

tral worship. The lascivious rites of the old religion were liable to creep into the ritual of these open air sanctuaries, and Jehovah was conceived as only on a level with the gods that He had supplanted. The worship of Jehovah on the high places had been tolerated and countenanced by the best

men in Israel down to the building of the temple, but under Hezekiah and Josiah it was seen that the life of the national religion demanded their utter destruction. So the idolatrous priests were slain, the priests of Jehovah removed to Jerusalem, and the shrines hopelessly desecrated.

APPLICATION

He did that which was right . . . and declined neither to the right hand, nor to the left, v. 2. On a notable occasion in his public life, John

Bright said: "I asked my calm judgment and my conscience what was the part I ought to take. They pointed it out to me, as I think, with an unerring finger; and I am endeavoring to follow it." Loyalty to the right as God sees and reveals it, is the only sound rule of life, and it is a rule to be adopted from the very start. One is never too young to take a firm stand against evil and to be out-and-out on the Lord's side. The boy of eight years or less may be a moral hero as truly as the man of forty or sixty. Heroism belongs to every age and position in life.

He began to purge . . . Judah . . . from the high places, v. 3. The patronage of rich and powerful men cannot make a wrong thing right. Josiah found in Jerusalem altars erected by the kings of Judah, high places left by Solomon, carved images in the temple that were associated with names of rank and influence; but evil is just as really evil when wrought by a king as when wrought by the most common offender. We should never hesitate for a moment to set our face against ways and customs which are God-dishonoring, even though they may be in favor with the leaders of society and fashion. Whatever pushes the Most High from His place of majesty and authority should find in each of us an active opponent.

Cut down all the idols, v. 7. "I expect to go as a missionary", said a student at Yale to a little company of fellow students. "Well", exclaimed another, "if you go, remember, I want the first peck of idols you get the heathen to give up." By and by the student went to Japan. There he found the people wor-

shipping everything one can think of,—the sun, the moon, waterfalls, heroes both living and dead, bits of paper, idols great and small. One evening, in an address to an assembly of Japanese who had been won to Christianity, he said, "I wish some of you Christians would bring me some of the gods you have thrown away. I should like to send them to America, to give some people there the benefit of foreign travel." Next morning one of the Christians sent about a peck of idols that had been worshiped in the family for many years. There are millions in the world still who bow down to wood and stone. We can all be missionaries and reformers in one way or another, and thus help to reduce the number of idols and idol worshipers and increase the number who worship the true God.

They delivered the money . . . put it in the hand of the workmen, vs. 9, 10. Lady Huntingdon, an English countess of the eighteenth century, sold all her jewels, and by the proceeds erected chapels for the poor. She purchased theatres, halls and dilapidated chapels in London, Bristol and Dublin, and fitted them up for public worship. She gave away for religious purposes more than \$500,000. All we have is from God; and we, too, should give of our means for the repairing and building up of the temple of a redeemed humanity. No other investment that we can make will yield so rich returns.

The men did the work faithfully, v. 12. Froude, in a fable, tells of a cat, fat and lazy in a luxuriant home, who was so dissatisfied that she concluded to make a journey and try to find out how to be happy. She saw a bird singing on a limb, an ox lying contentedly in the pasture, a bee sucking honey from a bell-shaped flower. They all told her that

From the
Very Start

Might Does Not
Make Right

All From God

Which Was
Right?