

LITTLE FOLKS

The Key to the Box.

'What would you do,' said the little key

To the teak-wood box, 'except for me?'

The teak-wood box gave a gentle creak
To the little key; but it did not speak.

'I believe,' said the key, 'that I will hide

In the crack, down there by the chimney side,

'So this proud old box may see
How little it's worth except for me.'

It was long, long afterwards, in the crack

They found the key, and they brought it back.

And it said, as it chuckled and laughed to itself,

'Now I'll be good to the box on the shelf.'

But the little key stopped with a shiver and shock,

For there was a bright new key in the lock.

And the old box said: 'I am sorry, you see;

But the place is filled, my poor little key.'

—Selected.

Mabel's Thank-offering.

'O, mamma,' said Mabel one morning, 'I want a nickel just so bad!'

'What would you do with it, my dear?' questioned the mother.

'I'd buy some of those nice chocolates I saw in Mr. Seyb's restaurant yesterday,' said Mabel. 'They did look so good.'

'Well, since my little girl has helped her mamma so well this morning, she shall have the nickel.'

Mabel jumped up and down with delight, and in a few moments she was hurrying up the street with the money tightly clasped in her right hand. When she returned, her face was all aglow, but she had no chocolates.

'Why, Mabel, where's your candy?' asked her mother. 'You surely saved mamma a piece?'

'I didn't buy any, mamma,' explained Mabel, her cheeks dimpling with a smile. 'Just before I got to the restaurant I came up to a blind man standing on the street, begging. I heard him say: "O God, if I could only see your beautiful world, how happy I'd be!" Then I thought of what our teacher said. She told us to give a thank-offering this week to some one who didn't have some blessing we had, so I just dropped the nickel in his cup. When he thanked me, somehow I had such a sweet, good feeling in my heart that I didn't want any chocolates.'

Then Mabel's mother couldn't help but kiss her happy little girl, and tell her how glad she was that she had made the thank-offering.—Sunday School Advocate.

The Chickens.

(D. A. T., in the 'Chatterbox'.)

See the chickens round the gate
For their morning portion wait;
Fill the basket from the store,
Let us open wide the door:

Eager, busy, hen and chick,
Every little morsel pick.
See the hen with callow brood
To her young how kind and good;



Throw out crumbs and scatter seed,
Let the hungry chickens feed.
Call them now, how fast they run!
Gladly, quickly every one.

With what care their steps she leads—
Them, and not herself she feeds;
Picking here and picking there,
Where the nicest morsels are.

The Best Plan.

Grant, Virginia and Nellie Stone had played in the yard until they were tired, and they stretched out on the sitting-room floor to rest.

'Let's play air-castles,' suggested Virginia, and the idea met with the approval of the others. After a time 'air-castles' lost their interest, and they began to talk of what they would do when they were grown up.

'I'm going to be a doctor and have mamma live with me. I'll get her a maid and she won't even have to wait on herself,' Grant observed.

'It will take you too long to get rich. Mamma would be all worked out before you could make money to hire a maid,' answered Virginia, scornfully. 'I'll take Domestic Science in high school, and when I learn to cook, I'll do all the cooking for mamma. I'll make something she likes every day. She'll be able to visit and belong to lots of societies then. I think that's a lot nicer plan than yours, Grant.'

'I'll learn to sew and make all of mamma's clothes' was Nellie's decision. 'She won't have to work a bit when we

grow up, will she? Let's go tell her about our plans.' And they ran to the kitchen, where Mrs. Stone was busy ironing.

'I'll tell mine first,' said Grant. 'Mamma, when we grow up we are going to do things to help you. We want you to decide who has the nicest plan.' Then each told what they would do in that distant grown-up period.

Their mother looked serious when they finished. 'Your plans are all good, but I can tell you a better one yet. It will be a good many years before you can do these things, but Grant could fill the wood-box every day, as I have asked him to do. It was empty again this morning, and I had to get wood. Virginia and Nellie could wash the dishes and make the beds every morning and not complain about it, or have to be told again and again. There are many steps you could save me if you would only try. That would give me time to rest now, and I would like it.'

The children looked crestfallen for a moment. They saw the almost empty wood-box and the unwashed dishes. They knew their mother was