

OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

WATCH YOUR WORDS.

Keep a watch on your words, my darlings,
For words are wonderful things;
They are sweet, like the bees' 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
Prompts 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.

CASTLE-BUILDING.

ELLA was comfortably seated in a great arm-chair, reading of heroic deeds and wishing, oh! so much, that she might accomplish something to make her famous—something to be talked about and win praise from all who knew her, as well as from an admiring public far and wide.

"Now, if I were only old enough to be a Florence Nightingale, go to the seat of war and nurse the wounded soldiers, wouldn't that be splendid? Or, like Grace Darling, rescue some one from a watery grave. Dear me, what can or shall I ever do?"

And foolish Ella, forgetting her room needed righting, that she had not yet practised her music lesson, or that her mother might need some assistance this busy morning with nurse sick and Willie fretting over not receiving his usual attention, went on idly dreaming or planning what she would do at some future day, when big enough to accomplish something worth while.

"Ella, dear," called out a sweet, gentle voice from the parlor door, "won't you please run up into the nursery and help amuse Willie? Jennie's face is aching so badly she cannot pay much attention to baby."

"Oh, dear! it is always just so; I no sooner get comfortably seated reading than I must go and amuse Willie. He's a perfect bother!" mentally said Ella, as she slowly closed her book, and still more slowly rose out of the arm-chair into which she had curled herself for a good indulgence in reading and castle-building.

"Come, Ella, Willie will get to fretting real hard, and then it will be much more difficult to amuse him."

"But mother, this is Saturday, and I think I might have a little rest and pleasure of my own, without having to amuse baby whenever he is cross and fretful."

"Very true, dear, it is your holiday, but cannot you find pleasure in making others happy? I would not have my little girl grow up cold and selfish, thinking only of her own enjoyment."

"Grow up cold and selfish," repeated Ella, as she ascended the stairs. "Why, mamma doesn't know what great things I mean to

accomplish one of these days. How I do wish I was big enough now to go away to China or Africa to teach the heathens, or do something of the kind."

A scream from Willie quickened her steps, but her brow bore a rather sulky look as she turned the knob of the nursery door.

"Oh, Miss Ella! I'm so glad you have come. I have a distracting toothache and the neuralgia all down one side of my face, and I can't amuse Willie no way."

"You took cold talking for so long a time over the fence last evening," replied Ella, in no very gracious tone. "There, Willie, stop your crying, or I'll not play with you. Just see, you have upset the soap-suds and broken your soap-bubble pipe."

Willie had stopped crying upon his sister's entrance into the room, but now he stood with quivering lips, scarce knowing whether to confess he was sorry, or to rebel and again set up a defiant yell.

What has become of Ella's wish to care for wounded soldiers, or to teach the heathens? Has she poured oil upon the troubled waters? helped to ease Jennie of the torturing pain she is so patiently trying to endure? or seen what gentle words may do to quiet Willie? Alas, no! The work just before her does not seem grand enough to claim her attention. It is not one that will win praise from her fellow-creatures, and so Ella sets about amusing her little brother in a pre-occupied, listless manner. Jennie is not sent to lie down, or Willie put in a thorough good humor, until mamma is disengaged, enters the room, and by her bright, sunny face and manner sets things to rights. Jennie has something given her for her tooth, and a soothing lotion to bathe her face, and is then sent off to lie down and rest. Willie is taken upon the lap and soon quieted with a pretty picture-book.

Ella watches these proceedings, wondering why she had not thought of them, and with regretful feelings tells her mother so.

"Well, Puss, it is not easy to put old heads upon young shoulders."

"But, mamma, only this very morning I was planning what great deeds I meant to do, and was wishing to begin them right straight off."

"And forgot that the work directly before you was the only one God requires of you. I'm afraid my little girl indulges in castle-building. Like bright bubbles they will only fall to pieces, deary, unless you first lay a firm foundation."

"And how can I do that, mamma? I don't quite understand your meaning."

"It is this. Day-dreaming, or castle-building, as I call it, for future time to the neglect of present duties, is apt to weaken the character instead of strengthening it; so when the time comes for some great and heroic deed, such a one is unnerved or incapacitated to act in the way they had dreamed they should. While another, who forgets self and daily strives to make others happy, unconsciously performs brave deeds all the time. This is the firm foundation of which I spoke. And you see, Ella, when a time comes for what you consider great and heroic deeds, they are performed as naturally and with as little thought

of self as the simple ones have long been transacted, and, dear child, let me add, without a thought of this world's applause which castle-builders expect to follow their great deeds."

Ella looked thoughtful. Had mamma so clearly read her thoughts? Or was this really the way with all dreamy castle-builders? If so, she would not be one of them. And, forming a good resolution, she no longer found the care of dear Willie a bother, or present duties distasteful. But, in the strength of Him who ever helps His trusting children to do right, Ella at once set about building a firm foundation against the time she might be called upon to make greater sacrifices for others.—*Illustrated Christian Weekly.*

ROCKS.

A GENTLEMAN was once, when a lad, sailing down East River, near New York, which was then a very dangerous channel. He watched the old steersman with great interest, and observed that whenever he came near to a stick of painted wood he changed his course.

"Why do you turn out for those bits of wood?" asked the boy.

The old man looked up from under his shaggy brows, too much taken up with his task to talk, and simply growled out, "Rocks."

"Well, I would not turn out for those bits of wood," said the thoughtless boy; "I would go right over them."

The old man replied only by a look which that boy has not forgotten in his manhood. "Poor, foolish lad," it said, "how little you know about rocks!"

So, children, shun the rocks as you would the way of death. There are plenty of buoys to warn you where they lie hidden, and whenever you meet one turn aside, for there a danger lies.

LAPLAND BABIES.

I WANT to tell you how the mammas away up in Lapland keep their babies from disturbing the minister on Sabbaths. All the babies are outside, buried in the snow. As soon as the family arrives at the little wooden church, and the reindeer is secured, the papa Lapp shovels a snug little bed in the snow; and mamma Lapp wraps the baby snugly in skins, and deposits it therein; then papa piles the snow around it, and the dog is left to guard it while the parents go into church. Often twenty or thirty babies lie out there in the snow around the church; and I never have heard of one that suffocated or froze. Smoke-dried little creatures, I suppose they are tough. But how would our soft, tender, pretty, pink-and-white babies like it, do you think?—*S. S. Visitor.*

HEAVEN'S gates are wide enough to admit penitent sinners, but too narrow to admit sin.

A POOR heathen convert came to ask the missionary if he could procure a Bible. "I have not a new one that I can give you," said the missionary; "I have a second-hand one, but it is old." "O! that is nothing! If the book is old *the Word is new.*"