

God is none the less the doer because he does some of his greatest deeds through men.

The God-man is always back of the man of God.

V

Just in proportion as a man creates his circumstances you have his measure.

Josiah came into national circumstances which were vile, but he made them virtuous.

The potter was made to fashion things, not to be fashioned by them.

Josiah was the national potter fashioning the vase of the nation into a form of virtue.

When he came to the throne he changed the old circumstances and created new ones.

He acknowledges his own intellectual and spiritual feebleness who confesses himself to be "a creature of circumstances."

Circumstances are the things that stand around us, and it is the prerogative of every

man to say whether he shall be surrounded by grape vines or brambles, figs or thistles.

VI

He is an irrational and reckless man who attempts to reckon God out of his affairs.

No nation grows great while departing from God.

It is always quality, and not quantity, that constitutes the majority.

God can do infinitely more with a brave boy than he can with a cowardly man.

Cowards encumber every good cause with which they seek to attach themselves.

The administrative might of Josiah was in Jehovah.

Let any man come out fearlessly for God, and he need not fear the outcome.

The swiftest-footed racer at the start is seldom soonest at the goal, but swift or slow goodness is sure to win.

The Lesson Heart Talk

BY MRS. J. H. KNOWLES

The life of Josiah is like a flower growing in a field of ugly weeds. We wonder how such opposite products can come from the same soil. His grandfather had been very wicked. Late in life he repented and tried to undo the evil of his youth, but his kingdom reaped a sorry harvest from his early sowing. Of his father nothing good is said. His mother's name is mentioned, but of her character and influence we know nothing. Other mothers are mentioned whose sons, Jehoahaz and Jehoiakim, "did evil in the sight of the Lord according to all that their fathers had done," so that we cannot say in any case that the mother was responsible for the goodness or the badness of the sons.

From Jeremiah and other prophets we learn how desperately evil were the times in which Josiah lived; "for from the least of them unto the greatest of them every one is given to covetousness; and from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealt falsely." Yet, in the midst of such conditions this honest, straightforward young man stood for everything pure and good as far as his influence could go. Straightforwardness was his distinguishing trait. When you can say of one, "He is a straightforward sort of a fellow," you mean you can depend on him; you know where to find him; he is not running around corners to dodge responsibility, nor to hide things he is afraid or ashamed to have seen. Josiah "turned not aside to the right hand nor to the left." That was a great thing to say when from the prophet to the priest every one dealt falsely. It was not easy even for a king to stand in the face of a universal opposing sentiment. When

kings became unpopular the people thought nothing of putting them out of the way.

So there must have been good moral fiber in Josiah. Somewhere, by some hand (let us hope by his mother, for it seems as if that privilege belongs first to mothers), good seed had been sown in the boy's heart. When he was sixteen he gave himself to God of his own will and purpose; and when he was twenty he was a strong force against the prevailing sins of the day.

The kings of Israel and Judah speak straight to you, young people! Most of them began to reign before they were twenty, very few after thirty. The determining influence of character was fixed in early youth. Each one was bad or good according to his own choice. Character is not necessarily a matter of environment. "The masses" do not make men; individual men make up the masses.

It is a delusion to think youth may sow "wild oats," and later years reap a good harvest. Manasseh, though sincerely repentant, was never able to kill out the wild-oat harvest. It grew after he was dead. The business, literary, and religious world agree in their testimony; the careless reckless, lawless boy never, or rarely, makes the successful, useful man; the indifferent student never makes the strong thinker or writer; the boy or girl who turns away from God does not make, in later years, the wise, influential Christian.

Said Uncle Eben, "They once wuz a boy got lost; got off the trail chasin' a butterfly, and got lost." Ah, yes! more than one has got lost that way. Keep on "the trail"—the path of faith, obedience, duty; the straight way that

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