

## OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

### A HYMN SIX HUNDRED YEARS OLD.

Guard, my child, thy tongue,  
That it speak no wrong.  
Let no evil word pass o'er it;  
Set the watch of truth before it,  
That it speak no wrong,  
Guard, my child, thy tongue.

Guard, my child, thine eyes;  
Prying is not wise;  
Let them look on what is right;  
From all evil turn their sight;  
Prying is not wise;  
Guard, my child, thine eyes.

Guard, my child, thine ear!  
Wicked words will sear;  
Let no evil words come in,  
That may cause the soul to sin.  
Wicked words will sear,  
Guard, my child, thine ear.

### HOW TO BE STRONG.

BY THE REV. JAMES HASTIE, LINDSAY, ONT.

"He that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger."—Job xvii. 9.

THERE are two things all boys want when they are small. One is, they want to be big. When the time comes to put off their little petticoats and frock, and get their first little coat and trousers, how proud they are, for they now think they are getting big.

The other thing they want is to be strong. Sometimes they want to be strong so that they can harness the horse and drive it themselves. Sometimes they want to be strong so that they can earn something and so help mother. Sometimes a boy wants to be strong because he wants to beat that boy at school who is always challenging him to a wrestle, and always manages to throw him down. When I was a little fellow going to school there was a boy about my own age, but stronger, who was always challenging me to wrestle and who always got me down. I had often heard it said that fat pork would make one strong, and that no one could be strong who did not eat it. So for some days I ate fat pork for supper and fat pork for breakfast, expecting that by noon I would have the benefit of it in the way of making me strong enough to throw that other boy down. By-and-by I got such a dislike to fat pork that for years I could not bear it and scarcely can yet. That was my plan to get strong. But the text recommends another way yet, it is by getting "clean hands." But, how can clean hands make you strong? you ask.

"Harry," said his brother John, "what has made you take this wonderfully clean fit all of a sudden? This is the seventh time I have seen you go to the pump and wash your hands to-day."

"Because I want to be strong," said Harry.

"Well, but washing your hands won't make you strong."

"Yes it will, the Bible says so."

"I don't believe it does," said John.

"I am sure it does, though," retorted Harry, positively, "papa read it at prayers this morning: 'He that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger,'" and Harry waved his arm in the air as if to see whether six or seven washings had really made him any stronger.

"Well, you don't suppose that means really clean hands," said John. "You are a silly little boy, you have had all this trouble for nothing."

"No, I haven't. I'll ask papa to-night if the Bible doesn't mean what it says."

So after tea Harry said, "Papa, doesn't the Bible say that if you have 'clean hands' you'll be strong?"

"Certainly, my boy," said Mr. Williams, smiling; "I am glad to see that you remember so well what we read this morning, how Job said, 'The righteous shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger.'"

"There," said Harry, "I knew I was right; and washing your hands will make you strong, won't it?"

"It is very good for little boys to wash their hands," said Mr. Williams, "and it helps to make them strong and healthy if they keep clean. But there are some stains we can't wash off with soap and water, and these are the stains that this verse means. The other day I saw a little boy lift his hands to strike his sister; and doing this made his hands far dirtier than if he had been making mud pies for a whole day."

Harry blushed, for he felt his father meant him; and then his papa went on—"When I was a little boy I was taught that it was my duty to keep my hands from picking and stealing—picking, you know, means taking little things that don't belong to you—like lumps of sugar out of mamma's cupboard, or picking fruit off the young trees that I tell you not to touch."

"Well," said John, "Eve must have had dirty hands, for she stole fruit in the garden."

"Now, John," said Mr. Williams, "can you remember the name of a man who 'stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the Church,' a thing that made his hands very dirty indeed?"

"That was Herod, papa, when he killed James and put Peter in prison."

"Yes, and do you know who it was who tried to clear himself of a terrible crime by washing his hands?"

Both boys were silent, and Mr. Williams asked again: "Who took water and washed his hands, saying, 'I am innocent of the blood of this just person?'"

"Oh, that was Pilate, when he let the people crucify Jesus," said Harry.

"Yes," said their father, "but the stain of the sin was just as much on his soul after he had washed his hands as before; and it is the same with our sins, whether we call them little or great; we cannot get rid of them or their consequences, however we try to clear ourselves. No washing of our own will do it. So what must we do, Harry? When you make your hands dirty with doing wrong, how can they be made clean?"

"God can wash them, papa; that is what you mean—ain't it? Because David said, 'Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow.'"

There, my young friends, you have the meaning of the text. Doing wrong makes you have in God's sight dirty hands. Doing right makes you have in God's sight clean

hands. And when you have clean hands in this sense you are strong in heart and mind and soul, to resist temptation and to work for God. Now I will give you two texts about being strong and being clean, and you will see how they agree with what I have been saying. The first text is 1 John ii. 14: "I write unto you, young men, because ye are strong, . . . and have overcome the wicked one." And why were they strong? Because "the word of God abideth with you," i.e., you do what God's Word commands, and you are strong in doing good.

The other text tells that without clean hands no one will be allowed to enter heaven—Psalm xxiv. 3, 4: "Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord (heaven)? Who shall stand in His holy place? He that hath clean hands and a pure heart."

Now, young friends, you will remember the text—"He that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger," in all that is good, till by-and-by you shall be like Christ Himself, always doing right, never doing wrong.

### WAITING TO GROW.

Little white snowdrop, just waking up,  
Violet, daisy, and sweet buttercup!  
Think of the flowers that are under the snow,  
Waiting to grow!

And think what hosts of queer little seeds;  
Of flowers and mosses, of ferns and of weeds;  
Are under the leaves and under the snow,  
Waiting to grow!

Think of the roots getting ready to sprout,  
Reaching their slender brown fingers about  
Under the ice and the leaves and the snow,  
Waiting to grow!

Only a month or a few weeks more  
Will they have to wait behind that door;  
Listen and watch and wait below,  
Waiting to grow!

Nothing so small, and hidden so well,  
That God will not find it, and presently tell  
His sun where to shine and His rain where to go,  
Helping them grow!

### BAD HABITS.

WE feel sorry when we look at a number of little boys playing in the streets, smoking, chewing, and swearing, as we think some of them will have to spend a portion of their lives in the penitentiary. Look at the sunny-haired boy, with laughing eyes and rosy cheeks, as he sits on the goods box, squirting tobacco and rolling his eyes in a languid, unnatural manner, trying to imitate the chronic loafer; and notice that disgusting, impertinent smile as he relates some vulgar story, to which he has listened in some saloon, as it was related by some brute in the shape of a man. What will be the state of our coming generation? and who is to blame for this state of affairs but the parents who allow their children to run the streets, and the idler who sets these brutish examples?

Love's secret is to be always doing things for God, and not to mind because they are such very little ones.

In Calcutta there are 199 Hindoo temples, 177 Mohammedan mosques, thirty-one Christian churches, and two Jewish synagogues.