

Readings and Recitations

A STORY OF FOUR BOYS.

The *Atlanta Constitution* says : This paper has printed many a story of denial, energy, and heroism, but none more deserving than that of the Green boys.

These four boys started a few years ago selling newspapers. They made ten cents apiece the first morning they went to work, and for two winters thereafter they went barefooted, through the snow and sleet in the freezing dawn, on their morning rounds. From the very first they wisely saved a certain percentage of their earnings, which they wisely invested in Atlanta real estate. The oldest one of them is now eighteen years of age, and the youngest twelve. They have supported an invalid father and their mother all the time, and now have property worth considerably over \$5,000, houses from which the rent is twenty dollars a month, and \$200 stock in a building and loan association. They have educated themselves the meanwhile, remaining from school this year in order that they might work the harder and build a home for their parents, that is to have a front parlor and a bay window in it. These little boys have been carriers, newsboys, errand boys, about the *Constitution* office, and one of them is now assistant mailing clerk. Their net savings from their sales and salaries, exclusive of their rents, have been twenty dollars per week for the year. Next year they can do better, and by the time the oldest of the brothers is of age they ought to have a comfortable little fortune.

What these boys have done other boys can do. The whole secret is steadiness, sobriety, industry, and economy. There are few lessons for boys more important than that the smallest amount—no matter how little it may be—will make a man independent if he will only live inside of it and compound his surplus. It must have been discouraging to these youngsters when it took them a month to lay up a dollar, and it was heroic in them when they laid this dollar up and went barefooted over frozen ground rather than use it to buy shoes. It is easy now when they are comfortably clad and housed, and everybody about them is comfortable, and their savings amount to twenty times a week more than they were formerly able to save in a month. They have conquered life almost before they have entered it, and if they will only keep cleanly hearts and genial souls, and broad, hearty impulses, they will not only be rich but useful men.

HAND IN HAND WITH ANGELS.

BY LUCY LARCOM.

Hand in hand with angels,
Through the world we go ;
Brighter eyes are on us
Than we blind ones know ;
Tenderer voices cheer us
Than we deaf will own ;
Never, walking heavenward,
Can we walk alone.

Hand in hand with angels
In the busy street,
By the winter hearth-fires—
Everywhere—we meet,
Though unfledged and songless,
Birds of Paradise :
Heaven looks at us daily
Out of human eyes.

Hand in hand with angels,
Oft in menial guise ;
By the same straight pathway
Prince and beggar rise,

If we drop our fingers,
Toil-embrowned and worn,
Then one link with heaven
From our life is torn.

Hand in hand with angels ;
Some are fallen—alas !
Soiled wings trail pollution
Over all they pass.
Lift them into sunshine !
Bid them seek the sky !
Weaker is your soaring
When they cease to fly.

Hand in hand with angels ;
Some are out of sight,
Leading us unknowing
Into paths of light.
Some dear friends are loosened
From our earthly clasp,
Soul in soul to hold us
With a firmer grasp.

Hand in hand with angels,—
'Tis a twisted chain,
Winding heavenward, earthward,
Linking joy and pain.
There's a mournful jarring
There's a clank of doubt,
If a heart grows heavy,
Or a hand's left out.

Hand in hand with angels,
Walking every day :—
How the chain may lengthen,
None of us can say.
But we know it reaches
From earth's loveliest one,
To the shining seraph,
Throned beyond the sun.

Hand in hand with angels !
Blessed so to be !
Helped are all the helpers ;
Giving light, they see.
He who aids another
Strengthens more than one ;
Sinking earth he grapples
To the Great White Throne.

THE LITTLE PHILOSOPHER.

The days are short and the nights are long,
And the wind is nipping cold ;
The tasks are hard, and the sums are wrong,
And the teachers often scold.
But Johnny McCree,
Oh ! what cares he,
As he whistles along the way ?
" It will all come right
By to-morrow night,"
Says Johnny McCree to-day.

The plums are few, and the cake is plain,
The shoes are out at the toe ;
For money you look in the purse in vain
It was all spent long ago.
But Johnny McCree,
Oh ! what cares he