

OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

"CROSS PATCH."

THIS was the nickname Helen's mates all gave her, and I'm sorry to say it was appropriate. She was interesting in many ways, but cross from morning till night, and though not in her teens, "crow's feet" already disfigured her brows. A voice originally sweet was fast becoming shrill and discordant, and rosy lips, from a habit of pouting, protruded far too much for beauty. She wondered why other girls were greater favourites than herself; why her mother's most intimate friends soon became weary of and indifferent towards her. Some of these ugly facts stared her in the face every day. Still she never stopped to reflect on the cause of such disagreeable effects, but fretted, fumed and scolded because everybody was having nicer times than herself.

She had a darling blue-eyed sister, golden-haired, sunny-faced, with a nature so genial and a disposition so lovable, her friends, old and young, called her "Sunbeam."

A regular duty of these two sisters was to wash up the breakfast and tea things each day, to relieve their mother who was burdened with many cares, but deprived herself of their assistance at other times that they might attend school.

One March morning a heavy sleet covered the ground. After breakfast, as Eva was feeding the poultry, Helen looked out of the window and noticed her sister's happy countenance as she stood with her flock of white Leghorns and Chillingtons around her; some of the tamest were eating crumbs from her hands. Although a pretty sight, it roused Helen's envy, and her cross spirit vented itself in scolding. "You lazy girl! Out there playing with those chickens! Come right in to your work!" Eva made no reply—only continued to smile and scrape at the dish she held in her hand. This was too much for "Cross Patch;" so she crept up behind Eva, and jerking her by the arm, exclaimed, "You naughty girl! Why don't you come in when I call you?" The plate was shattered to atoms—a small matter, however, compared with the accident that befel poor Eva, for she slipped on the ice in such a manner as to dislocate her hip and was carried into the house shrieking with pain. A surgeon was summoned, and all that love and skill could devise was done for her relief, but for hours her suffering was intense. This deplorable accident finally resulted in a disease of the hip, by which poor Eva was rendered a cripple for life! You may rest assured that Ellen was cured of her scolding; a terrible cure certainly, but a sure one. No one ever heard a cross word escape her lips again; but tears often filled her eyes, and her perfect devotion to her injured sister was attested by many delicate and loving attentions. Helen hunted the woods and the meadows for the earliest wild flowers; gathered baskets of tiny rocks, shells, lovely mosses, ferns and lichens; read and sang to Eva; caressed her tenderly as if trying (ah! so vainly!) to make amends for past unkindness. Helen could never be happy again. She wore a sad face

and her heart was sadder still, aching with bitter remorse and unavailing regrets.

The neighbours and school children clubbed together, and purchased a comfortable invalid's chair for their little favourite Eva, and during the pleasant spring days Helen took a mournful pleasure in wheeling her sister around the yard under the lilacs, the rose bushes, the cherry and apple trees. Grateful smiles were her sweet reward, for Eva's was a forgiving heart, and though a daily sufferer during the few years she lived, the little invalid was ever patient and uncomplaining. Persons often remarked, "What a pity her bright young life should have been thus overshadowed!" They could not see that darker, invisible cloud which brooded over Helen's spirit, Helen's home, Helen's life, and all the sad result of a needless display of ill-temper. Dear children, never scold! Never ill-treat a brother or a sister. You know not the sorrow it may cause. Be "sunbeams," like Eva, if you would be loved, lovely and happy. "Little children, love one another."

"BIMEBY."

I HAVE a little friend whom we call "Bimeby," because he always says, "By-and-by," when he is asked to do anything. He will get up by-and-by; he will learn his lessons by-and-by; he will bring in wood for his mother, or go to the store for her groceries by-and-by.

A great many troubles come to him and to his friends from this bad habit of putting off his duties, and not long ago, it was the cause of a very serious misfortune.

One morning when the ground was covered with ice, little "Bimeby's" mother said:

"Jack, I want you to sprinkle some ashes on that icy place by the back door."

"All right," said Jack, "I'll do it by-and-by."

"But you must do it right off," said Mrs. Harris; "somebody will fall there, if it is neglected."

"Yes, mother," and "Bimeby" started off to get his sled that he had lent to the boy next door, thinking that five minutes' delay could not make much difference.

Just about that time, Mamie, Jack's four-year-old sister, begged to go out and play in the yard.

"It is so shiny out," she said, "I guess it's most like summer. And mebbe I shall find a fower peeping up somewhere."

So her mamma put on her little rubber boots, her warm cloak, and hood and mittens, and let her go out with her tiny sled.

Poor Mamie! She clambered down the steps, laughing and cooing to herself, and talking about the "fowers." But all at once she uttered a loud cry of fright and pain. She had slipped upon "Bimeby's" ice, and broken her arm.

Then came the surgeon to torture the little soft, fair arm, and long days of weariness followed, days of great care and anxiety for the household, and all because one careless boy put off obeying his mother for a few minutes.

One day when Mamie lay asleep, and Jack sat sadly watching her, Mrs. Harris said some very serious words to "Bimeby."

"If I could take my choice," she said, "I would rather be blind, or lame, or deformed, than to be under the control of the habit of putting off. Such a habit steals away the very best of life; it mixes up our work and our pleasures, till there is no good result from either—till we do nothing and enjoy nothing. And I need not tell you that such a habit makes endless troubles for all our friends. Think of the suffering you have caused your little sister."

The tears rolled down Jack's cheeks.

"I know you do not mean to make trouble and sorrow," added the mother, "but you always will until you learn to do your duty at the right moment—that is, at the first moment possible."

"Bimeby" took the lesson to heart, and his friends hope that they will soon have reason to change his name to "Right-off."

DON'T, BOYS.

DON'T be impatient, no matter if things do go wrong sometimes. Don't give the ball a kick and send it into a mud-puddle, because it would not go straight when you threw it. Do not send the marbles against the fence, and thus break your best glass alley, because your clumsy fingers could not hit the centre. Do not break your kite-string all to pieces, because it will not come down from the tree at the first jerk. It will take you three times as long to get it down afterward. Do not give your little brother an angry push and a sharp word if he can not see into the mysteries of marble playing or hoop rolling at the first lesson. You were once as stupid as he is, although you have forgotten it.

What in the world would become of you if your mother had no more patience than you? if, every time that you came near her when she was busy, she thrust you off with a cross word? Dear, kind, loving mother, who never ceases to think of you, to care for you, who keeps you so nicely clothed, and makes such nice things for you to eat—what if she were to be so impatient that you would be half the time afraid to speak to her, to tell her of your own troubles at school or at play? Ah, do not grieve your mother by your impatience and your crossness.—*Selected.*

A YOUNG INDIAN HERO.

CAPTAIN BENNET, an Indian of Mackinac, lost his house by fire, but his little son gained the reputation of a hero:

The three children of the Indian who had charge of the place had been left locked up in the house, while he and his wife were visiting his wife's mother. The oldest of the children was a boy eight years of age.

The house took fire in the night, and the boy, not being able to get out of the doors, and the windows being securely fastened, was only able to escape by taking an axe and chopping his way out of the window.

He then took the younger children out. They remained about the house till morning, wrapping their feet up in some blankets to keep them from freezing. They waited till noon the next day for their parents to come, and they not doing so, the little fellow put the two smaller ones on a hand-sled and hauled them down to their grandfather's, four miles distant.—*Northern (Mich.) Tribune.*