

## The Cross Box.

It was a rainy day, and all the children had to stay in the house. Ned had planned to go fishing, and Johnny wanted to set up a wind-mill he had made. Susie wanted to gather her flower-seeds, and Pet was anxious to hunt for her white kitten in the barns.

So all were disappointed, and before night had become cross, and peevish, and snappish. Mamma called them all to her and talked very gravely.

They were quiet for a while after it. In half an hour Ned brought a small box and showed his mother. He had cut a little hole in the top just large enough to let a cent through, and under it were the words cross-box.

"Look, mamma," he said, "s'posing whenever any of us speak cross we made ourselves pay a cent for a fine? Susie and Johnny and Pet are so cross it would be a good thing. We'll try who can keep out of the box the longest."

Mamma laughed and said it might be a very good plan if they all agreed to it: but if they did agree they must do as they promised.

"I'll agree," said Susie; "I'm not going to be cross any more."

"And I," said Johnny.

"And I," added Pet.

"What shall we do with all the money?" asked Susie.

"We'll buy a magic lantern," replied Ned.

"No, we'll buy a whole lot of candy," said Johnny.

"No," added Susie, "we'll send it for a bed in the Children's Hospital."

"I tell you," said Ned, angrily, "if you don't do as I want to I'll pitch the box out of the window."

"Where's your penny, Ned?" asked mamma.

Ned looked very foolish, but brought the first penny and dropped it into the box.

Mamma thought the box really did some good. The children learned to watch against getting angry, and little lips would be shut tight to keep the ugly words from

coming through.

When school began they were so busy that the box was forgotten. Weeks later mamma was putting a closet in order one Saturday.

"Here's the cross-box!" she said.

"I'm going to see how much money there is," cried Ned. "Seventeen cents. That's enough to buy lemons and nuts and play peanuts stand. Let's do it."

"Oh!" said Susie, "there goes poor little lame Jimmy. I think it would be nice to give it to him."

"I say"—whimpered Pet.

"I won't!" whined Johnny.

"I"—No one knows what Ned was going to say in a very crabbed voice, for just then he clapped one hand on his mouth and with the other held up a warning finger.

"Look out," he half whispered, "or there'll be four more cents in the cross-box for Jimmy.—Sel.

## A Bear Bargain.

"It is a jolly knife!" said Ted, admiringly.

"There are three blades besides the corkscrew," said Tom; "it could not have cost less than half a dollar."

"What made him give it you?" said Ted. "I wish he had taken it into his head to give it me."

"Why, I'll tell you," said Tom, laughing. "He's so green, you know. I gave him my red alley for it, and the medal I picked up in the road: and I told him the medal was silver and the alley was real marble, and worth a lot of money, and he thinks he's got a great bargain."

"O," said Ted, "that alters the case. I would not have it at that price if you gave me a hundred pounds as well."

"Why not," said Tom, "if he's such a soft as to believe everything you tell him?"

"He's welcome to sell his knife how he likes," said Ted, turning on his heel, "but I would not sell my character for all the knives in the world."—*Boys' and Girls' Com.*