

## OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

### A MOTHER'S HYMN.

O Child, who from the cross looked down  
Upon a mother's deepest pain,  
With love all filial love to crown,  
Look on a mother's heart again.

She knew Thee holy, undefiled;—  
The sword was not for earthly stain;  
Mine is a weak and earth-born child;  
Look on a mother's heart again.

She felt the anguish and the shame  
That opened glory's boundless reign;  
I have no hope but in Thy name;  
Look on a mother's heart again.

She saw Thee break the tempter's power;  
His wiles and curses were spent in vain;  
For mine the tempter knows his hour;  
Look on a mother's heart again.

Death could not hold Thee, but the grave  
Is strong my treasure to retain;  
O Saviour, born to shield and save,  
Look on a mother's heart again.

Thou art eternal life and love;  
Who gains Thee has eternal gain;  
To mine Thy strength and sweetness prove;  
Look on a mother's heart again.

### THE LITTLE GIRLS' PRAYER MEETING.

KITTY was a romping, noisy, quick-tempered, impulsive child: but though she often tore her clothes, and broke dishes, and made trouble for her mother, she tried hard to be good, and used to pray every night asking God to forgive her sins and make her a good girl. When she was seven years old a minister moved into the neighbourhood, and his little Nellie and Kitty soon became fast friends. Every day they went to the same school, and played together, and each soon learned that the other prayed and was trying to be good. One morning Kitty came bounding into the minister's house, shouting, "O, Nellie! can't you"—when she saw a sight that stopped her feet and tongue, and brought a solemn hush upon her soul. The minister, his wife, and all the children, Nellie among them, were kneeling before their chairs, and some one was praying aloud. Kitty had never seen a family at prayer before, and she went out very softly. After that she used to watch Nellie while playing, and think, "I wish we had prayers like Nellie's folks."

One day during vacation, they were playing together, when Kitty suddenly stopped and asked, "Do you pray in the morning when your father does?"

"Yes. Don't you?" said Nellie.

"My folks never pray," said Kitty. "O, dear! I wish they did. It would help me so much to be good if anybody prayed with me; I get lonesome trying all alone."

"I'll pray with you," said Nellie. "Can't we have a little prayer-meeting all by ourselves?"

"Oh, yes," cried Kitty, joyfully. "Let's go off where nobody can see us and have one now."

"Where can we go?" said Nellie. "Oh, I know; down by the thorn-bush back of the shed."

So, with their arms around each other, the two little girls went to that shady retreat hidden out of sight from the road and houses, and, kneeling down together, asked the good Lord to wash away their sins for Jesus' sake, and help them to be good children while at

work or at play. After they had prayed a deep peace came into their hearts, and, kissing each other, they parted and went to their homes—Kitty wondering at the quiet joy in her heart, and breaking into little snatches of song as she helped her mother about getting dinner.

"Can't we have a prayer-meeting every day?" was the first thing Kitty said the next time they met.

"I want to," said Nellie. "What time can we meet?"

"I can't come very early," said Kitty, "for I have to wash dishes and sew a 'stint' on patch-work every forenoon; but I get through by ten o'clock, generally, if I'm smart. When I cry and make a fuss I don't get through so quick."

"Let's have it at eleven, then," said Nellie.

"And let's invite Annie to come, too," said Kitty. "She prays when she goes to bed. I know, 'cos I've slept with her."

So, after that, every fair day while vacation lasted, the little girls met at eleven o'clock and prayed together. Sometimes they sang a hymn, and sometimes Nellie would tell the others what her father or mother had said about Jesus, and the different ways she could please Him. And these little meetings helped the children to "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

### THE CHILD JESUS.

"I WONDER what the Lord Jesus really did when he was a child?" said Willie, one Sabbath evening just before Christmas day.

"So do I," said Katie; "and I wish the Bible had told us more about Him—whether He ever went to school or not, whether He ever played, or whether He was always quiet and thoughtful."

"A good many people have felt the same wish," Aunt Kate answered; "but as God has not seen fit to tell us more, we may be sure there is some very good reason why we should not have our curiosity gratified. Still, we do know something about the childhood of our Lord, and the few notices we have may teach us a great deal."

"He didn't go to school, I suppose," Katie said; "because the Jews asked, 'How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?'" (John vii. 15.)

"Did Jesus never learn His letters?" asked Polly, with some surprise.

"Well, the Jews did not mean that Jesus had never learned the alphabet," Aunt Kate said, "but that He had not been taught in any of the schools of the rabbis; and they were surprised, not at His being able to read, but at His knowing so much about the Scriptures. Whether He went to school at Nazareth or not I can't say, for the Bible tells us nothing about it."

"At any rate, I suppose He used to help Joseph at his work," Willie said; "and that proves that He must have been something like other boys."

"I have no doubt that in a great many ways Jesus was like other boys, only we can never think of His being idle or disobedient,

or anything else wrong. Very likely He did work at Joseph's trade, for the people called Him the carpenter's son; and St. Mark tells us that once they asked, "Is not this the carpenter?"

"And don't we know anything else about the Lord when He was a child?" asked Polly.

"Yes, there is another text which surely you will remember, that tells us what He did after Mary had found Him disputing with the doctors in the temple."

"He went home with Mary and Joseph, and did what they told Him," Willie said.

Katie had found the place in St. Luke, and read:—"And He went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them; but His mother kept all these sayings in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature, and in favour with God and man?"

"And so," said Aunt Kate, "though we know hardly anything else about the Lord's childhood, we do know that He was always obedient and gentle, setting an example to the boys and girls of Nazareth, and not only to them, but to all children in all parts of the world."

"I don't wonder that everybody loved Jesus when He was a child," said Willie, "for He must have been so good. But then it was easy for Him to be good, and it's very hard for us."

"Yes, but, Willie, you know that He was once a child and had to pass through all the temptations of childhood and knows how hard it is for you to be good, and if you ask Him, He will help you so that you may be like Him, and as you grow bigger and wiser you may increase 'in favour with God and man.' And as we think of the Saviour, let us remember why He was born into this world and lived and died for us. It was to make us pure and holy and to save us from our sins. Come let us thank Him for His love." And Aunt Kate prayed.

We are never too young to learn what is useful, nor too old to grow wise and good.

### BE FAIR!

"SEE what a good trade I made to-day!" said Lucius to his uncle. "I traded my old knife with Jamie Neil for his nice two-bladed one that cuts twice as well. One of the blades of my knife was broken, and the other would not hold an edge five minutes. But Jamie took a fancy to it because of the handle, and I was glad enough to make the trade."

"I am very sorry, Lucius, if you have cheated him," said his uncle, "but more sorry for you than him."

Lucius hung his head a little and asked, "Why so?"

"Because one success of this kind may lead you to try it again, and nothing can be worse for a boy's prospects in life than to get him into the habit of over-reaching."

"But, uncle, in all trades, don't each try to get the best bargains, and don't all merchants make their fortunes by being sharp in trade?"

"No trade, Lucius, is sound that does not benefit both parties. Were you cheated in a trade, you would feel very angry about it, and probably quarrel over it. Now don't trade any more unless the trade is fair all around."