

Our Young Folks.

BE IN TIME.

Be in time for every call;
If you can be first of all—
Be in time.
If your teachers only find
You are never once behind,
But are like the dial, true,
They will always trust to you—
Be in time.

"Never linger ere you start;
Set out with a willing heart—
Be in time.
In the morning up and on,
First to work and soonest done;
That is how the goal's attained,
That is how the prize is gained—
Be in time.

A LITTLE BLACK HERO.

Some of you have hard words to bear at times because you love the Lord Jesus. But in some parts of the world people who say they believe in Him are beaten cruelly and even put to death.

In Central Africa, a few years ago, some boys were burned to death by order of the king because they were Christians. Yet in spite of this a boy of about sixteen years was brave enough to wish to become a Christian. He came to the missionary and said in his own language:

"My friend, I wish to be baptized."

"Do you know what you are asking?" said the missionary in surprise.

"I know, my friend."

"But if you say you are a Christian they will kill you."

"I know, my friend."

"But if they ask you if you are a Christian, will you tell a lie and say 'No'?"

Bravely and firmly came the boy's answer: "I shall confess, my friend."

A little talk followed in which he showed clearly that he understood what it was to be a Christian, so the missionary baptized him by the name of Samwell, which is the same as our Samuel.

The king found him so useful that he employed him to collect the taxes, which are paid in cowries, little shells in Africa used instead of money.

One day, when he was away on this business, the king again got angry with the Christians, and ordered that all the leading ones should be killed. Samwell's name was found upon the list. As he came back he heard of the death that was awaiting him. That night, when it was quite dark, the missionary was awakened by a low knocking at the door. It was Samwell and his friends, come to know what he should do. Should he run away, or must he go and hand over the money he had collected? After a silence the missionary said:

"Tell me what you think."

Looking up, Samwell replied: "My friend, I cannot leave the things of the king."

His friends earnestly begged him to fly, but the missionary said: "No, he is right. He has spoken well; he must deliver up the money."

They all knelt down in prayer together, the missionary wondering sadly if he should ever see the young hero again.

"My friend, I will try to start early, and leave the cowries with the chief," said the lad, as he set off; "but I fear my carriers will not be ready till after daylight, and if I am seen I shall be caught. Good-bye."

But God kept him. He went boldly to the chief's hut, put down his cowries and walked away. He went a few nights after to tell the missionary, who said: "You ran when you got outside?"

"No, my friend, for I should have been noticed at once. I walked quite slowly until I got out of sight, and then I ran as fast as I could, and so I escaped."

This is a true story, taken from Mr. Ashe's book, "Two Kings of Uganda." It shows the love of Christ can make a boy brave to do his duty even in the face of danger and death. "In the fear of the Lord is strong confidence."

A WISE BOY.

Mr. Hill was busy in his carpenter shop one morning. The door stood open, and he heard a voice outside. He turned and saw a bright-faced boy with a brown suit and a red cap.

"Good morning, my little man," said Mr. Hill. "What can I do for you? Do you want a house or a bridge built?"

"No," said the boy. "We've got a house, and there's a bridge now over the creek. My name's Johnny Jay, and I want those, if you don't want them yourself." He pointed to the shavings which lay under the bench.

"You do, hey? And what will you do with them, Johnny? Build a bonfire?"

"No. I'm going to sell them to old Miss Clark. She'll give me a cent for a basketful."

"Well, I guess you may have them."

So Johnny brought his basket and picked up the shavings. When he was nearly done he saw something bright upon the floor. It was a dime. Johnny had never had more

than a cent at a time in his life. He looked to see if Mr. Hill had seen it; but he had not. Johnny picked up the dime and slipped it into his pocket. He filled his basket, and went out without saying anything to Mr. Hill. But as he was going away he thought:

"This dime isn't mine. It is Mr. Hill's. If I keep it I shall be a thief. But I want it very much. I s'pose Mr. Hill has plenty more dimes. He doesn't know it was on the floor."

And very deep into the little boy's heart came the thought, "What would God say?" He ran back to Mr. Hill and said: "This is yours; I found it on the floor."

Mr. Hill took the money and put it into his pocket. "You are an honest boy," he said. "You may come every day for shavings."

Do you think Mr. Hill ought to have given the dime to Johnny? He thought of it; but then he said to himself:

"I'm not going to pay the little fellow for being honest. He will find pay enough in doing right for its own sake."

And if you had seen Johnny running away with plenty of little skips and shouts you would have said that Mr. Hill was right.

KIND DEEDS.

There is a story told of a little beggar boy who was found, one morning, lying asleep upon a pile of lumber, where he had passed the night. A labouring man, passing by on his way to work, touched with a spirit of kindness, stopped and, opening his dinner pail, laid beside the sleeping boy a portion of the good things in it, and then went on. A man, standing not far off, saw the kindly act, and, crossing over to where the boy lay, dropped a silver half-dollar near the sandwich the labourer had left. Soon a child came running over with a pair of shoes; and thus the good work went on, one bringing some clothing and another something else. By-and-by the boy awoke, and, when he saw the gifts spread around him, he broke down, and, burying his face in his hands, wept tears of thankfulness. Thus did one kind deed inspire others to act of kindness, and sow the seed of much happiness.

TO BOYS COMMENCING BUSINESS.

Be on hand promptly in the morning at your place of business, and make it a point never to be late, and perform cheerfully every duty. Be respectful to your employers and to all in authority over you, and be polite to every one; politeness costs nothing, and it will help you wonderfully in getting along in the world. And above all, be honest and truthful. The boy who starts in life with a sound mind in a sound body, who falls into no bad habits, who is honest, truthful and industrious, who remembers with grateful love his father and mother, and who does not grow away from church and Sabbath school, has qualities of mind and heart that will insure him success to a remarkable degree, even though he is endowed with only ordinary mental capacity; for honour, truth and industry are more than genius.

Don't be foppish in your dress, and don't buy anything before you have the money to pay for it. Shun billiard saloons, and be careful how you spend the evenings. Cultivate a taste for reading, and read only good books. With a love for reading, you will find in books friends ever true and full of cheer in time of gloom, and sweet companionship for lonely hours. Other friends may grow cold and forsake you, but books are always the same. And in closing, boys, I would say again, that with truth, honesty, and a living faith in God, you will succeed.

Honour and shame from no condition rise;
Act well your part; there all the honour lies.

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 am 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.

"I WAS deaf for a year, caused by catarrh in the head, but was perfectly cured by Hood's Sarsaparilla," H. HICKS, Rochester, N.Y.

Sabbath School Teacher.

INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

Dec. 11, 1892. } THE APOSTOLIC COUNCIL. { Acts xv. 12-20

GOLDEN TEXT.—Through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they.—Acts xv. 11.

INTRODUCTORY.

When Paul and Barnabas returned to Antioch in Syria, from their missionary journey in Asia Minor, they gave an account of their labours, detailing the remarkable success they had met with wherever they had preached the Gospel. They also told of the opposition they had to encounter and the persecutions they endured. In the meantime race distinctions had shown themselves in the Christian Church. Those of Jewish origin could not fully agree with Gentile brethren. The Jewish converts thought it necessary for all to enter the Church through the gateway of Judaism, that all should submit to the Mosaic ceremonial. Though mistaken in their view, it can readily be understood why the Hebrew Christians should insist on the imposition of Jewish rites on those who entered the Church from the heathen world. They had been God's chosen people. The religion they had followed had been divinely instituted, and they took it for granted that all its ceremonial observances were binding for all time on all mankind. It was difficult for them to comprehend the fuller, freer and more spiritual character of the religion of Christ, for which the Mosaic dispensation was a preparation. Jewish converts had visited several of the Gentile churches and had disturbed the minds of the people by insisting that the Jewish ritual was binding on them. It was determined that the question should be considered and decided upon by the Mother Church in Jerusalem. For this purpose Paul and Barnabas were sent to lay the matter before what was the first general council of the Christian Church.

I. The Council.—When Paul and Barnabas reached Jerusalem they addressed the assembled Church and gave an account of the progress of the Gospel in the various places they had visited. Among the listeners were some who did not think that these first missionaries had been doing right in receiving Gentiles into the Church on the terms they did. These critics maintained that it was needful to circumcise them and to command them to keep the law of Moses. Then the Church met in council and the whole question was fully and keenly discussed. Then the Apostle Peter followed with an earnest address in favour of receiving the Gentiles without subjecting them to obedience of the Mosaic ritual. The next speakers were Paul and Barnabas, who declared "what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them." When they concluded speaking the venerable Apostle James, the brother of our Lord, and the author of the New Testament epistle bearing his name, pronounced what was accepted as the decision of the Council.

II. The Decision.—James referred to the address that had been delivered by Peter, whom he here calls by his Jewish name, Simeon. The labours of Peter and of Paul and Barnabas had been blessed by many tokens of the divine approbation. The methods they had followed under the Spirit's leading were in accordance with the mind and will of God. It was His purpose "to take out of them a people for His name." These were to enter on the service of God and advance the honour of His name. Not only had this mission to the Gentiles been owned and blessed of God, but it had been clearly foretold in the Scriptures. In proof of this James quotes from the Greek version of the Old Testament a passage from the prophecy of Amos, found in the eleventh and twelfth verses of the ninth chapter of that book. The prophecy refers to the coming and kingdom of the Messiah. After the calamities had fallen upon the Jewish nation for their apostasy, there was to be a restoration. "I will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down." Messiah was to restore the kingdom of God. This restoration was to be the occasion for the extension of the blessings of God's kingdom far beyond the confines of the Jewish race. "That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles upon whom My name is called," saith the Lord, "who doeth all these things. Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world." From this it is evident that the New Testament Church firmly believed that Jesus was the Messiah, that the reference in the words of Amos was to Him, and that the reception of the Gospel by the Gentiles was the beginning of the fulfilment of that prophecy. James then stated the conclusion to which he had come, that it was unnecessary to trouble the Gentile converts by seeking to impose on them the requirements of the Mosaic ceremonial. There were certain practices, injurious to their Christian freedom and growth in grace, which they must be counselled to avoid. They were warned to "abstain from pollutions of idols." It would be wrong for them in any way to countenance idolatry in any form. There must be no compliance with any of its customs. Meats offered in sacrifice were not to be used as food. In matters of common life as well as in religious services they were to abstain from everything that had a suspicion of idolatry about it. Another evil they were rigidly to avoid, the sin of impurity. It was specially needful to counsel the first Gentile converts to special carefulness in this respect. Licentiousness was so inwrought with the ordinary life and the idolatrous worship of the heathen people, that special exhortation was required. Next they were told to abstain from "things strangled and from blood." The eating of blood was forbidden by the Mosaic law. The bodies of animals put to death by strangulation would contain blood. The Gentiles were, therefore, required to make this concession to their Jewish brethren; because unless they did there could be no free and brotherly intercourse among the members of churches where Jews and Gentiles were united in the bonds of the Gospel. It was all the more necessary that the Gentile converts should follow the course here recommended to them, because the Jewish law was read in the synagogues every Sabbath, and these regulations were constantly before the mind of the people.

III. The Deliverance.—In order to reassure the Church at Antioch, the council at Jerusalem decided to send a delegation as well as a written copy of the resolution arrived at. Both were necessary to give full weight and authority to the decision reached. An influential deputation was chosen, that the mind and spirit of the brethren in Jerusalem might be personally communicated to the Christians at Antioch, and the written resolution that its terms might be clearly understood. The apostolic delegation would confirm the resolution, and the resolution would confirm the report of the delegation. The persons selected to convey the greetings of the Council were Paul and Barnabas; men beloved and trusted in the Church at Antioch, and Judas, surnamed Barsabas, and Silas, men trusted and esteemed in the Church at Jerusalem. The result of this action and the delegation appointed was every way satisfactory, for it was received by the Christians at Antioch with great joy.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

Differences of opinion have arisen in the Church in every age. Men do not and cannot think alike on every subject. The Gospel sanctions mental freedom.

Full and free discussion in the truth-seeking spirit is the best way to arrive at right principles of action.

A spirit of conciliation and self-sacrifice is necessary for the promotion of true unity.

Faith in Jesus Christ is the one condition of salvation. Rites and ceremonies cannot take the place of Christ.