

## OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

### THE STOLEN CUSTARD.

A TRUE INCIDENT

Sugar-toothed Dick  
For dainties was sick,  
So he slyly crept into the kitchen,  
Snatched a cup from the pantry  
And darted out quick,  
Unnoticed by mother or Gretchen.

Whispered he, "There's no cake,  
For to-morrow they bake,  
But this custard looks rich and delicious,  
How they'll scold at the rats,  
Or the mice, or the cats,  
For of me I don't think they're suspicious.

"They might have filled up  
Such a mean little cup!  
And, for want of a spoon, I must drink it,  
But 'tis easy to pour,—  
Hark! who's at the door?"  
And the custard went down ere you'd think it.

With a shriek he sprang up,  
To the floor dashed the cup,  
Then he howled, tumbled, spluttered and blustered,  
Till the terrible din  
Brought the whole household in.—  
Dick had swallowed a cupful of mustard!

—Our Little Ones.

### READY FOR A FIGHT.

It is not necessary to cross the Atlantic in order to visit places that are foreign and strange to American travellers. How different is a Canadian city from one of our own! Halifax, in Nova Scotia, for example, amazes and amuses an American citizen, from the moment he gets a view of its magnificent harbour—one of the finest in the world. He sees for the first time in his life—unless he has travelled abroad—a city that is held on the tenure of conquest. It is a city fortified and garrisoned, and the fortifications are on a scale that recalls those of Gibraltar.

As soon as the visitor is fairly within view of the city, and while it is still five or six miles distant, he sees on a lofty height, commanding the approach to it, a mass of grass-covered earthworks, with great guns slanting down from deep embrasures. The harbour narrows as the city is neared, and very soon is seen, on another height, a stronger and newer fort, with guns of the best calibre, all aimed with a sly and covert menace at some imaginary foe. In front of the town nature has placed a small island, a green chunk of earth, of irregular shape, rising from the water a hundred feet or more; a cool and pleasant spot for a picnic. Man has converted it into an earthwork of almost Gibraltar strength. He has dug into it, undermined it, and placed in it as many great guns as he could point at the imaginary foe who covets the city, and is coming up the bay to capture it.

Halifax rises from the water's edge to near the summit of an eminence two hundred and fifty feet high. The summit itself is crowned by an extensive fortification, called the Citadel—green with grassy slopes—in which are set a great number of huge pieces of ordnance, slanting over the town toward the same phantom foe. Just above the city rides at anchor a mighty ironclad of eight thousand tons burden. She has a crew of seven hundred and fifty men. Her guns are few in number,

but of earthquake power, capable of hurling six hundred-pound balls at any power presuming to enter the harbour with uncivil intent. This monster is painted white, and is full of the best-natured fellows to be found afloat. Near her lie two other ironclads, smaller, but by no means small, each swarming with blue-clad men, not unwilling to exchange chaff with a passing boat.

On shore, what first greets the eye of a new-comer? A squad of red-coats going to relieve sentries. Their red coats are of the reddest red. Their summer helmets are of spotless white, and on the front of them glisten in letters of burnished gold the number of their regiment and the arms of England. If the object of those who designed this uniform was to give to it the most conspicuous character possible, that object has been accomplished. But that is no affair of ours. What we wish to remark is, that there are about three thousand of these red-coated gentlemen. Splendidly drilled and equipped, they pass the season at this agreeable summer resort, serenely awaiting the hostilities of the shadowy foe whose coming is so long delayed. It is evident that the British lion has a strong grip upon the beautiful capital of Nova Scotia. But the puzzle to an American is, Who wants to get it away from him, that he should take the trouble to hold it so extremely tight?

We could not but think of the words of John Bright: "If you want war, prepare for war; if you want peace, prepare for peace." England prepares for war, and her experience, like that of other warlike nations, gives significance to Mr. Bright's aphorism—she generally has war, whether she wants it or not.—*Youth's Companion.*

### OLD RYE'S SPEECH.

I was made to be eaten,  
And not to be drank,  
To be threshed in a barn,  
Not soaked in a tank.  
I come as a blessing  
When put through the mill—  
As a blight and a curse  
When run through a still.  
Make me up into loaves  
And your children are fed,  
But if into drink  
I will starve them instead.  
In bread I'm a servant—  
The eater shall rule;  
In drink I am master,  
The drinker a fool.  
Then remember the warning,  
My strength I'll employ,  
If eaten, to strengthen,  
If drunk, to destroy.

### A NOBLE LAD.

A poor boy, whose name no one knows, but we hope that it is in the Book of life, found three little children who, like himself, had been washed ashore from one of the many wrecks, wandering along the dreary coast in the driving sleet. They were crying bitterly, having been parted from their parents, and not knowing whether they were drowned or saved.

The poor lad took them to a sheltered spot, plucked moss for them, and made them a rude, but soft bed; and then, taking off his own jacket to cover them, sat by them all the

night long, soothing their terror till they fell asleep.

In the morning, leaving them still asleep, he went in search of the parents, and to his great joy met them looking for their children, whom they had given up for dead. He directed them where to find them, and then went on himself to find some place of shelter and refreshment.

But when the parents were returning with their recovered little ones, they found their brave preserver lying quite dead upon the snow, not far from where they parted from him.

The long exposure in his exhausted state was too much for his little strength, and having saved his little charges—a stranger to them as they to him—he lay down to die.

A sad story is this, and one that moves our hearts. How much more should our hearts be moved by the story of Him who freely gave His life that He might save us from eternal death!

### THE THREE SIEVES.

"O, mamma!" cried little Blanche Philpot, "I heard such a tale about Edith Howard! I did not think she could be so very naughty. One—"

"My dear," interrupted Mrs. Philpot, "before you continue, we will see if your story will pass three sieves."

"What does that mean, mamma?" inquired Blanche.

"I will explain it. In the first place, *Is it true?*"

"I suppose so; I got it from Miss White, and she is a great friend of Edith's."

"And does she show her friendship by telling tales on her? In the next place, though you can prove it to be true, *Is it kind?*"

"I did not mean to be unkind; but I am afraid I was. I would not like Edith to speak of me as I have of her."

"And, *Is it necessary?*"

"No; of course not, mamma; there is no need for me to mention it at all."

"Then put a bridle on your tongue. If you cannot speak well, speak not at all."

### LOVE YOUR ENEMIES.

A large boy in a school was so abusive to the younger ones, that the teacher took the vote of the school whether he should be expelled. All the small boys voted to expel him, except one, who was scarcely five years old. Yet he knew very well that the larger boy would probably continue to abuse him. "Why then did you vote to have him stay?" said the teacher. "Because, if he is expelled, perhaps he will not learn any more about God, and so he will be more wicked still." "Do you forgive him then?" said the teacher. "Yes," said he; "papa, and mamma, and you, all forgive me when I do wrong; God forgives me too; and I must do the same."

"THE hope of the righteous shall be gladness; but the expectation of the wicked shall perish. The way of the Lord is strength to the upright; but destruction shall be to the workers of iniquity."—*Prov. x. 28, 29.*