

## OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

### THE LITTLE BIRD.

A little bird with feathers brown  
Sat singing on a tree—  
The song was very soft and low,  
But sweet as it could be.

And all the people passing by  
Looked up to see the bird  
That made the sweetest melody  
That ever they had heard.

But all the bright eyes looked in vain,  
For birdie was so small,  
And with a modest dark-brown coat,  
He made no show at all.

"Why, papa," little Gracie said,  
"Where can this birdie be?  
If I could sing a song like that,  
I'd sit where folks could see."

"I hope my little girl will learn  
A lesson from that bird,  
And try to do what good she can,  
Not to be seen or heard.

"This birdie is content to sit  
Unnoticed by the way,  
And sweetly sing his Maker's praise  
From dawn to close of day.

"So live, my child, all through your life,  
That be it short or long,  
Though others may forget your looks,  
They'll not forget your song."

### SHARPER THAN A SERPENT'S TOOTH.

A week or two ago, a young man, belonging to an influential, honourable family, cheated a couple of business firms in a great western city, by false representations, out of a couple of a hundred thousand dollars. The matter was brought before his father, an old man of stern integrity. The young man was his only child.

"Gentlemen, I can do nothing," he said, "I have paid nearly half a million dollars already to make up sums which he has embezzled. He has brought me to beggary. The law must take its course." He turned away. The road between him and death was short, and it would be dark and hard.

On the same week an elderly woman was seen to throw herself into the Schuylkill river, near Philadelphia. She was rescued with difficulty. She held in her hand a satchel containing gold, notes and bank books representing several thousands of dollars. When she recovered her senses, she was asked:

"Why did you do this? You were in no danger of want."

"No; I had money enough. But I had five children once—four boys and a girl. They all went away. They have not wanted me to visit them, and they do not write to me. I have waited for years, and they have not come back. Folks told me they were doing well, and were fine gentlemen and ladies, but they have forgotten their old mother. It was so lonesome that my head got queer. Indeed, gentlemen, I tried to do all I could for my little children; but when they grew up they were tired of me."

No words of ours can add to these two chapters of actual life. Very few sons and daughters are as guilty as these, but how few are wholly free from such guilt? Many a man

or woman, who would not take the life of the poorest living creature, kills the souls of those who love them best, by years of passive, cold forgetfulness and neglect.

### "WELL DONE."

Not what you say,  
Oh wish, or hope,  
While through the darkness  
Here you grope;  
But what you do,  
And what you are,  
In heart and thought  
And character—  
This only makes you great;  
And this,  
If clothed in Jesus' righteousness,  
Will open Heaven's gate;

Sell, all and buy  
This precious gem,  
And wear it as  
A diadem;  
A heart that's clean,  
A mind that's pure,  
Will prompt to deeds  
Which shall endure.  
So God will own you as His son,  
And say  
To you when ends life's little day:  
"Well done!" my child; "well done!"

### HOW IT IS DONE.

I remember a man who had been a Christian for two years, but he was bemoaning his hard and sinful heart. I said to him one day, "Did you ever know a sinner who had not a hard heart?"

"No," he said, "but mine is getting no better."

I arose and closed all the shutters, and made the room quite dark.

"Why do you do that?" he asked.

"I want to teach you how to drive away the darkness," I said; so I handed him a long broom and a duster. "Now, I want you to sweep out the darkness."

"I can't," he said.

"Can't you if you try very hard? Will no amount of physical force do it?"

"Certainly not," he said.

Then I opened the shutters, and the room was beautifully illuminated. "So you see that, if you want the darkness and dreadings of your heart to be dispelled, it is not by any amount of effort of your own, but by letting in the light of the Sun of Righteousness. But now that we have such a beautiful light in the room, we may close the shutters again; we shall want no more, I suppose, for a month," I said.

"What do you mean?"

"I mean that we are not to expect to have a stock of grace laid up, on which we may draw; but that, if we would continue in the light, we must keep looking up to the Sun, and receiving His blessed rays into our souls."

### BOYS WHO BECAME FAMOUS MEN.

One night a father was roused by the cry of fire from the street. Little imagining the fire was in his own house, he opened his bed-room door and found the place full of smoke, and that the roof was already burned through. Directing his wife and two girls to rise and fly for their lives, he burst open the nursery door where the maid was sleeping with five

children. They snatched up the youngest, and bade the others follow her; the three eldest did so; but John, who was then six years old, was not awakened, and in the alarm was forgotten. The rest of the family escaped—some through the windows, others by the garden door; the mother, to use her own expression, "waded through the fire." Just then John was heard crying in the nursery. The father ran up the stairs, but they were so nearly consumed that they could not bear his weight: and being utterly in despair he fell upon his knees in the hall, and in agony commended the soul of the child to God. John had been awakened by the light, and finding it impossible to escape by the door, climbed upon a chest that stood near the window, and was seen from the yard. There was no time for procuring a ladder, but one man was hoisted upon the shoulders of another. And thus he was taken out. A moment after the roof fell in.

When the child was rescued, the father cried out: "Come, neighbours, let us kneel down; let us give thanks to God. He has given me all my eight children; let the house go; I am rich enough." John Wesley always remembered the deliverance with the deepest gratitude. Under one of the portraits published during his life is a representation of a house on fire with the scriptural inquiry, "Is not this a brand plucked out of the burning?"

### AN UNKNOWN HERO.

Deep down in a mine in Wardley Colliery, Newcastle, England, there is a brave boy who deserves to be called a hero. In a situation of sudden peril he used precautions which prevented a dreadful explosion, simply by behaving with courage and presence of mind.

He noticed that his lamp flared up, a sure sign of the presence of dangerous gas. Had he hastily rushed away, his light might have burst through the wire gauze which surrounds a miner's lamp, and setting fire to the gas, caused a heart-rending accident.

The lad did nothing so silly. When questioned by the superintendent as to how he had found out that there was gas in the neighbourhood where he was at work, he replied, "Because my lamp flared."

"And what did you do then?" asked the gentleman.

"I took my picker, and pulled down the wick, but the lamp still flared."

"Well, my boy, how did you manage then?"

"Why, I put the lamp inside my jacket, and covered it up tight, and the lamp went out."

Of course the lamp would not burn without air. To think of the right thing to do, and then promptly do it, boys, that is what makes the difference between a common man and a hero. This little fellow, whose name is not mentioned—Mick, or Ted, or Jack—has in him the making of a grand man, cool, resolute, and clever.

Fortunately there was an overseer near him, who, when he heard from the lad about his lamp, went bravely through the gas, in total darkness and set open a door, the closing of which had forced the gas into the mainways of the mine.

All honour to them both.