

OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

BABY BOY.

Merely a plaything, just a toy,
Yet half supreme though tiny, small;
We toss and catch him as a ball—
Our darling baby boy.

The cat can rob him of his bread—
O, charming, helpless infancy—
Yet in our little family
He is the chief and head.

A rare buffoon, a wit complete,
He makes us merry all day long
With five short words and one wee song,
So simple, yet how sweet!

An orator of matchless skill;
We note each look, each word, each tear,
And fly with mingled love and fear
To do his sovereign will.

O, should we, in our rapture wild,
Great, gracious, glorious Deity,
Enthroned our boy instead of Thee,
Chastise us, Lord, but sp the child.

THE BAG OF PEARLS.

An Arab once lost his way in a desert. His provisions were soon exhausted. For two days and two nights he had not a morsel to eat. He began to fear that he should die of hunger. He looked eagerly, but in vain, along the level sand for some caravan of travellers from whom he might beg some bread.

At last he came to a place where there was a little water in a well, and around the well's mouth the marks of an encampment. Some people had lately pitched their tents there, and had gathered them up and gone away again. The starving Arab looked around, in the hope of finding some food that the travellers might have left behind. After searching awhile he came upon a little bag, tied at the mouth, and full of something that felt hard and round. He opened the bag with great joy, thinking it contained either dates or nuts, and expecting that with them he should be able to satisfy his hunger. But as soon as he saw what it contained, he threw it on the ground, and cried out in despair, "It is only pearls." He lay down in the desert to die.

Pearls are very precious. If the man had been at home, this bagful of pearls would have made his fortune. He would have received a large sum of money for them, and would have been a rich man. But pearls could not feed him when he was hungry. Although you had your house full of pearls, if you have not bread you will die. The Arab knew the value of the pearls that he found; but he would have given them all that moment for one morsel of bread—would have given them, but could not, for there was no bread within his reach. So although he was very rich, he was left to die of want.

Pearls and gold cannot preserve the life of the body, far less can they satisfy the soul. Bread is more precious to a hungry man than pearls; and the bread of life is more precious still. Christ has said, "I am the bread of life." How foolish it is to spend ourselves in gathering things that cannot feed us if we are hungry, and cannot save us from our sins! "Seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness," and keep other things in a lower

place. The chief thing for each of us is to take Christ as the life of our souls, and then we may gladly accept whatever good things in this life God may be pleased to give us. "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

He who is rich when he comes to die, but is still without Christ for his soul, is like the Arab in the desert, with his bagful of pearls, but perishing for want of bread.

WISE AND WITTY SAYINGS OF CHILDREN.

THE GOLDEN CALF.

At a school examination in Scotland a little girl was asked, "Why did the Israelites make a golden calf?" She answered, "Because they hadna as muckle siller (money) as would make a coo" (cow.)

GOING TO BED.

Aunt Esther was trying to persuade little Eddy to retire at sunset, using as an argument that the little chickens went to roost at that time. "Yes," said Eddy; "but then, Aunty, the old hen always goes with them."

A GOOD REASON.

A little boy, running along the street, struck his toe and fell on the ground. "Never mind, my little fellow," said a bystander; "you won't feel the pain to-morrow." Then he blubbered out, "I won't cry to-morrow, either."

WHY HE WAITED.

A Scotch boy had delivered a message to a lady, but did not seem in a hurry to go. Being asked if there was anything else his mother had bidden him say he whimpered out, "She said I was na to seek anything for coming, but if ye gave me anything I was to take it."

"KEEP A STIFF UPPER LIP."

There has something gone wrong,
My brave boy, it appears;
For I see your proud struggle
To keep back the tears.
That is right. When you cannot
Give trouble the slip,
Then bear it, still keeping
"A stiff upper lip."

Though you cannot escape
Disappointment and care,
The next best thing to do
Is to learn how to bear.
If, when for life's prizes
You're running, you trip,
Get up; start again;
"Keep a stiff upper lip."

A PASSPORT.

A foreign exchange with the heading, "The New Testament used as a Passport," tells the following interesting story:

"A German workman and his wife emigrated from Kulm, in Eastern Prussia, to America, leaving behind them three little children—a boy of ten years, and two little girls, aged seven and four respectively. In the course of time they expressed a wish to have their children with them, but they had no funds with which to carry it out. The sea passage being secured, the three little pilgrims were allowed to tramp their way from Kulm to the port of departure, with next to nothing but a little Testament given them by their

aunt, inside the cover of which were written the names of the children, and underneath the words, 'Christ says, "Whatsoever ye do to one of these little ones, ye have done it unto me."' This was most productive of sympathy and direction, by which the children were safely placed on board the vessel which was to transport them to the New World."

A POPULAR CHINESE STORY.

There were two short-sighted men, Ching and Chang, who were always quarreling as to which of them could see best. As they had heard there was to be a tablet erected at the gate of a neighbouring temple, they determined that they would visit it together on a given day, and put their powers of eyesight to the test. But, each desiring to take advantage of the other, Ching went by stealth to the temple, and, looking quite close to the tablet, he saw an inscription, with the words, "To the great man of the past and the future." Chang also went, prying yet closer, and in addition to the inscription, "To the great man of the past and the future," he read, in smaller characters, "This tablet is erected by the family of Ling, in honour of the great man." On the day appointed, standing at a distance from which neither could read, Ching exclaimed:

"The inscription is, 'To the great man of the past and the future.'"

"True," said Chang, "but you have left out a part of the inscription, which I can read, but you cannot, and which is written in small letters: 'Erected by the family of Ling in honour of the great man.'"

"There is no such inscription!" said Ching.

"There is!" said Chang.

So they waxed wroth; and, after abusing one another, they agreed to refer the matter to the high priest of the temple. He heard their story, and quietly said: "Gentlemen, there is no tablet to read; it was taken into the interior of the temple yesterday."

UNWOUND CLOCKS;

In a hotel was a number of clocks, one at least for each room, but as they each told a different story, they were never depended on, and if you did believe them, you were sure to be deceived. The fact was, all these time-pieces were out of order, or had not been wound up. Nothing could be learned from them; they were ornamental apologies for clocks, and nothing more. Even so the example of professing Christians is of small service to the world if the real power and godliness is absent. Religion when it ceases to be useful, and is only set up for decorative purposes, is an utterly vain thing. If we are not wound up by the divine hand we cannot go, and if we are not going we are useless, we contradict each other, and we teach the world nothing worth its knowing. It is a great pity when, for the lack of the inward, the outward becomes a total failure. When force has departed from the main-spring, the face and hands of mere profession are a wretched mockery.