

## OUR YOUNG FOLK.

### BOB AND THE BIBLE.

"And why," said Bob, with a scornful look,  
 "Should I study the Bible, that stupid book?"

"Because," said his teacher, gentle and sweet,  
 "'Tis a lamp to thy path and a light to thy feet.

"Without it, we stumble and heedlessly tread,  
 Not knowing that heaven is just ahead.

"Not knowing that Love and Mercy stand,  
 To guide our feet to the better land.

"The Bible lights up our darkness, you see,  
 And opens heaven to you and me.

Said Bob, "It's all very true, maybe,  
 But too awfully nice for a boy like me."

"But, Bob, it has lessons and stories, too,  
 Just the thing for a boy like you!

"Stories of wars and fighting men,  
 Of Daniel shut in a lion's den;

"Of prophets braving a nation's ire,  
 Of men cast into a furnace of fire;

"Of ships, and storms, and journeys afar,  
 Of shepherd lads, and a wonderful star;

"Stories of gardens, and stories of beasts,  
 Of fires, and floods, and wedding feasts;

"Stories of soldiers, and judges, and kings;  
 The Bible has many wonderful things."

"Now, that sounds something like," said he;  
 "I guess I'll read it a little, and see."

### THE SECRET OF IT

Olive Meeker was a womanly, helpful child of ten years. Her mother said she was her "right hand," for she was always close by to help when she was needed, and could always be depended on, for whatever she did was done just as well as she knew how to do it, whether people were looking at her or not.

"She is no eye servant," her mother said, "I can rely upon her as I could upon a woman."

What a reputation for a little girl to have! I have seen so many children who would never think to help their mother at all unless she asked them, and then would object or pout or fret—or, if they did what she asked, would take no pains to do it well—that when I became acquainted with Olive I admired and loved her.

At one time I was visiting at her mother's house. We were expecting company, and were all very busy getting ready. Mrs. Meeker had given Olive and Crissy (my little daughter) permission to go into the garden and cut flowers to fill the vases to decorate the rooms.

"Go now," she said, "while Arthur is asleep, and there'll be no trouble."

But they had not cut half the flowers they needed before a little cry reached them from the nursery.

"That's a sign," laughed Olive.

"A sign of what?" asked Crissy.

"Why, that there is no more cutting and arranging of flowers for me. Didn't you hear Artie?"

"The little nuisance?" said Crissy. "Let him cry; I wouldn't go."

"Mamma is busy, I must go," said Olive, and away she ran. She tried to hush the little fellow in the cradle, for I heard her singing

little baby-songs in a low, soft tone, but he would not be kept down, there was no sleep in him.

"He always seems to know when I want him to sleep for any particular reason," she said afterwards, good-naturedly: "I think he smelled the flowers this time."

So, finding it was useless to try any longer, she took him out of the cradle, washed his face and brushed his hair, and took him down on the piazza. Crissy had brought in the basket of flowers and was putting them up in bouquets, and Olive longed to help her. She put Artie down on the footstool and gave him his playthings, but nothing would satisfy him but flowers; and when she gave him a handful of flowers, the little tyrant looked as cross as before.

"Poor little thing! I guess his teeth hurt him," she said; "I must try to amuse him."

I watched the child to see if her good nature would hold out. It never for a moment failed. I knew she wanted to be beside Crissy at work with the flowers, but she gave it all up to take care of that cross baby, and she did not fret at all, notwithstanding his spiteful ways. She was as bright and sweet as the roses and lilies themselves, and tried to please her baby-brother until mamma came and took him away.

"Thank you darling," mamma said when she carried him in; and Olive smiled and looked so happy.

Then I talked with the little girl. I said, "you wanted to be at work with the flowers, didn't you?"

"Oh, yes'm," she answered; "but that was nothing. Mamma says that babies are worth more than flowers; and then you know, we want him to grow sweet-tempered, and he can't, if we are cross with him."

"I noticed you spoke very low to him. I should have spoken loud."

"Mamma says the crosser he is and louder he cries, the more careful we should be to speak softly; that's to teach him, you know. He takes lessons from us every day, and we must give him only the sort we want him to learn. That's mamma's doctrine."

A very good doctrine. I wish all the little girls who have to help mother and amuse baby brothers or sisters would take lessons from Olive and her mamma.

But I learned the secret of Olive's helpful, happy ways later one day when I was talking with her mother.

"Why, Olive is a little Christian," said Mrs. Meeker. "She loves Jesus, and tries to please Him in all she does."

"Ah! that is the secret of it. I see it all now."

### A LESSON IN LETTER-WRITING.

The Rev. Robert Robinson, of Cambridge, who died in 1790, was a very learned man, and a great author as well as a brilliant preacher; but he was no less noted for his simplicity of character and the kindly interest which he took in little children. He was on a visit one day to an esteemed member of his congregation, Mr. Foster, an ancestor of the gentlemen of the same name who are at this hour th. great

bankers in Cambridge. The youngest son named Ebenezer, a child, came bounding into the room when he heard the minister was there, and, as usual, jumped upon his knee the following dialogue then took place:

Mr. Robinson.—Well, Ebenezer, so you have taken your old seat; but how is it my other knee is unfurnished: where's Michael?

Ebenezer.—O sir, Michael has gone to London.

Mr. R.—Indeed! how long has he been there?

E.—More than a fortnight, sir.

Mr. R.—How many letters have you written to him?

E.—None at all, sir.

Mr. R.—How is that?

E.—Because I do not know how to write a letter, sir.

Mr. R.—But should you like to know how?

E.—O yes, sir, very much indeed.

Mr. R.—Then suppose you and I try between us to make up a letter to Michael, shall we?

E.—O dear yes, sir, if you please; I should so like to do that.

Mr. R.—Well, then, let us begin: "*Sauces Michael*;" will that do?

E.—O dear no, sir, I should not like to say that at all.

Mr. R.—Why not?

E.—Because that would be rude, sir.

Mr. R.—Let us try again, then: "*My dear brother*:" there, will that do?

E.—O yes, nicely sir.

Mr. R.—Well, then, now let us go on: "*Last Thursday half Cambridge was burnt down*—"

E.—O no, no, sir, that will never, never do.

Mr. R.—Why won't it do?

E.—Because it is not true; you know, sir there has not been any fire at Cambridge.

Mr. R.—Then suppose we alter it to: "*Last night our Tabby had three kittens*:" that's true, you know, because you told me so just now.

E. (hesitatingly)—Y-e-s, sir, it is true, but yet I should not like to write that.

Mr. R.—But you know it is true, why should you not like to write it?

E.—Because I do not think it is worth putting into a letter, sir.

Mr. R.—Ho, ho! then if I properly understand you, friend Ebenezer, you think that when we write letters to our friends we should, in the first place, never be rude; secondly, that we must never say what is not true; and thirdly, that we must never tell them what is not worth knowing. am I right?

E.—Yes, sir, if I were to write a letter I should try to think of all that.

Mr. R.—Then, my dear boy, you must never again tell me you don't know how to write a letter, for I assure you that you have a much better notion of letter-writing than many people have who are five times your age.

"Then," as Bunyan says, "one smiled, and another smiled, and they all smiled together."

EVERYTHING in Nature indulges in amusement. The lightning plays, the thunder rolls, the wind whistles, the snow flies, and the waves leap. Even the buds shoot and the rivers run