

OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

THE ONLY CHOICE.

I know a heart that sits upon its throne,
Yet makes its kingdom poorer day by day;
A queen unblest, in that it blesses none,
And far too poor to give itself away.

And one I know hath all its sweetness given,
A flower left empty by the thankless air,
Yet in the losing finds its only heaven,
Fed by the fountains of divine repair.

Ah! who can weigh our wealth against our death?
Where is the justice fine of sight and touch?
So light the things we dream have dearest worth,
And those we hold for nothings worth so much.

How shall I dare then for this joy to pray,
Lest when it comes it prove a grievous loss?
Or how implore that grief may pass away,
Lest thus I spurn a flower-bearing cross?

Oh, blessed tears, that cleanse the eyes for morn!
Oh, costly gains, wherein our all we lose!
Oh, rose of peace, so white with many a thorn!
Choose thou, my heart, be strong at last, and choose.

Not yet, not yet! I cannot ask for pain,
And dare not ask the joy that blindeth me.
I cannot choose; my Father I would fain
Ask Thee for that which looks like joy to Thee.

STRAIGHTFORWARD FRANK.

"COME, Frank, we are going to King's Woods this afternoon to fill our bags with nuts. It is a fine day, we'll have a grand time, and we want you along."

The boy he addressed looked as if he would like to accept the invitation, but he did not hesitate a moment in his answer.

"No, thank you, boys," he said, "I cannot to-day; I promised mother that I would come straight home, and give her a hand with her canned fruit after school."

"I wouldn't be tied to my mother as you are," said Harvey Jones. "You can never go anywhere or do anything that she doesn't come in the way."

"Call it being tied if you choose," said Frank, "but I shouldn't enjoy myself a bit over there in the cool woods, with mother, working away by herself over the hot stove. I hope you'll all have a splendid time, though;" and off he went.

"There's good stuff in that lad," said a gentleman who was passing and heard the little talk. "Who is he, and where does he live?" he inquired, detaining one of the boys a moment.

"His name is Frank Archer; they call him Straightforward Frank at the Academy, because he's never ashamed of anything. His father is dead, and Frank lives with his mother."

"I'm glad to hear so good an account of a widow's only son," was all the gentleman said.

Meanwhile the work of canning quinces went merrily on at the little brown cottage. Mrs. Archer had a quiet, happy face, and she appreciated the unselfishness of her boy, and shewed him that she did so by being a very pleasant companion. He helped her with her work, doing all her chores, splitting wood, bringing water, and often cooking meals and washing dishes. Some people think this is no boy's work. But I do not admire any boy who is willing to sit still and let his mother do such things alone. A manly boy tries to save steps for mother and sisters, and to lighten all their burdens. Mrs. Archer did

a great deal to help Frank, too. She studied with him, puzzling over problems, and digging out Greek roots, and sympathizing with him in all his hopes.

"It seems farther off than ever, mother, dear," he said that afternoon.

"It" meant going to college and then studying to be a doctor.

"Oh, I have not given up hoping," said Mrs. Archer. "God will make the way plain, I think."

The quinces were at last sealed up, and the jelly was quivering in the bowls, when there was a knock at the door. A gentleman stood there who introduced himself as Judge Nichols, of B——.

"I have bought the old Kent Place, madam," he said, "but as I live in Europe half the year I need a responsible person to stay there and take care of it for me. Your pastor, Dr. Steel, recommended me to call on you. He thought you might be willing to accept the position."

After a little conversation the judge named a salary which almost took away Mrs. Archer's breath. It seemed munificent. But he explained that the house was to be kept in perfect order, always in readiness for guests, and that the grounds also were to be cared for. She would have a faithful coloured man to help her, but Frank would find many things to do. The matter was satisfactorily arranged, and papers were signed a day or two after, engaging Mrs. Archer as housekeeper and supervisor during Judge Nichols' absence.

Frank was willing to work hard and deny himself luxuries, and make any sacrifice to gain an education. God had opened the way, for his mother now saw how she could assist him and gratify his desire. A few years later Dr. Archer was one of the rising physicians in that part of the State. But if he had not been Straightforward Frank, willing and glad to obey his mother, he might never have succeeded in gaining the place he desired.

SAFE-FOLDED.

O, it is hard when o'er the face
We scarce can see for weeping—
The little, loving baby face—
That last, still shade comes creeping;
Full hard to close the tender eyes,
And fold the hands for sleeping.

Yet, when the world our own would claim,
It doth not greatly grieve us;
We calmly see, as days go by,
Our little children leave us—
And, smiling, heed not how the swift,
Soft-footed years bereave us.

O, mother hearts! I count you rich
Beyond mere earth-possessing.
Whose little babies never grow
Away from your caressing—
Safe-folded in His tender arms,
Who gives again with blessing.

THE OBEDIENT BOY.

I READ a very pretty story the other day about a little boy who was sailing a boat with a playmate a good deal larger than he was.

The boat had sailed a good way out in the pond and the big boy said: "Go in, Jim, and get her. It isn't over your ankles, and I've been in after her every time."

"I daren't," said Jim. "I'll carry her all the way home for you, but I can't go in there; she told me not to."

"Who's she?"

"My mother," said Jim, softly.

"Your mother! why I thought she was dead," said the big boy.

"That was before she died. Eddie and I used to come here and sail boats, and I never let us come unless we had strings enough to haul in with. I ain't afraid, you know I'm not; only she didn't want me to and I can't do it."

Wasn't that a beautiful spirit that made little Jim obedient to his mother even after she was dead?

CHILDREN'S PRAYERS AND PENCE.

Are there ten thousand children
Filled with a zeal intense,
Ready for Christ to offer
Their labours, their prayers, their pence?

For the gifts and the prayer of the children,
Gathered in one strong band,
Could conquer the world for Jesus,
And make it a Holy Land!

HOT COALS.

GEORGE was so angry that his eye flashed. He shook his finger and cried, "Sure as I catch Jim Jones, I'll break his head!"

"Oh, don't!" exclaimed his sister. "You would be hung."

"I don't care! he broke my cart and I will break his head."

"I would rather 'heap coals of fire' on his head," said Laura.

"Why, they would hurt worse than breaking it," said George. "I would rather be broken than burned, any day."

"It must be a good way, or the Bible would not tell us to do it," said Laura. "Let us ask Uncle Tim. He has been over the sea to Jerusalem; he must know what the Bible means."

"People who stay at home can know too, if they ask God to teach them," said Uncle Tim. "When a man wants to melt metal, he puts fire all over it; so if you want to melt the hard heart of an enemy, watch for a chance to be kind when he is in trouble. If he is hungry, feed him; if thirsty, give him drink. These kind acts will melt the heart, just as hot coals melt the metal."

George listened with his mouth and eyes wide open. I don't know whether he will try this way with Jim Jones. At any rate, we are sure it is a good way.

THERE are many who talk from ignorance rather than from knowledge.

"ORDER my steps in Thy word: and let not any iniquity have dominion over me."—Ps. cxix. 133.

FILL the heart with the treasures of the Word; and the attractions and pleasures of sin will have small-chance to enter.

It was the quaint saying of a dying man, who exclaimed, "I have no fear of going home. God's finger is on the latch, and I am ready for Him to open the door. It is but the entrance to my Father's house." And said another, "Why should I shrink from dying? It is the funeral of all my sorrows, and evils, and sins, and the perfection of all my joys forever."