

LITTLE FOLKS

The Boy Artist.

I hope all my young readers either can draw or will soon learn to draw, and I think they will like to hear of a little boy who, many years ago, managed to draw without either pencil or paper. At the time when Edward the Third was reigning in England, and when drawing and painting were in their infancy, there lived in Italy, not many miles from the beautiful city of Florence, a man named Bondone.

He was a husbandman, honest and kindly, and respected by all his neighbors.

Bondone had a son who, at the time I am writing of, was about ten years old, and whose merry laugh and clever answers amused

he caught sight of the boy absorbed in his drawing.

But on looking quietly over his shoulder Cimabue was astonished to see how excellent the work was for a child of his age; and when he found how fond Giotto was of drawing, Cimabue suggested to him to come with him to Florence, and be really taught to be an artist.

Giotto was only too delighted, and both went towards the village together, where Cimabue asked Bondone if he might take his son back with him to Florence. To this the father gratefully consented; and little Giotto left home that day to start on his career as a painter; and in the end he became an even greater artist than his master;



GIOTTO USED TO MAKE DRAWINGS OF HIS SHEEP.

and delighted all who knew him. The boy's name was Giotto, and it was his duty, day by day, to drive the sheep of which his father had the care to the mountain sides to graze, and to tend them until the evening, for fear they should stray.

It may seem that Giotto was a lucky boy to spend his days out on the sunny hillside; but he was not idle. He used to make drawings of his sheep, not on paper with a pencil, for he had neither, but on smooth pieces of slate, and for a pencil he used a sharp stone.

One day it happened that a great artist, Cimabue, who lived in Florence, was going on business to the little village where Giotto lived; and coming over the hillside

so great indeed, that in course of years his reputation reached the Pope, who sent for him to Rome to do work for him.

Every boy and girl in London can go to the National Gallery, and there they can see some of the very pictures painted by this little boy when he was grown up.

Giotto became one of the most famous artists that the world has produced, and now his pictures are of almost priceless value.—'Child's Companion.'

The 'Snow Prayer.'

A little girl went out to play one day in the fresh, new snow, and when she came in she said: 'Mamma, I couldn't help praying when I was out at play.'

'What did you pray for, my dear?'

'I prayed the "Snow Prayer," mamma, that I heard in Sunday-school.'

'The "Snow Prayer!" What do you mean, my child?'

'I mean that beautiful "Snow Prayer" in the Bible, mamma. You know it says, "Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow."'

A Mess of Pottage.

(By William Zacharay Gladwin, in Forward.)

'I wonder if Hildegard Augusta Delaplaine will come back next year,' said Mattie Peregrine.

'Of course, she will,' answered her room-mate, Nellie Corner, glancing up a moment from her packing. 'She has to. She's to be a teacher, you know.'

Nellie went on packing for a full minute, and then said, 'Why?'

'Oh, I was just thinking about graduation. Nellie Corner and Mattie Peregrine will be respectably dressed, to say the least, but Hildegard Augusta Delaplaine—think of a name like that—'

'I know one thing though. If she does come back next year I shall give her a hint of what will be expected of her.'

The next year came and with it came important changes in that western school for girls. The principal, an elderly woman, resigned and her place was taken by young Mr. Archibald Crenshaw, who had recently married a woman who was also engaged to teach in the school. After careful study of the records of his graduating class he said to his wife, 'I fancy, Mary, that Miss Delaplaine will be our best student.'

'There are nine in the class, I believe?' observed Mrs. Crenshaw.

'Yes, nine.'

'And which is the poorest student, do you think?'

'I hardly know. Miss Peregrine and Miss Corner seem to have the lowest class standing, and the housekeeper looks very grim when their names are mentioned.'

Mrs. Crenshaw laughed. 'They are probably the richest and the dressiest girls in the school, Archie. I shouldn't wonder if Miss Delaplaine were poor.'

Mr. Crenshaw frowned. 'While we are at the head of this school.'