

the nest, in which he found to his joy three beautiful eggs!

"Ah! I'll take them home to—" Eddy stopped short; the word "mother" had been on his lips; it gave a pang to the boy to remember that the presence of his gentle mother no longer brightened that home—that she already was far, far away. Eddy seated himself on a rough bench, and put down the nest by his side; he had less pleasure in his prize since he could not show it to her whom he loved.

While Eddy sat thinking of his parent as he had last seen her, with her eyes red and swollen with weeping, his attention was attracted by a loud, pitiful chirping which sounded quite near. Though the voice was only the voice of a bird, it expressed such anxious distress that Eddy instantly guessed that it came from the poor little mother whose nest he had carried away. Ah! what pains she had taken to form that delicate nest! how often must her wing have been wearied as she flew to and fro on her labor of love! All her little home and all her fond hopes had been torn from her at once to give a little amusement to a careless but not heartless boy.

No; Eddy was not heartless. He was too full of his own mother's sorrow when parting from her loved child to have no pity for the poor little bird chirping and fluttering over the treasure which she had lost.

"How selfish I have been! how cruel!" cried Eddy, jumping up from his seat. "Never fear, little bird! I will not break up your home; I will not rob you of your young. I never will give any mother the sorrow felt by my darling mamma."

Gently he took up the nest. It was no easy matter to climb the tree again with it in his hand; but Eddy never stopped until he had replaced the nest in its own snug place, wedged in the fork of a branch. Eddy's heart felt lighter when he clambered down again to his seat and heard the joyful twitter of the little mother, perched on a branch of a tree.

And from that day it was Eddy's delight to take a daily ramble to that quiet part of the wood and have a peep at the nest, half hidden in its bower of leaves. He knew when the small birds were hatched; he watched the happy mother when she fed her little brood; he looked on when she taught her nestlings to take their first airy flight. This gave him more enjoyment than the possession of fifty eggs could have done. Never did Eddy regret that he had showed mercy and kindness, and denied himself a pleasure to save another a pang.

For the Sunday-School Advocate.

LITTLE ROBERT AND HIS HOLY GROUND.

"FATHER," said Robert one day in the spring, "I wish you would give me a little piece of ground just beyond the orchard, and let me sow it with grain myself."

This request his father was very willing to grant. The land was staked out for him and plowed. Robert smoothed it over with his rake, and having watched the men on the farm as they sowed the seed to learn how to do it, taking some grain in a measure, he scattered it over his little field. It soon came up, and gradually grew high and thick. When it had become as high as the little boy's head, his father noticed that he went up into it a number of times a day and remained there a little while by himself.

When the grain became ripe under the warm summer suns, Robert's father said to him one day:

"It is time to reap your grain, my son. I will give you a sickle and you may cut it down yourself. You can bind it up in a bundle, as you see the men are doing upon the farm, and bring it into the barn and thrash it."

"I do not wish to cut my grain down," said Robert.

"Why not? It is ripe."

"I cannot bear to think of cutting it down," he answered again.



"But the heavy winds of fall will soon blow it down, or the frosts will come and kill it."

"I should be so sorry to have it taken away," said Robert.

"If you will tell me why you wish it to remain, after the grain is cut down I will have some evergreen trees planted there, and they will make a comfortable shelter even when the frosts come."

"O," said the little boy, "it does not seem as if I could have my grain cut down; it is holy ground. It is where I go to pray."

His father was much affected to learn that his little boy was accustomed to go three times a day into this pleasant retreat above the orchard, and that, out of the sight of every human eye, he knelt down and prayed to his heavenly Father to make him a good and faithful boy. He was, indeed, a little disciple of Jesus, who, following his example when he was upon earth, retired to the silent fields and mountains to pray.

We should all have holy ground somewhere; some quiet room in the house, or some sheltered place in the garden where we may be alone with God. In such a place there is One, not seen indeed with the eye, but just as really there as if we could see him; One who sees us, and hears us, and loves us, and who is ever saying, "Come unto me."

Sometimes, when father or mother has been away, a present is brought to us upon their return, and thus we are made doubly happy—happy to see our loving parents and delighted with the gift which they bring. No little boy will go with a careful step into his holy ground and kneel down and whisper to the blessed Jesus to receive him, to forgive him, and to give him a new heart without meeting the Saviour, and he will give him something. He will smile upon him, and touch his heart, and make him happier than he has been made by any gift that he ever received.

Try this, little reader! Think where you can make your holy ground, and then every day, in the morning, at noon, and at night, go into it and pray.
P.



For the Sunday-School Advocate.

GREEN GRASS.

"WHAT are you looking at so earnestly, Willie?" asked his good mother.

"At the grass, mother," was the reply. "I was thinking of what you said concerning so many things being mentioned in the Scriptures—lamb and lions, thunder and lightning, rain and snow, flowers and birds, and I was wondering if grass was mentioned."

"O yes, sonnie, grass is often mentioned. In one place we are told that our Saviour, before he miraculously fed the multitude, bade them 'sit down on the green grass.'"

"So he did, mother, so he did! I remember now. I wish I had been there to sit down with them. I would have minded him right away."

"There are other things, Willie, which he told his disciples to do which can be done by his disciples now. I hope you will seek to prove your obedience in regard to them, for you know you cannot go to Palestine, nor turn the wheel of Time back eighteen hundred years and more, but you can try to keep his commandments."

Willie looked thoughtful. Then he said quietly, as if he had truly resolved, "I will try to do so, mother."

"That's a dear boy!" exclaimed his mother, kissing him; "now remember this also about grass: 'The grass withereth, and the flower thereof fadeth away, but the word of our God shall stand forever.' Love that word, my son, and obey it, and you too shall live forever."

"I will try, mother," was Willie's reply.

Little readers, will you say the same? God will help those who try.
P. A. II.

For the Sunday-School Advocate.

MOLLIE AND HER PETS.

BY MRS. H. C. GARDINER.

Two little kitties, gray and white,
And full of antics gay,
Chasing each other out of sight,
Teasing their mother,
Hugging each other,
Showing a kittenish wild delight
In mischief as well as play.

A great black dog—a puppy in age,
With roguish, handsome eyes,
Watching the kits with dignity sage;
Bounding away
To join in their play,
Putting the mother, Gab, into a rage
With his doggish enterprise.

A lamb, too big for a household pet,
Running beside the gate,
Too young for the honors of sheepland yet—
Ah, it does not care
For the whole flock there
In the meadow green, enough to forget
Its earlier lost estate.

Canaries hang on the swaying tree
Filling the air with song,
Watching the blue-birds wild and free,
And "making believe"
That they do not grieve
For the loss of their own sweet liberty,
Or see the pitiless wrong.

White rabbits adown the garden-walk
Are nibbling the parsley green;
Unheeding Miss Mollie's reproving talk
(She says they are thieves,
That they spoil the young leaves,)
But they pull away at the juiciest stalk
And strip it perfectly clean.

Miss Mollie herself is a blue-eyed sprite,
Just seven years old to-morrow,
A fair sweet child to our partial sight.
God keep our Mollie
From sin and folly,
Shield her from care and early blight,
From every earthly sorrow!

TO-DAY.

TO-DAY I'll to my Saviour haste,
And not a moment longer waste,
But seek, by fervent prayer,
To gain an interest in his love,
A fitness for the courts above,
A seat prepared there.

Though Satan for to-morrow pleads,
Yet Jesus kindly intercedes;
And I should watch and pray.
I would not then such grace despise;
To Him my answer shall arise,
Yea, Lord, to-day, to-day.