

OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

THE HANDS AND LIPS OF LONG AGO.

WHERE are the little hands we led,
Long Ago,
While culling flowers blue and red,
Long Ago?
Our little playmates' dimpled hands,
That often joined our merry hands
In building houses in the sands,
Long Ago?

Some little hands were folded dead,
Long Ago,
And tiny flowers blue and red,
Long Ago,
Over their little graves were found,
At eve, in silence shedding 'round,
Tear-like dew-drops on the ground
Long Ago.

Where are the rosy lips we kissed,
Long Ago?
Whose ling'ring touch our lips have missed
Long Ago?
I wonder if the smile that plays,
Still gives them such bewitching ways
As it did in by-gone ways,
Long Ago.

Some rosy lips were resting cold,
Long Ago,
And life's brief tale of woes had told,
Long Ago:
Their little griefs they'll miss no more,
But on the bright angelic shore
They've caught the same old smile of yore,
Long Ago.

Some little hands and lips were left
Long Ago,
Theirs was the lot to be bereft
Long Ago,
These hands had yet some work to do,
These lips must tell life's story through—
God help them always to be true,
Evermore.

ROOM AT THE TOP.

Never you mind the crowd, lad,
Or fancy your life won't tell;
The work is the work, for a' that,
To him that doeth it well.
Fancy the world a hill, lad;
Look where the millions stop,
You'll find the crowd at the base, lad,
There's plenty of room at the top.

Courage, and faith, and patience,
There's space in the old world yet;
The better the chance you stand, lad,
The further along you get.
Keep your eye on the goal, lad;
Never despair or drop;
Be sure that your path leads upward;
There's always room at the top.

ONE DROP OF INK.

"I DON'T see why you won't let me play with Will Hunt," pouted Walter Kirk. "I know he does not always mind his mother, and smokes cigars, and once in a while swears just a little; but I have been brought up better than that. He won't hurt me, and I should think you would trust me. Perhaps I can do him some good."

"Walter," said his mother, "take this glass of pure, cold water, and put just one drop of ink into it."

"O mother, who would have thought one drop would blacken a glass so?"

"Yes, it has changed the colour of the whole, has it not? It is a shame to do that. Just put one drop of clear water in, and restore its purity," said Mrs. Kirk.

"Why, mother, you are laughing at me. One drop, nor a dozen, nor fifty, won't do that."

"No, my son; and therefore I cannot allow one drop of Will Hunt's evil nature to mingle with your careful training—many drops of which will make no impressions on him."

A THOUGHT FOR THE YOUNG.

WHEN Christ was to be carried triumphantly into Zion, he selected a colt still with its mother, and one on which no man had ever sat—one that had never given service to another. When his body was to be laid in the grave, it was a new tomb, hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid. Under the ceremonial dispensation, the animal offered in sacrifice to typify him must be one "which hath not been wrought with, and which hath not drawn in the yoke." Even the Philistines, when they had captured the ark in battle and found they must get rid of it because it brought the pestilence to their cities, made a new cart and attached to it two milch kine on which there had come no yoke, to return it to Israel—so common was the impression that their God demanded the first service of that which was offered in sacrifice.

Does all this not teach that when we offer our bodies a living sacrifice for Christ, it should be their first service? If he required a colt which had never been used, and an animal in sacrifice on which had never come a yoke, and even a cart which had never been driven, will our bodies be as acceptable to him after they have been worn and wasted in the service of self, the world and Satan? If previous service to another injured the worth of the sacrifice under the former dispensation, how much more will it under this? And is it not in accordance with a principle in our nature? We always depreciate the value of second-hand property. The new book, or coat, or furniture, we prize higher than that which has been used by another.

Should this not teach the young to enlist early in the service of Christ, while their hair is brown, and not wait till it is gray in the service of sin? It is the youthful ardour and ambition that Christ prizes most. He directed an apostle to write to young men because they were strong. As, in putting down the late rebellion, it was the young men who responded to the call of the President, so, in putting down the rebellion against Christ, it is young blood that is needed.

If it were possible for a tear to fall on the pavement of heaven, it must be from the eye of one who has given the prime of life to the world's service, and only its dregs to the service of Christ. "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them."

"NOT STRICTLY."

TWO little boys were invited to a birthday party some time ago, and on their return home the elder of the boys said to his mamma, "Mamma! Tommy took cherries preserved in brandy at the tea, this evening."

"How was that?" asked the mamma.

"Well," replied the little boy, "Mrs. B. said to us after she had helped us to peaches, 'Now, children, I have some cherries here, but they have been preserved in brandy, and I suppose you are all temperance boys and girls;' and she said to me, 'How is it with you, James? Are you a temperance boy?' and I said, 'Yes, I am, I will not take any cherries;

thanks!' And then she said, 'Tommy, are you temperance, too?' and he replied, 'Not strictly,' and so he took the cherries."

Shall I tell you what that mother did? She did not laugh and think it was very funny that her little boy had replied to the lady's question, "Not strictly." She took Tommy alone in her room and told him that he might thus lead other little boys in the path of ruin, and how all intemperance had its beginnings in being "not strictly" decided against all appearances of the evil. And I am sure you will be glad when I tell you that the little fellow promised that if he was asked the question again, he would leave off the "not" and say "Strictly."

Let me tell you, children, that is a very nice word when it is used in the right place—"strictly." This is what we want, these days—boys and girls "strictly" truthful, "strictly" honest, "strictly" temperate; then we shall have just the kind of men and women that are needed for the times.

I LOVE them that love me, and they that seek me early shall find me.

"ENTER not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men."—*Prov. iv 14.*

AS to the PAST—"Ye were sometimes darkness." AS to the PRESENT—"Now are ye light in the Lord." AS to the FUTURE—"Walk as children of light."—*Eph. v. 8.*

A very learned man once said, "The three hardest words in the English language are, 'I was mistaken!'" Frederick the Great once wrote to the Senate. "I have just lost a great battle, and it was entirely my own fault." Goldsmith says, "This confession displayed more greatness than all his victories." Do not be afraid to acknowledge your mistakes, else you will never correct them; and you are really showing how much wiser you are than when you went astray.

A LITTLE girl was on the train recently, when a fearful collision took place, demolishing both engines and ruining several cars. Wonderful to relate, no lives were lost and no person seriously injured. People were expressing their wonder that not even a bone was broken when this child said, "Mamma, you prayed this morning, before we started, that God would take care of us, and I knew he would. He has, hasn't He, mamma?" Tears came to the eyes of several who listened, and one said, "Give me the faith of a child, for of such is the kingdom of Heaven."

THE great thing is for a boy to meet a temptation boldly, frankly, and at once, with a "No!" which has a meaning in it. Some boys will say "No," but it is in such a half-hearted way that the tempter knows that it means a half "Yes." This simply gives an invitation for a repetition of the solicitation, and makes almost certain, too, the yielding. But a "No!" that is enforced by tone and look that tell that the word has its own true meaning settles the matter; or if it does not settle it, makes it certain that if the temptation comes again, it will be weaker and he will be stronger. The first "No!" is a great thing.—*Christian Weekly.*