

OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

WHAT A LITTLE CHILD SAID.

Once upon a time I listened,
Listened while the quick tears glistened
'Neath the drooping lids that hid them, as a little prattler
said,
While a father's arms caressing,
Round the precious form were pressing,
And against his pillowing bosom lay a dainty, curl-ringed
head:

"Papa," spoke the little trembler,
"Papa, dear, do you remember
When that gentleman was here to tea, his sober, solemn air?
How he bent his head down lowly,
And his words came soft and slowly,
As he prayed to God in heaven such a pretty, thank-you
prayer.

"And I wondered all about it,
For, of course, I couldn't doubt it
Was a funny way that made us be so kind to one another,
To say 'thank you' for each present,
In a way so very pleasant,
And forget that God might like it, so I asked my darling
mother.

"But she looked at me so queerly,
And her eyes were very nearly
Full of crying, and I left her, but I want to know real bad—"
Here the shy eyes lifted brightly—
"Is it treating God politely,
When he gives us things, to never mind, nor tell him we are
glad?"

"And since then I've been a thinking—
Papa, dear, why are you winking?"
For a low sob shook the strong man as each keen, uncon-
scious word
Pierced him, all the past unveiling,
All the cold neglect and failing,
All the thoughtless, dumb refusal—how the heedless heart
was stirred:

"God is good, and Jesus blessed them,
And His sacred arms caressed them,"
Murmuring thus he touched the child-brow with a passionate,
swift kiss,
Of the little one beside him,
Of the angel sent to chide him,
And a "thank-you prayer," ah, nevermore his living lips
shall miss.

BRAVE BEN.

"A BOY WANTED," said Ben, reading
the notice in a bar-room window, as
he passed a comfortable-looking country
hotel. "I wonder if I would do for the place?
I must do something to earn some money, or
how will poor mother be able to live? I be-
lieve I'll step in and ask about it."

So Ben went in. It was the first time he
had ever stepped over the threshold of a bar-
room door, and although the place looked
neat and clean, and there were no loafers
around, yet the odour was sickening, and Ben's
taste revolted from such a place. The pro-
prietor was a German, a good-natured look-
ing man, who offered Ben in payment for his
services his meals, and the various sums he
could make by holding horses, and making
himself generally useful to travellers. For
these privileges he was to turn his hand to
almost anything connected with the hotel
business, and in the absence of the proprietor
he was to pour out drinks from the glittering
bottles, and hand them to any poor wretches
who came in and could pay for them.

"Well, now," said the proprietor, after giv-
ing Ben this account of what would be ex-
pected of him, "you have heard what I want
you to do, are you ready to begin work?"

"Give me a few minutes to think it over,"
said Ben, "and I will make up my mind one
way or the other."

"Well, you may think about it, but I get
plenty more boys if you not like it," said the
man, a little angry, and speaking somewhat
brokenly, as he always did at such times.

Ben said nothing, but went out to the

pump to get a drink, and then threw himself
down to think over the offer he had received.
"What would his mother think of her son in
a bar-room? He would probably make
money enough to support her, but with her
strong prejudice against selling liquor, would
she enjoy using the money made from it? Then," continued Ben, "what would God
think of it? Is there not somewhere in the
Bible a curse pronounced on him who putteth
the bottle to his neighbour's lips? and if I
accustomed myself to sell liquor, would not I
soon learn to drink it? No, I cannot think
of taking such a place as that," and when his
noble decision was made, Ben returned to the
tavern.

The proprietor stood on the porch. "Well,
boy, what you think of my offer?" he en-
quired.

"I think I cannot take the place," replied
Ben boldly. "I want work very much, but
there are three reasons why I cannot work
for you. One is that God would not like it,
another is that my mother would disapprove
of it, and a third that I should be afraid of
becoming a drunkard myself. Good morn-
ing, sir."

Ben walked away, leaving the German try-
ing to get through his head what he meant.
But there was another person present who
understood him perfectly. A gentleman had
driven up in a buggy to enquire the way to a
neighbouring town, and was so much pleased
with Ben's fearless answer, that he overtook
him and invited him to ride, saying that he
wished to have a little talk with him.

"Young man," he began, "I honour you
for refusing to serve where liquor is sold, and
on that account you will be just the one for
me. I want a clerk that I can trust, and a
boy who obeys God and his mother, I know
will prove honest and faithful." Then he
named a very generous sum he was willing
to give, and Ben went home to his mother
that day as happy a boy as could well be
found.—*Child's World.*

THE KING AND HIS JUDGMENTS.

THERE was a certain king who was re-
puted to be very wise. There came a
judge from a far country to see him, and to
prove his wisdom. As the judge rode towards
the city of the great king, he passed a poor
man upon the road, who was sick and very
weak; and he made the poor man ride be-
hind him upon his horse, as he found they
were going to the same place.

But when they reached the city, the poor
man claimed the judge's horse, maintaining
that it belonged to him. The judge was much
displeased with this; but he was also very
glad, because he thought he should now be
able to test the wisdom of the king, and to
know whether what he had heard of it was
true.

The two went to the king with their case.
The king said:—"Leave the horse here, and
return, both of you, to-morrow at noon."

While they yet stood before the king, there
came into his presence also a butcher and an
oil-dealer, disputing about a purse of money,
which the butcher said was his, and which the

oil-dealer said was his. The king said,
"Leave the purse here, and return, both of
you, to-morrow at noon."

No sooner was this said, than there came a
scribe and a muleteer, with a woman whom
each of the two men claimed as his wife. The
king said to the men, "Leave the woman
here, and return, both of you, to-morrow at
noon."

Noon of next day came, and all the men
stood a second time before the king. First
addressing the poor man, he said, "Go and
point out which of all those horses belongs to
you." The man obeyed. Then the king ad-
dressed the like command to the judge; and
he obeyed. Thereupon the king said, "Give
the horse to the judge, and give the beggar
forty stripes." He said also, "Give the purse
to the butcher, and give the oil-dealer forty
stripes." He said finally, "Give the woman
to the scribe, for she is his wife; and give the
muleteer forty stripes."

After this the judge, being permitted to
speak privately with the great king, asked
him how he had been able to judge as he had
done; for in each case it appeared that the
judgment was just. The king said, "When
the poor man went up to the horse, the animal
did not recognize him—he knew the horse,
but the horse did not know him; but when
you went he recognized you, and from the
tips of his ears downwards he was all over
smiles. Then as to the purse; I ordered it
to be boiled for a time; and bye-and-bye
there were clear signs of fat, but no signs of
oil. And in regard to the woman, she was
ordered by me to provide barley for a lot of
mules, and she could not do it; but she suc-
ceeded beautifully in arranging the papers
and other writing materials of a scribe."

The judge was greatly pleased with the
wisdom and justice of the king; the king,
too, was greatly taken with this judge who
appreciated him, and made him stay with
him ever after, to help him in his judgments.

GENIUS AND LABOUR.

DOWNRIGHT hard work is essential to
success in anything that is worth doing
in the world. No native ability relieves a
man from the necessity of earnest and persist-
ent application to whatever he undertakes, if
he would be efficient in his endeavours. This
is as true for men of brilliant genius as for
those of moderate capabilities. Indeed, it is
commonly recognized by them more readily
than by inferior minds. "The fact is," says
Ruskin, "that a man of genius is always far
more ready to work than other people, and
gets so much more good from the work that
he does, and is often so little conscious of the
inherent divinity in himself, that he is very
apt to ascribe all his capacity to his work,
and to tell those who ask how he came to be
what he is, 'If I am anything, which I much
doubt, I made myself so merely by labour.'" So if a man thinks he has genius in one direc-
tion or another he will best prove it by work-
ing hard and persistently at anything he un-
dertakes in that direction. His genius will
prompt him to labour, not relieve him from
labour.—*Sunday School Times.*