

Our Young Folks.

Little Things.

Suppose the little flowers should think
That they are much too small
To be of any use to us,
And so not bloom at all;
How much that's pleasant we should lose;
For as we pass them by,
Nary little flower that blooms
Is pleasing to the eye.

Suppose the little raindrops thought,
That they were much too small
To be of any use on earth,
And so not rain at all;
Then the fruits would never grow,
Nor roses in the bowers,
For all the little raindrops help
To make refreshing showers.

And so shall little children think
That they are much too small
To be of use to others here,
And do no good at all?
Ah! dearest children, think not so,
For little acts of love
Are pleasing in the sight of God,
And counted up above.

—Children's Friend.

A Mother's Love.

The tenderest illustration of Divine love are drawn from the well-known and almost universal affection of parents for their offspring. "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him." "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him?" In the instance given below by the *Edinburgh Witness*, the strength of maternal love is most touchingly exhibited, and by the comparison a clearer conception is given of the power and long-suffering of God's love. "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." While the sinner is still far from God, His grace pursues, convicts, converts, and saves the wanderer.

In the Highlands of Scotland, a poor widow found herself unable to pay the rent of her small cottage, and the agent of the landlord threatened to dispossess her. A kinsman who lived at some distance had promised to assist her, and she set out for his residence, carrying on her back her only child, a boy about two years old.

The morning in which she left her home, gave promises of a lovely day. But before noon the heavens were darkened by a gathering storm. It was in the month of May, and the fall of snow on that day, so unusual both for its season and its severity, is yet remembered in the region as "the great May storm." The severity of the storm overtook the lone traveler in a wild mountain pass, ten miles from her home. She knew that a mile beyond it there was a house where she could find shelter; but whenever she attempted to face the blast which was rushing through the gorge, all hope failed of proceeding in that direction.

After wandering for some time among the huge fragments of granite which skirted the base of the overhanging precipices, she found a sheltered nook under a ledge of rock, where she crouched, pressing her child to her trembling bosom. The storm continued to rage, and it became bitterly cold. All she thought of was the protection of her child. She wrapped him in her shawl, which was thin and worn. As night came on, she stripped off almost all her own clothing and wrapped it around the child, whom at last, in despair, she put in a deep crevice of the rock among some heather and fern. Covering his face with tears and kisses, she left him in a soft sleep, and rushed into the snowdrift, resolved to find assistance for him or perish in the attempt.

That night of storm was succeeded by a peaceful morning. The people of the village, fearing that she could not have reached her destination, set out in a body to search for her. They reached the pass, and at its entrance they found the widow dead, her arms stretched forth as if imploring assistance. Before noon the cries of the child guided them to its safe hiding-place, where all the story of the mother's love was revealed.

Fifty years later, an aged minister was preaching in a distant city on the love of Christ, and in illustrating the nature of the "love which seeketh not her own," he told the story of the Highland widow, whom he had known in his boyhood. Some time afterward, a message was brought to him from a man supposed to be dying, who greatly desired to see him. The request was speedily complied with. The sick man seized him by the hand, and, gazing intently in his face, said, "You do not know me, but I know you, and know you father before you. I have been a wanderer in many lands, and have fought and bled for my country. I came to this town a few weeks ago in bad health, and was providentially led to the place where you were preaching. I heard you tell the story of the widow and her son." Here the voice of the old soldier faltered, but recovering himself for a moment he cried, "I am that son!" and burst into a flood of tears.

"Yes," he continued, when he had regained his composure, "I am that son! Well might you ask what a heart would mine have been if such a mother's love had been forgotten by me. I never forgot her, and my last desire is to lay my bones beside hers in the old church-yard among the hills. But what covers me with shame is, that until now I never saw the love of the Saviour in giving himself for poor sinners." With deep emotion he added, "It was God made you tell that story. Praise to His holy name! My mother has not died in vain, and the prayer she has offered for me has been answered. The story of her love has been used by the Holy Spirit in leading me to see the love of Christ. I see it, I believe it; I have found refuge in my old age, as in my childhood, in the cleft of the Rock, but it is the Rock of Ages!" And clasping his hands, he repeated, with intense fervor, "Can a woman forget her suckling child that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee! He lived for some years, a devoted disciple of the Lord Jesus, and at length died rejoicing in the same precious Lord.

Foreshadowing of the Styles.

The earliest suggestion of seasonable changes in apparel is always observable in hats and bonnets. The first hint of spring or autumn is found in the slight, yet distinct, variations of head-coverings. Already the shop windows are filled with hats, loaded with velvet, and feathers, and brilliant wreaths, which, were it a month later, would be the envy of the passing crowds. Now these milliners' foreshadowings are merely glanced at and forgotten—at least for the time. There will be no essential variations of shapes during the early Fall. The favourite style will be the Leghorns, with low, round, flat crowns and finger wide brims, turned up against the crown on one or both sides. This style has been moderately popular all summer, the liking for it increasing as the season waned. For autumn, these hats have the under side of the brim faced all over with velvet, an inch-wide binding showing on the outside. Around the crown a band, flatly folded, or a loose-lying scarf of velvet fastens in a number of loops without ends, on the left side, not so far back as formerly. Mingled with the loops is a bunch of small feathers or a long plume. Under the curling edge of the brim, turned up against the crown, is a spray or short wreath of bright coloured leaves and berries. Ornaments of all metals,—notably burnished silver,—except oxidized silver (this has run its course), are sparingly placed upon the velvet, garniture; and this, with insignificant variations, is the regulation model for an October hat.

High authorities declare that plaids, stripes and figures are to be fashionable in all dress materials, for cool and cold weather, which is equivalent to saying that plain and simple shapes and meager trimmings are to be the coming rule. Plaids, and stripes, and figures are so difficult to trim with any semblance of grace or beauty, that, when they are the mode, excessive garniture ceases to be practicable.

The pretty, old fashioned Gabrielle dress, modified and improved, is re-introduced under the more pretentious title of the Princesse. It is well adapted to in-door costumes, and like the long-loved and soon-to-be-lamented polonaise, is quite becoming to most people. A good figure is set off, and a bad figure much helped, by the graceful Princesse costume.

However strongly Fashion may declare in favor of stuffs with other than plain colored surfaces, there can never be a question as to the more genuine elegance of these. They are more refined and tasteful, and always more satisfactory and economical than any figured, striped or plaided goods can be. One requires a less quantity of this material, which may be turned, according to necessity, upside down and inside out, than of such as has an "up and down" or right and wrong side.

It is believed that the deep, rich shades of maroon, brown and blue will be quite as popular as black during the winter, both for in and out door wear. They are a pleasant change from black, and there is much greater security in purchasing low-priced colored silks than in purchasing black, which has become unsuitable that the largest dealers refuse to warrant even the best makes. Among woolen fabrics, cashmere drap d'ete, and camel's hair cloth will, as heretofore, be the most widely worn; and a promised compromise between the light cashmere and heavy drap d'ete will fill a long felt gap in winter goods.—"Home and Society," *Scribner's for October*.

Water Running up Hill.

Did any of you ever see water run up hill? I've always kept my eyes open (at least when I was awake), but as long as I've looked at the brook that flows near my pulpit, I've never yet seen it try to run up hill. But a bird who heard a naval officer talking about it, told this to me:

There is, in the Atlantic Ocean, a warm-water river or current, called the Gulf Stream, that really, of its own accord, flows up an inclined plane from south to north. He said that, according to scientific men, this warm stream starts at three thousand feet below the surface off Hatteras, and in the course of about one hundred and thirty miles rises, or runs up hill, with an ascent of five or six feet to the mile.

What makes it? Ah! that is more than Jack knows. More than the bird knew. More than the officer knew, either, I guess.

Shall anyone ever know? Why not? Wise people are learning new things all the time, and why may they not find out the why and wherefore of this queer thing?—*St. Nicholas*.

Helping.

"Poor old fellow, he can hardly get along. Let's lend him a hand." And so they did. And the old man, with the help of the two lads, soon got his truck to the top of the hill; and then it was easy work after that.

Are you a helper? Are there any who are the better for you? Any whose load you lighten? and to whom you are a comfort? Are you trying to lead any to God? We cannot tell what power our words may have, but one day we shall know, and, if we are faithful, we may find many souls won, to shine as stars in our crown of rejoicing, who might have been lost if we had spoken no words of Jesus.

If you are not a helper, are you hindering? Does your course of life give gain to any heart? Does your example lead any into sin? Do those who are laboring for Christ find you a hindrance?

Learn from these lads. Help, and do not hinder. Help the poor, the old, the ignorant, the ungodly; help all you can. Do not spend time and strength in sin, or folly, or selfishness. Try to do good for Christ's sake. That is the true motive. They who feel what Jesus has done, for them are the helpers. He died to save sinners. May you be led by the Holy Spirit to be a helper for His sake.—*Young Reader*.

Romp with the Children.

Hundreds of men have no time to get acquainted with their children. They see in a general way that they are clean and wholesome looking, they pay the quarterly school bills, and they grudge no expense in the matter of shoes and overcoats. They dimly remember that they once courted their wives, and said tender things in pleasant parlors, where the cheerful gaslight shed its glow, or on moonlight evenings under rustling leaves. The time for that has quite gone by, and they would feel as bashful as a school-boy reciting a piece, were they to essay a compliment now to the lady at the other end of the table. They have forgotten that home has its inalienable rights, and among them, first and chiefest, the right to their personal presence. Nothing rests a man or woman who has been busy about one set of things, better than a total change of employment or feeling. A nap on the lounge is all very well, but after a half hour of it, if the most tired man will shake off dull sleep by a game of be-peep with the baby, he will be rested much more thoroughly than if he drowse away the whole evening, as too many business men do.

Which shall it Be.

In view of the great dangers besetting young people of the present day, in the form of bad newspapers, illustrated "juvenile" monthlies and weeklies of a vile character, surreptitiously and extensively circulated, and finding their secret way into the best homes and school-houses of the land, the dullest managers of a pure periodical for the young hardly can fail to burn with a holy fire. If they only can do a negative good, in crowding bad reading to the wall, in taking up the children's attention so that foul publications are unheeded, a great work is accomplished; their mission is a blessed one, and good citizens everywhere should rally to their assistance. Let not parents deceive themselves. No home is too sacred or too carefully guarded for those fiendish invaders, the vendors of low and dangerous juvenile publications, to ply their unholy trade. Every child is in danger for whom good, well selected, enjoyable reading is not provided by those most directly having its best interests at heart. All dangerous publications do not betray their character at a glance. Often they wear their mask of useful information, and even of piety. A more general oversight will not suffice. Do not force your child to spend time in reading, but look to it that all his or her reading-time be properly and pleasantly filled. While you blindly congratulate yourself that your boy or girl, through a fondness for books and periodicals, must necessarily be learning something, it may be well to know what that something is. Undue intellectual stimulus for children is bad enough, but emotional stimulus is worse. In the hands of unprincipled purveyors, it opens the way to moral errors of every kind, and by quickening an also slow growth, to what is holy, develops only precocity in vice. The point of the wedge is easily inserted, and, at first, as easily thrust back; but beware of the silent force that having once gained an entrance may split the peace and purity of your home.—"Home and Society," *Scribner's for October*.

Treatment of Babies.

A Writer in the *True Woman* says there can be no doubt that much of the nervousness and irritability of men and women have come from the sufferings endured in infancy. She adds, on the simple matter of washing and dressing:

Contrast the treatment of the new-born of any animal with that of a new-born babe, and all will admit the first surpasses the other in tenderness. She scarcely leaves her young for a moment. It is sheltered from the cold and hardness in the most loving manner. It is fed just as much as it wants, and just as often,—the whole mother, for a time, subjected to the necessities of the newly-arrived being.

On the contrary, the human baby is taken away from the mother's side, and subjected to a thousand inhuman tortures, generally inflicted by some elderly female, who has no call in nature to love the little stranger, and who has become, by habit, hardened to infantile sufferings. The babe is dressed in the duly-prepared new clothes. That article to which the very softest touch of the air must seem like hardness, is rasped by new flannels, pinned up in new linen, tortured by tight bandages. Every movement is enshrouded by raiment too long, too heavy, by wraps too numerous. No less than ten different pieces of raiment compose the dress of an infant, put on within an hour after it is born. Can this all be right? Do women show that they have intellectual and moral powers running to waste, crying for employment, when the simple thing of dressing a baby is so ill done?

We will confine ourselves to this point, the dress of the baby. If baby dies has not this something to do with it.

The baby cries when it is being dressed, because it is rendered simply miserable by the process. It is too complicated. It takes too much time to accomplish. It is utterly uncomfortable to be endured. But nurse says, "Is does baby's lungs good to cry," and the poor young mother is too ignorant to know better; and meekly submits to hear and see her first-born put to the torture within her reach, and stretches out no hand to hinder.

The efforts of an unregenerate man to resist evil may be compared to the waves that break away from the receding tide; they are vain and constantly declining struggles against the backward movement of the heart. The falls of a regenerate man, on the other hand, are the recessions of the wave in an advancing tide; the great progression will still be godward. What we want is the flow of the new nature to overbear all the obstacles of wind and sand, and the must be given by the attraction from above.—*Dr. John Ker*.

Courage and Cowardice.

George came into the house one day all dripping wet. His mother, as she saw him, exclaimed:

"Why, George, my son, how came you so wet?"

"Why, mother, one of the boys said I 'daren't jump into the creek,' and I tell you I am not to be dared."

Now was it courage that led George to do that? Some boys would say it was; and that he was a brave and courageous boy. But no, George was a coward; and that was a very cowardly act. He well knew that it was wrong for him to jump into the creek with his clothes on, but he was afraid the boys would laugh at him, if he should stand and be dared.

Edward came strutting along up to James, and, putting his fist in his face, said: "Strike that if you dare!" just to see if he couldn't get him into a quarrel. Now which would show the most real courage, for James to give him a hit and have a brutal fight, and both get wounded, or to say as he did: Edward, if you want a quarrel you have come to the wrong boy. I never fight, because it is wrong. You may call me a coward, if you will, but I will show you that I have courage enough not to be tempted, by your ridicule, to do what I know is wrong? That was brave and courageous.

Well, a great man, Mr. A., a member of Congress, said something that offended Mr. B., another great man. Mr. B. sent him a note and dared him to fight; that is, he challenged him to fight a duel. Mr. A. accepted the challenge, and they met with deadly weapons and sought to take each other's life. Now, some said Mr. A. was a man of courage, because, like the foolish boy who jumped into the creek, he wouldn't be dared. But Mr. A. accepted that challenge, probably, through cowardice. He knew it was breaking a positive command of God to attempt to kill the man who dared him, but he had not courage enough to bear the tauntings of those who would say he was afraid to fight. He was a coward!

A good definition of courage is "not to be afraid to do what is right, and to be afraid to do what is wrong." The stories of Daniel and his three friends, and of Joseph, give us fine examples of those who possessed true courage; who were not afraid to do what is right, and who were afraid to do what is wrong.—*Congregationalist*.

How to Avoid the Precipice.

A story is told of a gentleman who wished to engage a coachman. In answer to his advertisement two men presented themselves. "Do you understand the care of horses, sir?" said he, addressing the first. "Perfectly," answered the man; "it has been my occupation from my youth." "Are you a skilful driver?" "Without boasting, I think I may say I am," replied the man. "How near do you think you could drive a team to the edge of a precipice, and not run off?" After a little hesitation he answered, "Well I think I could within two feet. I have done it before now."

Then the gentleman called the other applicant, and asked him the same question. He gave similar replies until he came to the last. To that he said, "I never try experiments of that kind, sir. I always keep just as far from precipices as possible, and then I know I am safe." "You are just the man I have been looking for," said the proprietor; "I shall feel perfectly safe in trusting my wife and daughters to the care of a coachman who always keeps just as far from danger as possible."

There is a sermon in this which may be read between the lines. The man who keeps as far from wrong-doing as possible is safe—others run a risk, be it more or less. The man who never plays gambling games never becomes a gambler. The man who never drinks never becomes a drunkard. The man who always endeavors to state the exact truth never becomes a liar. The man who never uses another's money without the owner's consent never becomes an embezzler. The man who never goes into bad company is never corrupted by bad company. Yet nearly all these approaches to evil may be made without actually doing evil. Some men make them nearly every day of their lives, and die virtuous and happy at last—they stop somewhere this side of the precipice, though perhaps they go within two feet of it. Another step might hurl them down headlong. Put that step they do not take. Others "rush in rafts down to ruin."

The trouble is, there is no definite boundary, in very many cases, between the harmless and harmful. There is an enchanted middle ground where men and women love to linger, hoping to secure the good and avoid the evil of a dangerous course—to taste the honey and shun the poison—to gather the rose and not be wounded by the thorn. But just how far they may go in safety no man knows. As Macaulay says, "A good action is not distinguished from a bad action by marks so plain as those which distinguish a hexagon from a square. There is a frontier where virtue and vice fade into each other. Who has ever been able to define the exact boundary between courage and rashness, between prudence and cowardice, between frugality and avarice, between liberality and prodigality? Who has ever been able to say how far mercy to offenders ought to be carried, and where it ceases to deserve the name of mercy and becomes a pernicious weakness? What casuist, what law-giver, has ever been able to mark the limits of the right of self-defence? All our jurists hold that a certain quantity of risk to life or limb justifies a man in shooting or stabbing an assailant; but they have long given up in despair the attempt to describe, in precise words, that quantity of risk."

The only absolutely safe course is to keep as far from the precipice as possible.

It is one of the most beautiful compensations of this life that no man can successfully try to help another without helping himself.

The Power of Love.

A mother in Brooklyn was sorely tried with the waywardness of her little daughter. It seemed impossible to excite within her any emotions of love, convictions of conscience, respect for her mother's wishes, or regard for her authority. This caused deep sorrow to the mother. One night, after a day of anguish, she went with her to her room as usual and knelt to repeat with her the ordinary evening prayer, but her heart was so full that she broke out into tender, earnest supplication. She spoke of her love for the child, her great anxiety, her hopes and fears, commended her to God, and besought him in his great tenderness and love for her to change her heart and save her from sin.

The prayer ended, Minnie was quiet for several minutes, and the mother still lingered on her knees. Finally Minnie spoke. "Mamma!" said she, with unusual tenderness, "Mamma! do you really love me, as you told God that you did?"

"Yes, my dear, and more than I can express."

"And does God love me, as you said he does?"

"Yes, with a very great and tender love."

Then she was quiet again for some time. Finally she broke out again: "Mamma, I didn't think you would brag to God so about me. But, mamma, if you really love me so, and God loves me, I'll try to be good."

Her heart was broken, her will subdued, her waywardness cured. Thenceforth she was a gentle, obedient, loving child. Love conquered her. A revelation of love to one's soul is the dawn of new life.

Teachers and Teaching.

If public schools are not to be religious, their teachers should be. To teach well is to exercise power; and there is no heart so filled with power as the one that is truly dedicated to the service of its Creator. Religion is to teach men to live honorably, nobly, and wisely; and happy are those scholars who have a religious teacher. It will be a long time before the world will distinguish between the inward possession and the outward expression; this latter is called sectarianism, and is justly shut out from schools upheld by taxes laid on all kinds of people; but no one objects to a teacher who lives a holy life, and whose heart breathes the continual desire that his pupils may attain that his happiness also.

It is a popular delusion in these United States that our system of public schools prepares the children for all the various relations of life. If the thoughtful parent co-operates with a wise and skilful teacher, there may be something effected. In truth, however, we have only reached the position of "general intelligence among the masses"—each one gets the same amount of general intelligence. So many pages in somebody's arithmetic, so many in grammar, and the boy has become a man. Really, however, there is a crying need of something special, for each one has special gifts, each one is an individual. Somewhere, in the course of his study, the pupil needs to be addressed as though only he existed. Somewhere, rigid classification must give way—that is to make the system complete.

Oral teaching requires the object to be in the presence of the pupil so as to give an occasion for thought. This object calls into existence the active powers—and hence accurate ideas are formed. There have been many objections made to oral teaching, but they all sum up in this, that the teacher does all the work for the pupil. This only lies against incorrect oral teaching, for correct oral teaching does nothing whatever for a pupil that he can do for himself. It simply brings objects and subjects of study into the presence of the pupil and directs his mind to them, and directs also the study of these objects and subjects. The objection to verbal study is that it is an exercise almost wholly of a verbal memory. The results look well; it is easy to do; but he is a teacher of small experience who has not seen the knowledge that he supposed to be as firmly fixed as the hills, disappear like the clouds in a summer sky. Words cannot give the mind the ideas that can only be derived by observation.

Teachers should therefore adapt their teaching to the wants of the mind until it can go and acquire accurate knowledge of itself.—*N. Y. School Journal*.

The Congregationalists of England have just raised a fund of half a million of dollars for retiring pastors, and are still engaged in raising a fund for the widows of deceased ministers, which will amount to over eighty thousand dollars.

If God had given us a life full of attractions we should have had no desire for another. It is natural to love an abode in which we find delight; whatever attracts us to earth abates the ardour we may have for heaven; the inward man is renewed, then the outward man decays, and our faith is built up on the ruins of our fortune. When the dove found out of the ark the unchained winds, the overflow of water, the flood-gates of the heavens open, the whole world buried under the waves, she sought refuge in the ark. But when she found valleys and fields she remained in them. My soul, see the image of thyself.—*Saurin*.

There are some Christians who are able to look forward to death, not only without reluctance and dread, but with resignation and pleasure. Thus Dr. Ganga was accustomed to say—"I have two friends in the world—Christ and death. Christ is my first, but death is my second." Such a Christian may be compared to a child at school. The little pupil is no enemy to his book; but he likes home, and finds his present condition not only a place of tuition, but of comparative confinement and exclusion. He does not run away; but while he studies he thinks with delight of his return. He welcomes every messenger who comes—but far more the messenger who comes for him. And though he may be a black servant, he says—"Well, he will take me to my father's house."—*Jay*.