



LITTLE NELLY.

THE CHILDHOOD OF JESUS.

In the green fields of Palestine,
By its fountains and its rills,
And by the sacred Jordan stream,
And o'er the vine-clad hills,

Once lived and moved the fairest Child
That ever blessed the earth,
The happiest, the holiest,
That e'er had human birth.

How beautiful his childhood was!
Harmless and undefiled,
O dear to his young mother's heart
Was this pure, sinless Child.

Kindly in all his deeds and words,
And gentle as the dove;
Obedient, affectionate,
His very soul was love.

O is it not a blessed thought,
Children of human birth,
That once the Saviour was a child,
And lived upon the earth?

The story of Christ's infancy as given in the Gospels, though very brief, is nevertheless full of interest. It is helpful to the children to think that Christ passed through all those phases of child-life through which they are passing themselves. There was much that was wonderful in the circumstances attending his birth,

and infancy — the announcement to the shepherds, the adoration of the wise men, the threatening of Herod; but when those were past, there followed those peaceful, quiet years of early childhood spent in the humble home of Nazareth. Thinking of this there is nothing strange in the love of Christ toward the children.

Dean Stanley once addressed the children in Westminster Abbey on the Child Christ. His text was, "And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man." He said that "in all things Christ was an example for us to imitate." Let us see how this can be. Each one must remember that the only way of becoming like Christ is by seeking improvement, and trying to grow better and better, wiser and wiser every year. (1) Christ grew strong in character. Children need a stout heart to resist tempta-

tion, a tender conscience which shall shrink from the contamination of sin, a strong determination not to trifle with the useless things of the world. (2) Christ grew in wisdom. To gain this the mind must be opened to take in all that your teachers can pour into it. Childhood's days are golden days, which can never be recovered if they are wasted or lost. Seek, therefore, for wisdom; pray for it, determine to have it. No one who has heard will ever forget the story of those days when Jesus went up to Jerusalem for the first time, and remained in the temple for many hours, reading, hearing, questioning. That is the way to get some of the blanks of our mind filled up. (3) Christ grew in favour, etc. Everybody loved him—i.e., of those who knew him. He was kind, gentle, courteous to all who dwelt in the little home at Nazareth, obedient to his parents, keeping the commandments of God. There is no better example of a pure, beautiful, and perfect child-life than that of Jesus Christ.—*English Magazine.*

On his seventh birthday papa gave James a nice Bible. It has soft covers and is not too big to hold. James wants each person in the family to mark the verse in the Bible that he loves best. Which verse would you mark?



TIRED OF PLAY.

"TIRED of play." It seems strange we only think about it, that people ever grow tired of pleasure. Yet experience, even with very young children, that such is certainly the case. In our picture, as she sits there frowning, casting her playthings aside, thoroughly tired of the amusement afforded her, but let us hope she will find profitable employments to proper her occupation when she grows somewhat bigger girl.

ASKING GOD'S BLESSING.

CHARLIE was going home with his uncle. They were on the steamboat all night. The steamboat is furnished with little beds, each side of the cabin. These are called berths. When it was time to go to bed Charlie undressed himself. "Make haste and jump into your berth, boy," said his uncle.

"Mayn't I first kneel down and thank God to take care of us?" asked Charlie.

"We shall be taken care of fast enough," said his uncle.

"Yes, sir," said Charlie, "but my uncle always tells us not to take anything out first asking."

Uncle Tom had nothing to say to Charlie, and Charlie knelt down, just as he does at his own little bed at home. God bless you and goodness and grace you live every day, my children; but never take anything out first asking.