

## SMILE AND BLESS.

There's nothing more pure in heaven,  
—And nothing on earth more mild,  
More full of the light that is all divine,  
Than the smile of a little child.

So sweet it is, so simple,  
And yet so angel-wise,  
With the peace of God on the clear brow  
And the love of Christ in the eyes.

The sinless lips, half parted,  
With breath as sweet as the air,  
And the light that seems so glad to shine  
In the gold of the sunny hair.

O little one, smile and bless me!  
For somehow—I know not why—  
I feel in my soul when children smile  
That angels are passing by.

I feel that the gates of heaven  
Are nearer than I knew,  
That the light and the hope of that sweet  
world,  
Like the dawn, are breaking through.

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## HAPPY DAYS.

TORONTO, JANUARY 27, 1894.

## THE FIRST-FRUITS.

A LITTLE girl was once made the owner of some grapes upon a large vine in her father's yard. Very anxious was she that the fruit should ripen and be fit to eat. The time came.

"Now for a feast," said her brother to her one morning, as he pulled some of the beautiful ones for her to eat.

"Yes," said she, "but they are the first ripe fruit."

"Well, what of that?"

"Dear father told me that he used to give God the first-fruit of all the money he made, and then always felt the happier in spending the rest; and I wish to give the first of my grapes to God, too."

"Ah, but," said her brother, "how can you give grapes to God? And if you were

able to do such a thing he would not care for them."

"Oh, I have found out the way," she said. "Jesus said: 'Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren ye have done it unto me;' and I mean to go with them to Mr. Martin's sick child, who never sees grapes, because her mother is too poor to buy them."

And away ran this little girl with a large basket of the "first-fruit" of the vine, and other good things all beautifully arranged, to the couch of the sick child.

"I have brought Mary some ripe fruit," she said to Mrs. Martin.

"Dearest child, may God bless you a thousand-fold for your loving gift! Here, Mary, see what a basket of nice things has been brought you!"

The sick one was almost overcome with emotion as she clasped the hand of her young benefactress and expressed her sincere thanks.—*Presbyterian*.

## PERCY'S DAY.

BY ANGIE GOLDMAN.

LITTLE Percy was one of a family of six, five brothers and one sister. The sixth and oldest of the flock had been taken to heaven, and Mrs. Fletcher always said that Percy was more like this little one than any of the other children. Perhaps it was on account of this that some people thought Percy was his mother's favourite. This assertion Mrs. Fletcher denied, and said that she loved all her children equally. Be that as it may, I think Percy held the best claim upon her affection. I have heard his mother say that when she was sick, Percy would be the last one to retire, and always placed a glass of water and the candle and matches by her bed before he left the room. You see this was in the country, where they did not use gas.

Percy's little sister was too young to help her mother, and the work always fell to him. But I started to tell about Percy's day. He rose in the morning, lighted the fire in the stove, filled the kettle, set the table for breakfast, and then went off to feed the ducks and chickens. After breakfast he tied on a long apron, which his mother had made especially for her "girl-boy," as she called him, and washed the breakfast dishes, putting them away nicely. He did not forget, either to wash the pans and kettles, as so many "hired helps" are apt to do. After that he filled the wood-box and brought in water, and then trotted off to school as happy a little fellow as you could find anywhere.

At school all the children loved Percy. He was so obliging; always ready to give up his own pleasure to the wishes of others. When school was out Percy went home quickly, not stopping to play on the road, as I am sorry to say his brothers sometimes did. When he reached home he ran directly to the wood-shed, and got some wood and carried it to the kitchen ready for the next morning, then he went to his mother's room.

"Mother," the little fellow said earn-

estly, "I have been a good boy to-day. I received perfect marks for all my lessons, and I tried to bear in mind my verse, 'Thou God assist me,' and to be kind to the little boys and girls."

Mrs. Fletcher kissed the flushed cheek pressed against hers, and laid the baby in the outstretched arms.

"He has been fretful all day, dear. He is not well, I think; he has not slept worth speaking of all day. I am afraid you are tired too."

"I am never too tired to help you, mother; and I love baby, you know."

Mrs. Fletcher went about her work smiling, as she watched the patient little figure swaying back and forth in the low rocker, crooning a soft, sweet lullaby which must have been very grateful to the baby's ears, for in half an hour he was fast asleep. Mrs. Fletcher laid the little one in his crib, and Percy was free for a game of ball with his brothers. Don't you think he enjoyed his play more than if he had known all the while his poor, tired mother was still holding the nervous, fretful baby?

"My boy has made me very happy to-day," the mother said, as the little clinging arms encircled her neck for the good-night kiss. And I think the angels listened while God heard the little boy's prayer that night: "Lord Jesus, help me to be a good boy always and mind my mother."

## A GOOD WAY.

"Look in there," said Willie, as he led his brother to where he could get a peep at a small table set out with doll-dishes. On the dishes were some nice little cakes. "Neil's getting ready for a party," he said. "But she's out of the way now. Let's call Rover and see what he'll do."

"Here Rover—Rover."

The big dog came with a bound. Into the arbour he sprang and knocked over the pretty table. It was a very low one, and none of the dishes were broken.

But you should have seen Nellie when she saw the mischief. Tears flew to her eyes. Nellie was angry as well as sorry. "I'll pay you up," she cried. "I'll do something mean to you."

She went and told mamma how unkind her brothers had been, and that she was going to do something to punish them.

"What shall it be, mamma?" she asked.

She and Nellie had a long talk about it. The next day Nellie set her table out again.

"My, what a fine spread!" said Jack, as he saw it. "I'd like to be at it myself."

"So would I," said Willie; "but she won't ask us."

Nellie brought her dolls and seated them at the table. Then she called her brothers.

"Come," she said; "there's strawberries and cherries and plenty of good things."

They had a fine time all together. Don't you suppose the boys were sorry they had been unkind to their sister? Don't you think it was a good way for her to pay up?