

## Our Young Folks.

### MY KINGDOM.

A little kingdom I possess,  
Where thoughts and feelings dwell;  
And very hard I find the task  
Of governing it well.

For passion tempts and troubles me,  
A wayward will misleads;  
And selfishness its shadow casts  
On all my will and deeds.

How can I learn to rule myself  
To be the child I should,  
Honest and brave, nor ever tire  
Of trying to do good?

How can I keep a sunny soul  
To shine along life's way?  
How can I tune my little heart  
To sweetly sing all day?

Dear Father! help me with the love  
That casteth out my fear!  
Teach me to lean on Thee, and feel  
That Thou art very near.

That no temptation is unseen,  
No childish grief too small,  
Since Thou, with patience infinite,  
Dost soothe and comfort all.

I do not ask for any crown  
But that which I may win,  
Nor try to conquer any world  
Except the one within.

Be Thou my guide until I find,  
Led by a tender hand,  
My happy kingdom in myself  
And dare to take command.

—Louisa Alcott.

### ON TRUTHFULNESS.

Above all things tell no untruths, no, not in trifles. The custome of yit is naughte, and let yit not satisfie yow that for a time the hearers take it for truthe, for after, yit well be known as yit is, to your shame."—From a letter of Sir Henry Sidney's to his "little Philippe."

Jennie and I were reading together the life of Sir Philip Sidney, and we came to the passage which I have quoted above in a quaint and beautiful letter which was written to Sir Philip when he was a little boy at school by his father. When I had read to the end of the sentence I paused.

"I wish," said I, "that I could print that sentence in letters of gold upon the walls of every school room in the land. I wish I could tell it to every boy and girl whom I know, and make them feel its force."

"Why," said Jennie, in a surprised way; "do you think boys and girls are so untruthful?"

"I am sorry to say it," I answered, "but I think a good many of them are not perfectly truthful."

"I never told a lie in my life," said Jennie, proudly; "and I know plenty of other girls who never did, either."

"I am sure, Jennie," I answered, "that if you discovered that you had made a misstatement about anything you would at once correct it, but was it not you who gave Maggie Upjohn no less than five correct dates in her history examination, and helped her on two examples, and let her copy from your definitions beside?"

"Well," said Jennie, "yes, I did, but I don't call that anything."

"Did Mrs. Annersley know it?" I asked.

"Of course not."

"Would she have allowed Maggie's examination to pass if she had?"

"Certainly not," answered Jennie. "I see what you are aiming at, Miss Margaret; of course I would not accept any help on my examinations, but the girls would have thought me awfully mean if I had refused to help Maggie."

"That is where the school girl's code of morals is often defective," said I. "You helped Maggie to do what you knew to be wrong, and what you would not do yourself because the girls would think you mean if you didn't. To put it in plain English, you helped Maggie to deceive your teacher, and what is that but untruthfulness? It is not always that one can trace the consequences of such a deceit, but in this case the effect is very plain. Maggie did not gain her promotion by honest work, and therefore she will not be able to keep her position in her class. Mrs. Annersley was speaking to me of her yesterday. She said Maggie had been so idle that she was surprised at her being able to win a promotion, and that she was evidently unable to keep her new position now she had it, and she should be obliged to put her back where she was before. That will be a just punishment for Maggie, but," said I pausing, and speaking gently, "how will the girl who helped her to commit the fraud be punished?"

"Dear me, Miss Margaret," said Jennie, "you do call things by such dreadfully plain names. I suppose now, that I cannot rest till I have been to Mrs. Annersley and told her about it."

"You forget that you will be obliged to involve Maggie in your confession," said I. "'Never tell on a school-mate,' was one maxim of my code when I was a school girl, and it is a rule that I still believe in."

"Mrs. Annersley never wants us to tell on each other," said Jennie, quickly. "I will tell her about it, but I will not mention Maggie's name, of course. It was a mean thing to do," said Jennie, reflectively, "a very mean thing, for Mrs. Annersley always puts us on our honour during examinations, and then trusts us perfectly. I will never do such a thing again."

Exaggeration is a very prevalent form of untruthfulness, and it is a fact that a person who long indulges in the habit, becomes at last incapable of telling the truth. The moral vision becomes so blurred that one is unable to perceive the outlines of any truth clearly, and to present it as it is.

Pretence is only another form of untruthfulness. How many a school girl pretends to be brighter and better than she really is—pretends to a genuine knowledge when she has only a smattering—pretends to qualities which she never possessed, and to virtues which she never practised.

Ah, if people could realize how useless such things really are; for we are always estimated at our true value in this world. We can deceive no one for long. It is only by being genuinely noble and good and true that we can win love and trust and honour in return, and such a character is not built easily or soon.

Once some One lived in this world for more than thirty years as boy and man, and one of His names was Truth. He felt every temptation that can come to boys and girls, and He resisted them all, and if we watch Him closely and try to model our lives after His, we have His promise that we shall succeed. "We shall be like Him," and there is no other way than this by which we can attain perfect truth and honour.

### MUST AND MUSN'T.

"A fellow can't have any fun," growled Tom. "It's just must and musn't from morning till night. You must do this, you must learn that; or you musn't go there, you musn't say that, and you musn't do the other thing. At school you're just tied right up to rules, and at home—well, a shake of mother's head mean's more than a dozen musn'ts. Seems a pity a boy can't have his own way half the time, and do something as he likes."

"Going to the city this morning, Tom?" asked Uncle Thed from the adjoining room.

"Why, of course," answered Tom, promptly.

"Going across the common?"

"Yes, sir; always do."

"I wish you'd notice those young trees they've been setting out the last year or two. Of course the old trees will die sooner or later, and others will be needed, but—well, you just observe them rather carefully, so as to describe their appearance, etc."

"What about those trees, Tom?" asked Uncle Thed after tea, as they sat on the piazza.

"Why, they're all right; look a little cramped to be sure, snipped short off on top, and tied up to poles, snug as you please, every identical twig of them; but that's as it should be, to make them shipshape—don't you see? They can't grow crooked if they would. They'll make as handsome trees as ever you saw, one of these days. Haven't you noticed the trees in Mr. Benson's yard—tall and scraggly and crooked, just because they were left to grow as they pleased. The city fathers now don't propose to run any risks—"

"But I wonder how the trees feel about the must and musn't," remarked Uncle Thed, dryly.

Exit Tom, wishing he had not said quite so much on the subject of trees—and boys.

### PRESERVE YOUR INDIVIDUALITY.

Young people, preserve, each of you, your individuality. In these days you read and hear much of what the Epworth League or the Christian Endeavour Society or this or that other organization can do. Its design, its plan, its possibilities, its prospects and its success are held up to view, while every argument is brought to bear to interest you in its work. There can be no obligation to this so long as the organization is held subservient to these ends which ought to engage the attention and enlist the energies of every young Christian regardless of this relation to any other organization whatever. But the great question with every young person should be, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" If society or league or even Church can occasionally be put out of mind, together with all vows, pledges and rules and all associate work, and you forget all else in your sense of individual responsibility to God, you will find strength and guidance as you will not when sensible only of your share of a responsibility common to the membership of a society. You are your own president, your own director, your own secretary. And you are responsible directly to Him who loved you and died for you. "One is your Master, even Christ." Be sure of His will concerning you. Get your commands from Him.

This does not mean, as we have intimated, that you necessarily lose individual force through your membership in any organization; but it does imply that you are exposed to a danger in this direction. With a keen sense of your personal relation to God, your relation to others with whom you are associated in Christian work, as you are associated with the Church itself, will be helpful. But look first and always Godward, and make sure that you are not so depending upon the support and inspiration of your associations as to lose a keen sense of your individuality in the service of the Master.

## Sabbath School Teacher.

### INTERNATIONAL LESSONS

Nov. 9, 1890. } JESUS BEFORE PILATE AND HEROD. { Luke 23: 1-12.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Then said Pilate to the chief priests and to the people, I find no fault in this Man.—Luke xxiii. 4.

#### INTRODUCTORY.

In the early morning the Jewish Council had condemned Jesus on the charge of blasphemy, but since at that time they had no authority to execute the death sentence, they sent Him to Pilate, the Roman procurator. There they brought a different charge against Him, knowing that they could not get the Roman official to endorse the sentence they had pronounced.

I. Jesus Before Pilate.—The members of the Council and the spectators present on the conclusion of the proceedings hastened with Jesus to the judgment hall of Pilate, who was then in the city. The place where the examination took place was most likely a room in the Castle of Antonia, the tower of which overlooked the precincts of the Temple. Pontius Pilate had been governor of Judea for about four years before this most memorable event in his administration took place. He had by arbitrary and thoughtless actions several times roused the resentment of the Jewish people. He would no doubt be desirous of conciliating them at this time if he thought he could do so with safety. They had before this sent complaints against him to Rome. The headquarters of the Roman authority were at Cesarea, but it was Pilate's custom to visit Jerusalem during the great festivals of the Jewish year. So he is found in the city in the early morning. The members of the Council did not enter Pilate's judgment hall. The traditional custom of guarding against defilement during the Passover celebration prevented them from going into any place belonging to Gentiles. Their scrupulous observance of outward acts contrasts strangely with their hypocrisy and malice in seeking by all means to compass the death of Jesus. In their accusation of Christ they say nothing to Pilate about the charge they had brought against Him in their own Council. That would not have served their purpose. Blasphemy was not an offence punishable by Roman law, so they charge Him with offences that Pilate would regard as dangerous. First it is brought against Him that He was an agitator of sedition. "We found Him perverting the nation." This was as false and groundless as all the other charges they brought, only if they could induce Pilate to believe it they would accomplish their object. Next to deepen the impression of His supposed guilt they add that He forbade the giving of tribute to Caesar. This was a point on which the Jews were sensitive, and it would weigh seriously with Pilate. It has to be remembered that instead of giving any colour for such an accusation Jesus, when asked with a sinister purpose by an enemy whether it was lawful to give tribute to Caesar, replied: "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's." The last part of their accusation was that Christ claimed to be king. This Pilate could not understand in any other sense than that He claimed earthly sovereignty. So he asks Him: "Art Thou the king of the Jews?" Christ's answer, however, convinced Pilate that His kingdom was not of this world. In his conversation with Jesus the Roman governor is convinced that He is innocent. He returns to the crowd standing without and says to them: "I find no fault in this Man." This is clear testimony to the innocence of Christ and all the more remarkable considering the source whence it comes. His accusers only become more fierce and determined, and refer again to what they termed the seditious character of His teaching. He had gone over the whole country from Galilee to Jerusalem. The mention of Galilee reminds Pilate that if He is a Galilean then He belongs to Herod's jurisdiction, and by sending Jesus to him there may be a way for His deliverance opened up.

II. Jesus Before Herod.—Herod Antipas was governor of Galilee and Perea. His palace was at Tiberias, but he doubtless had a residence in Jerusalem. He was a Jew by profession and was present at the Feast of the Passover. It was the same Herod who had been reproved for his wickedness by John the Baptist, whom he had subsequently beheaded. Herod had often heard of Jesus, but he had not hitherto seen Him. When He was thus sent into his presence he was exceeding glad. He had been desirous and curious to see Him. It was, however, in his case a purposeless curiosity. After John had been beheaded, when he had heard of Christ, he was afraid that it was John risen from the dead. He heard of His wonderful works, and "he hoped to have seen some miracle done by Him." This desire, however, remained ungratified. Herod eagerly put question to Him after question, but Jesus remained silent. He never wrought miracles for the purpose of gratifying merely human curiosity. They were for a different and a higher purpose. "He answered him nothing." The chief priests and the scribes were vehement in their accusations. They were determined that He should be condemned, and as they had up to the present failed with Pilate, they were all the more anxious that Herod should be influenced against Him. Herod is apparently less conscientious than the Procurator of Judea. Pilate hesitated, and was anxious to save Jesus from the malice of His enemies, but Herod had no such desire. Together with the officers surrounding him he indulged in cruel mockeries, which gratified his own frivolous nature, and would, he thought, be pleasing to the accusers of Jesus. "He arrayed Him in a gorgeous robe," thus seeking to bring His kingly claims into contempt. The contrast between the lowly guise of Jesus and what He claimed to be was striking in the extreme, but Herod had no comprehension of it, and he is ready to join in the coarsest mockery with those around him. After this display of a weak and childish spirit Herod sends Jesus back to Pilate. So far as the Galilean governor is concerned the question of life and death is a matter of indifference. If Jesus is condemned it is no concern of his. At all events he does not pass a sentence of condemnation. In sending Him back to Pilate it is a virtual acquittal of the charges brought against Jesus. The responsibility of finally disposing of the case judicially is again cast upon Pilate. The two governors had been at variance. Something had come between them and interrupted their friendship. Pilate evidently had desired to be again on good terms with his neighbour, and had made the first advance. He had no doubt thought that by sending Jesus to Herod he might accomplish a twofold object. It was possible that the governor of Galilee would acquit Jesus, whom, in his conscience, he believed to be innocent. The delicate recognition of Herod's authority in the matter would possibly remove any resentment he might still cherish. So it proved. Herod did not liberate Jesus, but sent Him back to Pilate, but he appreciated the courtesy of the Roman Procurator, "and that same day Pilate and Herod were made friends together."

#### PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

The murderous intent of the Jewish rulers was very determined. They were prepared in the most unscrupulous manner to carry out their purpose. An evil design and wicked methods for its accomplishment usually go together.

It is always dangerous when weakness and wickedness go together. The wickedness is sure to overcome the weakness. Pilate did not wish to condemn Jesus, but he had not the moral courage to release Him.

Herod, who had slain John the Baptist, added to his guilt by neglecting the opportunity of delivering the Innocent One from the malice of His enemies.