

The Right Sort of Boy.

Here's to the boy who's not afraid
To do his share of work;
Who never is by toll dismayed,
And never tries to shirk.

The boy whose heart is brave to meet
All lions in the way,
Who's not discouraged by defeat,
But tries another day.

The boy who always means to do
The very best he can;
Who always keeps the right in view,
And aims to be a man.

Such boys as these will grow to be
The men whose hands will guide
The future of our land; and we
Shall speak their names with pride.

All honour to the boy who is
A man at heart, I say;
Whose legged on his shield is this:
"Right always wins the day."

THE BOY DISCIPLE.

BY

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CHAPTER I.

It was market day in Capernaum. Country people were coming in from the little villages among the hills of Galilee, with fresh butter and eggs. Fishermen held out great strings of shining perch and carp, just dipped up from the lake beside the town. Vine-dressers piled their baskets with tempting grapes, and boys lazily brushed the flies from the dishes of wild honey, that they had gone into the country before daybreak to find.

A ten-year-old girl pushed her way through the crowded market-place, carrying her baby brother in her arms, and scolding another child, who clung to her skirts.

"Hurry, you little snail!" she said to him. "There's a camel caravan just stopped by the custom-house. Make haste, if you want to see it!"

Their bare feet picked their way quickly over the stones, down to the hot sand of the lake shore. The children crept close to the shaggy camels, curious to see what they carried in their huge packs. But before they were made to kneel, so that the custom-house officials could examine the loads, the boy gave an exclamation of surprise.

"Look, Jerusha! Look!" he cried, tugging at her skirts. "What's that?"

Farther down the line came several men carrying litters. On each one was a man badly wounded, judging by the many bandages that wrapped him.

Jerusha pushed ahead to hear what had happened. One of the drivers was telling a tax-gatherer.

"In that last rocky gorge after leaving Samaria," said the man, "we were set upon by robbers. They swarmed down the cliffs, and fought as fiercely as eagles. These men, who were going on ahead, had much gold with them. They lost it all, and might have been killed, if we had not come up behind in such numbers. That poor fellow there can hardly live. I think, he was beaten so badly."

The children edged up closer to the motionless form on the litter. It was badly bruised and blood-stained, and looked already lifeless.

"Let's go, Jerusha," whispered the boy, whimpering and pulling at her hand. "I don't like to look at him."

With the heavy baby still in her arms, and the other child tagging after, she started slowly back toward the market-place.

"I'll tell you what we'll do," she exclaimed. "Let's go up and get the other children, and play robbers. We never did do that before. It will be lots of fun."

There was a cry of welcome as Jerusha appeared again in the market-place, where a crowd of children were playing tag, regardless of the men and beasts they bumped against. They were all younger than herself, and did not resent her important air when she called. "Come here! I know a better game than that!"

She told them what she had just seen

and heard down at the beach, and drew such a vivid picture of the attack, that the children were ready for anything she might propose.

"Now we'll choose sides," she said. "I'll be a rich merchant coming up from Jerusalem with my family and servants, and the rest of you can be robbers. We'll go along with our goods, and you pounce out on us as we go by. You may take the baby as a prisoner if you like," she added, with a mischievous grin. "I'm tired of carrying him."

A boy sitting near by on a door-step, jumped up eagerly. "Let me play, too, Jerusha!" he cried. "I'll be one of the robbers. I know just the best places to hide!"

The girl paused an instant in her choosing to say innocently although not meaning to be unkind. "Oh, no, Joel! We do not want you. You're too lame to run. You can't play with us!"

The bright, eager look died out of the boy's face, and an angry light shone in his eyes. He pressed his lips together hard, and sat down again on the step.

There was a patter of many bare feet as the children raced away. Their voices sounded fainter and fainter, till they were lost entirely in the noise of the busy street.

Usually, Joel found plenty to amuse and interest him here. He liked to watch the sleeky donkeys with their loads of fresh fruit and vegetables. He liked to listen to the men as they cried their wares, or chatted over the bargains with their customers. There was always something new to be seen in the stalls and booths. There was always something new to be heard in the scraps of conversation that came to him where he sat.

Down this street there sometimes came long caravans; for this was "the high-way to the sea,"—the road that led from Egypt to Syria. Strange, dusky faces sometimes passed this way; richly dressed merchant princes with their priceless stuffs from beyond the Nile; heavy loads of Babylonian carnets; pearls from Ceylon, and rich silks for the court of the wicked Herodias, in the town beyond. Fisherman and sailor, rabbi and busy workman passed in an endless procession.

Sometimes a Roman soldier from the garrison came by with ringing step and clanking sword. Then Joel would start up to look after the erect figure, with a longing gaze that told more plainly than words, his admiration of such strength and symmetry.

But this morning the crowd gave him a strange, lonely feeling,—a hungry longing for companionship.

Two half-grown boys passed by on their way to the lake, with fish nets thrown over their shoulders. He knew the larger one,—a rough, kind-hearted fellow who had once taken him in his boat across the lake. He gave Joel a careless, good-natured nod as he passed. A moment after he felt a timid pull at the fish net he was carrying, and turned to see the little cripple's appealing face.

"Oh, Dan!" he cried eagerly. "Are you going out on the lake this morning? Could you take me with you?"

The boy hesitated. Whatever kindly answer he may have given was rudely interrupted by his companion, whom Joel had never seen before.

"Oh, no!" he said roughly. "We don't want anybody limping along after us. You can't come, Jonah; you would bring us bad luck."

"My name isn't Jonah!" screamed the boy, angrily clenching his fists. "It's Joel!"

"Well, it is all the same," his tormentor called back, with a coarse laugh. "You're a Jonah, anyway."

There were tears in the boy's eyes this time, as he dragged himself back again to the step.

"I hate everybody in the world!" he said in a hissing sort of whisper. "I hate 'em! I hate 'em!"

A stranger passing by turned for a second look at the little cripple's sensitive, refined face. A girlish beautiful face it would have been, were it not for the heavy scowl that darkened it.

Joel pulled the ends of his head-dress round to hide his crooked back, and drew the loose robe he wore over his twisted leg.

Life seemed very bitter to him just

then. He would gladly have changed places with the heavily-laden donkey going by.

"I wish I were dead," he thought moodily. "Then I would not ache any more, and I could not hear when people call me names!"

Beside the door where he sat was a stand where tools and hardware were offered for sale. A man who had been standing there for some time selecting nails from the boxes placed before him, and had heard all that passed, spoke to him.

"Joel, my lad may I ask your help for a little while?" The friendly question seemed to change the whole atmosphere.

Joel drew his hands across his eyes to clear them of the blur of tears he was too proud to let fall and then stood up respectfully. "Yes, Rabbi Phineas, what would you have me to do?"

The carpenter gathered up some strips of lumber in one hand, and his hammer and saws in the other.

"I have my hands too full to carry these nails," he answered. "If you could bring them for me, it would be a great service."

If the man had offered him pity, Joel would have fiercely resented it. His sensitive nature appreciated the unspoken sympathy, the fine tact that soothed his pride by asking a service of him, instead of seeking to render one.

He could not define the feeling, but he gratefully took up the bag of nails, and limped along beside his friend to the carpenter's house at the edge of the town. He had never been there before, although he met the man daily in the market-place, and long ago had learned to look forward to his pleasant greeting; it was so different from most people's. Somehow the morning always seemed brighter after he had met him.

The little whitewashed house stood in the shade of two great fig-trees near the beach. A cool breeze from the Galilee lifted the leaves, and swayed the vines growing around the low door.

Joel, tired by the long walk, was glad to throw himself on the grass in the shade. It was so still and quiet here, after the noise of the street he had just left.

An old hen clucked around the door-step with a brood of downy, yellow chickens. Doves cooed softly, somewhere out of sight. The carpenter's bench stood under one of the trees, with shavings and chips all around it. Two children were playing near by, building houses of the scattered blocks; one of them, a black-eyed, sturdy boy of five kept on playing. The other, a little girl not yet three, jumped up and followed her father in to the house. Her curls gleamed like gold as she ran through the sunshine. She glanced at the stranger with deep-blue eyes so like her father's that Joel held out his hand.

"Come and tell me your name," he said coaxingly. But she only shook the curls all over her dimpled face, and hurried into the house.

"It's Ruth," said the boy, desiring to look up. "And mine is Jesse, and my mother's is Abigail, and my father's is Phineas, and my grandfather's is—"

How far back he would have gone in his genealogy, Joel could not guess; for just then his father came out with a cool, juicy melon, and Jesse hurried forward to get his share.

"How good it is!" sighed Joel, as the first refreshing mouthful slipped down his thirsty throat. "And how cool and pleasant it is out here. I did not know there was such a peaceful spot in all Capernaum."

"Didn't you always live here?" asked the inquisitive Jesse.

"No, I was born in Jerusalem. I was to have been a priest," he said sadly.

"Well, why didn't you be one then," persisted the child, with his mouth full of melon.

Joel glanced down at his twisted leg, and said nothing.

"Why?" repeated the boy.

Phineas, who had gone back to his work-bench, looked up kindly. "You ask too many questions my son. No one can be a priest who is maimed or blemished in any way. Some sad accident must have befallen our little friend, and it may be painful for him to talk about it."

Jesse asked no more questions with his tongue; but his sharp, black eyes were

fixed on Joel like two interrogation points.

"I do not mind telling about it," said Joel, sitting up straighter. "Once when I was not much older than you, just after my mother died, my father brought me up to this country from Jerusalem, to visit my Aunt Leah."

"I used to play down here by the lake with my cousins, in the fishermen's boats. There was a boy that came to the beach sometimes, a great deal larger than I,—a dog of a Samaritan,—who pulled my hair and threw sand in my eyes. He was so much stronger than I, that I could not do anything to him but call him names. But early one morning he was swimming in the lake. I hid his clothes in the oleander bushes that fringe the water. Oh, but he was angry! I wanted him to be. But I had to keep away from the lake after that."

"One day some older children took me to the hills back of the town to gather almonds. This Rehum followed us. I had strayed away from the others a little distance, and was stooping to put the nuts in my basket, when he slipped up behind me. How he beat me! I screamed so that the other children came running back to me. When he saw them coming he gave me a great push that sent me rolling over a rocky bank. It was not very high, but there were sharp stones below."

"They thought I was dead when they picked me up. It was months before I could walk at all; and I can never be any better than I am now. Just as my father was about to take me back to Jerusalem, he took a sudden fever, and died. So I was left, a poor helpless burden for my aunt to take care of. It has been six years since then."

Joel threw himself full length on the grass and scowled up at the sky.

"Where is that boy that hurt you?" asked Jesse.

"Rehum?" questioned Joel. "I wish I knew," he muttered fiercely. "Oh, how I hate him! I can never be a priest as my father intended. I can never serve in the beautiful temple with the white pillars and golden gates. I can never be like other people, but must drag along, deformed and full of pain as long as I live. And it's all his fault!"

A sudden gleam lit up the boy's eyes, as lightning darts through a storm-cloud.

"But I shall have my revenge!" he added, clenching his fists. "I cannot die till I have made him feel at least a tithe of what I have suffered. An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth! That is the least that can satisfy me. Oh you cannot know how I long for that time! Often I lie awake late into the night, planning my revenge. Then I forget how my back hurts and my leg aches; then I forget all the names I have been called, and the taunts that make my life a burden. But they all come back with the daylight; and I store them up and add them to his account. For everything he has made me suffer I swear he shall pay for it four-fold in his own sufferings!"

Ruth shrank away, frightened by the wild, impassioned boy, who sat up, anxiously staring in front of him with eyes that saw nothing of the sweet green-lad world around him. The face of his enemy blotted out all the sunny landscapes. One murderous purpose filled him, mind and soul.

(To be continued.)

BE ACCURATE.

Make it a habit to be accurate in everything you do. Never make a single step until you are sure that it is just what you want. Be accurate in your writing. Dot your "i's" and cross your "t's" as what our school teacher used to dinz in to our ears in our boyhood days, and it taught us habits of accuracy which we never had cause to regret. In sending orders to your merchant, be accurate in them; put down just what you want and how you want it, in such plain language that you can't be misunderstood. Be very careful to get your address right, street, number, town, county, and state, and you will save a great deal of trouble at the office where your order is received. A great deal of the misery in this world is caused by inaccuracy of word or deed.—Exchange.