

Our Heroes.

BY EBEN E. REXFORD.

HERE'S a hand to the boy who has courage
To do what he knows to be right
When he falls in the way of temptation,
He has a hard battle to fight.
Who strives against self and his comrades
Will find a most powerful foe;
All honour to him if he conquers,
A cheer for the boy who says "No!"

There's many a battle fought daily
The world knows nothing about
There's many a brave little soldier
Whose strength puts a legion to rout,
And he who fights single-handed
Is more of a hero, I say,
Than he who leads soldiers to battle,
And conquers by arms in the fray.

Be steadfast, my boy, when you're tempted
To do what you know is not right;
Stand firm by the colours of manhood,
And you will overcome in the fight.
"The right!" be your battle-cry ever
In waging the warfare of life;
And God, who knows who are the heroes,
Will give you the strength for the strife.

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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

Rev. W. H. WILKINSON, D.D., Editor.

TORONTO, FEBRUARY 17, 1894.

WALKING IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF JESUS.

BY REV. W. F. CRAFTS.

Follow Me.—John 1. 43.

WHEN Jesus began to preach, he used to say sometimes to a man whom he would find at his work, "Follow me;" and the man would leave his earthly business to journey with Jesus, and learn of him how to be good and do good. I have sometimes called these two words, "the children's creed." They tell us in eight letters the most important thing about religion, after our sins are forgiven and our hearts are converted—to follow Jesus.

A boy, in one of my Sunday-schools, when he came to die, showed that he had understood what the words meant, for he said, "I have been trying to walk in the footsteps of Jesus." That is what Jesus meant when he told men to follow him. It was not merely to come after him and walk with him, but to try to be like him in thoughts and words and deeds. The disciple that Jesus loved more than any other, because he was the noblest, had for his motto, as we see in his letters, the words, "Even as He;" which meant that in everything he tried to be even as Jesus was.

Being like him means a great deal for a child to-day. A Sunday-school teacher, the Sunday after the lesson on "Following Jesus," said to her class, "What have you done to follow Jesus this week?" One said, "I have prayed." That was a right answer, for Jesus used to pray every day, and sometimes all night. Another answered, "I have read the Bible." That was a true

answer also, for Jesus read the Bible so much that he could repeat a great many verses out of his memory.

A little bootblack blacked a gentleman's boots very nicely, and the gentleman said, "Do you think that will please me?" The boy said, "I don't know; but I think it will please my Father in heaven."

"Poor fellow!" said the gentleman; "then your father is dead, is he?"

"Oh, no," said the boy; "I don't mean that. My Father up in heaven is God."

"Then," said the gentleman, "you think that blacking my boots so nicely will please God, the heavenly Father; do you?"

"Yes," said the boy, "I think God is pleased to have us do everything the best we can."

A curious old woman, having a bundle in her hand, and walking with a painful effort, sat down on a curbstone to rest. She was curious, because her garments were neat and clean, though threadbare, and curious, because a smile crossed her wrinkled face as children passed her. It might have been this smile that attracted a group of three little ones, the oldest about nine. They stood in a row in front of the old woman, saying never a word, but watching her face. The smile brightened, lingered, and then suddenly faded away, and a corner of the old calico apron went up to wipe away a tear. Then the eldest child stepped forward and asked, "Are you sorry because you haven't got any children?"

"I—I had children once, but they are all dead," whispered the woman, a sob in her throat.

"I'm awful sorry," said the little girl, as her own chin quivered. "I'd give you one of my little brothers here, but you see I haven't got but two, and I don't believe I'd like to spare one."

"God bless you, child—bless you forever!" sobbed the old woman; and for a full minute her face was buried in her apron.

"But I'll tell you what I'll do," seriously continued the child. "You may kiss us all once; and, if little Ben isn't afraid, you may kiss him four times, for he's just as sweet as candy?"

Passers by, who saw the three well-dressed children put their arms around that strange old woman's neck and kiss her, were greatly puzzled. They didn't know the hearts of children, and they didn't hear the woman's words as she rose to go: "O children! I'm only a poor old woman, believing I'd nothing to live for; but you've given me a lighter heart than I've had for ten long years!" Those children were following Jesus in comforting the sad.

Every day we should seek to have the mind that was in Christ Jesus, who cared more to please God and do good than for anything else in the world. By-and-bye, those who seek to walk in the footsteps of Jesus here, and who cannot be quite like him in everything, because he did no sin, will see him as he is, and be satisfied as they awake in his likeness.

"I want to be like Jesus,
So lowly and so meek;
For no one marked an angry word
That ever heard him speak?"

A LITTLE ERRAND FOR GOD.

HELEN stood on the door-step with a very tiny basket in her hand, when her father drove up to her and said: "I am glad you are all ready to go out, dear. I came to take you to Mrs. Lee's park and see the new deer."

"Oh, thank you, papa; but I can't go just this time. The deer will keep, and we can go to-morrow. I have a very particular errand to do now," said the little girl.

"What is it, dear?" asked the father.

"Oh, it is to carry this somewhere," and she held up the small basket.

Her father smiled and asked: "Who is the errand for, dear?"

"For my own self, papa; but—oh, no; I guess not—it's a little errand for God, papa."

"Well, I will not hinder you, my little dear," said the good father, tenderly. "Can I help you any?"

"No, sir. I was going to carry my orange, that I saved from the dessert, to old Peter."

"Is old Peter sick?"

"No, I hope not; but he never has any-

thing nice, and he's good and thankful. Big folks give him only cold meat and broken bread, and I thought an orange would look so beautiful and make him so happy! Don't you think that poor well folks ought to be comforted sometimes, as well as the poor sick folks, papa?"

"Yes, my dear; and I think we too often forget them until sickness or starvation. You are right; this is a little errand of God. Get into the buggy, and I will drive you to old Peter's and wait till you have done the errand, and then shew you the deer. Have you a pin, Helen?"

"Yes, papa; here is one."

"Well, here is a \$5 bill for you to fix on the skin of the orange. This will pay old Peter's rent for four weeks, and perhaps this will be a little errand for God, too," said the gentleman.

Little Helen, who had taught a wise man a wise lesson, looked very happy as her fingers fixed the fresh bill on the orange. —*Domestic Journal.*

BURDETTE'S MESSAGE TO BOYS.

My boy, the first thing you want to learn—if you haven't learned how to do it already—is to tell the truth. The pure, sweet, refreshing, wholesome truth. The plain, unvarnished, simple, everyday, manly truth. For one thing, it will save you so much trouble. O, heaps of trouble! And no end of hard work. And a terrible strain upon your memory. Sometimes—and when I say sometimes, I mean a great many times—it is hard to tell the truth the first time. But when you have told it, there is an end of it. You have won the victory; the fight is over. Next time you tell the truth you can tell it without thinking. Your memory may be faulty, but you tell your story without a single lash from the stinging whip of that stern old taskmaster, conscience. You don't have to stop and remember how you told it yesterday. You don't get half through with the awful sense upon you that you are not telling it as you did the other time, and cannot remember just how you did tell it then. You won't have to look around to see who is there, before you begin to tell it. After Ananias told a lie, his wife had to tell another just like it. You see, if you tell lies you are apt to get your whole family into trouble.

And then it is so foolish for you to lie. You cannot pass a lie off for the truth, any more than you can get counterfeit money into circulation. The leaden dollar is always detected before it goes very far. When you tell a lie, it is known. Yes, you say, God knows it. That's right; but he is not the only one. So far as God's knowledge is concerned, the liar doesn't care very much. He doesn't worry about what God knows—if he did, he wouldn't be a liar; but it does worry a man or boy who tells lies to think that everybody else knows it. The other boys know it; your teacher knows it; people who hear you tell "whoppers" know it; your mother knows it, but she won't say so. And all the people who know it, and don't say anything about it to you, talk about it to each other, and—dear! dear! the things they say about a boy who is given to telling big stories. If he could only hear them, it would make him stick to the truth like flour to a miller.

And, finally, if you tell the truth always, I don't see how you are going to get very far out of the right way. And how people do trust a truthful boy! We never worry about him when he is out of sight. We never say: "I wonder where he is! I wish I knew what he is doing! I wonder who he is with! I wonder why he doesn't come home!" Nothing of the sort. We know that he is all right, and that when he comes home we will know all about it, and get it straight. We don't have to ask him where he is going, and how long he will be gone, every time he leaves the house. We don't have to call back and make him "solemnly promise" the same thing over and over two or three times. When he says, "Yes, I will;" or "No, I won't," just once, that settles it. We don't have to cross-examine him when he comes home, to find out where he has been. He tells us once, and that is enough. We don't have to say, "Sure?" "Are you sure now?" when he tells anything. But, my boy, you can't build up that reputation by merely telling the truth about half of the time, nor two-thirds, nor three-fourths, nor nine-tenths of the time. If it brings punishment upon you while the

liar escapes; if it brings you into present disgrace while the smooth-tongued liars are exalted; if it loses you a good position; if it degrades you in the class; if it stops a week's pay—no matter what punishment it may bring upon you, tell the truth.

All these things will soon be righted. The worst whipping that can be laid on a boy's back won't keep him out of the water in swimming time more than a week; but a lie will burn more than fifty years. Tell the truth for the sake of the truth, and all the best people in the world will love and respect you, and all the liars will respect and hate you. —*Ladies' Home Journal.*

ST. CHRISTOPHER.

Did you ever hear the story of St. Christopher, my Juniors? The story is not true, but it teaches a beautiful lesson. Here it is.

Christopher was a very strong man, whose business it was to take people across a very swift river. One night, in the midst of a terrible storm, a little child came to his door.

"Please carry me over to the other side," begged the child.

"Impossible," said Christopher. "See how dark the night is, and how wild the storm, and how angry the current."

But the child begged and begged, until at last Christopher told him to get up on his back, and he would see what could be done. Bravely he stepped off into the raging river, with the little boy on his back. But as he went on, the little boy began to grow heavier. Light as a feather at first, before Christopher had reached the middle of the stream the burden on his back was as of a full-grown man, and before he had gone three-fourths of the way the burden became more than the weight of the heaviest man in the world, so that Christopher, great giant as he was, could not stand up under it.

Then Christopher knew that it was neither boy nor man he was carrying, but the Lord Jesus Christ.

"Save me, Master," he cried, "for I am sinking!"

So the Lord Jesus picked up the giant who had been carrying him, and bore him safely back to his hut, and so the kind ferryman became St. Christopher, for the word "Christopher" means, you know, "Christ-bearer."

This story is not true, I said, but it teaches a true lesson, which is this: Jesus does place burdens upon his children. Often he makes them light at first, but they grow heavier and heavier and heavier. Often we do not know that Jesus is in the burden we are carrying, and often we feel like giving up. But Jesus is there, and if we will only ask him, he will pick up both us and our burden, and carry us to a place of safety and happiness. —*Golden Rule.*

LAUGHTER AND TEARS.

LAUGHTER and Tears met one day in a shady lane. The sunshine and shade mingled pleasantly there, and the breath of the woods was strong in the air, as was also the fragrance of the clover field near by. But the lane was all too narrow to allow both to pass, for Laughter was boisterous, and romped about so much that he took up a deal of room; while Tears seemed to be half blind and could scarcely see her way.

She said, in a voice like the song of a night-bird:

"Why don't you let me pass? This is my path?"

"No," replied Laughter, "this lane is mine, and I'm in a hurry, so you had better climb the fence into the dark woods and walk through the dead leaves."

"Why don't you climb the other fence?" said Tears, softly, "and run along through the clover, in the sunshine? I'm sure you'd like it better."

"Well," rejoined Laughter, pleasantly, "I'm sure I don't want to quarrel with so gentle a maiden, and so, as we don't seem able to agree about the path, suppose I turn about and go with you?"

"That would be very pleasant, indeed," said Tears, "for I am lonely."

So they went on together through the twinkling shine and shadow, and each felt better for the company of the other.

And that is why it is that when you meet Laughter you are almost sure to find Tears not far away.