

Our Young Folks.

A BABY'S COMMAND.

Just three years old was our baby,
A little town maid was she,
A grass-plot to her meant country,
A fountain the boundless sea.

For all of her tiny lifetime
Had passed midst the houses high,
Whose tops, to her childish fancy,
Were part of the arching sky.

So one August day when his sunship
Was baking the city brown,
We carried her off to the seaside,
Away from the breathless town.

Stripped her of socks and slippers,
Regardless of freckles and tan,
And told her to go and frolic
As only a baby can.

But she stood with her wee hands folded,
A speck on the sandy shore,
And gazed at the waves advancing
With thundering crash and roar.

We knew that some thought was stirring
The depth of her little brain,
As she listened to God's great organ
Pealing its glad refrain.

At last in her clear child's treble
As sweet as a robin's trill,
With one little finger lifted,
She cried to the sea "Be still!"

Ah, dear little fair-haired baby,
Like you in this mortal strife,
There's many a one made weary
And stunned with the waves of life.

But the billows of both, my darling,
Are moved at the Master's will,
And only His voice can hush them,
By whispering, "Peace be still!"

HONEST WORK.

We are all workers in one way and another, but how many of us are possessed of an earnest desire that the work which we put from our hands shall be a thorough, honest, faithful performance that shall fulfil its purpose and withstand the ravages of time? The great difference in labour is not in what has been done—not in the kind of work we perform—but in the spirit which we put into it. From the cleansing of a room to the purification of a government, from the clearing of a forest to the chiselling of a statue, from the humblest work of the heart and brain, it is the determination to make it of the best possible quality that places it in the front rank. The work that is performed only for the sake of what it will bring, not for what it will carry forth, is like the cloth of shoddy, which may please the eye, but will not wear. It is cheap, flimsy stuff, woven with no nobler purpose than to hold together long enough to be bought and paid for.

HOW TO TAKE PART.

Be yourself. Do not try to be anybody else. I heard of some girls who said they would not take part in meeting because they could not talk like a certain young lady who attended.

Suppose you are invited out to tea with a family consisting of a father, a mother, a young lady daughter, a boy twelve years old and a little four years old. You sit down to the table and everyone feels perfectly free. The father gives an item of news. The mother tells something which she heard when calling the day before. The young lady describes an experiment tried at the high school. The boy repeats some verses which his teacher has taught him. And by and by the little girl makes you all laugh by telling how the dog ran away with her doll. You think what a nice, pleasant family! how I am enjoying my visit!

On the other hand, suppose the little girl should say to herself, "Because I do not go to school I am not going to say anything", and the boy, "Because I am not in the high school, I am not going to say anything", and the young lady, "Because I cannot talk like father and mother, I am not going to say anything." So they keep still. What would you think. Something like this, I imagine, "I wish I was at home, what a stuff family!" Be yourself. Be natural.

A MARTYR.

Richard Cameron, a youth of high promise, on completing his studies at a university in Holland, returned to Scotland, and espoused the cause of the Covenanters. His loyalty, piety, and great scholarship have been universally admitted by historians. Devoted to the principles of the Reformation, and to their natural results—civil and religious freedom—he was prepared for whatever might follow in their defence. Whatever he had an opportunity he preached to the people, but his career, though brilliant, was short. Like the rest of his brethren, he was an outlaw, without any process, and had to live in perpetual concealment. His hiding places were literally the "dens and caves of the earth," and he rarely experienced the comforts of a bed. His last night, the 21st of July, 1680, was spent in the house of a friend on the water of Ayr. Next morning, on washing his hands, he laid them on his face, and said, "I have need to make them clean, for this is their last washing. In the course of the day a messenger arrived with intelligence that a party of soldiers were on his track, and not far distant. With his brother, and a few friends, a meeting was held at a dreary spot called Airmoss, surrounded by a morass or bog, and where it was believed horsemen could not reach them. They had not long to wait when the enemy appeared. Surrounded by 120 dragoons, there was no escape and the little band resolved to stand on their defence and fight to the last. Cameron engaged in prayer, employing these memorable words: "Lord spare the green, and take the ripe." On concluding, he encouraged his brother and friends not to swerve in the Lord's cause. A desperate effort was made by the soldiers to secure him alive, but it failed. Fighting manfully, back to back with his brother, he was cut down by a blow with a sabre. The officer in command failed in his object, which was to bring Cameron to an ignominious end, wreaked his vengeance on his inanimate body. He caused his men to cut off his head and hands, and carried them to Edinburgh as a proof to the Lords of Council of his bravery and zeal against the rebels. Cameron's father, a very old man, was then a prisoner in the Tolbooth for the same cause. With barbarous cruelty they presented the head and hands to the aged Christian, and mockingly asked if he knew to whom they belonged. "I know them, I know them," he replied, taking them and kissing them. "They are my son's, my dear son's." Good is the will of the Lord, who cannot wrong me or mine, but who has made goodness and mercy to follow us all our days." The head of the martyr was afterward affixed on the netherbow, and the hands beside it, with the fingers pointing upwards as if in the attitude of prayer. "There," said one of his persecutors on passing, "there are the head and hands of one that lived praying and preaching, and died praying and fighting."

THE HOOK AND THE BAIT.

He was seated by the little wooden bridge as I came near, his rod and fishing tackle lying on the grass beside him. He was so intent with his hook and his bait that he did not look up till I said:

"Ho, ho! Tommy Tucker. So you're playing truant to-day, are you?"

Tommy looked up, his bright eyes flashing.

"No," he said; "we have a holiday to-day, and I came down to the brook to try my luck at fishing. But see!" he went on, holding up his workmanship with pride; "isn't that a cunning way to put the bait on? Won't that fetch 'em?"

I took the hook in my hand and examined it.

"Why," I said, "you have covered the hook with the bait so that you can't see a bit of it: You didn't need to do that, did you?"

Tommy Tucker looked very much as if he doubted my sanity.

"Of course, I did," he said. "Fishes know too much to bite if they see the point of the hook sticking out of the bait. You don't know how cunning you must be to catch fish."

The little fisher looked very wise as he said this, and stretched out his hand to take the hook from me.

"Ah, Tommy Tucker!" I said, "there are hooks for men as well as hooks for fishes, and the hook is always hidden by the bait. There isn't any human fisher half so cunning as old Satan; he knows how to

dress up the hook with a bait so pleasant to see that foolish people rash right at it, and get caught on the hook before they know it."

Just then a middle-aged man shuffled along the bridge and went off in the direction of the village.

"He's going to the saloon," said Tommy Tucker. "Is that the kind of a bait that you mean, Mr. Earleton?"

"Yes," I said, "that's one kind. Years ago Drunken Sam, as boys call him, was a bright young man at college. The devil fished for him. The bait he dangled before him was a life of pleasure. Sam began to be persuaded that the Bible was too strict. He wanted to live while he lived, he said. So he neglected his books, and took to drink, and to the theatre and to other wrong things. Then he felt the hook. He was expelled from college. And now you see him, a drunkard, making for the saloon as if he couldn't live anywhere else."

"He didn't see the hook, or he wouldn't have taken the bait," said Tommy Tucker, after a pause. "I suppose that bad companions, and bad books, and everything that draws people away to wrong, are bits of Satan's bait."

"Yes," I said, "and you'll find lots of Satan's baits dangling before your eyes, too, if you only keep your eyes wide enough open to see that they are Satan's."

"I'll look out for them," said Tommy. "And when I feel as if I wanted to snatch at the bait I'll remember the hook."

"Right, Tommy Tucker!"

A GOOD MAN'S TENDERNESS.

Boys are sometimes tempted to think that to be tender-hearted is to be weak and unmanly. Yet the tenderest heart may be associated with the strongest and most forcible mind and will. Take, for example, the story told of him to whom we owe our wonderful railway system. George Stephenson went one day into an upper room of his house and closed the window. It had been open a long time because of the great heat, but now the weather was becoming cooler, and so Mr. Stephenson thought it would be well to shut it. He little knew at the time what he was doing. Two or three days afterward, however, he chanced to observe a bird flying against that same window, and beating against it with all its might again and again, as if trying to break it. His sympathy and curiosity were aroused. What could the little thing want? He went at once to the room and opened the window to see. The window opened, the bird flew straight to one particular spot in the room where Stephenson saw a nest—that little bird's nest. The poor bird looked at it, took the sad story in at a glance, and fluttered down to the floor, broken-hearted, almost dead.

Stephenson, drawing near to look, was filled with unspeakable sorrow. There sat the mother bird, and under it four tiny little ones—mother and young—apparently dead. Stephenson cried aloud. He tenderly lifted the exhausted bird from the floor, the worm it had so long and so bravely struggled to bring to its home and young, still in its beak, and carefully tried to revive it, but all his efforts proved in vain. It speedily died, and the great man mourned for many a day. At the same time the face of George Stephenson's mind was changing the face of the earth, yet he wept at the sight of this dead family, and was deeply grieved because he himself had unconsciously been the cause of death.

THE POWER OF A TRACT.

A young Hindu of some education fell into bad habits, and in his extremity stole \$3 from his aunt. Passing on his way he found in his path the "Heart Book," a small treatise translated and printed in his own language. On reading it his attention was arrested and his conscience aroused. He went home confessed his theft, and restored the money. For six months he read and re-read the graphic description of his own heart wrongs in the little book. His conscience, so scared and dead before, now gave him no rest. His aunt advised him to go to a friend in a near village, who had a larger book, which they called "God's Word." He went, borrowed the friend's Bible, and read it as he had read the "Heart Book." He was converted, ceased all idolatrous worship and rites, and was baptized. His family persecuted him, cast him out, and performed his funeral rites, but he lives an earnest, happy Christian.