

OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

THE YEARS TWELVE CHILDREN.

January, worn and gray,
Like an old pilgrim by the way,
Watches the snow, and aching sighs
As the wild curlew 'round him flies;
Or, huddled underneath a thorn,
Sits praying for the lingering morn.

February, bluff and cold,
O'er furrows striding scorns the cold,
And with his horses two abreast
Makes the keen plough do his behest.

Rough March comes blustering down the road,
In his wrathful hand the oxen goad,
Or, with a rough and angry haste,
Scatters the seeds o'er the dark waste.

April, a child, half tears, half smiles,
Trips full of little playful wiles;
And laughing, 'neath her rainbow hood,
Seeks the wild violets in the wood.

May, the bright maiden, singing goes,
To where the snowy hawthorne blows,
Watching the lambs leap in the dells,
List'ning the simple village bells.

June, with the mower's scarlet face,
Moves o'er the clover field apace,
And fast his crescent scythe sweeps on
O'er spots from whence the lark has flown.

July, the farmer, happy fellow,
Laughs to see the corn grow yellow,
The heavy grain he tosses up
From his right hand as from a cup.

August, the reaper, cleaves his way,
Through golden waves at break of day;
Or in his waggon, piled with corn,
At sunset home is proudly borne.

September, with his baying hound,
Leaps fence and pale at every bound,
And casts into the wind in scorn,
All cares and dangers from his horn.

October comes, a woodman old,
Fenced with tough leather from the cold;
Round swings his sturdy axe, and lo!
A fir branch falls at every blow.

November cowers before the flame,
Blear crone, forgetting her own name!
Watching the blue smoke curling rise,
And broods upon old memories.

December, fat and rosy, strides,
His old heart warm, well clothed his sides;
With kindly word for young and old,
The cheerier for the bracing cold,
Laughing a welcome, open flings
His doors, and as he goes he sings.

—Christian Weekly.

LUTHER TO HIS BOY.

To my Little Son, Hansigen Luther, Grace
and Peace in Christ:

My Heart, Dear Little Son.—I hear that you learn well and pray diligently. Continue to do so, my son. When I come home I will bring you a fine present from the fair. I know of a lovely garden, full of joyful children, who wear little golden coats, and pick up beautiful apples and pears, and cherries and plums, under the trees. They sing and jump and make merry. They have beautiful little horses with golden saddles and silver bridles. I asked the man that kept the garden who the children were. And he said to me:

"The children are those who love to learn, and to pray, and to be good."

Then said I:

"Dear sir, I have a little son named Hansigen Luther. May he come into this garden and have the same apples and pears to eat, and wonderful little horses to ride upon, and may he play about with these children?"

Then said he:

"If he is willing to learn, and to pray, and to be good, he shall come into this garden;

and Lippus and Justus too. If they all come together they shall have pipes, and little drums and lutes, and music of stringed instruments. And they shall dance, and shoot with little cross-bows."

Then he showed me a fine meadow in the garden, all laid out for dancing. There hung golden pipes and kettle-drums and fine silver cross-bows; but it was too early to see the dancing, for the children had not had their dinner. I said:

"Ah, dear sir, I will instantly go and write to my little son, Hansigen, so that he may study, and pray, and be good, and thus come into this garden. And he has a little cousin, Lena, whom he must also bring with him."

Then he said to me:

"So shall it be. Go home and write to him."

Therefore, dear little son Hansigen, be diligent and learn to pray; and tell Lippus and Justus to do so too, that you may all meet together in that beautiful garden. Give cousin Lena a kiss from me.

Herewith I recommend you all to the care of Almighty God.

A.D. 1530.

OUR FATHER GOD.

God Almighty heareth ever
When His little children pray;
He is faint and weary never,
And He turneth none away.

More than we deserve He sends us,
More than we can ask, bestows;
Every moment He befriends us,
And supports us in our woes.

Let us then, in Him confiding,
Tell Him all we think and feel,
Never one dark secret hiding,
Seeking nothing to conceal.

Through His Son, our precious Saviour,
God will pardon all our sin,
Will forgive our past behaviour,
Open heaven and take us in.

NUMBER ONE.

"I always take care of Number One," said one of a troop of boys at the end of a bridge, some wanting to go one way and some another.

"That's you, out and out," cried one of his companions. "You don't think or care about anyone but yourself; you ought to be called 'Number One.'"

"If I did not take care of Number One, who would, I should like to know?" cried he.

True. Number One was right. He ought to take care of himself—good care.

"But does not that smack a little of selfishness?" the boys ask. "Number One thinks of nobody but himself."

Nobody but himself; that certainly is selfish, and therefore wrong. But Number One is committed to our own care. "What sort of care?" is the all-important question.

The care of his soul. Number One has a soul to be saved from sin and from hell; Number One has a soul to be won to Christ, to holiness and to heaven. Here is a great work to do.

Take care of his habits. Make Number One industrious, persevering, self-denying, and frugal. Give him plenty of good, healthy work to do. Teach him how best to do it, and keep him from lounging and all idle company.

Take care of the lips of Number One. Let

truth dwell on them. Put a bridle in his mouth, that no angry, back-biting tale shall come from it. Let no profane or impure words escape. Let the law of kindness rule his tongue, and all his conversation be such as becomes a child of God.

Take care of the affections and feelings of Number One. Teach him to love God with all his heart, and his neighbour as himself; to care for others and share with others; to be lowly in mind, forgiving, gentle, sympathizing, willing to bear and forbear, easily entreated, doing good to all as he has opportunity.

This is the care to take of Number One, and a rich blessing will he prove to his home and neighbourhood and to himself. Boys, you all have Number One to take care of, and a responsible charge it is.

COUNT THEM.

Count what? Why count the mercies which have been quietly falling in your path through every period of your history. Down they come every morning and evening, angel messengers from the Father of lights to tell you of your best friend in heaven. Have you lived these years wasting mercies, treading them beneath your feet, and consuming them every day, and never yet realized from whence they came? If you have, heaven pity you! You have murmured under your affliction; but who has heard your rejoicing over your blessings? Do you ask what are these mercies? Ask the sunbeam, the rain-drop, the star or queen of night. What is life but a mercy? What is the propriety of stopping to play with a thornbush, when you may just as well pluck sweet flowers and eat pleasant fruits? Happy is he who looks at the bright side of life, of providence and of revelation; who avoids thorns and sloughs until his Christian growth is such that, if he cannot improve them, he may pass among them without injury. Count mercies before you complain of afflictions.

BORROWED BOOKS.

A person who borrows a book has no right to lend it to another without the express permission of the owner. This should be an unvarying rule.

A borrowed book should be covered and handled with care and nicety, and returned promptly. Nobody has a right to retain a borrowed book during an indefinite period.

If accident or injury result to a borrowed volume while away from its owner, honour requires that it shall be replaced by a new copy.

Never ask the loan of a very costly book or one belonging to a set, if you can avoid it.

Teach children to be very particular in regard to their handling of all books, whether their own or those of others.

THERE is dew is one flower and not in another, because one opens itself and takes in, while the other closes itself and the drop runs off. So God rains goodness and mercy as wide as the dew, and, if we lack them, it is because we will not open our hearts to receive them.