

OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

ONLY.

ONLY a word for the Master,
Lovingly, quietly said,
Only a word!
Yet the Master heard
And some fainting hearts were fed.

Only a look of remonstrance,
Sorrowful, gentle and deep,
Only a look!
Yet the strong man shook,
And he went alone to weep.

Only some act of devotion,
Willingly, joyfully done,
"Surely 'twas nought!"
(So the proud world thought.)
But yet souls for Christ were won!

Only an hour with the children,
Pleasantly, cheerfully given
Yet seed was sown
In that hour alone
Which would bring forth fruit for heaven.

"Only"—but Jesus is looking
Constantly, tenderly down
To earth, and sees
Those who strive to please,
And their love He loves to crown.

IN DEBT.

BROWNING M— is not at all brown, but very fair, with blue eyes, and the most flaxen of tresses. Neither is he one of the imaginary beings sometimes so called, but a real live boy, eight years old, with all a boy's fondness for fun and frolic.

One evening his father noticed a very sober look on his son's face usually so careless and merry.

"What is the matter, my son?" he asked, as the boy hung around him with a wistful, persevering air, which said as plainly as words could, "I want something but don't like to ask for it."

But in reply to his father's question he said: "I want twenty-five cents, papa."

"Twenty-five cents," repeated Mr. M—, "and what will you do with it?"

"Why you see, papa, I borrowed a quarter of a dollar of Fred when I bought my dominoes, and I want to pay him back," said Brownie, in a voice that trembled with tears.

Fred is Brownie's elder brother, who has lately begun keeping an account book, of which he is not a little proud. Looking up from the book he was reading, he exclaimed: "I'll tell you, papa, why Brown is so anxious all at once to pay me. I showed him his name in my book to-day, where I have him down for twenty-five cents, borrowed money."

"Ah!" said the father, "is that it?"

"Yes," answered Brownie, "he has me on his book. I don't want to be on *anybody's* book, so please give me the money."

"Well, my son, I hope you will always have such a hatred of debt, as to make you always unwilling to have your name in a creditor's book," was the reply of the father, as he put a shining silver quarter into the little boy's hand. Brownie, with a bright, happy face, passed the coin over to his brother, and then bounded lightly away to his play.

But that night, as he was preparing for his sleep, the mother who had overheard the whole, said, "So you do not like being in debt, do you?"

"No, mother, it made me feel dreadfully to

think my name was in a book as a debtor, and I couldn't take pleasure in anything till it was paid, for something seemed to keep saying, 'You are in debt, in debt.' And papa said he hoped I would always feel so about it."

"I hope so, too, Brownie, but are you sure you are now out of debt?"

"Why yes, mother, I didn't owe anyone but Fred, and now that I have paid him I feel as light as a feather, in proof of which assertion Brownie capered up and down the room in a very lively manner. His mother waited until he became quiet and then said:

"Brownie, who gives you every day food to eat and clothes to wear? Who gives you health and strength, and cares for you day and night?"

"It is God, mother," answered the boy, reverently.

"And who gave his Son to die for us, and His Word to guide us in the way of Salvation? Do you not owe your Heavenly Father something for all these precious blessings and others too many to be counted?"

"But I thought these were gifts, mother, and that God asked nothing in return for all He does for us, and that we *never could* pay Him for all his benefits to us, never."

"True, my son, yet there is one thing which He requires us to give in payment for His great sacrifice."

"What is that, mother?"

Mrs. M— turned over the leaves of the Bible which lay beside her, and then placed her finger on a passage which Brownie read aloud, "*My son, give me thy heart.*"

The boy was silent for a few moments, and then said: "But what does that mean, mother, and how can we do it?"

"It means, my son, that our best and warmest love must be given to God; and that we must play, work, and study, sing and pray, as He has told us to do, because we love Him so much, that it is our delight to please our kind Father in Heaven who does so much for us."

"But how can we ever feel so?" asked Brownie in a doubtful tone.

"Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and love to God are His gifts, which all may have for the asking. He, only, can give us hearts that love to do His will. When we give to Him the love of our hearts, the work of our lives, all we have, and are to be used in His service, then and not till then are we out of debt."

"Well, then, all persons who are not Christians, are in debt, are they not, mother?"

"Yes, my dear boy, *all* who have not given God what He requires in the verse you read. Many persons who, like you, cannot rest under a debt to a fellow creature, and who think themselves honest, and honourable, because they are unwilling to remain for a moment under obligations to others, are yet content to take and use God's gifts without giving what He asks for them. More than that, they claim heaven as a reward for their honesty toward their fellow men. But God's Spirit causes the conscience to whisper, 'In debt, in debt.' No rest is given till the debt is paid, by surrendering the heart and life to Him, giving up our wicked feelings and desires, and having the mind that was in Christ Jesus."

THE THREE ANSWERS.

BEAUTIFUL, indeed, was the lesson which a Sabbath school class had been reciting—all about the Saviour's kingdom. They learned that it was a kingdom of great joy and deep love; peace dwelt there, and kindness and good will sprung all along the way-side. It was a kingdom upon which the Sun of Righteousness shone, and in its clear sky hung the Star of Bethlehem. The eyes of the children grew bright with interest while the teacher talked; and they longed to know more about a state so glorious. Then the teacher turned to the book, and this question came next, "What will *you* do to advance this kingdom on earth?" "Yes," added the lady, looking seriously upon the little boys, "what will you do to help on the Saviour's kingdom? What will you do, James?"

"I will give my half-pence to the missionaries, and they shall preach about it to the heathen," answered James, with great earnestness.

"And what will *you* do, George?"

George looked up and said, "I will pray for it."

"And what will *you* do, John?" said the teacher, addressing the youngest in her class.

He cast down his eyes and softly said, "I will give my *heart* to it." The teacher blessed the little boy, and breathed a silent prayer that Jesus might take the offering.

These three answers comprehend all we can do for Jesus.

It is good to give our money and our prayers; but the *first* thing we must do, the *best* gift we can offer, is to give up our hearts to the Saviour's kingdom, and let Jesus rule over us.

RETALIATION.

A LADY once, when she was a little girl, learned a good lesson, which she tells for the benefit of whom it may concern.

One frosty morning I was looking out of the window into my father's farm-yard, where stood many cows, oxen and horses waiting to drink. It was a cold morning. The cattle all stood very still and meek, till one of the cows attempted to turn round. In making the attempt she hit her next neighbour, whereupon the neighbour kicked and hit another. In five minutes the whole herd were kicking each other with fury. My mother laughed and said:

"See what comes of kicking when you are hit. Just so I have seen one cross word set a whole family by the ears some frosty morning." Afterward, if my brothers or myself were a little irritable she would say, "Take care, my children. Remember how the fight in the farm-yard began. Never give back a kick for a hit, and you will save yourselves and others a great deal of trouble."

I AM richer than you if I do not want things which you cannot do without.

If a bee sting you, will you go to the hive and destroy it? Would not a thousand come upon you? If you receive a trifling injury, do not be anxious to avenge it: let it drop. It is wisdom to say little of the injuries you have received.