

OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

DO WHAT IS RIGHT.

One and all who hear my lay,
This much I have to say:
Each day, and every day,
Do what is right—
Right things in great and small;
Then, though the sky should fall,
Sun, moon, and stars, and all,
You shall have light.

This further would I say:
Be tempted as you may,
Each day, and every day,
Speak what is true—
True things in great and small;
Then, though the sky should fall,
Sun, moon, and stars, and all,
Heaven would shew through—

Figs, as you see and know,
Do not of thistles grow;
And, though the blossoms blow
While on the tree,
Grapes never, never yet
On limbs of thorns were set;
So, if you good would get,
Good you must be.

Life's journey through and through
Speak what is just and true;
Do what is right to do
To one and all.
At work, and when you play,
Each day, and every day,
Then peace shall gild your way,
Though the sky fall.

THE BOY WHO WOULD NOT BE WHIPPED.

I MAY as well tell the boys now that my mother was a widow, and a woman of great firmness and decision of character, and of deep piety. When she said anything she meant it, and yet she was just as gentle and tender as a lamb. One time in the fall of the year, when I was about fifteen years old, I was out in the yard trying to move a heavy stick of timber. I asked my brother, then twelve years of age, to assist, but he stood stock-still and laughed at me, while I almost strained my eyeballs out of my head. At last I lost my temper, grew hot, got mad, and picked up a switch, and gave brother a whipping. That was one thing mother did not allow—she did not permit one child to whip another on her place. When she heard the row, she came out of the house and gave brother a good thrashing and made him help me put the timber in place, and then said to me:

"Now, my son, I am going to whip you for whipping your brother."

I had not had a whipping for a long time, and had begun to feel like a man. In fact, I waited on the girls now and then, and some white, downy-looking stuff had begun to grow upon my lip and chin, and I felt large over the prospects of beard at no distant day. The fact is, I had gotten "too big for my breeches, and needed to be taken down a button-hole or two." I had no idea of taking a whipping—none in the world. I had violated one of my mother's rules, but the provocation had been a great one to a boy. True, if I had gone five steps to the door, and told mother, she would have adjusted matters and made brother do what I wanted him to do. Instead of this, I had assumed authority, had taken the law into my own hands, and had done what I knew my mother did not allow.

I said, "Mother, you shall not whip me."

"But I will do it, my son," she replied, and started toward me with a purpose in her eye. I got out of her way, and bad boy that I was,

I turned my back upon home and mother, and went off about four miles, and hired myself to a clever, thrifty, well-to-do farmer for five dollars per month. I told him what had occurred, and how I had been outraged at home, and that, too, by my mother. He told me I had done wrong, and that I ought to go back home, and he proposed to go with me, and intercede for me. I had too much of my mother in me to yield just then. I went to work, but was not happy. I lost my appetite and could not sleep. I grew worse and worse, but hoped all the time that mother would send for me, and apologize and take me back "scot free," but I heard nothing from her. I began to feel that I needed mother and home more than mother and home needed me—a lesson most boys do not learn until it is too late. At the end of the week, on Saturday morning, I told my employer I wanted to go home. He approved my purpose, and kindly offered to go with me, but I preferred to go alone. He paid me for my week's work, but I hated the money. It felt like lead in my pocket, and grew heavier and heavier as I got nearer home, till finally I pulled it out and threw it as far as I could send it into the woods. I did not go home in a hurry. It was four miles, and I was four hours on the way—and mortal long hours they were. I hesitated, and turned back, and resolved and re-resolved. The better thing in me said, "Go home, and yield to your mother and obey her;" but some other thing said, "I would die first."

Those who have never been in the shoes of the "Prodigal Son" do not know what an effort that trip home cost the poor boy, nor how long he was making it. When I felt that I could go no farther, I would kneel down and pray. That always helped me. I felt firmer afterwards. The last hundred yards before I got home seemed to be a mile long. If it had been night and no lights burning, so mother could not see me, how glad I would have been; but there it was a beautiful sun-bright day in the calm, cool November. O, how black the bright light makes a guilty heart look! The last hour before day is said to be darkest hour. When I got near enough to hear, mother was singing:

"Jesus, lover of my soul,
Let me to Thy bosom fly."

Ah, that song! What mingled feelings it stirred in my heart, and how appropriate it was. Hope and shame had a struggle, but thank God, hope prevailed just as I reached the kitchen door, where mother was setting the table for dinner.

"Good morning, my son," she said, just as pleasantly as I had ever heard her speak in all my life; "Come in," she continued, "have a seat," setting a chair for me. "I hope you are well, my son?" That word "son," how it hurt me. I was not worthy of it.

"Very well, I thank you"—I did not venture to say "mother." "Are all well?" I asked.

"Well, I thank you, my son," and she went on chatting away just as pleasantly as if I had been a neighbour called in. I wanted to tell her my sin and shame, but did not know where or how to commence. Dinner was soon ready, and mother asked me to dine with her,

with all the politeness and deference due a visitor.

When seated at the table, mother said, "Will you please say grace for us?" That was awful. The words choked me, though I had been accustomed to asking a blessing for a year or two. I could not eat; I was too full already. Mother hoped I was well. I told her I was.

When dinner was over, I said, "Mother what work do you want me to do?" "None at all, my son; I do not expect visitors to work for me," she answered.

"But, mother, I have come home, and I want to go to work, and quit this foolishness," I said.

She replied firmly, "Well, my son, to be candid with you, if you will now take a whipping, you can stay, but if not, you can have your clothes and leave."

I jumped up and pulled off my coat and vest, and sat down with my face toward the back of the chair, and my back toward mother, and said:

"Well, mother, I will take the whipping, and stay at home with you. So get your switch and give it to me."

Just then mother burst into tears, caught me in her arms, and said:

"That will do, my son. Let us pray." She led. O, that prayer, that prayer! It lingers yet like the refrain of some old song, grand with the melody of heaven. I then had a home and a mother, and was just about as happy as boys ever get to be in this life. Now, boys, I am ashamed of my sin till this day, but I am so proud of my mother I thought I would tell you this story.

THE HABIT OF POSTPONING.

"A TIME for everything, and everything in its time," is a good maxim to learn and practise. It helps one to success by lightening labour, and prevents carelessness. We had a friend in boyhood, of superior talents, a fine scholar, and an agreeable companion. But he was always putting off important duties to a future time, hoping for greater leisure to attend to them. His whole life has proved a failure, because he has always been behindhand.

Robert Southey said that Samuel Taylor Coleridge had the same bad habit. He was a poet of wonderful genius, a profound thinker in philosophy, and a scholar whose range of reading was almost boundless. But he did little worthy of his great powers. As Southey says, "At times, he feels mortified that he has done so little; but this feeling produces no exertion. 'I will begin to-morrow,' he says. And thus he has been all his life letting to-day slip."

"THE fear of man bringeth a snare; but whose putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe."—*Prov.* xxix. 25.

We take lessons in art, literature—a thousand things; but that high sense of honour, man's moral obligation to man, is forgotten.

KIND words do not cost much. They never blister the tongue or lips, and we have never heard of any mental trouble arising therefrom.