

OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

FAIRY HANDS AND FEET.

Little white hands have never
Known what it is to work;
Yet they are busy ever,
With never a wish to shirk.

Never a moment idle,
Never at all o'ertasked;
Whatever another calls for
Bringing as soon as asked.

Running with slippers, and also
Bringing an evening kiss,
Waiting for papa's blessing
To fill her with happiness.

Placing a chair for mamma
Without being asked at all;
Soothing the fretting baby,
Shaking its cradle small.

Playing, when papa's reading,
Still as a little mouse;
Never with clash or chatter
Righting her little house.

Never intrusive, only
Ready to come and go,
As papa and mamma wish,
Little face all aglow.

HAL'S CONVERT.

He was a rough-looking Irish boy. This at first glance; but his face was full of fun, his brown hair clung to his head in tight curls, his eyes were merry, gentle or fierce, according to his quickly changing moods. I am not sure that you might not have called him positively handsome, had he been well dressed and cared for.

In speech Mike was the worst boy in school. Why should he not be? His father was unusually intelligent for one of his class, a good workman, but given to drink, and when drunk he was foul of speech, abusive of his family, the terror of the neighbourhood.

Mike's mother, ignorant, hardworking, honest, quick-tempered, dealt many a blow to her children in her hot impatience, while she worked early and late to keep them clothed and fed. The boy had never learned the first lesson in self-control. How could he? When angry, as he was extremely often, his profaneness was fearful to hear. All the better class of boys avoided him; all but Hal, a fine, manly fellow of twelve, whose home was as good as Mike's was bad.

He admired Mike, who rivalled him in football, base-ball, jumping, and in his classes even, for Mike was among the first there in spite of his disadvantages. Hal was distressed at Mike's profaneness, and determined to try to help him to give it up. This was how he did it:

He took him one day to see his fan-tailed pigeons, then to see his pups, a new and thriving, but sightless family. One day Hal astonished his Aunt Hannah by asking her if she would have a secret with him. Would she knit a pair of cardinal mittens like the pair she knit for him last winter. Of course she would. Christmas morning Hal slipped the mittens into Mike's cold hands. One morning the boys were alone, again admiring the pups.

"Mike," said Hal, "if you'll give up all your bad words I'll give you one of my pups."

Now these pups constituted a prospective bicycle fund, at least the beginning of one. Their owner expected to sell the five young

setters for at least sixty dollars. It cost a struggle to give up one.

Mike could hardly believe his ears.

"I'll do my best," he said, and bore off his treasure in such a state of pride and delight as he had never known.

He kept his word. The foul words slipped out many times afterwards, but by-and-by he had so far given up the dreadful habit that his teacher praised him for his improvement.

"It's not meself it is," said the boy, "it's Hal intirely."

Some of the well-dressed boys in school jeered at Mike, calling him "Hal's convert;" but do you not think Hal had found out the secret of helping those less fortunate than himself?

THE NIGHT CAME DARKLY DOWN.

The night came darkly down.
The birds' mother said
"Peep! peep!"
You ought to be asleep;
'Tis time my little ones were safe in bed.
So, sheltered by her wing in downy nest,
The weary little birdlings took their rest.

The night came darkly down:
The baby's mother said
"Bye low!"
You musn't frolic so!
You should have been asleep an hour ago,
And nestlag closer to its mother's breast.
The merry prattler sank to quiet rest.
Then in the cradle soft
'Twas laid with tenderest care.
"Good night!"
Sleep till the morning light,"
Whispered the mother as she breathed a prayer.
Night settled down, the gates of day were barred,
And loving angels were on guard.

GOD FEEDS THE BIRDS.

Did you ever think what a work this is that God does? You may have fed a few crumbs to the little snow-birds that gather around the windows in the winter; or you may have scattered grains of corn or crumbs about the yard for the summer birds to eat. You may have quarrelled with the birds that pecked your cherries or that pulled your corn, but did you ever think that the great God feeds this great feathered multitude? Not only the larks and the orioles, but the eagles, and the ravens, and the sparrows, all partake of His care.

There is no king on earth who is mighty enough or wealthy enough to feed the birds. If the richest monarch should spend all his money for food the birds would soon eat it all up. If he should set all his subjects to feed the birds, many would starve before their provision was brought to them. But God feeds the birds. From all the trees, and fruits, and flowers, from heaven above and from earth beneath, and from the wide rolling sea, He gives them food.

He does not put their food into the birds' mouths. If a raven should perch on a dram-shop sign all day, God would not feed him. The raven knows better than to do that. So he starts off down the street, and looks this way and that, and picks up a crumb here and another there, until he is fed.

From the eagles that scream above the clouds where thunders roll and lightnings flash, down to the humming-birds that drink the honey from the flower-cups with their tiny bills, from the wild birds of the forest to the sparrows that gather around our doors God feeds all.

And if God cares for the birds, does He not care for you, children? can you not learn to love and trust Him? Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing, and not one of them, even if smitten by a cruel hand, falls to the ground without our Father's notice. Fear ye not, O children of God! "Ye are of more value than many sparrows."

"FAITHFUL" AND "LAMEY."

Children, last summer I had the care of two little motherless chickens, and learned to love them as much as they seemed to love each other.

They were always seen together, and slept under a shelter made for them, as they would not go to roost with the other fowls. It was beautiful to see their devotion to each other.

One afternoon while sitting by an open window, I saw the larger chicken coming up from the cow-pen alone, walking very slowly and stopping every few minutes. This made me watch it, to see what was the matter, and I soon saw it all explained.

Its little companion had been hurt by the cow, and it was so lame that it could only walk a little way, then had to stop and rest, which it did many times before it reached the poultry-yard.

And, children, every time it stopped, the other chicken would stop near it, and wait for it. Now, its friend did this not once, but every afternoon until the little lame one was quite well.

We named the two friends, Faithful and Laney, and I seldom saw them without remembering the pleasant and useful lesson little Faithful taught me, which was this—to be as faithful and true in my home, and to my friends, and to my good heavenly Father.

Dear children, in leaving this little story with you, let me ask how many of you in signing your names to your letters can write *faithful* before them?

Faithful Alice Lee, faithful Ethel Helmer,—and the little brothers, too can they all write faithful and true before *their* names?

Here is a short Bible verse I want you all to learn. Luke xvi. 10—"He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much."

THE NINTH COMMANDMENT.

"What is the ninth commandment?" said a teacher to a boy in Sunday school.

"Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour."

"What is bearing false witness against your neighbour?"

"It is telling falsehood."

"That is partly true; and yet it is not exactly the right answer—because you may tell a falsehood about yourself."

A very little girl then said:

"It is when nobody did anything and somebody went and told of it."

"That will do," said the teacher with a smile.

The little girl had given a curious answer, but underneath her odd language there was a pretty clear perception of the true meaning of the ninth commandment.