

BOYS AND MEN.

You are boys now, but you soon will be men. Then you will have your own way to make in the world. Do you mean to be idle and fretful, and deceive people, and give them a bad opinion of you? Or do you intend to go to work, and act bravely and nobly, and do your duty, and leave a name behind you when you die which the world will love and respect? Take care, now is the time! Did you ever notice a large tree that grew crooked, and was an ugly eyesore on that account? Perhaps it stood on the lawn, right in front of the porch, and your father would have liked very much to straighten it. It was impossible to do so. A hundred horses could not have dragged it erect. And yet think of the time when the large tree was a small sapling; a child might have straightened it then, and it would have grown properly, and everyone would have admired it. By this I mean that boys ought to grow straight, not crooked. You are young now, as the tree was once; begin in time, and you will be as straight as an arrow when you are a man. If you wait, it will be too late. The way to make men erect and noble, is to take them when they are boys and show them that there is nothing in this world so noble as doing their duty. Once more I say, remember that though you are boys now, you will be men soon.

You may do good or evil. If you are false and worthless, you and everybody else will have a hard time of it. You may be soldiers, judges, statesmen and presidents. What you say or do may decide the fate of millions of other people. These will look to you; and more than all, God will watch you, and hold you to a strict account. If you are brave, and true, and unselfish, heaven will bless you, and everyone who knows you will love and respect you. If you are mean and cowardly, and think of nothing but your own pleasure, God and man will be displeased with you. Which will you be? The best of all things is to be pure and do your duty.

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WHAT BECAME OF A DISHONEST BOY.

Let me tell you of a boy, whom we shall call Ned, who wanted to go to the show that came to the town in which he was living. His father could not go, and so put him off. The next day Ned coaxed to be taken to the show, but his father told him to go to school, and he would call for him if he went. Ned thought he only wanted to put him off again, and did not expect him to call for him. So he took some money, played truant, and went to the show. His father called at the schoolhouse for him, and then went to the show. There he saw Ned with some bad boys, but he said nothing. In the evening he asked his son if he was at school. "O yes, sir!" but he knew he was telling a lie. You see how sins go together; one leads to another. He disobeyed, then he stole, played

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truant, and lied to conceal his sin. He soon saw that his father knew all about it. He knew he deserved to be punished, so he thought he would confess it and escape. But the confession that is made merely to escape punishment doesn't amount to much. The sorrow for sin, that doesn't lead us to forsake it, and do better, is a sham. His father said he would have to tell the teacher, and let him punish him as he thought best. Ned felt that would be a disgrace before the school to which he was not willing to submit, so he ran off.

After a few weeks he was brought home, forgiven, and restored to his old place in the home. Then he was sent to school in a neighbouring town. He did not like it there, so he ran off again. This time he was six months. He changed his name so that he would not be known, but he got into trouble for which he would have to go to prison, unless he had some one to help him. Now, the poor rebel against his parents had to tell his name and who his father was. As soon as his father heard it, he came and helped him out of his trouble, and took him home again.

You would expect him to be a kind and dutiful son after that, wouldn't you? But he was not. He went from one thing to another, he took step after step in his disobedient way, until he was in the prison, where he told the chaplain that he was suffering the just punishment of heaven. How ungrateful is disobedience! It will wound and crush the heart of the kindest parent on earth. A noble-hearted boy would deny himself anything, and a loving, dutiful girl would make any sacrifice, to gratify a kind parent.

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