

we take a week of it, out from morning to night? There, now! don't shout my ears off."

But nothing could keep back the shout, the storm of pleasure, which not only Mike, but Ted and Tootsie, raised, until Uncle Edward himself, their mother, and even their grave father were infected with the children's glee. But of that picnic party, of the hampers packed for it, of the ride there, of the adventures they met, I have no space to speak in this little story.

Perhaps some other time, when speaking of my nephews and nieces, I may tell more about my Irish boys, if my little readers wish to hear of them. Meanwhile, one word in farewell. For ever, and for ever, on Mike's young heart two text were stamped. One in letters of fire startling him even yet with words of solemn warning—

"Besure your sin will find you out."

The other in bright and golden characters—

"Little children, love one another."

(THE END.)

Little Trouble-the-House

By L. T. MEADE.

CHAPTER I.—DON'T BLAME HIM, NURSE.

The children's mother was dying, and they were all shut into the back parlor.

For the first time in their lives the four children were alone. Their nurse even had left them. She had brought in their supper on a tray, prepared a mug of milk and water for each, cut some bread, and then gone away, turning the key as she went in the back parlor door.

Lucy, aged three, went and banged against the locked door, and uttered a sharp cry, but nurse took no notice, her footsteps were heard echoing fainter and fainter in the distance, and the children were quite alone.

There were four of them—two little brothers and two little sisters. Miles, the eldest, was seven; Polly, six; Hugh, between four and five; and Lucy, three. They had not the least idea, any of them, why they were locked into the dull back parlor, without nurse or Miss Cecil the governess, or even Julia the nursery maid. They did not like the back parlor at all, there was nothing to watch outside but the dismal patter of the rain on the window panes, and nothing to see inside but the stupid red fire.

It was getting dark, too, and Miles could no longer read his history lesson, nor Polly finish sewing her strip of calico; Hugh was very cross, and refused to eat his supper, and would kick his toys about, and quarrel with Lucy, who, for her part, kept up a continual murmuring wail of discontent and discomfort.

"Come here, darling," said little motherly Polly, sitting down on the hearth-rug, and taking her on her knee.

Hugh went on kicking savagely at his toys, but Miles, throwing down his book, went and joined

Polly on the hearth-rug. He was a fine boy, with a handsome, intelligent face, but it was restless now, and seemed to share in the universal discontent.

"Why are we here?" he exclaimed, "why ever are we locked in here? and nurse so solemn. I do call it strange."

"'Tis' cause mother is sick," replied matter of fact Polly, "and nurse thinks we'll be sure to make a noise, and wake her up. She's sleeping, maybe."

"Oh! 'tisn't that," replied Miles, "for mother has often been sick, quite very often, Polly, and she never minded me going to her. Why, I've sat on her bed when she 'as had headache as bad as possible."

"But I'm sure mother is worse to-day, Miles, for I saw nurse crying, and she never did cry when 'twas only headache that ailed mother; and I think the best plan for us is to be good and not grumble; only I do wish there was some light, for I want to finish my handkerchief to show to mother 'gainst she is better."

TO BE CONTINUED.

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