

OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

BEAUTIFUL THINGS.

Beautiful faces are those that wear—
It matters little if dark or fair—
Whole-souled honesty printed there.

Beautiful eyes are those that show,
Like crystal panes where heart-fires glow,
Beautiful thoughts that burn below.

Beautiful lips are those whose words
Leap from the heart like songs of birds,
Yet whose utterance prudence girds.

Beautiful hands are those that do
Work that is honest brave and true,
Moment by moment the long day through.

Beautiful feet are those that go
On kindly missions, to and fro—
Down lowliest ways, if God wills so.

Beautiful shoulders are those that bear
Ceaseless burdens of homely care,
With patient grace and daily prayer.

Beautiful lives are those that bless,
Silent rivers of happiness,
Whose hidden fountain but few may guess.

Beautiful twilight, at set of sun;
Beautiful goal, with race well won.
Beautiful rest, with work well done.

"AND THEN?"

We remember reading, years ago, of a man who was so sparing of his words that he seldom uttered more than two consecutively, and consequently was known as "Two Words." Favourites of his, and most often made use of, were these, short and questioning—"And then?"

Every man, woman and child utters them frequently—they are indeed the text of many a hope, many a promise, many a prayer. Childhood will grow out of its childishness, *and then* all the joys and success of manhood will gladden it. Youth will step out from its youthful annoyances, *and then*—will come only halcyon days, full of sunlight and song, and glad fulfilments. Manhood will brush away the clouds that envelop it, *and then*—the long awaited results will surely be realized in maturer years. Manhood's prime may wear itself out in noble endeavours, but Old Age will reap the fruits, *and then*—content will render the hours peacefully sweet. Old Age will be ended by-and-by, *and then*—

And then—what?

It is not enough that we dream over the two words—that we use them as pleasant agencies to conjure up brightness for the future. To paint beautiful pictures of the "Good time coming" is well, because none have a right to shut the sunlight out of their lives, and the sunlight streams in ever through the open door of To-morrow, but to shut our eyes to our possible destiny—to look resolutely away from a destiny that must be inevitably ours—that is not well. It is the height of folly, or else the climax of cowardice.

Thousands are dancing through life thinking lightly of the morrow, with "*And then*" upon their lips, but never repeating it in its deep and solemn suggestiveness. Poor fools, that make a minute of the week, and glide down it careless and unconcerned, for them, as for all others, there will come a Saturday night with its silent hush, and the sun will

go down, and the stars will come out, and the soul will remember itself—*and then*—

As we have each our by-and-bys, that we fill with those things we love best, so there is for all one great common by-and-by, and it is surer than those little ones we think most of. Who says "by-and-by" with a thought of all its meaning? We hang upon being as by a thread, and yet we plan with an "I will," as though the future were ours to do with as we please. And someday we shall see our mistake. Some day we shall say "I will," and our wills shall be as mere breaths; and it shall be then, O Father, "as *Thou* wilt;" and we shall close our eyes to all around us, and go out somewhere by a way which we know not—*and then?*

A REMARKABLE TREE.

There is a singular tree in Cuba—the yaguey-tree—that affords striking illustrations of the progress and fatality of sin. This tree begins to grow at the top or midway of another tree. The seed is carried by a bird, or wafted by the wind, and, falling into some moist branching part, takes root and speedily begins to grow. It sends along a kind of thin string-like root down the body of the tree that is occupied, which is soon followed by others. In course of time these rootlings strike the ground, and growth immediately commences upward. New rootlings continue to be formed and get strength, until the one tree grows as a net with the other inside. The outside one surrounds and presses the inner; like a huge girdle of snakes, strangling its life and augmenting its own power. At last the tree within is killed and the parasite that has taken possession becomes itself the tree. What a picture of the enslaving and fatal power of sin as it attaches itself to a man, and with his consent is allowed. It may have a small beginning, but soon binds him as with cords, gains increasing mastery, and presses upon his very life. He is held in fetters by its power, till at last the tyrant overcomes the victim, and triumphs over its prey.

BELIEVING, BUT NOT UNDER- STANDING.

"I will not believe anything but what I understand," said a self-confident young man in a hotel one day.

"Nor will I," said another.

"Neither will I," chimed in a third.

"Gentlemen," said one who sat close by, "do I understand you correctly, that you will not believe anything that you don't understand?"

"I will not," said one, and so said each one of the trio.

"Well," said the stranger, "in my ride this morning I saw some geese in a field eating grass; do you believe that?"

"Of course," said the three.

"And I also saw sheep and cows eating grass, do you believe that?"

"Certainly," said the three unbelievers.

"I also saw pigs eating grass, do you believe that?"

"Of course," was again replied.

"Well, but the grass which they had formerly eaten had by digestion turned to feathers on the backs of the geese, to bristles on the backs of the swine, to wool on the sheep, and on the cows had turned to hair; do you believe that, gentlemen?"

"Certainly," they replied.

"Yes, you believe it," he rejoined, "but do you understand it?"

They were confounded, and silent and ashamed.

"JUST LIKE GOD."

These were the words of a little girl. I have used them in preaching from John iii. 16; "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Little Mary was reading this verse with her mother—a beautiful family custom—when her mother asked: "Don't you think that is very wonderful?" She replied in the negative. Her mother, surprised, repeated the question. "Why no, mamma," said her little daughter. "It would be if it was anybody else; but it's just like God."

"Out of the mouth of babes." So I told the people that while I took the text from the Bible and the subject from the text; I found the special topic for the discourse in these three words of a child—amply expressing the thought, the atonement, the great demonstration of the Deity.

BEAUTIFUL SYMPATHY.

A little girl went to her Sabbath school, and when she came home her mother asked her what she had done at school, and in the simplicity of her little soul she said:

"Oh, dear mother, I am afraid I have done nothing; for you know there was little Mary Curtis, whose baby brother was buried this week, and she was sorry, and she cried so that I cried with her, and I took her hands in mine, and kissed her, but it took all the lesson out of my head; and poor Sarah Miles, who is always behind with her lessons, had them this morning quite perfect, and she was so happy that, although she got more marks than I did, I was quite glad, too."

"My dear," said the happy mother, "you have fulfilled the Apostle's injunction; you have wept with those that wept, and rejoiced with those that rejoiced."

TWO KINDS OF GIRLS.

There are two kinds of girls: One is the kind that appears best abroad—the girls that are good for parties, rides, visits, etc., whose chief delight is in such things. The other is that kind that appears best at home—the girls that are useful and cheerful in the dining-room, in the sick room and all the duties of home. They differ widely in character. One is often a torment at home, the other a blessing. One is a moth, consuming everything about her—the other is a sunbeam, inspiring light and gladness all around her pathway. The right kind of education will modify both and unite their good qualities.