

Our Young Folks.

THE LITTLE LAD'S ANSWER.

Our little lad came in one day
With dusty shoes and tired feet;
His playtime had been hard and long
Out in the summer's noontide heat.
"I'm glad I'm home," he cried, and hung
His torn straw hat up in the hall,
While in the corner by the door
He put away his bat and ball.

"I wonder why," his aunty said,
"This little lad always comes here
When there are many other homes.
As nice as this and quite as near?"
He stood a moment deep in thought,
Then, with the love light in his eye,
He pointed where his mother sat,
And said, "She lives here; that is why!"

With beaming face the mother heard:
Her mother-heart was very glad.
A true, sweet answer he had given—
That thoughtful, loving little lad.
And well I know that hosts of lads
Are just as loving, true and dear;
That they would answer as he did:
"Tis home, for mother's living here."

BE SLOW TO ACCUSE.

"Mother, I cannot find my seventeen cents anywhere," said Arthur, coming into his mother's room with quite an anxious face. "I put it here in my pocket. It had been hanging up in the hall day, and I do believe that new girl has taken it out. She saw me have it last night and put it away."

"Look in your other pocket, Arthur. A little boy who is so apt to forget things must not be too positive that he puts his money in his pocket-book. And never accuse anybody of stealing without a shadow of evidence. This is very sinful as well as unkind. What if Susan should lose her money and accuse you of stealing it? Remember the Golden Rule."

"But, mother, she looked guilty when I said I had lost it, and that I knew some one had taken it out of my pocket."

"But very likely she did look confused on hearing you make such an unkind speech. She knew very well that there was no one in the house you could suspect of taking it but herself. You might as well have said so in plain words. An innocent person is more apt to look guilty, when accused of a crime, than one who is hardened in wrong-doing. The latter usually has a face ready made to suit any occasion. A gentleman once said that the most guilty looking person he ever saw was a man arrested for stealing a horse which afterward proved to be his own."

"But what has become of my money, mother? It is gone, that is certain."

"I believe you lost a fine top once, that it was supposed a little neighbour had stolen," said his mother, with a smile.

"But I cannot have left this in the grapevine arbour this winter weather."

"But there are plenty of other losing places about. Did you have on that jacket last evening?"

"No, mother, I believe I had on my grey one, but then I know I put it in my pocket-book."

"Don't say you know, my dear, for it may be an untruth. Please bring me your grey jacket."

Arthur walked slowly up to his room, but he walked back more slowly still, and looked very foolish when he came into his mother's room again.

Mother comprehended it all at a glance, and smiled as she said—

"I wonder who looks guilty this time?"

"Oh, mother, I am sorry, but I did not mean to accuse Susan so wrongly. I remember now just as plainly as can be wrapping up those three-cent pieces and two pennies in that bit of paper and putting it into my jacket pocket."

"It is a serious thing, Arthur, to make such charges as you did a moment ago against an innocent person. What if you had mentioned it among your schoolmates? It would not be long before it would be told all about: 'Susan, at Mr. Reynald's, steals. I wonder they keep her.' If she ever wished to get another place it might be a very difficult matter. Though you contradict the story afterwards, it would never undo the mischief. Many will repeat an injurious story who will never take the trouble to correct it. I will pray for you, dear boy, that you may learn to correct this sinful habit; and I hope you will pray with me. You will never improve a bad habit until you pray over it. Run now and tell Susan that you have found your money; and try to make some amends for your injustice by being more than usually thoughtful and obliging."

A BOASTFUL BOY'S DOWNFALL.

"Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall," said Solomon. A boy who had won a prize for learning Scripture verses and was greatly elated thereby, was asked by a minister in it took him a long time to commit them.

"Oh, no," said the boy, boastfully, "I can learn any verse in the Bible in five minutes."

"Can you, indeed? And will you learn one for me?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then in five minutes from now I would like very much to hear you repeat this verse," said the minister, handing him the book and pointing out the ninth verse of the eighth chapter in Esther:—

"Then were the king's scribes called at that time in the third month, that is the month Sivan, on the three and twentieth day thereof; and it was written according to all that Mordecai commanded unto the Jews, and to the lieutenants, and the deputies and rulers of the provinces which are from India unto Ethiopia, a hundred, twenty and seven provinces, unto every province according to the writing thereof, and unto every people after their language, and to the Jews according to their writing, and according to their language."

The boy entered on his task with confidence, but at the end of an hour could not repeat it without a mistake, and had to tearfully acknowledge himself defeated.

THOSE TWO GIRLS.

Jesus bids us shine.
You in your little corner,
I in mine.

My mind reverts to the past this morning as I sit on this little vine covered porch that faces the south. The skies are blue and the brooks sing a liquid tone. The doves and robins have built their nests in the syringa whose creamy blossoms press against the panes. All nature is in ecstasy.

Each morning I dream of country meadows full of daisies, of shady lanes, and brooks where grow the fragrant spearmint. Summer mornings I instinctively quote that couplet from Longfellow:—

A Sabbath sound as of doves
In quiet neighbourhoods.

At times like these I recall two girls, so unlike; but whenever I think of one of them, the other is present as surely as an echo. One sits in elegant leisure and grows as to the dullness of the town and the lack of attractive young men. She rocks to and fro clad in a satin gown; and with a sulky face declares that she is "bound to have as good clothes as other girls wear, and will air them in the kitchen if there is no other place to show them." She is one of a large class who is "determined to have a good time." I am afraid that Hades is full of men and women who in life were bent on having good times at any cost. My other girl is:—

Safe on the other side
Where all the ransomed and angels be.

When I think of the two and compare their lives I grow bitter as I see how unequally divided are the good things in this life. One young woman had everything and was not thankful. The other was a peasant in purse, but rich in grace. She lacked means, and longed for a golden opportunity that never came. Whenever I hear Sabbath school scholars sing this little hymn that heads this article, I choke back a sob and think of poor Mary Jackson. Whatever her hands found to do she did; often the task was distasteful, but it was done "willingly as unto the Lord." For her standard she had chosen Mary Lyon, that consecrated teacher who was never baffled, and who surmounted difficulties that to many would have been quite impossible. The influence of this educator still remains like a sweet fragrance, though it is almost forty years since she entered into rest.

Mary Jackson was a home girl for years, then she became a nurse, a clerk and a teacher. Wherever she went she made her mark. The words of the sainted founder of Mount Holyoke were to her an inspiration: "Dear girls, always be willing to go into fields of labour where no one else is willing to enter." Their poverty at home compelled her to do her utmost. She taught up among the pineries and in lumbering regions. Here were poor little children who lacked advantages. Mary watched for opportunities and always sowed good seed by the wayside. In places remote from towns she always established a little Sabbath school; helps and books were willingly given by other schools of means. She "built better than she knew." When Church Boards later on sent their home missionaries into the North-West, the ministers found that some one had gone before them and had prepared the hearts of the hearers to receive the Word with gladness.

In a lumbering camp among the pines stands a small chapel; beside it flows a turbulent stream down which logs are rafted each spring through swelling waters to points below. The wild March floods bear them to huge saw-mills, and the slave steam with his teeth of steel fashions them into smooth boards for lumber yards. The name of Mary Jackson is not forgotten. Through sleet and snow the rural men and women go to that little church, a vine of God's own planting. Mothers who sit beside fires resinous with pine knots tell the little ones of the first woman-teacher of that region. In this plain chapel stands a memorial tablet, placed there by bearded lumbermen and trappers, on which is inscribed this quotation: "Remember the words that I spake unto you while I was yet with you."

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Sabbath School Teacher.

INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

Aug. 1.

CHRIST'S AUTHORITY.

John 5: 17-30.

GOLDEN TEXT. All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. MAT. XXVIII. 18.

INTRODUCTION.

The occasion of this discourse, primarily addressed to Jews who had taken up a hostile attitude to Jesus, was the healing of a man who had been for thirty eight years stricken with paralysis. He had lain long by the pool of Bethesda, whose waters at certain seasons had curative properties. Being unable to go down into the pool he had waited anxiously for healing. Jesus, who with His disciples had come from Galilee to observe the feast of the Passover, encountered the afflicted man and miraculously healed him. He told the man to take up his bed and walk. Being on the Sabbath Day this gave offence to the Jews, and it was to convince them that Jesus spake these words in which He convincingly sets forth His claims to be the Son of God.

I. Jesus the Divine Worker. —Jesus sets forth His relation to God. "My Father worketh till now, and I work." The Father upholds all things, the course of nature is maintained by the power and will of God; the work of redemption is also God's work. there is no cessation of the divine energy. So the Son continues unceasingly the special work He came to do. All His work while on earth was merciful in its design and character, and it continues so still. His work and that of the Father are in perfect accord. These statements, together with His action, had convinced His enemies that His course was destructive of the traditions and restrictions with which they had perverted the spirit and meaning of God's law. They could not answer Him, so they resolved on what they thought the readiest way to silence Him. "They sought the more to kill Him." They often failed to comprehend His teaching; in this instance they understood its meaning but they perverted it. They understood that the claim He advanced made God His Father in the highest sense, placing Himself on perfect equality with God. They understood His claim but did not believe it. It was in their eyes a new offence. They professed to see in it blasphemy and this they thought would justify them in seeking to put him to death. The Son and the Father are in complete harmony in all their working. The Son does nothing of Himself, that is, of His own will as opposed to the will of the Father. In nature, character, and quality, the works of the Father and the Son are the same. This identity of purpose is still farther brought out by the statement that there is the most complete affection between the Father and the Son. "The Father loveth the Son." He delighteth in Him and there is the fullest confidence between them, for the Father sheweth the Son "all things that Himself doeth." Great as was the miracle they had seen, there would be others still more astonishing, as the range of His working not only extended throughout the physical world, but the moral and spiritual realm was still more directly the sphere of His activity.

II. Jesus the Life-Giver. —The healing of a man afflicted with paralysis was a work that to them was marvellous, but even as God has power over all life, so also has the Son. The Father can raise the dead; so can the Son; He quickeneth or giveth life to whom He will. To give a more complete view of His authority Jesus declares that the work of judging is entrusted to Him. Since life-giving power is possessed by the Son, then all the functions of the God-head are His. The Father "hath committed all judgment to the Son." The Son is entitled to all the honour and homage paid to the Father. This is Christ's claim complete. His enemies considered that these claims were blasphemous. So they would have been if they had not been true. As they are one in nature and in perfection they are equally entitled to adoration and worship. The Son being the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of His person, is divine and therefore worthy of the worship which is due to God. He is one with the Father. Whoever does not honour the Son does not honour the Father whose ambassador He is. The Saviour then adds the solemn declaration, which in John's Gospel is several times repeated, "He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life." The words of Jesus are God's message of eternal salvation to all who hear them, receiving them as from God and believing them. The faith that saves is more than belief in the words of Jesus as historically true. There is in this verse, that essential element of saving faith, trust in God and in Jesus Christ as the Saviour. The result of this confidential personal trust in Christ is everlasting life as a present possession of the soul. It is not in the distant future that the believer will have everlasting life, it is now. It will go on expanding, but its beginning is when the soul accepts Christ as a personal Redeemer. He is freed from the condemnation of sin because Christ by His atoning death has borne its penalty. It is here added that the believer has "passed from death unto life." The body will die and remain in the state of death till the resurrection, but the soul has acquired an endless life.

III. Jesus the Judge. —Again the Saviour uses the impressive formula "Verily, verily, I say unto you," in introducing an important declaration relating to the judgment. "The hour is coming and now is when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God." The spiritually dead hear that voice now. All who hear it believingly shall live. The Son has the same life-giving power that the Father hath. The Son, like the Father, is the fountain of life. This equality with the Father in power and perfection qualifies the Son for the work of judgment. For this reason and because He is the Son of Man, He is invested with authority to execute judgment. This judgment is to be universal. The hour is coming in which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice. That judgment will be just. They that have done good shall come forth in the resurrection of life, with all its blessedness. To those that have done evil it will be a resurrection of condemnation. The just and impartial character of the coming resurrection is still farther asserted in the closing words of the lesson. It is not His own will that the Judge seeks but the will of the Father who has appointed Him.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

Good deeds are often misunderstood and misjudged. The Jews ascribed the works of Jesus to wrong motives.

The works that Jesus did while on earth fully substantiated His claims to be the Son of God.

Jesus is the giver of spiritual life to every one that believes.

Christ who now brings us salvation will be our judge. His judgment will be just and true.