

Our Young Folks.

ONLY A BOY.

Only a boy?

Only a healthy and rosy face,
Bearing of pain and grief no trace,
Save where at times the shadows play
Like the light clouds on a summer's day.

Only a boy?

Only a loving and trusting heart
That throbs and strains for a long life start.
That yields in love to the gentle touch
Of one who will chide not overmuch.

Only a boy?

Only an earnest and longing soul
Through which wild fancies and wishes roll,
Peering from out those eager eyes
At the untried world that around them lies.

Only a boy?

Only the germ of some unknown gain
To a world that wavers 'twixt joy and pain,
Tell me of better gift who can,
To give to the world, than an honest man?

Only a boy?

Yes, when you see him in after days
Halting and grieving on Life's stern ways,
Will he not look you through and through,
Bitterly questioning you—yes, you?

Only a boy?

What did you do with his ardent youth?
What did you do with his love of truth?
What did you do with his tender heart?
Look, if you will, at your own poor part.

Only a boy?

Only a man with a saddened face,
Bearing of grief and sin the trace,
Craving a love that might cleanse the stain
Of the old thoughts that will come again.

Only a boy?

Only a spirit that soars at last
O'er the chains and blinds of a petty past,
Hardened but faithful, saddened but true,
Saved—hu, the praise is not for you.

GOLDEN GRAIN BIBLE READINGS.

BY J. A. R. DICKSON, B.D., GALT.

FAITH HEALING.

"He had faith to be healed."—Acts xiv. 9.
Hezekiah, 2 Kings xx. 3-6.
The Multitudes, Luke v. 15.
Syro-phenician Woman's Daughter, Mark vii. 29.
The Man with a Son Possessed, Mark ix. 22, 23.
The Deaf Man, Mark vii. 32.
The Man with the Withered Hand, Mark iii. 5.
The Woman with Issue of Blood, Mark v. 29.
See also Luke ix. 2, x. 8, 9, and Jas. v. 14, 15.

WHAT UNMAKES THE MAN.

Boys, did you ever see a drunken man. It is seldom one is seen on the street in the daytime. It is now as it was in the days when the Bible was written. It says: "They that are drunk are drunk in the night." It is a curious sight to see a drunken man. If he can walk, he steps carefully; and every step he takes he steadies himself up. It is difficult to keep his balance. If he loses this he falls immediately. His legs are weak, they totter, and can hardly support him. His head topples as if he had a load in his hat; his arms have lost their strength, but if he can get by a fence he holds on to it.

In the cities, where he can find nothing to hold on to, he usually falls down. Thousands are picked up in Brooklyn and New York by the police every year. They are called gutter drunkards, because when they fall they usually land in the gutter; this is caused by the slope of the sidewalk in that direction. They stagger that way, and when they come to the curbstone they pitch over it. Sometimes they fall on their faces and are terribly bruised. These are the poor men. If a man is rich, has money, they who sell the liquor order a carriage, and he is taken home instead of being taken by the police to the lock-up. But what a sad sight when he is brought in!

Intoxicating liquors make some men crazy and violent, and when they get home they abuse the family. This is kept secret to avoid disgrace, and as these things happen in the night, other people often know nothing of them. A man who lives near me was sent to goal for such conduct. Soon he turned their wives and children out of doors in the night. One I knew

did this twice. He is a fine man when sober. Intoxicating liquor is a poison; it makes some men jovial and frolicsome, others angry and violent; they curse and swear and fight. A man near me killed another; he is now in State prison for life. This awful business is carried on almost entirely in the night. At midnight it is generally at its full head.

There are all sorts of things to draw young men into these places; games and bets on games; company and fun, and the fact that they can go there and be there, without its being known, all serve to draw young men in. Remember, boys, this night work is bad work. As you value your character, your respectability, your health, your success in life, keep away from such places; have nothing to do with these poisonous drinks. Do you want to know where the prisoners in our State prisons come from? By far the greater portion got their character, and were led into the crimes they have committed, by the schooling they had in such places. Here you see what unmakes the man.

OUR FATHER'S BUSINESS.

If there is one part of the blessed Gospel which more than another belongs especially to Our Young Folks it is the first recorded words of the Child Jesus. Those thirty silent, sinless years are to us all a divine mystery. Perhaps we are not allowed to know and follow the unfolding of that one perfect life, because it might draw our attention off from the infinitely important words and deeds and sufferings of its later years, as you have seen a teacher lay her hand over the picture when she would keep some little learner's thoughts from wandering away from his lesson. But this silence is once broken. The curtain is once lifted, and we have a glimpse given us of the sweetest, purest child-life ever known on earth. That we may see into the heart of the Holy Child a single sentence of His—the first for twelve years, the last for eighteen more put on record—is vouchsafed us. When Mary reproaches the boy Jesus for causing her anxiety and distress by tarrying in Jerusalem, he replies with a gentle warning (lest she forget there were higher claims than hers): "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"

What better rule, what better guide, what better test of conduct, could young Christians have than this? Would you adopt an aim in life, something to live for, something to fill your days with an eager, earnest purpose? Then "be about your Father's business." Would you decide between two paths, whether to go to your right hand or to your left? Ask yourself which will most further your heavenly Father's business, and choose and follow that. Would you have a test by which to try your walk and conversation? Lay alongside of your daily doings this rule, to which the child Jesus kept himself with sweet and calm content: "I must be about My Father's business." Do you ask what is your heavenly Father's business for you? You need not have no great trouble now in deciding that question, hereafter, when Life's tangled lines have crossed and recrossed, you may doubtless halt in perplexity which path to choose, but now, while you are at the outset of life, your path is plain and straight. Your Father's will for you is that you should steadily, diligently, earnestly, improve all your powers of mind and body. Cultivate every gift and grace, let each sunrise waken you to renewed energy in your training work or study, and each sunset find you with duties well fulfilled, opportunities well met, and some steps of progress made, and when your time of fuller service comes you may be a bright and polished instrument "meet for the Master's use."

MONEY AND ITS USES.

There are people, very mysterious people, who often desire money with the most feverish eagerness of any, and yet when they get it they do nothing at all with it. It goes into the bank or into stocks and shares, and years of hard work and unfriendly scraping and grudging are transmuted into a few black figures in an account book. The old folks die uncomfortable, the young ones grow up uncherished, but more and more numerals are added to the mystic row. What do they want money for? They do nothing with it except leave it behind them. We cannot help thinking that a day will come when this mere "money-hunger" will be classed with the "drunk craving," "kleptomania," and similar morbid pecu-

liarities, and when those who suffer from it may be pitied and restrained like other lunatics.

There is no denying that money assumes a most important position in human life. All man's duties, needs and ambitions cluster round it. A man's character is best seen in his dealing with it. He who gets most human happiness and welfare out of its winning and spending is the sanest of men. He who gets least of these is the most insane. This is he who turns money into human sin and misery, he who bribes folly to its ruin, who entices the genius to be the buffoon, who sets joyless and wasteful fashions of life. Next lowest is he who gets money for its own sake, turning it into nothing else. After him come the people who spend it on such things as might be quite sufficing to beings without souls. Then follow those who lay it out on higher pleasures, which they can scarcely enjoy alone, or which are certainly the more delightful the more they are shared. And higher still come those whose want is only that they may do their duty to others. (It is but a perversion of this noble nature which makes it sometimes over-anxious to provide for itself, and so spare others from doing their duty to it!) This brings us to the conclusion that the only sane object for getting money is that we may have it to give, not as mere dolers of alms, but as thoughtful distributors and stewards. — *Sunday Magazine*

TWO WAYS OF LOOKING AT THINGS.

We are all graduates of the university of hard Knocks. Misfortune, Fatigue, Exposure and Disaster are the professors. Kicks, Cuffs and Blows are the curriculum. The day we leave the world is our graduation. Some sit down and cry. Some turn their faces to the wall and pout. Others stand up and conquer. Happy the bee that even under leaden skies looks for blossoming buckwheat; wise the fowl that instead of standing in the snow with the foot drawn up under its wing, ceases not all day to pick.

There are different ways of looking at things. Rain drop the first—"Always chill and wet, tossed by the wind, devoured by the sea." Rain drop the second—"Ah! the sun kissed me, the flower caught me, the field blessed me."

Brook the first—"Struck by the rock, dashed off the mill-wheel." Brook the second—"I sang the miller to sleep. I ground the grist. O! this gay somersault over the wheel."

Horse the first—"Pull! pull! pull! This tugging in the traces, and lying back in the breechings, and standing at a post with a sharp wind hanging icicles to my nostrils." Horse the second gives a horse laugh—"A useful life I have been permitted to lead. See that corn. I helped break the sod, and run out the furrows. On a starlight night I filled the ravine and mountains with the voice of jingling bells, and the laugh of the sleigh-riding party. Then too have the children throw in an extra quart at my call, and have Jane pat me on the nose and say 'Poor Charlie' (?). To bound along with an arched neck and flaring eye, and clattering hoof, and hear people say 'There goes a two-forty'."

Bird the first—"Weary of migration. No one to pay me for my song. Only here to be shot at." Bird the second—"I have the banquet of a thousand wheat fields, cup of the lily to drink out of, isle of the forest to walk in, Mount Washington underfoot and a continent at a glance."

You see how much depends on the way you look at things.

NO MORE CONSCIENCE OF SINS.

This deeply precious truth, observe, does not mean that there is no more *consciousness* of sins. Far from it. Or that we may not get a bad conscience through sinning, or that we may not be exercised "to have a conscience void of offence toward God and toward man." Not at all. It simply means that Christ, by the one perfect, finished sacrifice of Himself, has for ever put away all our sins, root and branch. And having been led to know and believe this, how can there be sins on the conscience? Christ has put them all away. The precious blood of our once-offered and accepted sacrifice has cleansed us from every spot and stain of sin. There may be the deepest sense of indwelling sin, and of many sins and shortcomings in our every day life, and the painful confession of them all to God; still, there is the full assurance that Christ died for all our sins, put them all away, and that none of them can ever be laid to our charge. This is indeed a most wonderful truth; but it is the great, the needed truth for a worshipper. There is no holy approach to God without it.