

OUR BRAVE VOLUNTEERS.*

God bless the brave boys, whom we miss
from the hearthstone,
As we rest from our toil at the close of the
day;
And the one vacant place speaks to us so
plainly
Of the dear and the loved ones, who've
gone far away.

Sad were our hearts, yes, well-nigh to break-
ing,
As we gathered to bid them a tearful
adieu,
Fearing never again on this side of death a
river,
Should we meet with those brave hearts, so
faithful and true.

They've gone far away from the home of their
childhood,
Far away from the loved on Ontario's
strand,
To fight for the homes that are now made
desolate
By the strong band of rebels who're scourg-
ing our land.

How we watch for the papers and eagerly
scan them,
For tidings of battle, for names of the
dead,
Fearing lest each be the name of our loved
one,
Knowing that at each name some mother's
heart bled.

And we earnestly pray that the time's not far
distant,
When the cruel war ended, we'll away
with our fears,
And tears changed to joy, our country re-
joicing,
We'll welcome them home, the brave
volunteers.

When loudly shall echo from hill-top and
valley,
Glad tidings of peace over mountain and
glen;
While strains of triumph swell louder and
louder,
With songs of thanksgiving we'll greet them
again.

And God bless the homes, where the place is
still vacant,
As they mourn for the dear ones at rest
'neath the sod;
And may all who've fallen in defence of their
country,
Find life everlasting in the home of their
God.

HAVE YOU DECIDED?

Who can help admiring the noble
character of Joshua? He had such a
courageous spirit; he made up his
mind as to what was true and right,
and then he stuck to it, and no one
could turn him. See him, the old
gray-headed warrior, gathering to-
gether the elders of Israel at Shechem,
and calling on them all, princes, judges
and rulers, to hesitate no longer, be-
tween the strange gods of Canaan and
the one true God—"Choose ye this
day whom ye will serve." But, whate-
ver their choice, it will make no
difference to Joshua—"As for me and
my house, we will serve the Lord."
Josh. 24. 15.

Sometimes you see a lad in a school
or a workshop following this noble
example and letting his companions
know and see that he has decided for
Christ. I wish there were more such.
But I find so many who want to wait
a little longer—they can't make up
their mind just yet.

"There is plenty of time for me,"
says a young girl as she comes away
from the Bible-class on Sunday after-

*By the time that these verses shall appear,
most of our volunteers, we trust, shall have
returned home. But the verses are so
creditable to the head and heart of the young
lady who wrote them that we have pleasure
in printing them.—Ed.

noon. "Teacher wants us to decide
at once, but surely there is no such
hurry—I must think about it some
day, I know, but not now—I can't
decide."

Take care, young people! Take
care, boys and girls! Your life is just
like that falling raindrop—just like
that rushing stream. You can't decide
which way your life shall go, but all
the time it is going on. Is it going
towards heaven or towards hell? Do
you not know? Haven't you decided
yet which way it shall go? If you
don't choose now, suppose the time
should come when you can't choose!

Ho would be a foolish captain who
should start on a voyage without mak-
ing up his mind where to go to. Sup-
pose another vessel meets him, "What,
ho! captain, whither bound?" "Don't
know." "Well, but do you know
where you are steering for?" "Don't
care." "Why, if you don't look out,
you will be among the icebergs pres-
ently." "Oh, never mind, perhaps I
shall change my course." Absurd as
this seems, isn't it a true picture?

"Out on an ocean, all boundless, we ride,
Borne on the waves of a rough, restless tide,"

but, whether we are going east, or
west, or north, or south, or going to
the bottom, we cannot tell. We have
not decided.

I can't think what you young people
are waiting for. Do you expect your
hearts to get softer? I fear you will
find the world a hard place, and the
longer you are in it the harder your
hearts will get. Do you expect it to
be easier, by and by, to become a
Christian than it is now? Is it easier
to bend the sapling or the oak tree?
Just ask any of your friends who were
converted late in life and see what
they say. You won't find so very
many, for comparatively few are
brought to Christ in old age. Or, do
you only mean to wait a little longer?
But what right have you to think that
God will wait any longer at all?—
T. B. Bishop.

If we were to venture a prophecy,
it would be, in spite of its seeming
boldness, that the time is not far
distant when the smoking-habit will be
on the decline, and that the generation
is near at hand which will be free
from the tobacco scourge. In the
Northern States women no longer
smoke; snuff has passed almost out of
use, though within the memory of
many now living its use was quite
common; the habit of tobacco-chewing
has rapidly declined within twenty
years; and even among men the tide
of enlightened public sentiment is
setting in strongly against the habit of
smoking. Already the respectability
of the cigar is discredited in the minds
of the boys of our best communities by
the example of Christian ministers
generally, and by the instructions given
to the young. Its use even by fathers
is in thousands of instances considered
a mark of weakness to be excused,
rather than of manliness to be copied.
The Bands of Hope in our Sunday-
schools have sown good seed which is
already yielding fruit, and the move-
ment for temperance instruction in our
public schools promises far greater
results. The temperance reform will
sweep away tobacco before it destroys
the saloon, and when tobacco is out of
the way, the overthrow of the saloon
will be comparatively easy.

LINCOLN'S MOTHER.

THOUGH President Lincoln's mother
died when he was only ten years of
age, yet she lived long enough to in-
spire him with a noble ambition, to
train him to love truth and justice,
and to reverence God and goodness.
Years after, when men were looking
to him as one who might become a
national leader, he said,—

"All that I am, or hope to be, I
owe to my mother."

The wife of a pioneer, she shared
the privations and hardships of life in
a wilderness. The struggle for exist-
ence familiarized her not only with
the distaff and the spinning-wheel, but
with the axe, the hoe, and the rifle.
She helped her husband to clear and
break up the soil, to kill wild turkeys,
as well as deer and bears, whose flesh
she cooked and whose skins she dressed
and made into clothes.

When she married, her husband
could neither read nor write, but she
found time, toilsome as was her life,
to teach both rudiments to him and to
her son. She was unusually intelli-
gent and refined for a pioneer's wife.
Her taste and love of beauty made her
log-house an exceptional home in a
wilderness, where the people were
rugged and lived so far apart that they
could hardly see the smoke from each
other's cabins.

When Abraham Lincoln had gained
the people's ear, men noticed that he
scarcely made a speech or wrote a
State paper in which there was not an
illustration or a quotation from the
Bible. "Abe Lincoln," his friends
used to say, "is more familiar with
the Bible than most ministers."

He had been thoroughly instructed
in it by his mother. It was the one
book always found in the pioneer's
cabin, and to it she, being a woman of
deep religious feeling, turned for sym-
pathy and refreshment. Out of it she
taught her boy to spell and read, and
with its poetry, histories and principles
she so familiarized him that they
always influenced his subsequent life.

She was fond of books, and read all
she could beg or borrow from the
pioneers far and near. Her boy early
imbibed his mother's passion for books.
Here and there could be found in the
cabin Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress,"
Weems' "Life of Washington," and
Burns' poems. Young Abe read these
over and over again, until he knew
them as he knew the alphabet.

When his mother died, the son had
already received a good education—
he told the truth, he loved justice, he
reverenced God, he respected goodness,
he was fond of reading, he could swing
the axe, shoot the rifle, and take more
than a boy's part in subduing the
wilderness and building up a home.

She selected the place for her burial.
It was under a majestic sycamore, on
the top of a forest-covered hill that
stretched above her log-cabin home.
No clergyman could be found to bury
her, and neighbours took part in the
simple, solemn rites. Months after, a
preacher, who had been written to,
travelled hundreds of miles through
the forest to preach a funeral sermon
under the great sycamore.

The boy of ten years never forgot
those sad, plain services, nor the
mother whose memory they honoured.
She ever remained to him the incarna-
tion of tenderness, love, self-sacrifice
and devotion to duty. When he was
President he honoured her training by
the thought, "She placed me here!"

LOVE'S BEACON.

BY BERN K. HENFORD.

THE twilight gloom is in the room.
The children cry, "Soon father'll
come!"
And to the door they run, once more
To watch, as many an eve before.

The kettle sings of happy things
That evening's coming always brings;
The fire burns bright, because, each night,
The hearts about it are so light.

'Tis time to trim my lamp for him
Who never lets love's light grow dim,
That he may see how anxiously
I wait him coming home to me.

Shine out, dear light, across the night,
And guide my good man's feet aright,
Love's beacon star, shines out afar,
And lead him where his dear ones are!

DAILY BREAD.

A LITTLE girl in a wretched attic,
whose sick mother had no bread, knelt
down by the bedside, and said, slowly:
"Give us this day our daily bread."
Then she went into the street, and
began to wonder where God kept his
bread. She turned round the corner,
and saw a large, well-filled baker's
shop.

"This," thought Nettie, "is the
place." So she entered confidently,
and said to the stout baker, "I've come
for it."

"Come for what?"

"My daily bread," she said pointing
to the tempting loaves. "I'll take
two, if you please—one for my mother
and one for me."

"All right," said he, putting them
into a bag, and giving them to his
little customer, who started at once
into the street.

"Stop, you little rogue!" he said,
roughly; "where is your money?"

"I haven't any," she said simply.

"Haven't any!" he repeated angrily;
"you little thief, who brought you
here, then?"

The hard words frightened the little
girl, who, bursting into tears, said:
"Mother is sick, and I am so hungry.
In my prayers I said, 'Give us this
day our daily bread,' and then I
thought God meant me to fetch it, and
so I came."

The rough but kind-hearted baker
was softened by the child's simple tale,
and he sent her back to her mother
with a well-filled basket.

Nettie had faith in God; she asked
and expected to receive.

Perhaps if some older persons had
more faith in their asking, they would
have more joy in receiving. God is
ready to fulfil his promises, but we
must be in the appointed attitude of
trusting expectation.

THE HOT SAW.

"O FRANK! come and see how hot
my saw gets when I rub it."

"That's the friction," said Frank,
with the wisdom of two years more
than Eddie boasted.

"Yes," said sister Mary, who was
passing, "it's the friction; and it
makes me think of two boys who were
quarrelling over a trifle this morning,
and the more they talked the hotter
their tempers grew, until there was no
knowing what might have happened if
mother had not thrown cold water on
the fire by sending them into separate
rooms."