

# LITTLE FOLKS

## The Selfish Sparrows.

Letter of Rev. W. Hunter to his children, in 'Daybreak.'

Kuangning, North China,  
8th June, 1902,

My Dear Wee Girlies—Do you know where we are living? It is not in our old beautiful garden, but just in an old inn yard, and I was sorry mother had not a nice garden, but only just heaps of dirt and hot sand to look at. Well, I got a man who had a cart, and he carted for me ever so many loads of earth, and I made a beautiful little garden for mother like this, all nicely tiled round the edges—



Now there are hundreds of sparrows, and they thought, 'dear me, what's all this for?' 'Oh,' said an old sparrow, 'that is for us to have our dust baths in! In Mr. Wang's the sparrows have beautiful dust baths, and in Mr. Chang's they have beautiful sand baths, and now Mr. Hunter has laid out these nice baths for us.' So they all went and had a bath, and said, 'Tweet, tweet! isn't it very nice? How kind of Mr. Hunter!'

Well, you see I wanted it for mother, so I wrote to kind Mr. Watson, and he sent me every sort of beautiful flower seeds, and I sowed them in nice little rows and plots, and every day I went to see, and one day up peeped a little green thing; oh, it was nice! all the rest was dry earth.

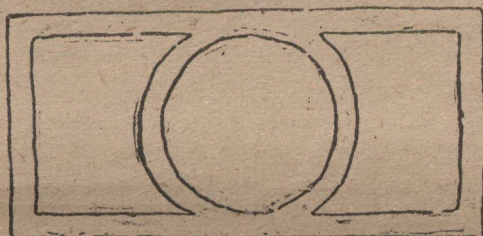
Five or six young sparrows gathered round it, and asked their papas and mammas, 'Tweet, tweet! what is this?' 'Oh, you little know nothings! that is some nice vegetables which Mr. Hunter sowed for us,' and so they ate it. Oh, mamma, here's another! said one. 'Well, dear, just eat it.'

'Oh, it was very nice. How kind the Hunter's are!' And so every morning they got up very early and searched, and every plant had a little sparrow until at last

there was only one, and they were enough! They must attend to all gathered round it fighting for their business better.' And so they



it, and now there was no more, only a big bare garden, for it looked big when it was empty, and they never



came to say 'thank you,' and every day I looked, and I told a man to pour on water (for the ground was hot and dry), and the birds said, 'What are the Hunter's spoiling our beautiful earth bath for? It is very wrong of them.' But then a few more flowers came up, and 'Oh,' they said, 'yes! that was rain

scolded, and poor mother had not one green little leaf left, and father was so sorry; but then he thought of another plan, and he went over to the old compound garden, and he brought some coarse kinds of flowers—sunflowers and that kind which had come up themselves from old seed, and he got some from other people. As these were big he thought the sparrows would not touch them, and as the sun is very hot he covered them up nicely until he knew the sun could not kill them. One day he took off the covers, and, oh! the sparrows rejoiced. 'Oh, here is some nice salad at last!' and they ate all up, and poor mother has just the big,



to make the earth soft to let our vegetables come through.' And so all the sparrows came. (for it was advertised in the 'Sparrow Telegraph'), and next morning we could only see sparrows there like locusts, and sparrows coming and sparrows going; and 'Oh,' they said, 'these Hunters have not planted half

bare garden left, all nicely laid out, but no green thing in it.

Now I don't ever want my little girlies to be like those sparrows to think that everything is for them, but always to be nice and kind to other people, even when we do want something for ourselves.

Your loving Father.

## The Boy Who Pleased Himself

(By Sydney Dayre.)

'Mother, I want to go over to Fred's this afternoon.'

'I would rather you stayed at home, Phil.'

'I promised Fred.'

'But he knows that the keeping

of your promises depends on your having permission to go.'

'Do stay, Philly,' pleaded his sister. 'Let's have a nice time at home.'

'This is Saturday afternoon.' A complaining tone had crept into Phil's voice. 'Fred's building a mill-dam and I want to help.'