

OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

BOYS WANTED.

Boys of spirit, boys of will,
Boys of muscle, brain and power,
Fit to cope with anything—
These are wanted every hour.

Not the weak and whining drones,
That all trouble magnify;
Not the watchword of "I can't,"
But the noble one, "I'll try."

Do what'er you have to do
With a true and earnest zeal;
Bend your sinews to the task,
Put your shoulder to the wheel.

Though your duty may be hard,
Look not on it as an ill;
If it be an honest task,
Do it with an honest will.

At the anvil or the farm,
Wheresoever you may be—
From your future efforts, boys,
Comes a nation's destiny.

THE BOY WHO DID HIS BEST.

He is doing his best, that boy of sixteen, stretched out before a bright fire in an old tanning-shed. Reclining upon an old sheep-skin, with a book in hand, he is acquiring knowledge as truly as if at some favoured institution, with all the convenience and facility for learning.

He is doing his best, too—this same boy, Claude—as he helps his master prepare the sheep and lambs' skin for dyeing, so that they can be made into leather. He is doing his best by obedience and by respectful conduct to his master, in endeavours to do his work well, although he often makes mistakes, as his work is not so well suited to his tastes as the study of Greek and Latin.

"See there, young rascal!" calls out Gaspard Beaurais, the tanner. "See how you are mixing up the wools." For Claude's wits were "wool-gathering," sure enough; but he was not sorting the wool aright.

"Aye, aye, sir," replied the apprentice; "but I will fix them all right." And he quickly sets to work to repair his mistake.

"He'll never make a tanner," said Gaspard to his wife, "and I fear he'll never be able to earn his bread."

"Sure enough," replied the wife. "And yet he's good and obedient, and never gives back a word to all your scolding."

And in after years, when the aged couple received handsome presents from the distinguished man who had been their apprentice, they thought of these words.

One evening there came a stormy, boisterous wind, and the little stream in which the tanner was wont to wash the wool upon the skins was swollen to a torrent. To attempt to cross it by the ford at such a time would render one liable to be carried down the stream and be dashed to pieces on the rocks.

"We must get all the skins under cover," said Gaspard to his apprentice. "A storm is at hand."

The task was finished, and the tanner was about to return to his cot and Claude to his shed, when the boy exclaimed:

"Surely I heard a cry. Some one is trying to cross the ford!" And in an instant he darted toward the river, followed by his master, carrying the lantern. Some villagers

were already there; and a strong rope was tied around the waist of the brave boy, who was about to plunge into the stream. For a man on horseback was seen coming down the river, both rider and horse much exhausted. Claude succeeded in grasping the rein; and the strong hands of his master that held the rope drew him to the shore, and all were saved.

Soon after, the stranger sat by the tanner's cheerful fire, having quite won the hearts of the good man and his wife by his kind and courteous manners.

"What can I do for your brave son?" he asked.

"He's none of ours, and not much credit will he be to any one, we fear. He wastes too much time over useless books," was the bluff reply of the honest tanner, who could not see what possible use Claude's studies would be to him.

"May I see the books?" asked the stranger.

Claude being called, brought the books of Greek and Latin classics, and stood with downcast face, expecting to be rebuked. But instead, he received words of commendation from the gentleman, who, after some talk and questions, was astonished at the knowledge the boy had acquired.

A few months later, instead of the old tanning-shed for a study, Claude might be seen with his books in a handsome mansion in Paris, the house of M. de Vallais, whose life he had saved, and who had become his friend and benefactor. The boy felt that he had only done his duty, and that he was receiving much in return; and he determined to make every effort to meet the expectations of his patron.

He succeeded. Claude Copperonier, the boy who did his best, became the most distinguished Greek and Latin scholar of his time. At the age of twenty-five he filled the chair of Greek professor in the Royal College of Paris. More than this, he became a man who feared God, and was much beloved for his goodness and amiable qualities.

He never forgot his former master and wife. Their old age was cheered by many tokens of remembrance in the form of substantial gifts from the man who, when a boy, studied so diligently by the fire of their old shed, but who "would never make a tanner."

BE PUNCTUAL.

Captain Jones was the owner of a fine sail-boat, and, being fond of boys, he arranged one Saturday afternoon to take several of them out on a boating excursion. At the time appointed all of them were there but one—John Gay, a boy who was noted for his want of promptness and punctuality. The other boys, being ready, were anxious at once to enter the boat, and as John did not make his appearance, they urged Captain Jones not to wait longer.

"Hadn't you better wait for John?" asked the captain. "He would not like to be left."

"How long have we waited already?" asked Edwin Ross.

"Nearly half an hour," said another, "and I would not wait any longer."

"No," said Will Leslie, who was a leader among the boys, "I would not wait any longer. There's no use waiting for John; he never was ready for anything. He's late at his breakfast, late at dinner, late going to bed, late in getting up—late in everything. All his mother can do never gets him started for school in season. If he is sent anywhere, he never goes in time. He was going to his uncle's last week by the railroad, but was so late in starting for the train that it went without him, and he was left behind. He's always late, and I'm for not being bothered for him any more. Come along!"

And the boys did come, and the captain with them.

Some ten or fifteen minutes afterward down came John to the place of meeting, in a great hurry, and terribly disappointed to find that they had all gone, and that the boat was almost out of sight in the distance.

"Dear me!" he said; "it's too bad. I do think it's too mean that nobody ever will wait for me."

There are too many people like John Gay. They lose in both pleasure and privilege, as well as in duty, by not being punctual. Washington once said to his secretary, who was behind time at an appointment, and who, by way of excuse, said his watch was not right, "You must get another watch, or I must get another secretary." And at a committee meeting, where one of its eight members was fifteen minutes behind time, a sensible Quaker said, "Friend, I am sorry thee should have wasted thine own quarter of an hour, but, what is worse, thee has wasted the time of every one of us seven—in all, two full hours, and this thee has no right to do."

When Alexander was asked how it was that he conquered the world, he replied, "By not delaying;" and the Spanish proverb says, "The road of By-and-by leads to the town of Never." And we generally find that to be always intending is never doing. Prompt beginning is half-finishing.

Begin early to be prompt and punctual in everything, and soon you will form the habit of punctuality, and this will be of benefit to yourself and of comfort to others as long as you live. Be prompt in obeying your parents, in learning your lessons, in going to school and to church and to Sunday school—prompt and punctual in doing whatever you have to do—and it will aid you to success in everything.

Learn this lesson and always act upon it, and you will be astonished to see how much you can accomplish, and with ease to yourself, and how surely you will gain the confidence of others as one that may always be depended on to do promptly and thoroughly what is to be done.

"EVEN a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right."—Prov. xx. 11.

WHO wins? The boy or man of bad habits? No! The boy or man who can swear, cheat, lie or steal, without being found out! No! But he wins who is not ashamed to pray to God in the hour of temptation for help—for strength more than human when adversity overwhelms. He who reads God's Word and trusts it; who is not governed by the motive, Is it expedient? but is it right?—he wins.