

Our Young Folks.

LITTLE ONES.

Little feet may find the pathway
Leading upward unto God ;
Little hands may learn to scatter
Seeds of precious truth abroad.

Youthful hearts may be the temples
For the Spirit's dwelling place ;
Childhood's lips declare the riches
Of God's all-abounding grace.

"Little ones," though frail and earth-born,
Heirs of blessedness may be ;
For the Saviour whispers gently,
"Suffer such to come to me."

And in that eternal kingdom,
'Mid the grand triumphal throng,
Children's voices sweet may mingle
In the glorious choral song.

LITTLE MABEL.

Suddenly there came a knock at the door, and Grace heard some one say, "Mabel wants to see the teacher." Turning, she saw old Mr. Hews (Mabel's father) standing in the open door, his face showing white in the darkness.

Without a moment's hesitation Grace dressed for a hasty walk, and presented herself at the door. "I am ready, Mr. Hews," she said, "I want to see Mabel."

"God bless you, miss?" the old man answered; and so they passed out into the darkness, he, long taught in the school of adversity, rough and uncouth, leading her, so fair, so young and winsome. The old man spoke but little; then only of the child.

"If it were not the Lord's doing, miss, I couldn't bear it," he said. "You see, it's as if the one little lamb, the last little nestling, were taken. Wife and I had a family, but they are all gone,—some dead, some gone a long way off. Little Mabel was my Robert's only child; and when he died, and his wife died, too, why, we took the baby to live with us. She's grown to us, and we to her, you see. There's not a spot about the old place but speaks of Mabel. The Lord's hand is heavy, miss."

The cottage door was reached at last. Mrs. Hews was waiting for them. After a moment's rest they went to the room where Mabel lay.

Grace knelt by the little bed. "Dear teacher," Mabel said, "I knew you would come. Now, I want to lay my head upon your shoulder, so I can see granny and dad, while you sing."

Grace took the little head upon her breast. Granny sat close by, vainly trying to steady her trembling lip, and smile upon the child. Dad, too, knelt by her side. "I want you to sing, 'Nearer, my God to Thee,'" Mabel said. There in the firelight, the little group sang those sweet yet mighty words which sooner or later, must be the cry of every Christian heart,—

Nearer, my God to Thee,
Even though it be a cross that raiseth me.

The words had scarcely died away when Mabel whispered, "You hear, teacher, 'Even though it be a cross that raiseth me.' Jesus was lifted on the cross you know." Then she added, aloud, "Don't grieve for me, granny; don't grieve, dear old dad. I am so happy! Sing again. Sing 'Jesus, lover—o—my soul.'"

Again a sweet, plaintive melody filled the air and echoed in the distant corners, while Mabel listened,—yes, listened, but not to them. One more of His little ones had joined the heavenly choir.

Grace laid the fair head softly back upon the pillows. Granny smoothed the coverlet with a reverent tender touch, "dear old dad" silently watching them the while. Grief had no part in that scene. They had gone so far with the little one that some portion of her new born joy had fallen on them.

In silence Grace parted with the old man and his wife, and passed out alone; yet not alone—never to be alone any more. She had found that friend who has said, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end!"

HAPPY HOME.

There is a lesson in the following story:

A pretty story about a German family discloses the secret of a happy home, where joy aboundeth, though there are many to feed and clothe.

A teacher once lived in Strasburg who had hard work to support his family. His chief joy in life, however, was in his nine children, though it was no light task to support them all.

His brain would have reeled and his heart sunk had he not trusted in his Heavenly Father, when he thought of the number of jackets, stockings and dresses they would need in the course of a year, and of the quantities of bread and potatoes they would eat.

His house, too, was very small for the many beds and cribs, to say nothing of the room required for the noise and fun which the merry nine made. But the father and mother managed very well, and the house was a pattern of neatness and order.

One day there came a guest to the house. As they sat at dinner, the stranger, looking at the hungry children about the table, said, compassionately, "Poor man, what a cross you have to bear!"

"I? A cross to bear?" asked the father, wonderingly, "what do you mean?"

"Nine children, and seven boys at that!" replied the stranger, adding bitterly, "I have but two, and each of them is a nail in my coffin."

"Mine are not," said the teacher, with prompt decision.

"How does that happen?" asked the guest.

"Because I taught them the noble art of obedience. Isn't that so, children?"

"Yes," cried the children.

"And you obey me willingly?"

The two girls laughed roguishly, but the seven youngsters shouted:

"Yes, dear father, truly."

Then the father turned to the guest and said: "Sir, if death was to come in at the door, waiting to take one of my children, I would say"—and here he pulled off his velvet cap and held it at the door—"Rascal, who cheated you into thinking that I had one too many?"

The stranger sighed; he saw that it was only disobedient children that made a father unhappy.

BERT AND THE BEES.

Bert had three buckets of water to bring from the spring.

They were pretty big buckets, and the spring was at the foot of the hill. The father was getting warm, too. He tugged away at one bucket and got it up; then he lay down on the back porch to rest.

"Hello, Bert! sun's not down yet," said his father, coming in to dinner from corn-planting. "I wish I were a big man," said lazy Bert, "and didn't have to carry water."

"But you would have to plant corn and sow wheat and cut and reap and thresh and grind," laughed his father.

"I don't mean to work when I'm big," grumbled Bert.

"Then you'll be a drone," said his father.

"What is a drone?" asked the little boy.

"A bee that won't work; and don't you know that the bees always sting their drones to death and push their bodies out of the hives?"

The farmer went off to wash for dinner, and Bert dropped asleep on the steps, and dreamed that the bees were stinging his hands and face. He started up, and found that the sun was shining down hotly on him, stinging his face and hands sure enough.

He hurried down to the spring, and finished his job by the time the horn blew for dinner. "Father," he asked, while he cooled his soup, "what make the bees kill their drones?"

"God taught them," answered his father; "and one way or another God makes all lazy people uncomfortable. Doing with our might what our hands find to do is the best rule for little boys and big men, and I wouldn't be surprised if the angels live by it too."

A BOY'S RELIGION.

If a boy is a lover of the Lord Jesus Christ, though he can't lead a prayer meeting, or be a church officer, or a preacher, he can be a godly boy, in a boy's way and in a boy's place. He ought not to be too solemn or too quiet for a boy. He need not cease to be a boy because he is a Christian. He ought to run, jump, play, climb, and yell like a real boy. But in it all he ought to be free from vulgarity and profanity. He ought to eschew tobacco in every form, and have a horror of intoxicating drinks. He ought to be peaceable, gentle, merciful, generous. He ought to take the part of small boys against large ones. He ought to discourage fighting. He ought to refuse to be a party to mischief, to persecution, to deceit. And, above all things, he ought now and then to show his colours. He need not always be interrupting a game to say that he is a Christian, but he ought not to be ashamed to say that he refuses to do something because it is wrong and wicked, or because he fears God, or is a Christian. He ought to take no part in the ridicule of sacred things, but meet the ridicule of others with a bold statement, that for the things of God he feels the deepest reverence.

DUTY BEFORE PLEASURE.

It was Saturday, and the weather was delightful. The children wanted to go out and pick berries. There were plenty ripe on the hillside.

"Let's get some lessons first," said Mattie; "duty before pleasure is mamma's rule. Then we will have nothing to worry us, and we'll have a better time."

"Oh no, do let's go now; we can study this afternoon," coaxed Sadie.

"But we shall feel hot and tired then, and not a bit like studying; let's get our lessons done now, while we feel bright."

"Yes, we'd better," chimed in little Lottie. "Mattie knows the good way."

And so she did. Mattie was the eldest, and always tried to do right, and to lead her little sisters in the right way.

"She's a dear child; she helps me so much with the others," her mother often said.

Sadie was easily persuaded. They took their books and slates and went out under the great pear tree in the garden. There they studied away till their lessons for Monday were all learned. Then they went out into the woods and had a nice time. They brought home a good basket of blackberries.

"Mother's rule is a good rule, I am sure," said Sadie, as she was eating her bread and milk for supper; "I am glad I haven't got my lessons to learn now. I'm so tired."

"Duty before pleasure; I'll always remember that," said little Lottie.

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