

## OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

### TOM'S REVENGE.

"That Ned Lane," said Tom Bixby, doubling up his fist and stamping his feet. "is a mean, spiteful, wicked boy. I hate him. I wish he was dead, I do!"

Then Tom broke down and fairly burst into tears. His mother, who had heard his angry words, came out to the garden to see what had caused them. She, too was indignant at what she saw. There was Tom's pet doggie, Fawn, stretched out stiff and cold on the grass. Around his neck a string was tied, from which dangled a card. On it these words were written, in a scraggy, blotted hand:—"He'll never chase my chickens more.—NED LANE."

"O mother!" cried Tom, "look at poor Fawn! See what that cruel Ned has done! O how I hate him! I'll be revenged!"

Fawn had been a favourite with all the Bixby family, and in spite of the fact that he would pursue chickens and tear the dresses of passing ladies, or scratch and hide away stockings and handkerchiefs when they were laid upon the grass to bleach, Mrs. Bixby had borne with him. She had hoped that his youthful faults would be cured in time. She knew that Ned Lane had been made very angry because of the loss of two rare fowls which Fawn had shaken and torn to pieces, and she felt that Fawn had been a great annoyance to the neighbours—a great transgressor. But what to do with Ned was the question, for Tom's heart was almost broken.

"Tom," she said, "you say you hate Ned. Do you wish what I heard you say just now—to be really revenged?"

"Yes, mother; I want to see him suffer. I wish all his chickens were gone."

"Ned has done a cruel deed, and I do not wonder that you are very deeply grieved; but, my son, he that hateth his brother is a murderer."

"He's not my brother," Tom replied.

"In one sense he is; yet I am sure you wish him no such ill. I think there is a way by which you can make him very sorry for this, and yet keep your own self-respect."

The gentle tones won their way to Tom's heart. He sat down by his mother, and she passed her soft hand over his hot brow and soothed him tenderly. Then she gave him her plan for being "quits," as he called it, with Ned, and for getting the victory.

The next day, when Ned Lane met Tom Bixby on his way to school, he was rather mortified to hear nothing about Fawn. He was prepared to defend himself if attacked, but Tom passed on in silence. He tried to say "Hallo Ned!" but failed in the attempt. All the morning, however, Tom looked and acted as usual, and at recess he engaged heartily in games with other boys.

When Ned, feeling more and more uncomfortable went home to dinner, a surprise awaited him. A superb pair of Brahma-pootra fowls had arrived, with a string and card attached:—"For those my poor Fawn chased.—TOM BIXBY."

I cannot say truly that the two from this time became fast friends, but this I know, that Ned Lane was thoroughly ashamed of his mean and unworthy action, and never after was guilty of the like cruelty; while Tom felt, even at Fawn's grave, that forgiveness is sweeter and better than revenge.

#### CHILDREN'S PRAISE.

Above the clear blue sky,  
In heaven's bright abode,  
The angel host on high  
Sing praises to their God;

Halleluia!  
They love to sing  
To God their King,  
Halleluia!

But God from infant tongues  
On earth receiveth praise;  
We then our cheerful songs  
In sweet accord will raise:

Halleluia!  
We too will sing  
To God our King,  
Halleluia!

O blessed Lord, Thy truth  
To children now impart,  
And teach us in our youth  
To know Thee as Thou art.

Halleluia!  
Then shall we sing  
To God our King,  
Halleluia!

O may Thy holy word  
Spread all the world around;  
And all with one accord  
Uplift the joyful sound,

Halleluia!  
All then shall sing  
To God their King,  
Halleluia!

#### WAITING TO GROW.

Little white snowdrop, just waking up,  
Violet, daisy, and sweet buttercup!  
Think of the flowers that are under the snow,  
Waiting to grow!

And think what hosts of queer little seeds;  
Of flowers and mosses, of ferns, of weeds;  
Are under the leaves and under the snow,  
Waiting to grow!

Think of the roots getting ready to sprout,  
Reaching their slender brown fingers about  
Under the ice and the leaves and the snow,  
Waiting to grow!

Only a month or a few weeks more  
Will they have to wait behind that door;  
Listen and watch and wait below,  
Waiting to grow!

Nothing so small, and hidden so well  
That God will not find it, and presently tell  
His sun where to shine and His rain where to go,  
Helping them grow!

#### "IF I SHOULD DIE BEFORE I WAKE."

"Mother, every night when I go to bed I say 'Now I lay me;' and do you know, mamma, though saying it so often, I never thought what it meant until Fanny Gray died? I asked nurse if Fanny died before she waked; and she said 'Yes; she went to bed well and had a spasm in the night, and died before she knew anything at all.' Now, mother," continued Rena, "I want you to tell me about 'Now I lay me,' so that when I say it I may think what it means."

"Well, Rena," said her mother, "I shall be glad to tell you. What does it mean when you say 'Now I lay me down to sleep'?"

"Oh, that means, mother, that I am just going to lie down in my bed, to go to sleep till morning."

"Well, then, as you lie down to sleep, what prayer do you offer to God?"

"'I pray the Lord my soul to keep.' I want the Lord to take care of my soul while I am asleep, and take care of me, mother. But, mother, if I should die before I wake, would the Lord be taking care of me then? Now, it seems to me that when Fanny died God did not take care of her that night, and so she died."

"Oh no, Rena! God did take care of her. The little verse says, 'If I should die before I wake, I pray the Lord my soul to take;' so you see God took little Fanny's soul to Himself, and when she awoke she was in the arms of the blessed Jesus. Now, Rena, when you say 'Now I lay me,' I want you to think in this way: Now I am going to bed and to sleep, and I want the Lord to take care of me. I will ask him to do so for Jesus' sake; and then I will lie down feeling that I am in the Lord's care, and that if I die before I wake, I shall still be the Lord's child."

"Oh, mother! I will try to remember. Why, I used to say it slow, and clasp my hands, and shut my eyes, and yet I did not think about it. Thank you, mother dear. Please hear me to-night when I go to say my prayers."

Ah, little children, are there not a great many who, like Rena, say their prayers without thinking what they say—mere words, without any meaning in them? God cannot listen to such prayers. They are not for Him unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid.

Think of what I have written about little Rena when you say "Now I lay me" to-night; and pray that God may watch over you, waking or sleeping.

#### A STRANGE MESSENGER.

A professional diver said he had in his house what would probably strike a visitor as a very strange chimney ornament—the shells of an oyster holding fast a piece of printed paper. The possessor of this ornament was diving on the coast, when he observed at the bottom of the sea this oyster on a rock, with a piece of paper in its mouth, which he detached, and commenced to read through the goggles of his head-dress. It was a gospel tract, and, coming to him thus strangely and unexpectedly, so impressed his unconverted heart, that he said, "I can hold out against God's mercy in Christ no longer, since it pursues me thus." He became, whilst in the ocean's depth, a repentant, converted and (as he was assured) sin forgiven man. Saved at the bottom of the sea.

"Whoso keepeth the law is a wise son: but he that is a companion of riotous men shameth his father."—Prov. xxviii. 20.

A LITTLE girl had been behaving badly at the table, and at last her father turned her high chair facing the wall. After a moment's pause the child said, "Why, papa, you've turned me wrong side out!"