE driving along the street one day last winter in my sleigh, a little boy six or seven years old asked me the usual question, "Please may I ride?"

I answered him "Yes, if you are a good boy."

He climbed into the sleigh, and when I again asked "Are you a good boy?" he looked up pleasantly and said "Yes, sir."

"Can you prove it?"

"Yes, sir."

"By whom?"

"Why, by my mother," said he promptly.

I thought to myself, here is a lesson for boys and girls. When children feel and know that mother not only loves, but has confidence in him or her, and can prove their obedience, truthfulness and honesty by mother, they are pretty safe. That boy will be a joy to his mother while she lives. She can trust him out of her sight, feeling that he will not run into evil. I do not think he will go to the saloon, the theatre or the gambling-house. Children who have praying mothers, and mothers who have children they can trust, are blessed indeed. Boys and girls, can you "prove by mother" that you are good? Try to deserve the confidence of your parents and every one else.

### CAUSES OF WAR.

A CERTAIN king sent to another king, saying, "Send me a blue pig with a black tail, or else—"

The other replied, "I have not got one, and if I had—"

On this weighty cause they went to war. After they had exhausted their armies and resources, and laid waste their kingdoms, they began to wish to make peace; but before this could be done it was necessary that the insulting language that led to the trouble should be explained.

"What could you mean," asked the second king of the first, "by saying, send me a blue pig with a black tail, or else—?"

"Why," said the other, "I meant a blue pig with a black tail, or else some other colour. But what could you mean by saying, I have not got one, and if I had—?"

"Why, of course, if I had I should have sent it."

The explanation was satisfactory, and peace was accordingly concluded.

The story of the two kings ought to serve as a lesson to us all. Most of the quarrels between individuals are quite as foolish as the war of the blue pig with a black tail.