

OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

THE QUARREL.

Two little kittens, one stormy night,
Began to quarrel and then to fight;
One had a mouse, the other had none,
And that was the way the quarrel began.

"I'll have that mouse," said the biggest cat.
"You'll have that mouse? We'll see about that."
"I will have that mouse," said the eldest son.
"You shan't have that mouse," said the little one.

We told you before, 'twas a stormy night
When these two little kittens began to fight;
The old woman seized her sweeping broom,
And swept the two kittens out of the room.

The ground was covered with frost and snow,
And the two little kittens had nowhere to go;
So they laid them down on the mat at the door,
While the old woman finished sweeping the floor.

Then they crept in, as quiet as mice,
All wet with snow, and cold as ice;
For they found it was better that stormy night,
To lie down and sleep than to quarrel and fight.

JOHNNIE'S ORATION.

"GOT your speech ready for Friday, Johnnie?" asked a school-boy.

"No," said John.

"Well, I have. You'd better hurry up."

"Pshaw! what's the use?" asked John.

"You see, a speech for Friday isn't just like lessons that a fellow ought to learn. Ever so many things may happen, so that I shan't have to speak at all. Visitors may come in, or some other boy may recite something real long, so that there won't be time for me. I shan't bother. Maybe I'll go out in the country that day, and then if I learned anything it would be of no use. I'll wait till the time comes."

John waited, but he did not go to the country. The other boys chose short declamations, and Friday morning was so cloudy that there was no prospect of company. At noon John was in a state of desperation. He flew here and there about the house in search of something that would answer his purpose. Uncle Jack gave him a book of old dialogues and orations, but before he could learn more than a line or two it was school time.

The others spoke, but John listened without hearing much; and when his own name was called, he walked across the floor with a bewildered feeling, staring at the ceiling, leaning against a post in the centre of the room. Mr. Gray would not accept excuses; John knew that perfectly. He put his hands in his pockets and looked at the clock; then he began, confusedly:

"My name is Norval. On the Grampian—Hills my father feeds his—his—name is Norval—"

"Runs in the family, that name does," slyly whispered a boy near him.

The others began to laugh, for they all knew how grandly John had talked of not taking any trouble. Mr. Gray began to look curiously over his glasses, and John knew that something must be done; so he suddenly said:

"I don't know much about Norval, but I know something about industry; so I'll talk about that."

"Industry is a good thing to have; it's better than luck; it may not turn out as he expects, and then he gets into trouble. If a boy is real industrious, and gets ready for things, why, he's ready. If the man that invented telegraphing had waited for luck, I

don't suppose there'd have been any messengers sent yet. Boys, be industrious; get ready beforehand and don't wait till the time comes."

John bowed and sat down, and the boys applauded heartily. Mr. Gray, who did not understand the matter so well, hesitated a moment, but finally said. "This address seems to be original, and I suppose we may judge it leniently on that account, though it is very imperfectly prepared. There is some valuable truth in it, however, which the speaker himself may profit by. Whatever is worth doing at all is worth doing well. Or, rather," he added more seriously, "there is a better motto still that I should like to give you: 'Whatever ye do, do it heartily as unto the Lord, and not unto men.' That will prevent all shams and careless work."

The boys thought John had escaped wonderfully well; but he was certain of one thing—that if he had not learned anything to recite, he had learned something else that day.—*S. Visitor.*

THE GARRET HOME.

A GENTLEMAN was visiting some destitute families in one of the poorest parts of London. After climbing a number of stairs, which conducted to the top of one of the houses, he observed a ladder leading to a door close upon the slates. He thought it most unlikely that any human being would be found dwelling there; but in order to satisfy himself he resolved on ascending the ladder. On reaching the door he found it so low that he was obliged to stoop before he could enter. "Is there any one here?" he inquired.

"Come in," answered a feeble voice.

He entered, and found a little boy the solitary tenant of this wretched home. There was no bed—no furniture of any kind. Some straw and shavings in one corner formed the poor little fellow's seat by day, and his couch by night.

"Why are you here?" inquired the kind visitor. "Have you a father?"

"Yes, sir."

"Have you a mother?"

"No, sir; mother is in the grave."

"Where is your father? You must surely weary very much for his coming home in this dark solitary place?"

"No, sir," replied the boy, sorrowfully.

"My father gets drunk. He used to send me out to steal, and whatever I stole he spent in drinking."

"Does he not make you do so still?"

"I went," replied the boy, "to the Ragged School, and I was there taught the words, 'Thou shalt not steal.' I was told about heaven and hell—that Jesus Christ came to save sinners—that God punishes the bad, and loves the good: and I resolved from that time I would steal no more. Now," continued the little sufferer, "my father himself steals, and then gets tipsy; and then he gets angry at me, and is cruel to me, and whips me, because I will no longer steal."

"Poor little boy!" said the gentleman, deeply interested in the sad history. "I am sorry indeed for you. You must feel very lonely here."

"No," said the other, with a smile on his face; "I am not alone!"

The gentleman took out his purse and gave

him a small trifle, promising that he would come back again and see him on the morrow:

"Stop!" said the little fellow, as his kind visitor was preparing to go down the ladder, "I can sing." And so saying he commenced, in simple strains, the beautiful hymn with which he loved to cheer his solitude:

"Gentle Jesus, meek and mild,
Look upon a little child;
Pity my simplicity,
Suffer me to come to Thee.

"Fain would I to Thee be brought,
Gracious God! forbid it not;
In the kingdom of Thy grace,
Give a little child a place."

ONE DROP OF INK.

"I DON'T see why you won't let me play with Will Hunt," pouted Walter Kirk. "I know he does not always mind his mother, and smokes cigars, and once in a while swears just a little; but I have been brought up better than that. He won't hurt me, and I should think you would trust me. Perhaps I can do him some good."

"Walter," said his mother, "take this glass of pure, cold water, and put just one drop of ink into it."

"O mother, who would have thought one drop would blacken a glass so!"

"Yes, it has changed the color of the whole, has it not? It is a shame to do that. Just put one drop of clear water in, and restore its purity," said Mrs. Kirk.

"Why, mother, you are laughing at me. One drop, nor a dozen, nor fifty, won't do that."

"No, my son; and therefore I cannot allow one drop of Will Hunt's evil nature to mingle with your careful training—many drops of which will make no impression on him."—*N. Y. Weekly Witness.*

NED'S LESSON.

"POLLY wants a cracker! Polly wants sugar! Hurry up! hurry up! Polly is hungry!" screamed the parrot, from the top of her perch. Mabel and May fed her with bread and fruit, and filled her cup with fresh water; and while Polly chattered her thanks the little girls turned to watch Ned at his play.

He was building a fort out of sticks and stones. "Now, girls, this is the way to make the roof. You lay the sticks so!"—but the pieces of wood dropped, and the fort fell into ruins before his eyes.

Then Ned stamped upon the ground in his anger, and a word, a dreadful word, fell from his lips. It was the first time in his life he had ever spoken such a word, and Mabel and May cried out, "Oh, Ned! how could you!"

Quick as a flash Polly caught the word, and in her loud harsh voice sent it ringing out through the garden. It had a dreadful sound when it fell from Ned's lips, but when Polly screamed it out the girls covered their ears, and Ned, full of grief and shame, ran to the bird. "Oh, Polly! hush, do hush! I'll never say it again! Mabel, give her some candy, cake, anything to make her forget that dreadful word!"

Ned is a big boy now, but he never forgot Polly's lesson. It was the last time he ever soiled his lips with an unclean word.

IMPURE literature will certainly lodge its own impurity in the heart.