

"Never mind him," repeated Critters, "but come and sit down."

"All right," said Bacup, in a resigned tone. "Very good. We shall see."

"Most likely," said Critters.

"We shall see," continued the other, loftily disdaining any reply or notice of this comment. "It wasn't this way when I first came into the house. Then the youngsters were taught to respect the older fellows; and they got it if they didn't. But now——" And here he broke off, allowing an expressive silence to tell what he could not bring himself to put into words.

"Maybe that was because some of the older ones had more sense than some of them seem to have now."

It was a little bright-eyed fellow, Chester by name, not long apprenticed, who made this suggestion.

"What do you mean?" demanded Bacup, wheeling round to get a good look at the offender. "Ah, I see; you want to make out that some of them had more sense than I had, and——"

"That's it, Johnnie," said Critters; "you've hit the right nail on the head

this time. Look at Jones, how he is getting on, and he's only been out of his time three years; and Wickins, too. They were both right good fellows, I've heard Mr. Stimpson say, when they were in this house."

"Maybe they liked it," returned Bacup, "and I don't; that's the difference."

"Yes," said Chester, "that's the difference."

"Then they are welcome to it. As for me, as soon as I'm out of my time, I'll cut the whole concern."

And when this familiar threat was met with more laughter, Bacup, with one last frown at the company, stalked moodily off to bed without his supper.

"Now then," said Critters, as the door closed behind Bacup, "we can make ourselves happy after our own fashion."

He drew his chair up to the fire, and the others did the same, Walter Craggy amongst them.

Even the two who had been daring each other to single combat put away their little difference, and sat down side by side.

(To be continued.)

CLEANLINESS.

BY E. A. CAMPBELL, *Author of "John Harker's Bond," etc.*



"CLEANLINESS," says an old proverb, "is next to godliness." Many a time I have heard this quoted as a text from Scripture, and have heard people positively assert that they had read it in the Bible. And perhaps they are not altogether in the wrong; for if the words are not to be found in the Bible, the meaning is. Heart-cleanliness is godliness. But it is not of this kind of cleanliness I wish to talk to you now, but rather of the kind which affects our persons, our houses, and our surroundings.

If we would only consider the amount of pleasure, cheerfulness, and health we get out of cleanliness, perhaps we should some of us be more ready to practise it. We ought, by constant practice, to bring ourselves to that state of mind which feels absolute discomfort at the sight of dirty hands or a dirty room. I have heard it said that, if we cannot do away with dirty people, we should at least avoid them as a common nuisance.

We should be clean, because we give ourselves and others pleasure by being so; because we encourage health, morality, and cheerfulness by being so; and because we set a good example by being so. We should not be dirty, because dirt affronts the senses of our neighbours and encourages disease and immorality. Where dirt is, there you will only too often find vice rampant—it deadens the moral sense and perception; whereas cleanliness is generally the accompaniment of industry, thrift, and good conduct.

Keep the house clean, leave no dark, dirty corners where dust and mildew lie unheeded for years. Clean your windows; let in God's blessed sunshine; it will find its way into those dark corners and light up the noisome heaps that might otherwise have lain unsuspected. Sunlight is as healthful to man as to plants. Keep plants in a darkened room, and what is the result? They live truly, but what a life!—drooping, sickly, blanched.