

Be Truthful

By Jose Feliciano*

THE whole world likes a person who always tells the truth. Such a person, though he may be poor, is above the price of gold. He may not possess any worldly goods at all, but he possesses that which mankind has always admired and respected—courage to tell the truth. Therefore, should you not like to be someone of whom it will always be said that he is as good as his word? Surely, you should.

Have you ever heard of the story of the shepherd-boy who cried "Wolf!"? I shall tell it to you now, hoping you will learn a lesson from the unfortunate experience of this boy.

While caring for his flock near a village, a shepherd-boy used to pass away his time by crying "Wolf! Wolf!" But there was no wolf; he cried to the villagers merely for fun. Several times the people of the village ran out to help him, but they were only laughed at by the foolish boy. At last, one day the wolf really came, and he cried in earnest "Wolf! Wolf!" But this time the villagers did not come to his aid, thinking he was only playing his old trick. The wolf killed some of his sheep and devoured them, and he could not do anything. Too late he learned that liars are not believed even when they tell the truth.

You know very well why the shepherd-boy was not believed even when he was telling the truth. And there is nothing more pitiful indeed than to find oneself not to be believed by one's fellows when one knows one says nothing but the honest truth. This is what happens when a person has been found to have fallen into the habit of deceiving his fellows. The habit of telling a lie or the truth is formed just as any other habit is formed—by repetition of the act. One should therefore be careful not to tell a lie, for each time he does so he finds it easier to repeat the act.

Children are oftentimes tempted not to tell the truth because they want to escape punishment at all costs. A person may succeed in escaping punishment once by lying, but the second or the third time he will surely be found out. One should not try to cover up one's fault by lying; wrongdoing cannot be hidden for long. If the truth about one's mistake is at once told, the guilty person may not be punished at all; he may only be given a warning or some advice as to proper conduct. Therefore, one should always tell the truth, and be man enough

(Please turn to page 281)

BE TRUTHFUL

(Continued from page 276)

to suffer the consequences of his act. As the saying goes, "Tell the truth and bear the blame." A man of character would do no less, and I am sure you want to be just such a man.

* Academic Division, Bureau of Education.