

Fraught with those deeds that love bestows;
So when our life-work finished shows,
No waymarks may appear but those,
Our course to track.

Vermont School Journal.

Christ and the Lilies.

The bell of the little rustic church was ringing the hour for Sunday school one pleasant summer Sunday afternoon, and Miss Evelyn, one of the teachers, quickened her steps along the green shaded lane to overtake a group of her own scholars, who she saw on their way to school, some distance ahead.

They did not notice her coming up behind them, for her light step fell soundless on the grassy path, and she could not avoid hearing what the two hindmost girls were saying as she drew near. It was Jenny Warner who was speaking, and her voice sounded almost as if she had been crying.

"You needn't say 'Never mind,' Lucy; I can't help minding when I am laughed at for my shabby clothes. Fanny Houston asked the girls, quite so I could hear, how they liked bonnets that were made in the year one, and mantles that were saved in the ark. It's none of her business what I wear, and she's a conceited disagreeable thing; but still you know, Lucy, our things are terribly plain and old-fashioned! I do wish mother would dress us a little nicer. If I only was rich I'd show Miss Fanny whether she should look down on me so!"

"Being rich needn't make a bit of difference," answered her older and more sensible sister. "She can't look down upon you now, unless you choose to care for her unkind speeches. It isn't dress that makes one person better than another."

"But other people think just the same, Lucy; I know everybody thinks meanly of us for being so shabby. I won't come to church any more with this o'd hat—now, there!"

"For shame, to say such a wicked thing!" said her sister, reprovingly. "And to be so silly, too; no one but such foolish girls as Fanny Houston think anything at all about your clothes. Didn't Mr. Hart praise you only last Sunday for knowing the catechism so well? And isn't Miss Evelyn as fond of you as she can be? So long as that kind of people think well of you, what need you care for such as Fanny Houston. Your rosy cheeks are a great deal prettier, I am sure, than the roses in her hat."

Jenny's simple little face brightened up at her sister's kind encouraging words, and she said penitently,—

"Well, I won't mind it if I can help—still, Lucy, I do wish we could afford to dress better, after all!"

And so they went through the church-yard gate, Miss Evelyn following close behind, and thinking how she should best say a word in season to each of her foolish pupils. There was a cluster of beautiful field lilies growing just without the gate—she stooped and plucked them—and then went into the church, for the bell had ceased ringing.

It was her custom, after the regular duties of her class were over, to allow them to select a chapter to read and "talk over" with her. This afternoon she herself selected the last part of the sixth of Matthew, and requested Fanny Houston and Jenny Warner to read it attentively. The little girls did so, wondering each to herself what Miss Evelyn could mean—if she could have heard anything? and each colouring with shame as they found the rebuke of their vanity in Christ's own words.

When they had finished, Miss Evelyn said, speaking very earnestly, though without looking specially at them: "I selected these verses, my dear girls, because I think there is great need that all young people should think seriously about these words of our Saviour, with regard to love of dress, now-a-days, when there are no children to be found any more, only little men and women—and one cannot tell a child's dress from its mother's except by the size. Vanity and self-conceit are the two faults which seem to take deepest root in the hearts of young girls, growing rankly there, and choking the springing up of better things. But I trust if they have found room in the hearts of any of you, my dear scholars, that the recollection of these words of Jesus, he, who though God himself, wore the coarsest robes, will help you to root them out. He is displeased to see the hearts which should be filled with better and holier thoughts, set only upon plans for vain display—some exulting in a silly triumph—others murmuring with sinful discontent. And it is but vain labour after all, for as he told the people then, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed half as richly as one of the wild lilies of the field. See how delicately these beautiful colours are laid on—how soft and

volvelty are the leaves! How coarse and gaudy the finery which some foolish girls delight in, appears by contrast! Believe me, my dear scholars, that the most beautiful ornament any of you can put on is a 'meek and quiet spirit'; set your thoughts upon attaining that—and no one whose opinion is worth having, will ever stop to think whether you are dressed in frounces and flowers, or in the plainest of garments; and you will be sure of the approbation of one at least—even Christ himself!"

The bell was ringing again for church, and the girls had no time to say anything; but we may hope that they took the lesson to heart, and profited by it.—*Children's Paper.*

EDUCATION.

School-days of Eminent Men in Great-Britain. (1)

By JOHN TIMBS, F. S. A.

(Continued from our last.)

CXL.

ROBERT BURNS, "THE AYRSHIRE PLOUGHMAN."

Robert Burns, whom his countrymen delight to honour as the Shakspeare of Scotland, was born in 1759, in the parish of Alloway, near Ayr. His father was a poor farmer, who gave his son what education he could afford. Burns tells us that "though it cost the schoolmaster some thrashings," he made an excellent English scholar; and by the time he was ten or eleven years of age, he was a critic in substantives, verbs, and particles. In his infant and boyish days, too, he was much with an old woman who resided in the family, and was remarkable for her ignorance, credulity, and superstition. She had the largest collection in the country of tales and songs concerning demons, ghosts, fairies, brownies, witches, kelpies, elf-candles, dead-lights, wraths, apparitions, cantraps, giants, enchanted towers, dragons, and other trumpery. This cultivated the latent seeds of poetry, but had so strong an effect on Burn's imagination, that after he had grown to manhood, in his nocturnal rambles he sometimes kept a sharp look-out in suspicious places, and it often took an effort of philosophy to shake off these idle terrors. (2) He says: "The earliest composition that I recollect taking pleasure in, was *The Vision of Mirza*, and a hymn of Addison's, beginning, 'How are thy servants blest, O Lord!' I particularly remember one stanza, which was music to my boyish ear:—

'For though on dreadful whirls we hung
High on the broken wave.'

I met with these pieces in Mason's *English Collection*, one of my school-books. The two first books I ever read in private, and which gave me more pleasure than any two books I ever read since, were *The Life of Hannibal*, and *The History of Sir William Wallace*. Hannibal gave my young ideas such a turn, that I used to strut in rapture up and down after the recruiting drum and bagpipe, and wish myself tall enough to be a soldier; while the story of Wallace poured a Scottish prejudice into my veins, which will boil along there till the flood-gates of life shut in eternal rest."

While Burns lived on his father's little farm, he tells us that he was, perhaps, the most ungainly, awkward boy in the parish. He continues:—

(1) A subscriber, writing from New Glasgow, April 27th, has favored us with the following:—

"To the account of the school-days of Lord Nelson, contained in my last number of the *L. C. Journal of Education*, that for March, might be added that as a matter of fancy, he learned to write with each of his hands, and could have written equally well with either; and that he had often remarked that it was one of the most happy incidents of his education, as on his right arm being carried away by a cannon-ball he was able to write his despatches as before. This anecdote I heard told by the first Lord Castlereagh to the Rev. Mark Cassidy, when visiting the public school on his father's estate, in the County of Down, Ireland, as his lordship saw me writing with my left hand."

(2) See the Life and works of Robert Burns. Library Edition. Edited by Robert Chambers.