

OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

AT THY SIDE.

A little traveller am I,
Upon a road that looks
As pleasant as the flowery paths
Beside the summer brooks.

I may have very far to go;
No one can tell, they say:
For some the way is very long,
For some ends in a day.

I've gone a very little way;
And yet I can't go back
To pick up anything I've lost
Or wasted on the track.

And if I careless pass each stone,
I mayn't my steps retrance;
And so I need a Friend all through
To keep me by His grace.

For there are snares I do not see—
I am a foolish child;
Then, Jesus, I will ask Thee now
To keep me undetled.

My feet from falling, keep, O Lord!
My heart from wandering wide;
Until, the last stone passed, I dwell
Forever at Thy side.

PATCH, BUT NOT CROSS-PATCH.

"MOTHER, I just can't wear this patched coat to school!" said Fred, flinging himself into a chair and sticking out his feet, while his face was drawn up in such an ugly scowl you would have thought him a dreadful boy.

"Why, Fred, I am surprised; only this morning you looked at those patches and said, 'Good for you, mother; these sleeves are jolly, now the elbows are all in;' and when you put it on you smoothed it down, and gave me a kiss, and told me I was the best mother in the world."

"Y-e-s, so I did;" and at the pleasant voice of his mother the boy drew in his feet, and the frown went off his face a little. "But you don't know how hard it is," added Fred; "every boy in my class has a new coat, and some brass buttons and all. I can see the very shine of them now," and Fred kicked the poor cat as it was lying in the sunshine streaming over the bright kitchen floor.

"Come, come!" spoke up his mother, "this will never do! Your coat is well enough if you will only think so; at any rate, I cannot buy you a new one," and Mrs. Green put the baby in his arms and began dishing up the soup for dinner.

Out on to the little porch went Fred with baby. The sun was so bright and warm that spite of all his trouble he couldn't help feeling just a little happy. Seating himself on the step he began talking to the dear little fellow, as he often did when in earnest about things.

"Baby, wouldn't you hate to wear patches? Patches on the elbows, patches on the knees, patches all over! Why, I am almost all patches, and the boys have nick-named me 'Patch.' I tell you, baby, it is pretty hard, but when I get to be a man, you shan't know what a patch looks like." Here the baby crowed and jumped as though he understood every word.

"Come!" called mamma, "bring baby in; your dinner is ready."

Fred seated himself at the small table and waited for his mother, but she took the rocking-chair by the stove and commenced to sing baby to sleep.

"Mother, aren't you going to eat?"

"No, son; I feel too tired now."

Fred helped himself to a plateful of the delicious soup, but somehow it didn't taste good, and there was a big lump in his throat, and glancing round to his mother he saw a sad, troubled look on her face. She had stopped singing and was stroking baby's hair softly. He couldn't stand it any longer, but jumping up ran to her, and hugging her tight around the neck, boy fashion, burst out with:

"Mother, don't you look so sorry. I can wear the patches as well as not, and the old coat's real warm. I guess it won't kill me if the boys do call me 'Patch,' and Mr. Maxwell said yesterday I learned ever so fast, and he hoped some day you'd be proud of me. But you can't if I don't get over these proud fits, can you? Come now, mother, let's eat up all the soup, and have a good time."

And they did; and how they both enjoyed that dinner! Just before Fred started for school that afternoon he ran up to his little room, kept so clean by his own hands, and there he asked the loving Saviour to give him more help to overcome the small trials of everyday life, and to make him a wise, good boy, adding at the close, "Please to make me a comfort to my mother."

He reached the school-room just as the bell rang, so was spared any taunts from the boys then. But at recess, Harry, remembering how easily he had fired him up in the morning, began again calling him "Patch," but to his surprise Fred's laugh rang out pleasantly, and he answered:

"Yes, I s'pose that's my name as long as these clothes last. But, boys, look! I tell you there's some fine work on this old coat, and if I've got to wear it and be called 'Patch' I'd better keep my temper and not give you a chance to make it 'Cross-Patch.'"

FOUR STEPS TO JESUS.

FLORENCE felt that she must be a Christian. Her heart was heavy with the knowledge that it was sinful. For many days she had been carrying this burden alone. She did not think she could speak to anyone. She had been in her bed-room, and prayed many times; and still all was hard and heavy in her little heart. "O, if I knew how to believe," she would say to herself. "And Mr. Marlette says it is *easy*. If I could only ask him!" Mr. Marlette was her dear silver-haired pastor. At length a thought struck her: "If I cannot talk with him I can write him a little note."

When Mr. Marlette found an envelope directed to him, which some one had quietly laid on the large Bible in his study, he was surprised to find it a note from his little friend Florence. When he read it he was very glad too. "The dear child! what can I say to her?" he thought. Then he closed the door, and asked as if *he* were a little child, going to a father to be guided in answering that note. And I think he was. He began it with Florence's own question, and this is what he wrote:—

"How shall I come to Jesus? The desire to come now, is the *first step*."

"Feeling my sinfulness and danger and need of His help, is the *second step*."

"Feeling that He is both able and willing to help, and save me, is the *third*."

"And then asking Him to do for me what I cannot possibly do for myself is the *fourth*."

"Four steps to Jesus. That's all.—Perhaps I should say there is but one, and *that* very short. Out of the heart gushes the prayer:—'God be merciful to me, a sinner;' and on the wings of the prayer the soul *flies* to the Saviour in a moment saying:—

'Here, Lord, I give myself away;
'Tis all that I can do.'

"This seems to be the short, simple, and the only way to the Saviour. May my dear Florence find it so!"

Florence read the note carefully.

"I think it is the *third step* I need," she said. "I have the first and second and *fourth*, and *will* believe He is *able*, yes, and *willing*, to save me." So taking the third step, and then trying the fourth, it was not very long before Florence felt that in her heart she had found the answer to her own earnest question, "How shall I come to Jesus?" And she said, with a glowing face to her pastor:—

"It is an easy way."

THE NINTH COMMANDMENT.

"WHICH is the ninth commandment?" said a teacher to a boy in the Sabbath-school.

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

"What is bearing false witness against your neighbour?"

"It is telling a falsehood."

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

Then a very little girl said:

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

"I FEEL BAD."

A LITTLE boy who had seen but four summers ran to his father a few Sabbaths since, and, overcome with grief, and his eyes full of tears, said to him, "Papa I feel bad."

"And what is the matter, Frankie?" said the father.

"I have been a naughty boy. My mamma told me not to play on the holy Sabbath day, for it was displeasing to God. I did play, and I feel bad because I hurt God's feelings."

"But how do you know you have hurt God's feelings?" said the father.

"Because," said the little boy, "My conscience bites my little heart."—*The Myrtle*.

A LITTLE boy being asked, "How many Gods are there?" replied, "One." "How do you know that?" "Because," said the boy, "there is only room for one, for He fills heaven and earth."