

OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

PROMPTING THE HEN.

It is well I ran into the garden."
Said Eddie, his face all aglow:
"For what do you think, mamma, happened?
You never will guess it, I know.

"The little brown hen was there clucking.
'Cut-cut!' She'd say, quick as a wink,
Then 'cut-cut' again, only slower;
And then she would stop short and think.

"And then she would say it all over,
She *did* look so mad and so vexed,
For mamma, do you know, she'd forgotten
The word that she ought to cluck next.

"So I said, 'Ca-daw-cut,' 'Ca-daw-cut,'
As loud and as strong as I could,
And she looked round at me very thankful.
I tell you, it made her feel good.

"Then she flapped, and said, 'Cut-cut-ca-daw-cut.'
She remembered just how it went then.
But it is well I ran into the garden—
She might never have clucked right again!"

—St. Nicholas.

THE EYE.—I.

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"He that formed the eye shall He not see?"—Ps. xciv.
9. "In wisdom hast Thou made them all."—Ps. civ. 24.

The first text tells you who made the eye—God.

The second text tells you He made the eye wisely and well. And I shall try this morning to make this so clear and interesting that you will remember them for a long time to come.

If you look into a jeweller's show-case you will see gold watches and costly jewellery placed inside of beautiful little boxes. These boxes, you notice on examination, are made of several pieces of wood glued together, and are covered outside with leather, and inside are lined with wadding and silk. They were intended, you say, to protect some delicate and valuable article inside, and that is why so many different kinds of material are used. You say, too, that whoever made those boxes must have known that wood is hard and strong, that leather is tough, that glue is adhesive, and that linings of wadding and silk would be springy and soft. You say, further, that it was the right thing to do to place the wood outside, and the silk inside, and not the reverse, for by this arrangement the strong wood protects from any injury that might come from outside, and the soft silk would keep the valuables from getting scratched and soiled inside, and so you conclude that the maker of the boxes was both a wise and a careful man. But the box in which the eye is kept is still more wonderful and beautiful, and surely, therefore, the eye and its box must have had a maker still more wise and kind. The box the eye is kept in is made of seven bones fastened together internally, and levelled at their edges as the cooper scoops off the edge of his barrel all round. Outside is a covering of skin, inside where the eye lies is a lining of fat and fine skin, softer far and more yielding than any silk possibly could be; while the whole cavity or box is always the exact shape and size the eye needs.

Over it the forehead projects like a verandah to keep dust, etc., from falling, then the eye-brows make a second verandah running out still further, while under this is a third, the upper lid, to carry off sweat when you work

hard, or water when you wash your face, or anything else which might injure the eye.

Then it needs to be constantly oiled, just as machinery does when running, and needs to be constantly washed on account of the fine dust getting into it; and how can this be done? Well, God has placed a little sack or bag up behind the eye which supplies a wash that serves for both oil and water at the same time, and supplies it in the exact quantity required every moment.

But, where will the tears go when they have served their purpose? They cannot stay in the eye, and it would be very unpleasant to have them run down one's cheeks all the time.

This difficulty is overcome by a water-pipe in the form of a small hole made through the bone of the nose, which carries off all surplus moisture and spreads it over the nostrils, and it passes away as we breathe.

Then a towel to wipe the eye is found always ready and clean in the upper lid, which sweeps over it every time we wink, which amounts to hundreds of times a day. But, do we not want to turn our eyes in all directions, and at the same time must not the eye keep its proper place?

How then is this to be done? If it were so fixed that it would not move, we could only see straight ahead. Or, if it moved on a hinge like the hinges on a trunk-lid, the eye could move up and down, but not from side to side. The only kind of hinge, then, that would suit every purpose is the "ball and socket" hinge, and that, wonderful to say, is how the eye is arranged. If it was left to roll about in its socket any way it happened, like a ball in a cup, that would not do. It must be so controlled in all its movements that the right side shall always be turned towards the object it wants to see. And how can this be done? To secure this the eye is furnished with an apparatus which works very much like the tackling of a ship by which the sails and yards are raised and lowered, and turned about. Muscles and loops around the eye correspond to the ropes and pulleys of the ship. When you want to look down, there is a muscle to pull the eye down. When you want to look up, there is another to pull the eye up. Then another to turn the eye to the right, and one to turn it to the left. Then there is a muscle fastened to the eye-ball in two places, and geared through a pulley to move it in any direction we want, and then another is fastened to the inside to keep the eye steady when we do not need to move it.

Surely, surely, in wisdom God has made all parts of the eye, and He should have the praise. I would like also to tell you something about the inside of the eye, and about the different kinds of eyes of different animals, and show how wisely arranged all this is, but that would take me far beyond my time.

I will merely ask you now to note and remember the practical lesson of the first text mentioned:—"Shall He not see?" "He that made the eye shall He not see?" That is—He that made the watch and jewellery, and the beautiful boxes they are kept in, is surely greater than the watch, and the jewellery, and the boxes. He that made those beautiful

cards and toys, and picture books you got on Christmas and New Year, is surely greater than those cards, and toys, and books. He that made your eyes and mine to see everything about us so clearly and correctly, surely He sees everything our eyes see, and sees ourselves, and all things.

That is what the text teaches and wants you to remember.

Everything bad you do, then; everything bad you think or plan; everything bad about you and in you, God sees it just as it is.

Away, then, away all evil.

On the other hand, everything good you do, and think, and plan, He sees and gives you credit for; and every danger present and coming He knows about, and knows how to prevent or overrule for your good.

Therefore, to the wrong-doer how dreadful is the thought, "Thou God seest me!" To the well-doer how encouraging and comforting the thought, "Thou God seest me!"

THE FAITHFUL ELEPHANT.

There is a beautiful story told of an old elephant who was engaged in battle on the plains of India. He was a standard-bearer, and carried on his huge back the royal ensign, the rallying point of the Poonah host. At the beginning of the fight he lost his master. The mahout, or driver, had just given him the word to halt, when he received a fatal wound, and fell to the ground, where he lay with a heap of slain. The obedient elephant stood still, while the battle closed round him and the standard he carried. He never stirred a foot, refusing either to advance or retire, as the conflict became hotter and fiercer, until the Mahrattas, seeing the standard flying steadily in its place, refused to believe that they were being beaten, and rallied again and again around the colours. And all this while, amid the din of battle, the patient animal stood straining its ears to catch the sound of that voice it would never hear again.

At length the tide of conquest left the field deserted. The Mahrattas swept on in pursuit of the flying foe, but the elephant, like a rock, stood there with the dead and dying around, and the ensign waving in its place.

For three days and nights it remained where its master had given the command to halt. Neither bribes nor threats could move it.

Then they sent to a village one hundred miles away, and brought the mahout's little son. The noble animal seemed then to remember how its driver had sometimes given his authority to his little child, and immediately, with all his shattered trappings clanging as he went, paced slowly and quietly away.

What a lesson of fidelity is taught us by the faithfulness of this dumb creature to his master!

A CUSTOMER went into a store one day, and found the proprietor out, and only a small boy for a clerk. Winking very slyly to the boy, he says: "Johnnie, give me extra measure to-day; your master is not in." Johnnie, looking solemnly into the man's face, said, "My Master is always in, sir." Johnnie's Master was the All-seeing God.