

Our Young Folks.

LITTLE FOXES AND HUNTERS.

"Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines."—Solomon's Song ii. 15.

Among my tender vines I spy
A little fox named "By-and-by."

Then set upon him quick, I say,
The swift young hunter, "Right-away."

Around each tender vine I plant
I find the little, "I-can't."

Then, fast as ever hunter ran,
Chase him with bold and brave, "I-can!"

"No-use-in-trying" lags and whines
Among my young and tender vines.

Then drive him low and drive him high,
With this good hunter named "I'll-try!"

Among the vines in my small plot
Creeps in the young "I-forgot."

Then hunt him out and to his den
With "I-will-not-forget-again!"

The saucy fox that's hidden there
Among my vines is "I-don't-care!"

Then let "I'm-sorry," hunter true,
Chase him afar from vines and you.

What mischief making foxes! yet
Among our vines they often get.

But now their hunter's names you know
Just drive them out and keep them so!

MAKE EXCUSES.

Not for yourself, but for others. So little is known of the interior life, even of those whose history is thought to be well known that motives would often justify what seem like very strange acts.

A brother in the church whose income was known to be constantly on the increase was condemned because his contributions to the support of the Gospel did not increase, as was thought, proportionately. But matters of equal importance with those of the church's interest were making constant demands upon his purse, and, as it was in the direction of a private nature, outsiders thought him simply unwilling to give as he was able.

A nobleman whose sensitiveness was mistaken for hauteur was anxious to secure as private secretary a man who would be likely to think charitably of his unfortunate manners. While riding one day he overtook a man who had been pointed out to him as a very eccentric, though learned, person. The nobleman, in his hunting-suit, presented so different an appearance from what he did in court costume that the gentleman failed to recognize him when he overtook him and began a conversation.

"I see," said the nobleman, "we are riding over the domains of the Earl of X—."

"Yes; so I thought."

"He is said to be a very dogged sort of person."

"Is he, indeed? Do you know the earl?"

"Yes; I know him very well. I'm sorry to say he is churlish at times."

"Then he is a man to be respected."

"Why so?"

"If he is churlish only at times, he must be heroic, as the cause of occasional petulance must be the result of a constant trial. This must be under control when he is pleasant."

"But he is distant and haughty besides."

"You must excuse me, but I should have to be convinced of that before I could accept it as a fact."

"Then my word is not enough for it?"

"Sir, the word of no one is sufficient guarantee in attacking the name or fame of a person unknown."

The man, though poor when he entered the earl's grounds, was soon raised to a position of honour—one for which his early teachings had fully fitted him.

An aged Christian who always would find excuses for every one, no matter how glaring the fault, was once told the shameful misdeeds of a professing Christian, the account being concluded with the words, "You surely cannot make excuses for such conduct as that?"

"Very well," was the reply; "then I shall surely leave it to God to condemn him."

Make excuses whenever you can; when that is impossible, imitate the example of this aged saint; leave condemnation to God.

DOING GOD'S ERRANDS.

Hester was a little girl who was trying to love and serve Jesus, and she showed her love for Him by seeking to please Him in all she did. She loved to do errands for her mother, and to have her mother say she was a faithful servant when she did them well.

One day she had been talking with her mother about God. As they got through she looked up with a bright thought beaming in her eyes and said: "Why, mother, God is sending us on errands all the time! Oh, it is so nice to think that I am God's errand-girl!"

"Yes, dear," said her mother, "God has given us all errands to do for Him, and plenty of time to do them in, and a book full of directions to show us how to do them. Every day we can tell Him what we are trying to do, and ask Him to help us; and when He calls us home to Himself we shall have great joy in telling Him what we have been trying to do for Him."

"I like that," said Hester; "it is very pleasant to be allowed to do errands for God."

"One of my errands," said her mother, "is to take care of you."

"And one of mine, dear mother, is to honour and obey you. I think God has given us very pleasant errands to do."

You know that nothing makes us more happy than to do anything for a person we really love. This is what Jesus meant when He said, "My yoke is easy, and My burden is light." This is what the Apostle John meant when he said that "His commandments are not grievous." His people serve Him from love, and that makes everything they do for Him light and pleasant to them. If we can only remember all the time that the duties given us are "errands for God," and that He is our Father in heaven, how easy it will make them all! Every burden will then really be light.

MANLY BOYS.

I am by no means an old man, but I have lived long enough to be thankful that I was one of the boys of whom rude boys speak as "led by a mother's apron strings." I was reared in a large city and in a neighbourhood where there was a large number of boys. Many of these seemed to have or to take their own way; a few of us were kept under parental guidance and control. I confess that there were times when it seemed hard because I was not permitted to go and come just as some boys were doing whom I knew. But now when I think of the after-results in different cases, I feel that I cannot be too grateful for the home influences which I had, and to which I yielded in youth. Of the boys whom I knew, those who lived and attained and honourably filled positions of trust were, without exception, those who were known as the "home boys," the "mother boys," "the babies"; and all because they did not think it manly to swear and smoke or chew tobacco and

fight and play truant from school, and be a nuisance in general. They were by no means "goody-goody" boys, they were not angels; they loved, and had, their fun; they had games; but they were loving and kind to their parents, and truthful and honest and well-behaved everywhere. And, although thus nick-named, many of them were strong enough to withstand the temptations of the camp and to endure severe hardships, and brave enough to fall on the field of battle with their face to the foe. Others of them have been able to keep themselves pure and to make for themselves a good record in the midst of the tests and struggles of life. In the meantime, as I have had opportunity to learn, the sad news has come to me of the moral wreck of one after another of those who preferred a street education, or who hated and rebelled against everything like a wholesome restraint, and who considered themselves manly.

WHAT WOULD JESUS DO?

I was walking along a narrow, dirty street in a large town about thirty years ago, when I saw a crowd of boys and girls laughing and jeering at an old man who was feebly tottering along, leaning on a thick stick for support. I had just made my way through the crowd when a poor, thin, ill-looking boy stepped from it, and going up to the old man took a piece of paper off his back, on which was written: "Who'll bid for the saint?" He had no sooner done this than a rough lad caught him by the arm, saying, "Hallo, sneak, you'll get something for that!" When their leader uttered these words several other lads came up and joined in tormenting the poor boy.

I then went up and made them let him alone, while I took his hand and commended his conduct in taking the paper off the old man's back.

"Sir, do you know what made me do it?" he asked.

"No, what was it?" I asked carelessly.

"Well, sir, that old man, they call him 'Saint Willie'; he comes to our house every week to read and talk to mother. One day he came, and said to me, after telling me all about Jesus, 'If ever you're a-going to do anything that ain't right, say to yourself, What would Jesus do? (and He'd always go right) then you do it;' and that's what made me do it," he cried triumphantly.

If every reader of this little story would ask themselves whenever they are in difficulty as to what they should do, or are tempted to do anything wrong, "What would Jesus do?" they would find it would be a great help to them in their daily life.

NO "IF."

There was a knock at the door of Aunt Fanny's pleasant kitchen one morning, and on the step stood a little girl with a basket on her arm.

"Don't you want to buy something?" she asked as she came in.

"Here are some nice home-knit stockings."

"Surely you did not knit these yourself, little girl?" said Aunt Fanny.

"No, ma'am; but grandma did; she is lame and so she sits still and knits the things, and I run around and sell them; that's the way we go along. She says we are partners, and so I wrote out a sign and put it over the fireplace: Grandma and Maggie."

Aunt Fanny laughed and bought the stockings and as she counted out the money to pay for them Maggie said: "This will buy the bread and butter for supper."

"What if you had not sold anything?" asked Aunt Fanny.

But Maggie shook her head. "You see we prayed, 'Give us this day our daily bread,' and God has promised to hear when folks pray; so I guess there wasn't any 'if' about it. When He says things, they're sure and certain."