

The Good Resolution eBook

The Good Resolution

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Page 1

THE GOOD RESOLUTION.

“Why am I so unhappy to-day?” said Isabella Gardner, as she opened her eyes on the morning of her fourteenth birth-day. “Is it because the sun is not bright enough, or the flowers are not sweet enough?” she added, as she looked on the glorious sunshine that lay upon the rose-bushes surrounding her window.

Isabella arose, and dressed herself, and tried to drive away her uncomfortable feelings, by thinking of the pleasures of the afternoon, when some of her young friends were to assemble to keep her birth-day. But she could not do it; and, sad and restless, she walked in her father’s garden, and seated herself on a little bench beneath a shady tree. Everything around was pleasant; the flowers seemed to send up their gratitude to Heaven in sweetness, and the little birds in songs of joy. All spoke peace and love, and Isabella could find nothing there like discontent or sorrow. The cause of her present troubled feelings was to be found within.

Isabella Gardner was in the habit of indulging in a fretful and peevish temper. She was often “hasty in her spirit to be angry;” forgetting that the wise Solomon says, “Anger resteth in the bosom of fools;” and that a greater than Solomon had commanded her to forgive, as she would be forgiven.

Her disrespect and ill-humor toward her parents had caused her many unhappy days and sleepless nights; and often had the day closed on faults unrepented of, and sins unforgiven. It was but the afternoon before that she had spoken in a high angry tone to her eldest sister, Mary, and parted in displeasure from her brother Edward, because he would not leave his studies to go into the garden with her. Thus had the “sun gone down upon her wrath;” and we cannot be surprised that when it rose in the morning she was unhappy.

Isabella had a generous temper; and after she had been unkind or unjust, she was frequently sorry, and determined to be so no more; but her regret was forgotten as soon as she was again tempted; and at the age of thirteen she had gained no victory over the sinful habit of indulging in an angry temper.

Isabella had kind and indulgent parents;—parents who looked with thankfulness upon the virtues, and with sorrow upon the faults, of their children, and prayed that the former might be strengthened, and the latter corrected. Mrs. Gardner had long seen with deep anxiety the growing defect in Isabella’s temper, and it was now brought more painfully home to her feelings, as she reflected how much an added year increased the responsibility of her child.

She had risen early, and had been long engaged in prayer to Him who can alone regulate the unruly dispositions, wills, and passions of sinful men. She prayed for

knowledge of her duty to her child, and for strength to perform it: she prayed for Isabella, that God would convince her of the error of her way; that his Holy Spirit might renew her in the spirit of her mind, that she might become a child and follower of the Lord Jesus Christ.



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Long and anxiously the pious mother continued her supplications at the throne of grace; and after taking her Bible, and reading the blessed assurance, "I can do all things through Christ strengthening me," she went into the garden to meet Isabella. She found her there, sitting as we have described, alone and sorrowful. "What is the matter, Isabella," said Mrs. Gardner, in a kind tone: "why are you so sad on the morning of your birth-day?"

[Illustration]

"I don't know, mother," replied Isabella; "I believe it is because nobody loves me."

"Isabella," said Mrs. Gardner, "I am afraid nobody will love you long if you go on as you have done lately, giving way to angry feelings whenever anything opposes your wishes; and, what is much worse, you will offend your heavenly Father, if you thus continue to break his holy commands."

"I can't help being displeased, mother, when people show me that they don't like me, and try to vex me."

"Seldom does any one vex us on purpose, Isabella. It is the bad state of our own hearts that makes us think we are not liked; and, besides, Jesus Christ has forbidden us to be angry even when there are real faults. He tells us to forgive others, as he has forgiven us; and do you think you have obeyed him?"

"No, mother; but people must be angry when they are treated unfairly; and the girls at school are often very unkind and unjust to me; and I am sure I ought to show them that I don't like it."

"Such is not the gospel rule, Isabella; and that alone should be your guide. There you are directed to love those who treat you unkindly, to do good to those that hate you, and to 'pray for those who despitefully use you.' The recollection of your own need of forgiveness from God, ought to make you patient toward the faults of others."

"Very often, mother, when I try to do my best, I am misunderstood, and reprov'd; and then I am sure even the best persons would be displeas'd."

"Not if they are disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ, Isabella. Was he not holy and undefiled, pure, spotless, and without sin? and was he not persecuted, falsely accused, and scourged? reviled and rejected by men, betrayed by one disciple, and forsaken by all the rest? Yet no word of evil passion was ever heard from him. He opened not his mouth, nor would he suffer another to resent any of the insults offered to him. 'The disciple is not above his Master;' and if we profess to follow Jesus Christ, we must learn to bear all things, and try 'to be perfect, as our Father in heaven is perfect.'



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“Forgiveness of injuries is a high duty, and patiently to bear injustice is one of the greatest Christian excellences. God alone can give us the right temper of mind, but we must ourselves try to attain it. Perhaps you may recollect what Peter says about suffering patiently for well-doing. To be sure, those to whom he was preaching were suffering in a great cause; but the conquest of our faults is a great cause to us; and we may all apply his words to our own cases. He was preaching to the Christians at Pontus, who were enduring persecution in the cause of Christ,—’For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.’” 1 Pet. ii, 20.

Isabella, as usual, acknowledged her error, and said she would try to correct it.

“Do you know, Isabella,” said Mrs. Gardner, “that you have promised me this a great many times before?”

“Yes, mother.”

“And do you know that, by thus repeatedly breaking your promises, you add to the sins already committed?”

“Yes, mother.”

“And do you know, my child, the reason why you cannot keep your promises?”

“No, mother; I am sure I try to keep them; but before I think I get angry.”

“We are all weak and sinful creatures,” said Mrs. Gardner; “and without help from God we can do no good thing. Even the apostle Paul found that when he would do good, evil was present with him: so that the best persons require aid from above, to enable them to keep in the right path. You must be convinced of your own weakness, Isabella, before you will feel the need of this assistance; and I should think your failures in your efforts to regulate your temper would be enough of it.

“This is the commencement of your new year. On this day you begin another term of duty. Think of all your faults; think particularly of that which now troubles you so much: then go to God, and humbly confess to him your wickedness; seek the influence of the Holy Spirit; promise from this day to try and govern your temper, and promise it in his presence. Ask God to help you to keep this resolution; pray that you may be gentle, kind, and forgiving; humble, and willing to be reproved; and that the beginning of your new year may be the beginning of a new life with you.

“I now leave you to think of these things, and commit you to Him who can alone make you perfect in every good work, with the earnest prayer that he may cleanse and purify your heart, and lead you into the path of life.”



Isabella turned to her mother, and large tears rolled down her cheeks as she said, "Mother, I feel the truth of what you say; I feel that I have been an ungrateful child; I have neglected my duty to you, to my father, sister, brothers, and friends; and I now see, for the first time, how greatly I have been offending God. From him I will first seek forgiveness, through the atonement of Christ, and before him I will make a solemn resolution to try, from this day, to subdue my sinful temper. I say, I will promise to try; I dare not promise to do it: I fear I shall fall back many times; and perhaps before this day closes I shall have to repent of angry words and wicked feelings."

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My young readers, if any of you are conscious of having the same fault that Isabella determined to endeavor to correct, make with her now a resolution to pray, and strive against it, and go to your heavenly Father, and ask his assistance. Plead earnestly in the name of Christ for the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Mrs. Gardner heard with gratitude the determination of her child, and left her with an affectionate wish that her birth-day might pass happily. When Isabella returned to her chamber she found upon her table a large Bible. It was a birth-day gift from her parents, and beneath Isabella's name were written the words which stand on the title-page of this book,—“He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh a city.” Prov. xvi, 32.

Isabella had two brothers, Edward and George: they were both younger than herself. Mary, her only sister, was seventeen years old, and was a lovely example of gentleness and piety. She was not so quick as Isabella; but she had “the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit,” which is far more beautiful in the sight of God than the most brilliant worldly accomplishments. Her faults were controlled by Christian principle and self-denial; and an affectionate interest in the happiness of others marked her conduct.

On the morning of Isabella's birthday, Mary was busily employed in arranging fresh flowers in the little parlor, and in trying to make everything look pleasant for her sister. The recollection of Isabella's unkindness to her the day before, while it grieved her kind heart, only made her the more anxious to add to her happiness.

This was like many other summer days. Though it opened in sunshine, it closed in clouds. At about twelve o'clock the bright light was darkened, and soon the heavy rain began to fall.

“How cross Isabella will be this afternoon!” said Edward to his sister Mary. “I am sure I don't want to see her; she will be so angry because it rains.”

“That is a very unkind remark, Edward,” replied Mary, “and shows a wrong state of feeling. I have not heard Isabella speak an angry word to-day; and instead of wishing to be out of her way, you ought to try to do all that you can to make up to her for the disappointment she will feel at not seeing her young friends.”

“You are right, sister Mary,” said Edward: “in judging Isabella I was committing the same sin myself; and I thank you for correcting me. I will try to make my sister happy; but I do hope that as she grows older she will become more amiable, and do to others as she would have them do to her.”

At this moment Isabella entered the room. There was no blue sky to be seen, nor any prospect of fair weather.



“I am sorry that your friends will not be able to come this afternoon, Isabella,” said Mary; “but we will all try to make the evening of your birth-day pass pleasantly; and when our father comes home, I am sure he will read to us in any book you wish.”

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Isabella thanked her sister, and said she thought she deserved the disappointment.

After tea Mr. Gardner read a very interesting book to his children. They listened with pleasure, and had a happy evening; and when they knelt in family devotion, Isabella deeply felt her father's petition, that as his children grew in years, they might, like their divine Master, "grow in favor with God and man." She went to bed that night with a cheerful heart, rejoicing that she had been able to keep her resolution for one day. "I give God thanks," said she, "that his grace has been sufficient for this purpose."

One afternoon Isabella asked her sister Mary to go with her to see their cousins, who lived about half a mile from their father's house. Mary told her that she would be glad to go with her on any other day, but that she was engaged that afternoon, to visit her Sunday-school children. Mary had been a Sunday-school teacher but a short time, and she was deeply interested in the sacred work. Isabella had set her heart upon going to see her cousins, and doubted not that Mary would have been ready to go with her. She was disappointed; and, forgetting herself, she told Mary that she thought she was very unkind, and that she had better oblige her sister, than go and see children that did not care anything about her. Isabella spoke angrily, and looked displeased. One moment after she remembered her resolution; but she was then too proud to confess her fault.

Mary made no reply, but soon went out upon her errand of love. The faces of the little children brightened with pleasure as she entered their doors. "Dear Miss Mary," said one little blue-eyed girl, "I have learned my verse in the Bible every morning, as you said I must; and to-morrow I shall say to you seven verses out of the second chapter of Matthew, about the birth of Jesus Christ in Bethlehem, of Judea."

"And I," said her little sister, "have learned my hymn, about 'little children, love each other;' and I have tried to love brother John, and to be kind to sister Susan, as you said was right."

"Does no one but I say that you must love your brothers and sisters, Nancy?" said Mary.

"O yes," said Nancy; "our Lord Jesus Christ says so; and he says we cannot be his children unless we love one another. I think of that sometimes, but sister Susan thinks of it much oftener than I do; and when John and I get angry in our play, or speak cross to any one at school, she will come, and say so sweetly, 'Little children, love each other.'"

Mary told Nancy to remember her hymn at all times, and to be early at Sunday school the next morning, to say it to her.



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Mary found one of her scholars sick,—a little girl, named Sarah, who on the Sunday before was as bright and as well as any child in school. Now her hands were burning with fever, and her large dark eyes were dim with disease. Once they brightened a little when Mary spoke to her of her class, but she soon turned over her little head, and sunk into an uneasy sleep. Her Testament was by her bedside, and her mother said that her last effort, before she was taken ill, was to learn her Sunday lesson. Mary watched by her all the afternoon: she lifted her aching head, and spread under it the cool pillows: she bathed her burning temples, and gently fanned her; and when, she gave the medicine, she silently prayed that the means used for her recovery might be blessed. Sarah did not speak, but when she opened her eyes she looked pleased that Mary was beside her. She remained with the little sufferer until her brother came for her in the evening, and promised to return the next day.

Isabella had gone to her room before Mary got home. She did not like to meet her; for the unpleasant feelings had not left her bosom, though she sincerely regretted her impatience. Pride now prevented her acknowledging her fault. When alone, she took her Bible, and sat down to read our Saviour's sermon on the mount. As the sacred precepts, one after another, met her eye, she felt serious and humble. When she came to the verse, "If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way: first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift;" she felt that Jesus Christ had spoken these words directly to her. She had often read them before, but never until this moment had they reached her heart.

"What gift have I to lay upon God's altar?" she said to herself: "prayer is my only offering; one that I am now about to present. Will God accept it while I am angry with my sister? O no! I will go this moment to her, and confess my fault, and ask her forgiveness. I will first be reconciled, and then come and offer my gift."

She went to Mary's room, and putting her arms around her neck, she said, "Dear sister, I cannot ask God to forgive me my trespasses this night until I have told you how sorry I am that I treated you so unkindly this afternoon. You are a good, affectionate sister to me, and I am very ungrateful. Will you forgive me? I will try to check my impatient feelings in future, and I hope to try in better strength than my own."

"I am quite ready to forgive you," said Mary, affectionately: "the offense to me is but a trifle; it is not that I regret. It is the sin we commit against God, when we give way to improper feelings of any kind, we should mourn over. He has commanded us to be patient and forgiving; and it makes me sad to think how often we grieve his Holy Spirit by doing what we know is wrong."



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“It is a source of daily sorrow to me,” replied Isabella, “that I cannot cultivate the temper of mind which is pleasing to God and man.”

“I have rejoiced lately, dear Isabella, to see you bear many little disappointments patiently; and until yesterday I have scarcely heard a hasty word from you for some time. I hope you will persevere, and that we shall both of us grow better as we grow older.”

“Yes,” said Isabella, “I have endeavored lately to subdue my evil temper, which is the source of so much trouble to me, I had hoped that I had in some degree succeeded, for many a time when I have felt an angry passion rising, I have tried to lift up my heart to God, and to say, ‘Lord, give me strength to resist this temptation;’ but to-day I have gone very far back, and how can I be forgiven for thus breaking the solemn resolution I made on my birth-day?”

“Do not say so, Isabella. Humbly confess your fault before God: he will forgive you according to his promise through Christ Jesus, and encourage you in your renewed efforts. God seeth not as man seeth: he knows how frail and weak we are, and he sees every penitent tear, and rejoices over every effort we make to overcome besetting sins. Our Lord Jesus Christ should be our example of forbearance. No angry words were ever heard from him, and he is not willing to hear them from those who call themselves his followers. Let us pray, my dear sister, that the same mind may be in us that was also in Christ Jesus.”

“I hear kind instructive words from you, my dear sister, and from my parents, teachers, and other friends, and I hope they will not be lost upon me. The Bible is much dearer to me now than it once was, and I find there simple directions for every duty. Formerly when I read my Saviour’s words, if I applied them at all, it was to somebody else rather than myself; but now I begin to feel that I need his blessed counsels more than anybody.”

“I am thankful, Isabella, to hear you speak so of the Bible. May it be a lamp unto the feet and a light unto the path, of us both; then our footsteps will not slip, and we shall be faithful children, sisters, and friends. Jesus Christ came to this world to save us from the power as well as the punishment of sin; and his gospel must purify our hearts, and correct our daily faults, or it will do us no good.”

Isabella listened attentively to her sister’s words. She felt their value, for she saw how faithfully Mary practiced what she taught.

“Good night, dear sister,” said Isabella: “may the humbling recollection of to-day’s failure strengthen me in my efforts to keep my resolution.”



As week after week passed by, Isabella Gardner met new difficulties to oppose her resolution; but though often cast down, she gained strength every day.

Her trials at her day-school were very great, for her school-fellows did not know how she was endeavoring to correct her great fault; and they would often avoid her company in their walks and amusements, knowing how she formerly made them unhappy by her caprices. She bore all this patiently, and would leave her companions immediately when anything was said or done that displeased her; and by going away by herself she was prevented from making a hasty reply, and had time to reflect and gather strength for future trials.



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It was hard for Isabella to “cease to do evil,” and harder still for her to “learn to do well;” and it would fill a much larger book than this, were I to tell you of all the difficulties she met with in trying to “put on the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit.”

But God was near. He saw her efforts and her failures, and he saw that his correcting hand must be stretched forth to finish the good work which he had begun. He sent sickness upon her, and the lately blooming Isabella was laid low upon the bed of pain. It was then she was called upon to “let patience have its perfect work.”

When Isabella heard her physician say that she would probably be ill for a long time, she thought of her resolution, and feared that she would be unable to keep it when there was so much pain to bear, and so much medicine to be taken. Then the solemn thought came that death might be very near, and that she might have but a little time left to correct her fault; and she determined to pray for patience, and to be particularly watchful over herself.

“I have indulged my old habit of fretfulness a good deal to-day, mother,” she said, as Mrs. Gardner sat down by her side, after making everything ready for the night. “I fear I shall never correct it; but I did not think of this sick bed when I made my resolution.”

“Has not God promised to be ‘about your bed, and about your path,’ my dear child?” said Mrs. Gardner.

“Yes, mother; and could I but remember his presence, I should not so often grieve you by my impatience.”

“You must not talk any more tonight, Isabella,” said her mother affectionately; “but try to go to sleep, and remember that God is always near you, and that his Holy Spirit is more grieved than even your mother by any disobedience to his commands. I love you, and forgive you. Now go to sleep, and may you awake refreshed in body and soul.”

Mary nursed her sister night and day, and never left her except when Mrs. Gardner insisted upon her going away to rest herself. Isabella was often impatient toward her, but Mary quietly went on treating her with more and more tenderness. She scarcely spoke, but humbly and silently went on doing everything a sister’s love could suggest.

“I wish you would speak cross to me sometimes,” said Isabella to her one day, “and then I should not feel so sorry after I had been unkind to you; but you are so patient and good, that it makes me quite ashamed of my fretfulness.”

“I will do anything for you but that, Isabella,” said Mary; “but it is my constant prayer that my Saviour may grant me the temper of mind that becometh his disciple, and that I may ‘sin not with my lips’ against him.”



Isabella became rapidly worse, and the sorrowful countenance of her father, and the anxious tenderness of her mother, showed how dear their erring child was to their hearts.

Edward would come home early from school to know how his sister was, and to see if there was anything he could do for her; and the merry voice of little George was still, and no one heard the sound of his ball or top.

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It was a house of sadness, but of composure,—a house of Christian sorrow! Trouble had entered it; but its inmates felt that the trouble came from a Father's hand, and that they should have no more than He who knew them best, and loved them best, saw was for their good. They felt their Saviour's presence, and rested upon his words, "My grace is sufficient for thee."

But this sickness was not unto death: God raised Isabella from her bed of pain to glorify him by the holy obedience of her life. To the eye of man there was much yet to be done; but her heart was humbled, and her pride subdued; and He who knew all her weakness, saw that she would persevere, and that his chastisement had answered the purpose for which it had been sent.

As Isabella began to recover, the confinement to her room, and her extreme weakness, were rather more difficult to bear than her sickness. She was, however, mild and very thoughtful, and she would sit sometimes for an hour in the easy chair, with her face covered with her hands.

One evening she asked her mother if she had seen her show a wrong spirit during the day.

"I have not," said Mrs. Gardner.

"I am glad of it," said Isabella: "I have been trying to be faithful to myself, and I rejoice that one day has passed at the close of which my mother can give me a smile of approbation. I have been looking back upon this long sickness, and I fear I have not improved as I ought: I must begin in earnest now, relying upon divine assistance."

It was a happy morning in Mr. Gardner's family when Isabella once more took her usual seat at the breakfast table. She was pale and thin: the glow of health had left her cheeks; but there was an expression there that showed the better health of the soul. The grateful child joined the family group at breakfast with a prayer that she might never again disturb its harmony.

But little time had passed before her school companions found that she was "renewed in the spirit of her mind." They found her ready to forgive those who injured her, willing to oblige others, and to be pleased herself. They soon began to love her much; for her bright, active mind, made her a delightful companion; and it was not long before Isabella Gardner was one of the most pleasing and best-esteemed girls in school.

The beautiful summer had passed, and the solemn autumn. The green fields had given their rich crops to the farmers, making glad their hearts with an abundance of good things. In short, winter had come, and was nearly gone.



At the close of a cold day the family of Mr. Gardner were sitting by their comfortable fire. "I have been thinking," said little George, as he looked into the bright fire, "how good sister Isabella has grown lately. She has not spoken a cross word to me since I can remember; and cousin Emily Gray says she would rather come to see her than anybody, now that she is so kind and obliging."

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Mr. Gardner tried, by a serious look and shake of the head, to make little George understand that he did not like his remarks; but George did not see him, and went on to say that he should like to know how Isabella had managed to grow so good.

“I see your kindness, dear father,” said Isabella, “in wishing George to be silent lest he should hurt my feelings; but you need not shake your head at him, for I am quite willing that he should say what he thinks. I have noticed how carefully you and mother have avoided speaking of my faults; but I have known by your silent kindness that you have seen and approved of my efforts to overcome them. I have done but little; but I hope by perseverance to become more worthy to be your child.

“You say, George, that I have grown better, and wonder what has made me so. I will tell you, my dear brother. My mother’s counsels and prayers first directed me to the source of all strength,—to God, and his holy word. I had neglected her wishes, and showed disrespect to her authority; and in sorrow, but in much love, she committed me to the care of my heavenly Parent. She led me to Jesus, who was meek and lowly in heart. From him I have sought daily, hourly help, and to him let all the praise be given, if I have succeeded at all in subduing my unruly temper. My long sickness, last autumn, brought me to feel my great weakness and entire dependence upon God, and gave me time for reflection. The patient kindness of my friends humbled me also; for I felt how little I deserved it; and I resolved anew, that if my life was spared, I would be a better child in future. But I have much yet to do, and the constant effort that I am obliged to make, to conquer this one fault, is enough to keep me humble.”

“I don’t quite understand all that you have said, Isabella,” replied George; “but I know it is much like what father and mother have often told me, that when I don’t know exactly how to do right, I must go to God, and he will always direct me.”

“I can scarcely tell you, George, how much happier I am now than I used to be. I wish I could tell you and every friend I have. My disrespect to my father and mother caused me many a bitter tear, while my unkindness to my brothers and sisters made my daily life unhappy; and after my angry disputes with my school-fellows, I was left in a troubled state of mind, vexed with myself and them. Now, with all my strivings and failures, I have much peace; and I believe every one will have it just in proportion as he or she obeys the commandment of the Lord Jesus Christ, ‘Love one another.’”

Mr. Gardner embraced his child, and when again they knelt in evening devotion, he prayed that love to God and man might reign in the bosom of each of his family, that when they were called from this world of trial and temptation, they might all meet in those blessed regions where all is love, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

* * * * *



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“Why am I so happy this morning?” said Isabella Gardner, as she arose from her bed, just one year after the day on which this little history of her trials commenced: “because, through the grace of God, I have, in some degree, subdued my sinful and unruly temper.”

Youthful temptations.

Many a snare and temptation, young friend,
Will often obtrude in your way,
And constantly every footstep attend,
And threaten to lead you astray.

Perhaps you'll be tempted to hazard a lie,
Some trivial fault to conceal;
But remember that God, the all-seeing, is nigh,
And will one day the falsehood reveal.

You'll be tempted to cheat your companions at play,
For the sake of a marble or top;
But they who once enter dishonesty's way,
Will find it not easy to stop.

You'll be tempted, perhaps, holy friends to despise,
And follow the godless and vain;
But ever remember to walk with the wise
If heaven you seek to attain.

Another temptation will lie in your road,—
To think that religion is sad;
But none are so happy as those who love God,
And none are so dull as the bad.

Beware, too, of slighting the day of the Lord,
And never its duties neglect;
But meet with his people, and rev'rence his word,
If you would his blessing expect.

But though such temptations your path will attend,
The Lord will still make you his care,—
Will be, if you seek him, your guide and your friend,
'Mid every temptation and snare.

* * * * *

Heaven.



Far beyond the furthest sky,
Never seen by mortal eye,
Heaven in dazzling beauty lies,—
An unfading paradise.

Evening dim, and gloomy night,
Never veil that world of light;
Winter never sojourns there,
Summer reigns throughout the year.

In one bright unclouded day
Endless ages roll away;
There, beneath the unsetting sun,
Years of ceaseless pleasure run.

There the good, in concord sweet,
Worship at Jehovah's feet,—
Raise the song, with joy unknown,
Circling round his holy throne.

Works of love, and songs of joy,
All the happy hours employ;
Sickness, trouble, want, and pain,
Seek admittance there in vain.

There shall He who, laugh'd to scorn,
Wore the piercing crown of thorn,
Hear his praise in sweetest chords,
King of kings, and Lord of lords.

O may I, when life is pass'd,
Join that happy throng at last;
Through the great Redeemer's blood,
Sing with them, and dwell with God.

* * * * *

Improvement.

How many poor children I see every day
Who have no one to guide them aright!
No wonder in vice they should wander astray,
And in all that is evil delight.



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But I, who have got a good Bible to read,
And parents so anxious and kind,
Shall prove myself vile and ungrateful indeed
If I still am perversely inclined.

These blessings will rise at God's terrible bar,
If I do not grow better by them;
And my Bible, neglected, will also be there,
And my friends and my teachers condemn.

Then let me attend, and make haste to improve,
With every fresh season that's given,
And pray to the Lord of all mercy and love
To train me for virtue and heaven.

BOOKS PUBLISHED FOR THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL UNION OF THE METHODIST
EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

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Napoleon Bonaparte:

Sketches from his history. Written for the young.

No person, young or old, that takes up this book will wish to put it down before it is finished; and no reader will fail to be profited by its perusal. We doubt whether in the same space there can anywhere be found a better summary of the history of that wonderful man, or a clearer picture of the folly of his extravagant ambition, or the cruelties it led him to perpetrate, and of the downfall in which it terminated. False views of the character of warriors and conquerors have ruined thousands. Need any other fact be stated to show the importance of giving the young, especially, timely and correct views of these characters?

If there is one class to whom more than another this book is particularly commended, it is to that large class of boys, between the ages of five and fifteen years, who often think, and sometimes say, "I would like to be a soldier."