

## Our Young Folks.

### CHILDREN'S PRAISE.

Our Father in Heaven,  
Our great and good king!  
We're a "band," O so happy!  
Praise God, we can sing.

We praise Thee at morn  
For the glorious sun;  
We praise Thee at eve  
For the silvery moon.

Sing praises to God!  
The winter at last—  
So snowy and cold,  
Though it lingered—is past.

Old winter, farewell!  
Now, sunshine and showers,  
Come, deck the bare fields  
With grasses and flowers.

Sing praises to God!  
The sky now is clear;  
Come back, little birds,  
Come, April is here!

Come bluebird, come robin,  
Build nests in the tree;  
Our berries, when ripe,  
Are plenty and free.

We give you a welcome,  
And say, with a nod,  
"Sing, sing, pretty birdies,  
Sing praises to God."

### LITTLE SHIPS.

Looking out upon the blue sparkling sea from the windows of an old house where I was staying, I saw a fleet of fishing boats put out, one after the other, with different names painted in various colours to suite the taste of their owners. Their big brown sails were hoisted to catch the breeze, as they passed silently down the narrow creek that lay between two dangerous reefs of rock, and they were anxiously watched by those left on shore.

Evening after evening the boats went out and the fishermen toiled all night catching the fish which would bring the daily bread. This evening the sky was cloudless, and far, far across the sea, with its lovely, ever-varying lights and shadows, could be seen the great vessels, bound for all parts of the world, and in comparison with which the little boats looked like little brown specks on the water. Thus I watched, and wondered what were the thoughts and motives of the weather-beaten sailors, till they all passed out of sight, and the evening sun sank beneath the waves, and only the steady glow of the lighthouse marked the entrance to the harbour.

Waking in the night I heard the wind moan and sigh in angry gusts round the house, with the rain dashing against the windows, and the shrill voices of the women, as they watched from the cliff for any sign of a boat's return. Next morning the sky was heavy with clouds; the rain was driven past by the wind in sheets; the waves were breaking with dull, sullen roars against the rocks. Beaten back they raised themselves in huge masses of white crested water, and were thrown back splashing and foaming, only to return again and again, and again and again, to be foiled in their attempt to conquer the stern cliffs that kept their force in check. Anxious faces are gazing out to sea, to catch the first sight of the returning boats, and anxious hearts beat faster as far out are seen the boats tossed up and down, now rising triumphant on the crest of a wave, now sinking and seemingly engulfed in the trough of the next.

Will all return is the question; and have all outlived the storm, and can they make the narrow creek in safety? Hopes and fears strive for the mastery. Nearer and nearer they come, some

steady and straight for the shore, others tossed and buffeted; further out it was the same with the larger vessels, the huge hull tossed about like a plaything. At last one boat nears the shore, and smiles are bright on every face as the men help to pull the boat to land, and the women take the fish that have been caught to market.

And then, that excitement over, the mothers, wives, and sisters still wait for the other boats. Though one has gained safe shelter others may not, and the boat now coming seems scarcely able to live through the storm. Still it does, and the men have only to tell of damage done and desperate efforts to make for home. Hope is high for the rest now nearing the cove. The wife knows her husband's boat, and prays he may be kept, when a sudden gust strikes the boat, and it staggers and reels over to one side. A wave breaks over, angrier than the rest, as if greedy of its prey, and before help can be rendered every vestige of boat and men is gone. Only the cries of the women tell of the desolation that comes when the husband and father are snatched away, and a harder fight with poverty begins.

It seems to me that you boys and girls, just setting out over life's sea are like the fleet of pretty fishing boats. The men and women who are teaching you, helping and guiding you how to do right, are like the big vessels. All are bound on the same voyage, and all hope to make the same harbour. To you life is sunny and bright, and, as you gather the flowers, with birds singing, and the soft wind touching your cheek, you cannot think there will ever be a stormy day again, but all will be smooth for you.

We watch you as you set sail, and know you mean to steer clear of the rocks and shoals—treacherous rocks of lying and swearing and evil thoughts, that don't seem to make any difference. Perhaps, outwardly your bark is still fair to see, and you are sailing as steady as ever. But these things are the little leaks that by and by will let the waters of vice and sin in, and loving hearts will be wrung as they see you swamped and tossed to pieces, and sunk out of sight. Others keep on bravely, and, though waves of trouble may come, they ride above the storm. They may have sore struggles in life, but they fight it out, and are welcomed by those who watch us from the further shore.

Life is our voyage and heaven is our harbour. If we want to live through storms that would shatter our frail barks on the rocks that lie below—evil, and sin of every imaginable kind; not drink alone, though drink drags down into its whirlpool thousands who sail out with every prospect of safety and peace—we must make sure that Christ is our Captain, for unless He is on board terrible shipwreck shall we make. If we trust in Him we need not fear, for He has put one grand, shining lighthouse for us to steer our course by, and that is the Bible. It tells us how to guide our barks, and sheds its brilliant light over the darkest night of toil and sorrow. And how, when we have touched the eternal shore, shall we praise the Captain of our Salvation for that beacon light.

"Pull for the shore, sailor, pull for the shore;  
Heed not the rolling waves, but bend to the oar;  
Safe in the lifeboat, sailor, cling to self no more.  
Leave the poor old stranded wreck, and pull for the shore."

### A SIGNIFICANT STORY.

A wealthy banker in one of our large cities, who is noted for his large subscriptions to charities, and for his kindly habits of private benevolence, was called on one evening and asked to go to the help of a man who had attempted suicide.

They found the man in a wretched house, in an alley, not far from the banker's dwelling. The front room was a cobbler's shop, behind it, on a miserable bed in the kitchen, lay the poor shoemaker, with a gaping gash in his throat, while his wife and children were gathered about him.

"We have been without food for days," said the woman, "when he returned. It is not my husband's fault. He is a hard-working, sober man. But he could neither get work, nor the pay for that which he had done. To-day he went for the last time to collect a debt due him by a rich family, but the gentleman was not at home. My husband was weak from fasting, and seeing us starving drove him mad. So it ended that way?" turning to the fainting, motionless figure on the bed.

The banker, having warmed and fed the family, hurried home, opened his desk, and took out a file of little bills. All his large debts were promptly met, but he was apt to be careless about the accounts of milk, bread, &c., because they were so petty.

He found there was a bill of Michael Goodlow's for repairing children's shoes, \$10. Michael Goodlow was the suicide. It was the banker's unpaid debt which had brought these people to the verge of the grave, and driven this man to desperation, while at the very time the banker had given away thousands in charity.

The cobbler recovered, and will never want a friend while the banker lives, nor will a small unpaid bill ever again be found on the banker's table.

### CHILDREN'S HYMN.

"Just as I am," Thine own to be,  
Friend of the young, who lovest me;  
To consecrate myself to Thee,  
O Jesus Christ, I come.

In the glad morning of my day,  
My life to give, my vows to pay,  
With no reserve, and no delay,  
With all my heart I come.

I would live ever in the light,  
I would work ever for the right,  
I would serve Thee with all my might,  
Therefore to Thee I come.

"Just as I am," young, strong, and free,  
To be the best that I can be,  
For truth, and righteousness, and Thee,  
Lord of my life, I come.

With many dreams of fame and gold  
Success and joy to make me bold;  
But dearer still my faith to hold,  
For my whole life, I come.

And for Thy sake to win renown,  
And then to take my victor's crown,  
And at Thy feet to cast it down,  
O Master, Lord, I come.

### WHAT RELIGION DID FOR A LITTLE GIRL.

Religion helps children to study better and to do more faithful work. A little girl of twelve was telling in a simple way the evidence that she was a Christian. "I did not like to study, but to play. I was idle at school, and often missed my lessons. Now I try to learn every lesson well to please God. I was mischievous at school when the teachers were not looking at me, making fun for the children to laugh at. Now I wish to please God by behaving well and keeping the school laws. I was selfish at home; didn't like to run errands, and was sulky when mother called me from play to help her in work. Now it is a real joy to me to help mother in any way, and to show that I love her."

Such a religion is essential to the best interest and moral growth of youth, and will make life sunny and cheerful.