

OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

DAILY BREAD.

"PAPA, doesn't everybody have daily bread?"

It was night, and Truda was going to bed. Her father put down his book and took her on his knee.

"Come to say good night?"

"Yes, papa, but I want to know something first. Doesn't everybody have daily bread? Jane says they don't. It is so easy to get bread?"

"Not always. I once knew some little children who had no bread for nearly two days!"

"What did they eat then; porridge?"

"No; they had nothing to eat but blackberries. Shall I tell you all about it? Once upon a time, two little boys went out for a walk. It was in the Summer time, and they meant to go to the woods and pick nuts, so they walked as fast as ever they could."

"What were their names?" asked Truda, settling herself to listen. Truda liked tales.

"One was called Dick and the other Robin. Well, they got to the woods at last, and found that somebody had been there already, and picked all the nuts. They did not like that at all!"

"No! I should think not," said Truda.

"However, there were plenty of pretty things in the woods, and they soon forgot the nuts. Robin was fond of flowers, and there were many that he had never seen before; so he was delighted. Dick had his pop-gun with him, and tried to kill every bird he saw, but somehow they always flew away before his shot reached them. They were very happy little boys, but after a while became very hungry boys, too."

"Hadn't they brought anything to eat with them? Polly and I always take cake when we go nutting, papa."

"Yes, they had cake, but they soon ate that all up, and then they got hungry again."

"Then why didn't they go home?"

"Ah, why indeed! They could not."

Truda looked puzzled. "Why not?"

"They could not find the way. When they turned to go back, they went down the wrong path; and instead of going home, they went away from it. Of course they did not know that, but they thought the wood was very long. At last it began to get dark, and then they were frightened. Dick, being three years older than Robin, tried to make out that he did not care, but he did. The woods were so dark and lonely, and there were such queer noises, that his courage slowly oozed away, and presently there was not a bit left. The sun had gone down, and the moon had come instead; but they did not like the moon, it made everything look so cold and strange. When they were too tired to walk they sat down at the foot of a tree, and Robin began to cry."

"O dear! what did Dick do, papa?"

"He cried too. Then they went to sleep and forgot all about everything. I don't even think they dreamed. When the sun came up the next morning he found them fast asleep: he dashed the light across Dick's eyes, and made him open them. Well, all that day the two little boys wandered about the wood,

going further from home all the time. They found some blackberries and picked them, and that was all the dinner they had that day."

"Were they in the wood another night, papa?"

"No; they got out of the wood, and found themselves in a field. There was a big stone wall in front of them, and they tried to climb over it. Dick managed very well, but poor little Robin tumbled, and hurt his foot so that he couldn't walk. Dick tried to carry him, and got him to an old stack in the corner of a field, and there they had to stay all that night."

"Poor little boys! Go on papa," said Truda, very much interested. "What did they do the next morning?"

"Robin could not walk, and Dick was afraid to leave him; so they sat by the haystack and cried—two very forlorn little boys. They found some more blackberries in the hedge, and Dick picked all he could reach, and gave the larger share to Robin because he had hurt his foot. They felt very queer, and Robin could not keep awake; he would go to sleep, though Dick shook him every now and then, and shouted in his ear."

"Where was their father all the time? Didn't he look for them, papa? If I were lost would you look for me?" said Truda.

"Their father and mother were away from home, and the servant was afraid to tell any one that the children were lost, till the day after. Then she told some men and they went to look for them, and one of them sent for the father to come home."

"I am glad! now they will be found," said Truda, contentedly.

"At last Dick saw some smoke curling up among the trees a little way off. Now Dick knew that where there was smoke there must be a fire, and where there was a fire there must be some one to attend to it. Robin was still fast asleep, and he couldn't wake him; so leaving him under the stack, he ran as fast as he could toward the trees, and there he found a little cottage. The door was open, and inside he saw an old woman warming up some potatoes in a frying-pan. He did not wait to knock, but walked straight in and putting his arms round the little old woman, burst into tears. She was quite frightened at first, and could not think what was the matter; but he soon told her.

"I'm lost," he sobbed, "and Robin is asleep under the stack, and we are so hungry." That was quite enough for the kind old woman. She made him tell her where the stack was, and went at once and fetched Robin, and then divided the potatoes between them. They were not many, and the boys were so hungry that they were gone directly, and Robin began to cry for more. The old woman looked troubled, and said she had not got any more, whereupon Dick suggested bread and butter. To his surprise she shook her head, and said she had not had a bit of bread in the house for three days. He asked her to get some more potatoes, but she shook her head again; they had eaten the last."

"Why, papa, the poor old woman must have been hungry too," cried Truda. "Had she given them her supper?"

"Yes, every bit of it. I do not know what they would have done if the old woman had

not remembered that it was nearly time for the mail-cart to pass. Taking both the little boys with her, she went down to the road, and there they stood till the mail-cart came up. Then she stopped the driver and told him all about it, and he promised to send some one for the children, and putting his hand under the seat he pulled out a loaf of bread, and dropped it into the old woman's apron."

"And did some one come for the boys?"

"Yes, father came for us and brought us home."

"Oh, Papa, it was you; you were Dick, and uncle Robert was Robin."

"Yes, and we never could forget the poor old woman who had been so kind to us."

"I am so sorry; an old woman asked me for bread to-day and I wouldn't give her any."

"Why wouldn't you?"

"I didn't want to leave my fairy tales. Papa, I am so sorry."

"Poor old woman! perhaps she will go supperless to bed, Truda."

The quick tears sprang into Truda's eyes. "I will never, never do it again, papa!" And she never did. No poor woman ever asked her for bread in vain; and many a poor old woman had a nice supper bought with Truda's pocket-money when she grew older.—*Early Days.*

"SOLITUDE."

AMONG the smaller houses on the zoological grounds is a yellow edifice which looks much older than the buildings I have already mentioned. It is much older and possesses an historic interest. It was built by the grandson of William Penn, and called by him "Solitude," because it then stood, all by itself, out in the wild woods, miles away from the little city of Philadelphia. This gentleman, John Penn, was of a poetic disposition, and wanted some quiet spot where he could be free from all noise and disturbance. So he built his house here. The house now belongs to the city, and is permanently leased by the Zoological Society. And who do you think have been living there until a short time ago? Snakes.

Yes, rattlesnakes and black snakes, and boa-constrictors, and ever so many other kind of snakes, were lying about there in cages, and some of them were formidable looking fellows; but I have always been disappointed in the size of boa-constrictors. I read so much, when a boy, about their swallowing goats and sheep,—and I have even known an ox to be mentioned in this connection (though this was probably a "stretcher"),—that I want my boas very large—as thick as barrels, or nail kegs, at the least.

All the cages are made with glass sides, so there is no danger in going quite close to the rattlesnakes, though they may spring their rattles and dart out their forked little tongues at you, as they did at me.

All these creatures lead very quiet lives, and as far as noise is concerned, none of the recent inhabitants of "Solitude" would have disturbed John Penn had they lived there in his time. But they might have made it lively for him in other ways.—*From a "Village of Wild Beasts," by Frank R. Stockton, St. Nicholas for August.*