

THE HOOK AND LADDER.

THE frosts in the door-yard maple
Had lighted a fine red blaze,
And one of the golden twilights
That come September days,
The neighbourhood lads had gathered
To play their usual plays.

Frankie was good at planning,
And seeing the glowing tree,
"Let have a fire department
And play 'tis a house," said he.
"Oh, yes, a hook and ladder,"
Cried all; "what fun 'twill be!"

So they put the hose on the hydrant,
Searched everywhere about
Until they found a ladder,
And then, with yell and shout
Of "fire" and clang of "ding-dong,"
They rushed to put it out.

The hosemen pulled their jackets
Hastily from their backs;
One climbed the tree like a squirrel
With a ball bat for an axe,
And he hewed at the beautiful branches
With frantic hacks and whacks.

Someone turned on the water,
And the boy in the foremost place
Got the full force from the nozzle
Square in his little face;
And he cried for half a minute
With the funniest grimace.

The stream flew this way, that way,
And up to the tree's bright top,
And back came the water splashing
With reckless slosh and slop,
And with it showers of red leaves
And twigs began to drop.

BOYS, DO NOT SMOKE.

(A SHORT TALK IN WORDS OF ONE SYLLABLE.)

SOME of you think it a grand thing to have a pipe in your mouth; you think that when you grow old you will be quite a man if you can smoke. I want to warn you not to start this deed, for if you do you may be sad by-and-bye. I can hear some of you say: "My friends smoke, why should not I do the same?" Let me tell you.

FIRST—Boys who smoke do not grow well. I know you want to grow to be big, fine men; of course you would like to have strong arms and big legs; now, if you smoke, your arms and legs will not grow so strong as they will if you do not.

It may be you do not know that when men smoke they take in the blood a juice which has been known to kill a dog when a small lot has been put in the mouth. A boy one day took an old pipe to make soap balls; this juice was in the pipe, it came in the boy's mouth; in a short time he died.

You see men spit on the ground; what is thrown on the ground is good to help to change food to blood; and it is good blood

which makes good bones and flesh. You want this, so do not smoke, and then you will not throw on the ground what is good to make blood.

SECOND—If you smoke you will spend much cash which you might spend in books or give to the poor. We laugh when we read of the folks in the East when they spend pence or gold to buy gilt things to burn on the graves of their friends. We say: "How sad, and what a waste of good gold!" Well, now, is it not just as much a waste when we spend pence and gold in a thing which is soon smoke, and that is all?

I read once of two boys who had six-pence each week to spend; one bought books, and his friend bought smoke, or what was soon smoke when he put it in his pipe and lit it.

The last one went to see his friend one day, and saw his shelves with good books. "Where did you get all those books from? I have no cash to buy books."

"No, you buy smoke and I buy books; now, which is the better?"

"I think you are right, and I have been a fool; I will not buy smoke any more, I will buy books.

THIRD—Boys who smoke may wish to drink.

I know you do not want to drink beer or wine or gin. I know you want to take all care to keep your pledge not to drink. Be sure of this: if you smoke you will find it more hard to keep your pledge than if you do not.

You can soon see how this may be. If you smoke, your friends who do the same will ask you to go to those rooms where smoke and drink go hand in hand. If you say you do not smoke or drink, you will not be asked to go at all.

Some men find they must drink when they smoke; they feel that smoke and drink are friends, and they do not want to part them. You have said that you will not drink, and I think you will be a wise boy if you make up your mind not to smoke.

There are men who will tell you they wish they did not smoke; they wish they could give it up, but they find they are so used to it they must keep on. Now, you do not want to be a slave to smoke, so do not put your first pipe in your mouth, and you will be glad when you are old.

EXPENSIVE.

AN Illinois senator unintentionally enabled his jeweller to earn two dollars very easily, not long ago, besides affording his friends some innocent amusement.

He left his watch with a jeweller whom he had been accustomed to employ when it needed cleaning. Several days later he called for it, was told that it had been put in order, paid the bill of five dollars, and took it away.

A few weeks afterward there was again something the matter with the watch. He took it to the jeweller, and when he called

for it the next week was told that the charge was two dollars.

"That last time I had it put in order the expense was five dollars. You asked me three dollars too much that time, didn't you?" said the senator.

"Oh no," replied the mender of watches, "there was a difference in the jobs, this time your watch only needed winding."

HOW THE MARTINS SERVED AN OWL.

BY MRS. G. HALL.

THE martin birds are great fighters, and build their nests in boxes if they can find them.

No other bird dares trouble them. But one day a stupid screech owl took possession of the box of two birds who had gone in pursuit of material to build their nest.

When the martins came home at night, the owl would not let them in. Owls are brighter at night, you know, and the birds were so small they flew away, as if afraid to fight with so large a bird.

But this was not so. They had only gone to bring a whole army of birds, and together they set to work. What do you think they did? Ousted him out! No! They brought pecks of mud, and just plastered him in the box. Then they flew away and waited. When they thought he was dead, they came back and carried off the plastering, and went on with their nest. Was not that very bright! This instinct which God gives to the birds of the air should teach us to love and worship him.—*Our Little Men and Women.*

THERE are few children who do not, at times, tell falsehoods. It is wrong and very sinful to tell a lie. But the worst of it is that those who tell lies also do other bad things. It is a desire to conceal a wrong usually, that leads children into falsehood. It is much better to have courage and manliness enough to frankly confess a wrong and honestly promise to turn away from it, than to try to conceal it by a lie.

SUNDAY-SCHOOL LESSONS.

SEPTEMBER 2.

LESSON TOPIC.—Jesus Cleansing the Temple.—John 2. 13-25.

MEMORY VERSES, John 2. 13-16.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Make not my Father's house a house of merchandise.—John 2. 16.

SEPTEMBER 9.

LESSON TOPIC.—Jesus and Nicodemus.—John 3. 1-16.

MEMORY VERSES, John 3. 1-3.

GOLDEN TEXT.—God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.—John 3. 16.