

OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

WHAT A LITTLE BOY DID FOR HIS MOTHER.

"THE flour's out, ma'am," said Bridget, putting her head into the sitting-room, where Mrs. Helps and Charlie were sitting.

"Very well, Bridget," said Mrs. Helps, but when the door was shut, she sighed; and though Charlie asked her twice what "succor" meant, she gave him no answer.

Charlie looked up from his book and saw tears were falling on his mother's hands, as she sewed.

"Mamma! mamma! what's the matter?"

"Oh, nothing, child! don't worry. I'm sure it's all right; and I'm glad you little ones have such good appetites."

Charlie thought hard for a moment. "Oh, I know!" he said with a wise look; "it's the flour. You were ever so happy till Bridget put her head in. Now, mamma, I'll tell you what; you get a whole barrel instead of a bag, and then you won't have to be bothered. I was over at Henry's the other day, and his mother went to the closet, and I saw her take such a lot of flour out of a barrel! Get a barrel, mother!" and Charlie put his arms around the dear neck and kissed the face he loved so much.

Mrs. Helps could not but smile at her little boy. "Child, the trouble is, I can't get a barrel. It would cost nine dollars, and I haven't got that. But no matter, my son; you are growing older every day. God is very good, and I know that we shall not starve. Now I must go up to my study, and you can run out doors."

Charlie put on his hat and ran out. Henry was waiting for him to play; but Charlie said, "No; I can't now. I want to go to the village."

"Can I go too?"

Now Charlie would have rather Henry had stayed at home, but he was trying to be an unselfish boy; so he said, "Yes; only please, Henry, I can't talk."

The two walked along; and though Charlie had said he could not talk, he soon began to tell Henry what was on his mind. "Mother works so hard," he said, "since father died last winter, and she's so worried how she ought to have a whole barrel of flour, I'm going to see if I can't earn one."

Henry opened his eyes at this: "You earn a barrel of flour! Why father paid for our barrel the other day, and I saw the bill, ten dollars. How'll you earn that?"

"Mother said nine dollars," said Charlie, a little discouraged. "I don't know *how*, but I've got a plan. I'm going to the grocer's."

"To buy your flour?" said Henry, half laughingly.

They went to a large grocery store in the village, and a clerk asked the boys what they wanted. Charlie answered that he would like to see Mr. Dunning.

"He's busy," said the clerk.

"I see, but I can wait."

In a little while Mr. Dunning came to the boys. "Now, my boy," said he, "what can I do for you?" Charlie felt like throwing his arms around the gentleman's neck, he looked and spoke so kindly, and telling all his hopes,

but he tried to tell as little as possible of his real need. "You know I wasn't begging," he said afterward.

"I want to know, sir, if I can do any work for you—sweeping or cleaning—here or in your house? I can chop wood and light fires and bring water and peel potatoes and post letters and—"

"Stop, stop, my boy!" said Mr. Dunning. "I see you can do a good deal for a little fellow. But can't you do all this at home? Don't they need you there?"

"Oh, I'll do that too. I can't be here all the time; but please, sir, I'll work very hard, and a very, very long time, if only I can earn ten dollars."

"Ten dollars! Well, that is a large sum to pay a little boy. What do you want it for?"

"Please, sir, mamma's writing and sewing and teaching to earn enough money for us, but she can't get enough, and I do want to get her a barrel of flour. I thought p'raps if I worked hard and earned part, you'd trust me to work for the rest."

"Why, what's your name?"

"Charlie Helps."

"So you're Mrs. Helps' boy! Bless you, child! you shall have work to do; and if you are faithful, you mother shall have the flour. Now, what time can you come here?"

"I dress Johnnie and the baby for mother in the mornings, and then I study; but perhaps mother could hear me some other time. I can chop our wood any time, and I can get up early and draw the water before breakfast."

"Well, you come round at ten o'clock every day and stay till four; tell you mother you'll not be in the store, but with my wife. I fancy she'll like to see a boy about again;" and Mr. Dunning sighed.

Ah, children! death takes a father from one home and a child from another, and only God can comfort those that are left. Mr. Dunning had lost his boy, a little fellow about Charlie's age, a few months before.

Now, I must not make my story too long. Charlie worked hard. He peeled potatoes, cleaned knives, sorted potatoes and apples, (and if you have ever tried it, you will find that it is very hard work,) split wood and even set the table. Charlie's mother did not know that he was to be paid for all this, but supposed that he had hired himself out to relieve her of his board, for Charlie always ate his dinner at the Dunnings', and the noble boy used to eat as little as possible at home. At last, when he had worked three weeks, Mr. Dunning called him into the store. "Here's a friend of yours, Charlie," he said; and there was Charlie's Sunday school teacher, Mr. Kimball.

"Charlie, I want to tell you that I'm going to send your barrel of flour home to-night," said Mr. Dunning; "and as Mr. Kimball is here, he shall see it marked. You've earned more than half the price already, and so you shall give this to your mother, and tell her if she will give you to me for my own boy—my very own—she shall never want for flour or any thing else I can furnish her out of my store."

Charlie could not answer, and could only smile from ear to ear as Mr. Dunning wrote, "Mrs. Helps, ordered and paid for by Charlie Helps," on the top of the barrel. Charlie rode home with the man that took the barrel,

and his mother came out to see who was there.

"Here's your flour, mamma!—here's your flour! I earned it! And oh, mamma, Mr. Dunning will give you everything you want, if you'll give *me* to him. But mamma! dear mamma! don't give me, for I mean to work for you, and I love you so much!"

Dear little fellow! the joy and the surprise were too much for him, and he cried in his mother's arms. Mr. Dunning called in the evening, and it was arranged that, though Mrs. Helps could not give Charlie, he should live part of the time at the Dunnings'.

All this happened years ago; and very few know that Charlie Helps, who is Mr. Dunning's right-hand man, earned his barrel of flour for his mother from that very store when he was nine years old.—*Well-Spring.*

CHILDREN DOING GOOD.

I AM sure you will find out ways of showing kindness, if you look for them. One strong lad, I saw the other day, carrying a heavy basket up hill for a little tired girl. Another dear boy I met leading a blind man who had lost his faithful dog.

An old lady sitting in her arm chair by the fire once said, "My dear granddaughter there is hands, feet, and eyes to me."

"How so?"

"Why, she runs about so nimbly to do the work of the house; she fetches me so willingly whatever I want; and, when she has done, she sits down and reads to me so nicely a chapter in the Bible."

One day a little girl came home from school quite happy to think she had been useful; for there was a school-fellow there in great trouble about the death of a baby brother.

"And I put my cheek against hers," said her companion, "and I cried, too, because I was sorry for her, and after a little while she left off crying, and said I had done her good."

The ways in which you can do kind actions are very, very many. Almost every hour of the day, if you have a kind *heart*, you will find some opportunity of doing a kind *deed*.

DULL BOYS.

DON'T be discouraged. Slow growth is often sure growth. Some minds are like Norwegian pines. They are slow in growth, but they are striking their roots deep. Some of the greatest men have been dull boys. Dryden and Swift were dull, as boys; so was Goldsmith, so was Sir Walter Scott. Napoleon, at School, had so much difficulty in learning his Latin that the master said it would need a gimlet to get a word into his head. Douglas Jerrold was so backward in his boyhood that at nine he was scarcely able to read. Isaac Barrow, one of the greatest divines the Church of England has ever produced, was so impenetrably stupid in his early years that his father more than once said that if God took away any of his children he hoped it would be Isaac, as he feared he would never be fit for anything in this world. Yet that boy was the genius of the family.

GOD loves to give, and He loves to have His people give. He does not like to have them covetous; He does not like to see them hoard; so, when we learn to give, and love to give, we become like him.