

OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

CAPTAIN ROBERT.

Robert was kept in the house by a cold, so he flattened his nose against the glass and watched a military procession pass by. They were in very gay uniform, with very bright buttons, and kept step beautifully.

Robert watched until the last glimmer of their brightness disappeared around a corner, then turned with a sigh to watch his mother place pies in the oven, and say to her—

"I would like to be a soldier."

"Very well," said his mother, "then I would be."

Robert stared at her a few minutes and then said—

"Would be what?"

"Why, a soldier. Wasn't that what you said you wanted to be?"

"Well, but how could I be?"

"Easy enough; that is if you put your mind to it. A soldier's life is never an easy one, of course. Care, you may hand me that other pie; I think I can make room for it."

"But mother, I don't know what you mean," Robert said.

"Don't? You haven't forgotten the verse we talked about so long: 'Greater is he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city?' It takes real soldier-like fighting to rule a spirit, I can tell you."

"Oh," said Robert; and he flattened his nose against the glass again and thought.

"But mother," he said at last, "I didn't mean that kind. I would like to be a captain and have soldiers under me."

"Nothing easier," his mother said, shutting the oven door with a satisfactory air. "There are your ten fingers, and your eyes, and your ears and that troublesome tongue that hates to obey. I pity any captain who has as troublesome ones."

Robert laughed. He had had so many talks with his mother that he understood her very well; yet this was a new way of putting it. He stood there a good while thinking about it, deciding that he would be a captain forthwith, and that his soldiers should obey perfectly. Then he wondered what orders he should have to give them first.

Poor fellow! In less than ten minutes from that time he knew.

He went to the sitting-room to find that baby Carrie had been there before him. There lay his birthday books, his beautiful "Family Flight" on the floor, some of the loveliest pictures in it torn into bits. His photograph album was on the sofa; but chubby fingers had tugged at mamma's picture until it lay loose and ruined, and papa's page was gone entirely.

Oh, how angry was Captain Robert! He wanted to run after Carrie and slap her naughty fingers, she was almost two years old, and ought to know better. He wanted to run to his mother, and with red face and angry voice to tell his story of wrong, and demand that Carrie be whipped. He wanted to bury his head in the sofa cushions and cry just as loud as he could roar. Why did he

do none of those things? Just because he remembered in time that he was a captain, and had soldiers to obey.

"Halt!" he said to his feet as they were about to rush away, and they instantly obeyed. "Stop!" he said to the tears, as they began to rush in torrents up to his eyes; and back they all went, save one little straggler who rolled down his nose, and was instantly wiped out of existence. In short, the boy proved himself a good captain, for that time at least. He even sent his feet up-stairs presently with a rosy-cheeked apple for Carrie, and bade his arms give a very loving hug, which they immediately did.

Mamma found out all about it, as mamma almost always do, and when papa came home at night, what did he do but bow low and say—

"Captain Robert, I am proud to salute you. I hear you have fought a battle and won a victory to-day." — *Pansy.*

THE CHILDREN'S GUIDE.

In our work, and in our play,
Jesus, be Thou ever near,
Guarding, guiding, all the day,
Keeping in Thy holy fear

Thou didst toil, a lowly Child
In the far-off Holy Land,
Blessing labour undefiled,
Pure and honest of the hand.

Thou wilt bless our playhour too,
If we ask Thy succour strong;
Watch o'er all we say or do,
Hold us back from guilt and wrong.

O! how happy thus to spend
Work and playtime in His sight,
Till the rest which shall not end,
Till the day which knows not night.

REMARKABLE STORY ABOUT ANGEL GUARDIANS.

In a wild and lawless district there lived some years ago a pious clergyman, who was sent for one day to visit a dying person. At once he prepared his horse and set off on his way to the cottage, but that way was through a dark, lonely forest, reported to be infested with robbers. The good man rode into the forest, no doubt committing himself to the care of his God, but suddenly a fear came over him that he was in great danger, and he alighted from his horse and knelt down, imploring God to protect him. He then remounted and rode on.

The visit was made, the good man was protected, and nothing more was heard about that night till long years afterwards. Then came a wonderful explanation of that protection, in a way little dreamt of by him who was the object of it. Again he was sent for to visit a dying man not far from that wild, dark forest, and again the good man set off to obey the summons. When he arrived at the spot, he was greeted by the sufferer as one who knew him well. "You don't know me, sir, but I know you." Do you remember being sent for years ago to visit some one who was dying? And do you remember riding through the forest, and when you were in the middle of it, getting off your horse to kneel upon the ground to pray? I saw you do it all. I was lying in wait with some others to

attack you. I saw you riding, and I saw you stop and dismount, and kneel and pray. I did not care a straw for your prayers; but one thing I never could get over—where, sir, did those two horsemen come from who rode one on each side of you after you had offered that prayer?"

The good man could give no reply, for he had never seen them, the only explanation of it was that they were the "angels of the Lord," who ever "encamp around the servants of the Lord and deliver them." How delightful is the thought to the Christian, that he is guarded from all harm, both from earthly and spiritual foes, by the shining warriors of God!

HAPPY EVERY DAY.

Sidney Smith cut the following from a newspaper, and preserved it for himself: "When you rise in the morning, form the resolution to make the day a happy one to some fellow creature. It is easily done—a left-off garment to the man who needs it, a kind word to the sorrowful, an encouraging expression to the striving—trifles in themselves light as air—will do it at least twenty-four hours. And if you are young, depend upon it, it will tell when you are old; and if you are old, rest assured it will send you gently and happily down the stream of time to eternity. If you send one person, only one, happily through each day, that is 365 in the course of the year. If you live only forty years after you commence that course of medicine, you have made 14,600 beings happy, at all events for a time."

MENTAL EFFORT HEALTHFUL.

A correspondent says on this subject: After an experience of thirty years in colleges, I have to say that I have never known or heard of a break-down in health that could be traced to study. I know a few that were caused by rum, and a few more that had their cause in the kitchen. I broke down myself in the last way. During the last thirty years I have habitually done five times as much mental work daily as I did in college, and I have found my brain-work healthful. Whether boys are to study Latin or German, they must be judiciously fed, and led to form wholesome habits in eating. Chronic indigestions must be promptly treated, just as the cases of other people. But I am confident that there is no healthier work in the world than brain-work for boys or men.

A SWEARER REPROVED.

Some little children were sitting one day on the step of a door singing, as they often do, some of their favourite hymns. They were suddenly surprised by a half-drunken man, who came up to them, and muttering an oath, said "Does your master teach you nothing but singing those foolish hymns?" "Yes," said a sharp little fellow about six years of age, "He tells us it is wicked to swear." The poor man seemed ashamed of his conduct, and passed on without further remark.