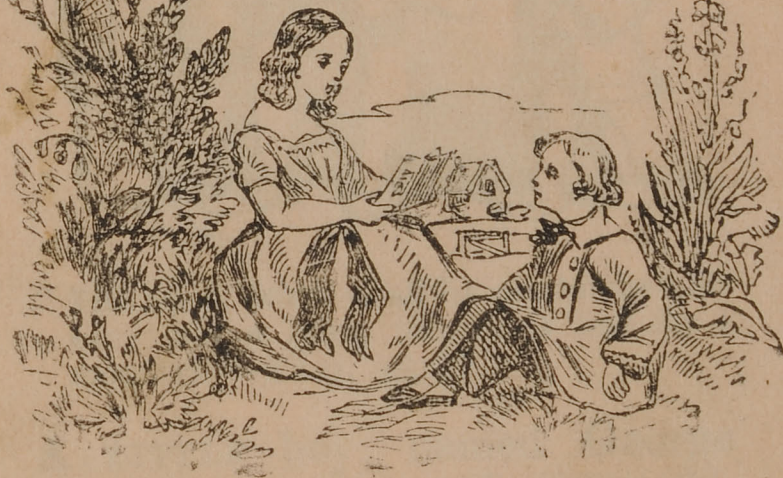


THE
LIP OF TRUTH.

RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY;
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LONDON.





THE LIP OF TRUTH.



“The lip of truth shall be established for ever: but a lying tongue is but for a moment.”—PROV. xii. 19.

A LITTLE boy, named George Washington, about six years old.

was walking in his father's garden. The flowers were very beautiful, and the birds sang sweetly in the trees. But neither flowers nor birds could just now take the attention of George. He held in his hand a small hatchet, which had been given him by a kind friend. He was proud of his new gift; and, as he walked about the garden, he looked at its nice handle and its sharp, bright edge. Now he gave a flourish with it, and then he cut some loose sticks which lay at the side of the path. He next struck off the tops of some flowers, and thought how cleverly he could bring down all the trees.

There was a fine cherry-tree in the garden, of which his father

had taken great care. When George came to it, he began to show his skill in cutting at the bark. He struck it once, and again, and then still harder, until he had wounded the tree so that it would soon fade and die. He did not think of what he had done, and went away to another place to play, and to show his playmates his fine new hatchet.

In a short time after, his father, when walking in the garden, stopped to look at his favourite cherry-tree, and soon saw that it had been cut and ruined. He was vexed, and went to the servants, to ask who had done the mischief. No one could tell. At last he met his son George, and asked him if he

knew about it. George soon saw that his father was displeased, and that he must expect to be punished. But he knew it would be wrong to deny the deed. "Father," said he, "*I cannot tell a lie*: you know I cannot tell a lie: I did it with my pretty hatchet." "Come to my arms," cried his father; "you have paid me for my tree; and I hope my son will always be brave enough to tell the truth, let come what will." Little George had "the lip of truth," and we do not wonder that he grew up to be honoured and loved by the people of the land in which he lived, and over whom he ruled for many years as the chief and governor.

Lying is a sin into which children often fall. Many have begun with this vice, and have ended by being guilty of almost every sin which can be committed. Even when they speak the truth, who will believe liars? They are like a bad clock, whose wheels move round, but which no one trusts, because it has often been found not to tell the true time. If the truth is not spoken at all times, who will credit what is said at any time? By falsely speaking, we lose the power to please and of being useful. We are shunned, as those with whom it is best to have nothing to do. Or, if we do succeed in deceiving others, we shall find that "a lying tongue is but for a moment." Our sins

will, sooner or later, be found out, to our sorrow, confusion, and shame.

There are in the Bible some solemn accounts of those who had not "the lip of truth." See the case of the sons of Jacob, when they brought the coat of Joseph to their father stained with the blood of a kid, and said their brother had been slain. Gehazi told a lie to the Syrian captain, and got by it "two talents of silver, and two changes of garments." How carefully he hid his wicked gains in a tower; but he soon found that "a lying tongue is but for a moment." He told a second lie to his master, and then his sin was exposed, and he was punished

all his days with a painful disease. Then, Ananias and Sapphira, who "lied to the Holy Ghost," and were smitten with sudden death. These all found that this sin brings sorrow, disgrace, and death. The Bible declares that God "hates a lying tongue;" that the devil is "the father of all liars;" that all lying shall be found out; and that those who are guilty of it, if they die unpardoned, shall be cast into hell, Prov. vi. 19; John viii. 44; Rev. xxi. 8.

It is hard for the young to say, "I have done wrong;" but it is the next best thing to doing right. We hope well of a boy who owns his fault, like George Washington, and who has the

courage to undeceive those to whom he has spoken falsely; but, more than all, we should confess our guilt before God. He is ready to forgive all those who truly believe, and confess and forsake their sins. May the young reader, through faith in the only Saviour, be delivered from the guilt and power of all sin.

Jesus, Lord, we look to thee,
Meek and truthful may we be;
From all paths of sin abstain,
Leading to eternal pain.

Cleanse our hearts, our sins forgive;
Form us new, that we may live;
Live to love thee, then arise,
To thy temple in the skies.

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BLESS'D Saviour, hear our hymns of
praise, [ascend;

Which now from youthful tongues
Though humble be the notes we raise,
Yet kindly to our voice attend.

We praise thee for thy daily care,
Our food, our raiment, and our home;
The happiness which now we share,
And all the hope of joys to come.

We praise thee for thy word of truth,
For sabbath hours, and Christian
friends,
For all who guard and guide our youth;
And point to bliss that never ends.

Thus we begin thy praise while young;
And when from earth our souls are
free, [throng,
Oh may we join the blood-bought
And sing thy praise eternally.