

THE BOY WHO SKATES.

BY GEORGE COOPER.

HAVE you ever heard of Bobby Bates,
Whose only joy in life was skates?
All summer with a wistful eye,
He'd gaze upon his skates and sigh;
But when Jack Frost came down one night,
And glazed the ponds, with wild delight
Infatuated Bobby Bates
Put off his cares, put on his skates.

He skated with excessive zeal,
Out figure eight with toe and heel;
He glided here, he circled there,
He balanced with one skate in air;
He skated up and down the hall,
He tried to skate upon the wall—
In short, this little Bobby Bates
Had only one idea—skates!

And so it happened, when one night,
The moon was shining, frosty, bright,
A goblin peeped in through the pane,
And cried, "Ho, ho! get up again!
I'm for a frolic to the Pole;
Don't lie there, sleeping, like a mole,
The ice is splendid, Bobby Bates;
Come out, and don't forget your skates!"

They skated to the Arctic Sea;
They skated to the Zuyder-Zee;
Up Mont Blanc to the very top,
Then down again. They didn't stop
Until they'd scaled the Matterhorn,
When in his bed he woke next morn,
"Ha, ha! he, he!" laughed Bobby Bates,
"It's nice to go to bed on skates!"

BANTAM FUSS AND SHOW.

YOU can make all the show that is necessary, provided you have something in you in the way of a manly or womanly mind and heart that is fit to make a show with. When I lived in the country I was very fond of chickens, and took care to get quite a variety of choice kinds—leghorns, brahmas, and other kinds whose names are familiar to poultry-dealers—and among them all was one little bantam. It never was more than half a chicken—you would have had to put it on a cricket before it would have stood as high as the rest—and even when it grew up it was nothing but a bantam; in fact, it did not grow up much—even when it was two years old you could almost have put it into the little egg-shell that it first hatched out of. And yet that little bantam would make more fuss and parade about scratching, about flapping its wings, and about crowing, than all the brahmas and cochins in the whole hen-yard put together.

So you see that what we are thinking about is not your trying to make a greater flourish than other boys and girls; flourish is cheap. Did you ever happen to have among your playthings a little drum? Do you know why it is so easy to get so much noise from a little drum? Because it is hollow—nothing inside of it. Big drums are made on the same principle. What we want, then, is not the show and flourish and noise, but we want that by the time you get to be old enough to do much of anything there should be great quantities of manly or womanly stuff in you that shall make you able to do it well and handsomely. You cannot do something if you have nothing to do it with. Only God can make something out of nothing; you cannot.

Those third-rate big brothers of his could club together and put little Joseph in a pit; but in the long run he beat the whole of them, and governed the whole great country of Egypt, while they were watching cows, shearing sheep, and tending asses in miserable little Goshen. And that was not because Joseph was "lucky," but because, whenever a chance came, he had already gotten a good "ready" inside, so that he could take hold of the chance and make the most of it.

My little friend, if you are going to do a good thing in the world, and stand up head and shoulders above the meaningless crowd around you, you have got to work for it. There is no luck about it. If you want to be lazy and just drift along; be taken care of; lean on your father and mother while they live, and then lean on the money they leave behind when they die; one of a crowd, a sheep among the sheep—why, then, I suppose you will. But if this is your style, may the Lord pity you!

You cannot be a grand man when you are forty or fifty unless you begin to be a grand little man when you are a youngster. If, like Joseph, you are able to do something large for the world when you get grown up, it will be because, like Joseph, you began to get the stuff together while you were growing up. If your father goes about to build him a large brick house, you know he will have to get together a great many little bricks before he can build it. So if you are going to do a great, noble work, you will have to be a great, noble man or woman in order to do it; and such greatness and nobleness have to be built out of a great many littles, just as your father's house has to be built out of a great many thousands and thousands of bricks. Great words and great deeds can no more be done by a man that from his youth up has been

lazy and shiftless and vulgar, than the Brooklyn Bridge could have been built out of a skein of yarn and a half-dozen pounds of ten-penny nails.—*Dr. C. H. Parkhurst.*

HELPING MAMMA.

THERE was most everything to do that day, Helen's mother thought. If she had only known the day before, it needn't have been so. But how could she tell beforehand that baby would be sick and company come? It all happened just the same, however, as if she had known, and she had a headache besides.

Little Helen's eyes were very sharp, and she knew that while her mother talked with her guests and smiled, that something was the matter.

Presently a pair of chubby arms crept up around the mother's neck, and Helen whispered softly:

"I wanta to help you, dear mother."

"Bless your little heart!" said the mother, turning and kissing the rosy cheek, close to hers, "you help me every day."

"But I want to help you more, 'cause I guess your head aches," said Helen, putting up her cheek for another kiss.

"Yes, dear, it does; and if you want to help mamma most, you may go out into the yard and make a whole lot of sand cakes. I guess the baby's sister will like that, don't you? Take good care of her, any way, and don't let her trouble the mother."

"Now, you mean me, I know," said Helen. "I'm all the sister baby has;" and she looked as if she half wanted to pout. But she thought better of it; for there was a fine pile of sand in the yard that she was very fond of.

Long before tea time there was a grand array of various kinds of cakes ready for whoever wanted them; and when bed-time came the mother told Helen that "she had been the best little helper that ever was."

STICK TO ONE THING.

EVERY young man, after he has chosen his vocation, should stick to it. Don't leave it because hard blows are to be struck, or disagreeable work performed. Those who have worked their way up to wealth and usefulness do not belong to the shiftless and unstable class, but may be reckoned among such as took off their coats, rolled up their sleeves, and conquered their prejudices against labor, and manfully bore the heat and burden of the day.

A CHRISTIAN is just one who does what the Lord Jesus tells him. Neither more nor less than that makes one a Christian.