

Our Young Folks.

STRIVE WITH A PURPOSE.

Strive with an earnest purpose,
In every task to excel;
That which is worth the doing,
Is worth the doing well.
Where there's the will for winning,
Surely the way will come;
That which is worth beginning
Is well worth being done.

Think that however humble
Tasks which around you lie,
Half-hearted work will ever
Yield but a poor reply:
Then let us strive with fervour,
Toil with whole-hearted zest;
That which is worth the doing
Is worth our very best.

—Mary L. Warner.

MAGNANIMITY.

That is a very big word for little people but it has a very simple meaning. It means largeness of mind, soul-greatness, loftiness of purpose. A magnanimous person is above every thing little, low, and mean. He is above doing an unkind act because somebody has mistreated him. Such a man takes no notice of small offences. He does not bear a grudge against any body, and never tries to take revenge. A man with a big soul is always quiet in a storm of trouble. He never gets discouraged because people misunderstand him and he keeps calm when men try to harm him. A great hearted man does good to those who do him wrong. Shall I tell you about a little boy who had a big heart? Henry Gray was his name. He lived in a large city and was every day thrown into the society of a great many other boys. He was high tempered, but he had a strong will and whenever he was insulted he would say to himself: "Now, that is a little thing and I will lose control of my temper on account of it. I will not stoop to return angry words for angry words but I will try soft answers and see if they will not turn away wrath. I will not allow myself to hate anybody and I will never do a mean thing because another boy has been mean to me." Henry's school-mates respected him but they thought he was unmanly. They told lies about him, but he took no notice of them. He would not say unkind things about those who talked unkindly about him but he would say and do good things about his enemies. It took people a long time to learn all about his noble nature, but he did not mind that. He would say when abused and insulted that he must have peace with his own conscience even if every body turned against him. It shows a little soul to be always fretting and writhing under trouble. Great minds are too busy with great thoughts and deeds to be annoyed much by small insults. The great men of the world have always been misrepresented and misunderstood, but they have lived grandly notwithstanding. Small, vulgar minds are always full of anxiety and trouble, and are afraid they will be misunderstood; but the great soul always has a brave heart. He keeps right on his way when everybody turns against him. He never worries about what people in the street will say about him. He just leaves everything in the hands of God, who never lets anything but good come to any of his children who love and trust in Him. A large-minded person knows that nothing evil can last long. He cares but little for a great name. He walks with uprightness of heart, and looks ahead for his reward. Such was the life of Henry Gray. Such too was the life of the Saviour of men, who has set us the best example of magnanimity.

MOTHER NOT TO BLAME.

Tom had been an idle, careless, mischievous boy in school. He did not mean to be a bad boy, but he wanted to do about as he liked, without seeming to care how much he troubled others by it. He had a seatmate who was quite unlike him, in that he was careful to try to please his teachers.

One day Tom heard the teachers talking about some of their pupils; he heard his own name mentioned, and then that of his seat-mate.

"Jamie must have a very lovely mother, I think," said one; "for he is always so polite and agreeable, and tries very hard to please all who are around him."

"I have heard that Tom Dunn's mother is a good woman," said another, "but I don't see how it is that she has such an unpleasant boy. I think he has a generous nature, and when he likes can show fine manners. It is my opinion his mother tries to teach him just what is right, but he will not listen to her teaching. You know there is many a boy that will go on to destruction in spite of his mother."

Tom had heard enough to make him a miserable boy for the rest of the day; and he had not put conscience away so far but that he could hear a whisper: "You've been a mean boy, and they've laid it all to your mother!"

Now he did really love his mother, and could not bear the thought that he had brought discredit upon her name. After school that night he lingered until the others had passed out, and, going up to his teacher, he said slowly, and as if he hardly knew how to say it: "I want to tell you—that—that mother isn't a bit to blame. Don't lay it to my mother—all my bad ways, I mean."

I don't think Tom thought at all what a brave thing he was doing; he did not think of anything but the wish to defend his mother; but when the teacher took his hand and said: "Your mother must be a brave lady, Tom, for her boy has shown himself brave to-night, and I shall expect good things from him in the future;" he thought, "I wonder if the other boys know that, good or bad, all they do is laid to their mothers."

PRAYING AND DOING.

"Bless the poor children who haven't got any beds to-night," prayed a little boy, just before he lay down in his nice, warm cot on a cold, windy night.

As he rose from his knees his mother said: "You have just asked God to bless the poor children: what will you do to bless them?"

The boy thought a moment. "Why, if I had a hundred cakes, enough for all the family, I would give them some."

"But you have no cakes; what, then, are you willing to do?"

"When I get money enough to buy all the things I want, and have some over, I will give them some."

"But you haven't enough money to buy all you want and perhaps never will have; what will you do to bless the poor now?"

I will give them some bread."

"You have no bread—the bread is mine."

"Then I could earn money and buy a loaf myself."

"Take things as they now are—you know what you have that is your own; what are you willing to give to help the poor?"

The boy thought again. "I'll give them half my money, I have seven pennies; I'll give them four. Wouldn't that be right?"

I LOVE THE BIBLE.

It has been said that a pebble in a stream may change the course of the brook, so a single act of faithfulness on the part of one of God's children may change the current of human life.

When Mr. Hone, who wrote the "Every-day Book," and was of sceptical views, was travelling through Wales he stopped at a cottage to ask for a drink of water, and a little girl answered him: "Oh, yes sir; I have no doubt mother will give you some milk. Come in."

He went in and sat down. The little girl was reading the Bible. Mr. Hone said: "Well, my little girl, are you getting your task?"

"No, sir; I am not," she replied; "I am reading the Bible."

"Yes," said he, "you are getting your task out of the Bible."

"Oh, no," she replied, "it is no task to read the Bible; I love the Bible."

"And why do you love the Bible?" said he.

Her simple, childlike answer was: "I thought everybody loved the Bible."

Her own love to the precious volume had made her innocently believe that everybody else was equally delighted to read God's Word. Mr. Hone was so touched with the sincerity of that expression that he read the Bible himself, and instead of being an opponent to the things of God, came to be a friend of divine truth.

THE CAMEL AND THE MILLER.

Did you ever hear the fable of the camel and the miller? Once a miller was waked up by his camel trying to get its nose into the tent. "It's cold out here," said the camel, "I only want to stick my nose in." The miller made no objection. After a while the camel asked leave to have his neck in, then his fore feet; and so, little by little, it crowded in its whole body. This, as you may well think, was very disagreeable to the miller, and he bitterly complained to the forth-putting beast. "If you don't like it you may go," answered the camel. "As for me, I've got possession, and I shall stay." Do you know what that camel was like? Bad habits; little sins. Guard against the first approaches, the most plausible excuses, only the nose of sin. If you do not, you are in danger. It will edge itself slowly in, and you are overpowered before you know it. Be on your guard. Watch.

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LADIES, BE ANIMATED!

The most delightful thing in this world is a pretty, animated woman. She has the effect of a ray of sunshine wherever she goes; and every person likes her. In the social world such a woman will always be a success, because, while society does not require gaiety or mirth, it does most emphatically demand cheerfulness and animation. And those women who have lost their animation by disease will do well to use Beecham's Pills, the great and universal cure for the many weaknesses and irregularities common to women. If your druggist does not keep them a box will be mailed you for 25 cents by B. F. Allen Co., 365 and 367 Canal Street, New York, Sole Agents for the United States.

Sabbath School Teacher.

INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

May 17, 1891.

SIN THE CAUSE OF SORROW.

Hosea 10 1-15.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Your iniquities have separated between you and your God.—Isaiah lix. 2.

INTRODUCTORY.

Hosea prophesied during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah and of Jeroboam, son of Joash, king of Israel. His prophetic career extended therefore over a long term of years. Very little is now known of his life. His father's name was Beeri, and belonged to the kingdom of Israel.

I. **Israel's Sin.**—During the reign of Jeroboam, the kingdom of Israel had attained its greatest material prosperity. Its religious and moral interests, however, showed no corresponding advancement. Instead the people were ever sinking deeper into idolatry. Jehovah, the God of Israel, was still nominally worshipped, but it was with heathen rites, and all the abominations attendant on the worst forms of heathenism were common among the people. The prophetic denunciations against the iniquities of the people make it clear that injustice, cruelty and oppression were alarmingly prevalent. Every species of wickedness was common. The holy law of God was trampled underfoot. It was Hosea's mission to bring the people to repentance. To effect this he denounced their wickedness, under various images he endeavoured to show them how hateful it was. He made known to them the fulness of the divine mercy and willingness to pardon, if only they would listen to God's message and turn from their sins. He also uses the language of stern rebuke, and warns them faithfully of the evil consequences of their continuance in sinful courses. He opens his prophecy by comparing Israel to a vine—a comparison frequently used in Scripture. It was an empty vine. It had deep roots, wide-spreading branches, abundance of leaves. It was beautiful to look at, but it was virtually useless. Its fruit was for itself. This betokened the outward prosperity of the nation, but the people had only grown the more selfish. God bestows his blessings on men that they might use them aright for His glory and for the good of others. The words of the prophet also indicate that as the people prospered in temporal things, they became more idolatrous and superstitious. "He hath increased their altars." Their idolatrous worship was extended and made more showy, "they have made goodly images." "Their heart is divided." They outwardly professed to worship God, in reality they served Baal. As in Elijah's days, there were some who still halted between two opinions. This profession of service to God and living practically as heathens could not long continue. The national prosperity was beginning to wane when they should "be found faulty," that is, guilty, and their guilt would be brought home to them. Then altars and images were to be thrown down in one common ruin. When calamity came upon the people they would then be convinced of their folly. The anarchy and confusion that followed the overthrow of successive kings brought them to confess that their misfortunes had come upon them because they feared not the Lord. They bewailed the lawless condition into which their land was plunged. They said "We have no king, . . . what then should a king do to us?" Another of their sins is pointed out in that they had been guilty of making rash and sinful engagements, "they have spoken words, swearing falsely in making a covenant." In consequence of this "judgment springeth up as hemlock in the furrows of the field. Sin and its punishment are as inseparable as are cause and effect. The people of Samaria had been proud of the golden calf and the gorgeous temple that had been set up at Bethel, here called Bethaven, signifying instead of the House of God, the House of Vanity. The idols in which the people had reposed their trust would become to them a source of weakness and fear. When Assyria should prevail over Israel the idols would be carried away as spoils of war, as a present to the king. Then the people would understand their own folly and that of their rulers who had established idolatry. Like foam on the water, the monarchy of Israel was to be blown away by Assyria. Aven, that is, Bethel, here described as "the sin of Israel," was to be destroyed and where the idolatrous altars stood should be a scene of desolation, thorns and thistles covering the places where they stood. So terrible would be the sufferings of the people that they would call on the mountains and cry to them "Cover us; and to the hills fall on us," preferring death to the endurance of the miseries that would come upon them. The people had persisted in their sinful ways for a long time. They had gone on in profligacy since the conflict in Gibeah. God had lengthened out the day of mercy to the sinning Israelites. Their condition had been pleasant, temporal prosperity had been given them, but they had continued to transgress and now they are warned that punishment will overtake them if they continue unrepentant.

II. **A Call to Repentance.**—God is infinite in mercy. Judgment is His strange work. Long and determinedly as these people had sinned, an opportunity is still afforded them for escape. Keeping up the agricultural figures already employed, the people are exhorted to "sow to yourselves in righteousness." Unrighteousness had been rampant throughout the land. It was time it should cease. They were urged to live righteously henceforth. The law is unchangeable that what a man sows he will also reap. So if they sow righteousness, they will reap its fruit, mercy. They are also urged to "break up your fallow ground." While they had been pursuing iniquity, they had allowed their better nature to remain uncultivated, and instead of the fair flowers of a good and virtuous life, evil passions like hurtful weeds had flourished there. "It is time to seek the Lord." Long had they disobeyed and forgotten Him. It was now high time to seek His face. There was still time before the threatened judgments would fall. Instead of judgment He was ready to rain righteousness upon them, to send the gentle influences of His grace and spirit that the fruits of righteousness might grow in them. Hitherto they cultivated wickedness and reaped iniquity. They had suffered for their own transgressions and through the iniquity of others. They had eaten the fruit of lies, faithlessness. They had trusted in themselves, in their own devices and in the number of men they could muster in their own defence. Had they trusted in God and served Him, He would have been their protector and then should have been safe. The lesson closes with a definite warning of the awful calamity that was impending over them. Consternation would seize the people of Israel. Their fortresses would be no defence for they were to be spoiled. It is uncertain what the historical reference here is, but it is plain that it means the overthrow would be swift, terrible, disastrous. "The mother was dashed in pieces upon her children." The cause of all these calamities was the sin of idolatry, and the numerous evils that sprang from it. "So shall Bethel do unto you because of your great wickedness." The overthrow would be swift and startling. "In a morning shall the king of Israel utterly be cut off."

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

God's mercy is unwilling to leave people in their sins. He sends His messengers to warn them and point out the way of deliverance.

The Israelites sought to serve both God and idols. It cannot be done. "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon."

False religion produces bad morals. "As men sow they shall also reap."