

# Our Boys And Girls.

What a friend we have in Jesus! And we listened for the rest— But the little maiden lingered On the words that she loved best.

Soft and low again she murmured— Oh, the love in her sweet voice, Thoughts of friendship dear and holy Made the maiden's heart rejoice.

"What a friend"—and then she faded. And the tears began to fall; "O my Jesus, take me, keep me, For I gladly give my all.

"Every heart beat, every motion, May be Thine to bend and lead; Take me, though a little maiden, Take each thought and word and deed.

"O Thy friendship, holy, precious! Dearer than the whole world wide! O my Jesus, hear me pleading, Keep me ever by Thy side."

E. M., in the Sunday Companion.

## OUR LADY'S PAGE.

M. B., Sister of St. Francis, in the Sunday Companion.

Europe was arming for the ransom of the Holy Sepulchre. It grieved the loving hearts of the faithful followers of Jesus Crucified to know that the land sanctified by His presence was desecrated by the Paynim. France, always chivalrous, Germany, with many of the minor states of Europe, were preparing for the great conflict. The Christian host boasted many valiant and experienced chiefs, but not one of all the number, however, could compete with Richard Lion Heart of England, the bravest royal knight that ever couched a spear. In the ranks of doughty knights and nobles, who formed the train of the champions of Christendom, no one attracted greater admiration than a delicate stripling, fair and beautiful as a painter's dream. He rode right gallantly a milk-white steed. His armor was inlaid with silver, and snowy plumes drooped over his pure brow.

Egbert was Richard's favorite page. When the boy begged so earnestly to be allowed to accompany him to the Holy Land, he smilingly answered: "Prithce, little page, what couldst thou do? I verily believe that thou canst even couch a spear."

"My lord King, try me. I have been practicing diligently with bow and arrow, yea, even with battle-axe, for I long to do battle for the blessed cross."

"My lord," interposed an aged knight, "Egbert can wield the weapons of the spirit right lustily, I ween, and thou knowest he is our Lady's page. I trow his prayers may be as powerful as our good English battle axes."

"Well, boy, if thou canst not fight, thou canst pray, an exercise in which I fear many of us are deficient. We will then e'en take our Lady's page. Her protection availeth more than sword or buckler; that is, if the fair ladies of our court will consent to part from their favorite pupil."

"Oh, my lord King, there is but one Lady whose approval I seek, Mary, our Queen, whose colors I bear."

The brilliant train rode forth; Egbert near the King, his blue eyes glowing with enthusiasm, for was he not to visit the sacred spots consecrated by the footsteps of the Saviour and His sinless Mother? After weeks of weary travel the allied host reached the goal of their fondest hopes. Many bloody battles ensued, in all of which Richard Coeur de Lion was the terror of the heathen and the pride of the Christian warriors. His exploits formed the theme of song throughout Europe, and excited the admiration of the Saracens to such a degree, that they longed to have him at the head of their armies. "With such a leader," exclaimed the Pasha, "we could conquer the world."

Into every battle the delicate young page rode fearlessly with his lord. "For Jesus and Mary!" was his cry, as he dashed into the thickest of the fight. Alas! the scimitar of a grim Turk came crashing down on the boy's helmet. He reeled in the saddle, and before the knights, who, noting his danger, entered to his rescue, could reach him, he was taken prisoner.

His captors bore him from the field and immured him in a dark prison.

"Sweet Lady," murmured the page, "I have fought for Thee, and now I will suffer for Thee."

The Emir having learned that one of the terrible Richard's pages was a prisoner, ordered him to be brought before him. The swarthy Turk looked with admiration on the brave but delicate youth, who bore himself so proudly.

"Say ye that this child was taken, sword in hand?" he asked.

"Assuredly, my lord. He was in the train of the all-conquering Richard, and he was evidently bent on emulating the prowess of his King."

"By the beard of the prophet, a fine, spirited boy! Methinks he would prove a bright ornament of the Sultan's court. He has but to deny Christ and swear allegiance to Mahomet, and his fortune is made. Hark thee, stripling! renounce thy Christ, promise obedience to the law of our prophet, and although taken in arms, we are ready not only to spare thy life, but even to confer on thee wealth and distinction."

The boy looked steadily at the tempter. "Hast thou comprehended my words, boy? Wilt thou become a follower of the great Mahomet, and thus secure life, liberty, and fortune?"

"Knowest thou not that I am a Christian?" asked the page, bravely.

"Thou wert until now. Renounce that godless sect and show thyself a faithful follower of Mahomet, and thou shalt be loaded with wealth and glory."

"Would it not be a grand triumph if he could win over Richard's favorite page? A feat which would render him all the more savage," answered an attendant. "Our men scarcely dare face him now. Death and terror follow in his train."

"We must and shall carry out this design. Speak, gentle youth; a word will gain all," said the Emir, blandly.

"I am a Christian, Emir, and, moreover, Mary's page. I will never prove a renegade," answered Egbert, undauntedly.

"Ah! who is Mary, who has captivated thy young heart? At the court of Saladin are many fair and lovely damsels."

"Mary," interrupted Egbert, indignantly, "is heaven's Queen, the Mother of my Lord and Master, Christ Jesus."

"Silence, boy! Utter not that name! Thou art no longer a Christian. Mahomet—"

"Is a vile impostor!" broke forth the boy, hotly.

"Strike the blasphemer on the mouth for that godless speech; and now young malapert," he continued, while Egbert calmly wiped the blood from his mouth, "renounce thy Christ or die!"

"Most willingly would I shed my blood for my Lord and Saviour, but I shall never become a cowardly apostate."

"Death, young braggart, may not be as sweet as thou dost take it; there are many ways of inflicting it," sneered the Turk.

"Even so, every Christian knight knows how to die for his God and country."

"Take him back to his dungeon and give him the bastinado; that will tame his proud and defiant spirit."

The cruel order was obeyed, and although the torture was excruciating, the page bore it without a groan. After the lapse of a few days the most tempting offers were again renewed, but nothing could win Egbert from the love of Jesus and His Blessed Mother. Various tortures were inflicted, but never a murmur or a sigh could be forced from the youthful champion of the cross. After he had been most cruelly scourged, he was left lacerated and bleeding, without food, to decide as to whether he would propitiate his tormentors by a tardy compliance with their wishes. In case of refusal he was to die forthwith.

Egbert lay on his stony couch, suffering intensely, but as brave and resolute as on the first day of captivity. He turned lovingly to Mary, his sweet patroness, and earnestly implored her aid for the coming trial.

It was night—calm, still night—with the angel-eyed stars keeping vigil o'er the slumbering earth, vigil o'er the far Orient, and night and the starry host looking lovingly down on the fair homes of England. And one there was in that beautiful home beyond the tide—a pale, sad-faced matron, who, no doubt, was even then praying for her absent boy. When, however, she would learn that the son she had dedicated to the service of sinless Mary was enrolled in the gleaming ranks of the crimson-bed martyrs, she would not grieve. Sweet visions of home and friends dawned on the young sufferer. Sweet as they were they could not lure him from duty's path.

"Nay, nay, I will not suffer earthly ties to induce me to waver in the



service of God and my Lady. Oh, sweet Mother, strengthen me that I prove loyal to Thy Blessed Son and Thee to the last moment of my life." Wearied and exhausted by want of food and loss of blood, he lay with closed eyes murmuring ever and anon the name of Mary. What was that? He started; before him stood a lady of entrancing beauty. "Egbert, my son," said a voice sweeter far than tone of angel lute. "Egbert, my faithful servant, arise and follow this guide."

The touch of her hand infused new life into the tortured boy. The chains fell from his hands and feet. He arose without difficulty.

"Mary! Mary! My Lady! My Queen!" he exclaimed in an ecstasy of joy, sinking on his knees.

"Be ever faithful," said the sweet voice, "and my protection will never fail thee." Laying her hand on the page's bowed head she blessed him and vanished from his enraptured gaze.

The dreary prison was now bright as Paradise; he knelt with outstretched arms, his blood-stained face shining with heavenly joy. The angel now took him by the hand and led him forth. Egbert knew not how far, nor in what direction, when suddenly he was recalled to consciousness by shouts of "St. George and our Lady for merrie England!"

The morning had dawned and the full sunlight flashed on the glittering steel and gay accoutrements of a gallant cavalcade—King Richard's chosen band riding forth to battle.

"Dunstan, whom have we here? A spy?" asked the chief leader, sharply.

"A spy!" exclaimed Athelstan. "By my halidom! Egbert or his ghost, I know not which!"

"Egbert himself," answered the boy, "just escaped from a Turkish dungeon. Thank God and our Lady!"

"And in what a plight! The boy is covered with blood. Behold his bleeding wounds!" exclaimed a tall knight, bitterly. "Oh, the dastardly cowards, thus to maltreat a mere child," said brave Oswald, vengefully. "But our Coeur de Lion will settle this score for thee, Egbert, with ample interest. Ride with me to the camp, poor lad; thou needs attention."

"Nay, nay," objected Egbert; "I would join ye in the battle."

"Not so fast, young page; thou wilt first have to report to the King. How can he know whether or not thou wert a deserter?"

And away he sped with the happy boy to King Richard's quarters. There was great joy in the camp, and likewise great indignation when the boy appeared. His miraculous deliverance inspired the Christian warriors with renewed courage, for was not Heaven's Queen interesting herself in their behalf?

Egbert continued to prove himself a valiant soldier of the cross until King Richard returned to England. He was sorely grieved that Jerusalem had not been wrested from the power of the Saracens. Camp and court now lost their fascination for the valiant youth, and he determined to devote the remainder of his life to the service of Mary, in religion. He became as fervent and fearless a soldier of the Gospel as he had been a soldier, and after winning many souls for Christ, was summoned hence to receive his exceeding great reward as Mary's faithful page.

of sheets being in correspondents with the number of years of the venerable Pontiff's age. These sheets or pages are each a foot in length and 17 inches wide and bear a record of 25,000 names 1,000 for each year of the pontificate. The entries are written in gold and each represents an offering of alms given in the free distribution of wholesome, instructive literature to the unfortunates in prison, asylums, hospitals and charity institutions throughout the United States and Canada. The names on the "Scroll are representative of the entire continent of North America, coming from about 300 cities and towns to the extreme limits of this vast territory. The long list, including the most distinguished members of the American Catholic hierarchy, is headed by His Eminence Cardinal Gibbons and Bishop Foley, the local prelate, conspicuous with the dignitaries are the names of the governor of Michigan and the Mayor of Detroit.

The sheets composing the "Scroll" are united by a chain stitching of gold thread, and this with the writing is the result of the painstaking labor of weeks of the Magdalens in several houses of the Good Shepherd, who copied from lists handed out by the Angelus, the paper in turn receiving them in lists of 25 each, from widely distributed patrons acting as promoters.

The parchment, folding sheet, upon sheet is attached to a heavy gold oar, resting on the centre of which are the arms of the Pope, tiara, keys etc., at either ends there are shields of the two countries presented in the offering. A further suggestion in the latter connection is a pair of silk flags, United States and British, fastened to the bar and serving as a wrap for the "Scroll" when closed. On Easter Sunday it goes to Rome in charge of a representative of the Angelus. Arrangements have been made for the presentation at private audience with the Pope on April 24.—Detroit News-Tribune.

## A Jubilee Offering To the Pope.

A remarkable document in which thousands of people in this city as elsewhere are directly interested, is on exhibition this week at the store of Partridge & Blackwell. The document is known as "The Golden Scroll," and is designed as a jubilee offering to the Pope, at the instance of the Angelus, the weekly Catholic paper published in this city. The "Scroll" consists of 98 sheets of sheepskin parchment, the number

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