

B. Y. P. U.

The unification of Baptist young people, their increased spiritual life, their increased interest in Christian service, their increased interest in Christian knowledge, their increased interest in Christian history and doctrine, their increased interest in Christian activity, through setting denominational institutions.

All Young People's Societies of churches having no organizations are entitled to representation. We are for our unity not upon a purely practical basis or method. Our common bond is in the New Testament, in the full affirmation of whose teachings we are now living.

Correspondence to this department should address the committee on B. Y. P. U., Rev. J. J. Baker, St. John, N. B.

For the week beginning Jan. 14.

Toronto: Duty of Confession.—Matt. 10: 23, 24.

We owe it to the world to confess Christ. We have it in our power to bring great good to others by always and every where standing for Christ. Every one knows in how many ways he may make confession. "No man liveth unto himself." Quietly it may be, but surely our influence is going out. Do we not owe it to every man to do our best for him? For the sake of those with whom we are to live the Christian life every day.

We owe it to ourselves to confess Christ. "With the mouth confession is made unto salvation." It would almost seem that there is no completeness of salvation without it. Confession gives joy; it gives strength.

"Each victory will help you Some other to win."

It will act as a defense. He who shows his colors, declares himself out of the world, has a much easier way than he who tries to be on both sides of the fence at the same time and don't touch ground on either side.

We owe it to Christ to make confession. It may seem a small thing that a poor sinner should declare himself for Christ, but somehow the Master recognizes that honor is done to Him. He puts very great value upon the act. See what a promise there is for him who confesses. On the other hand He demands that He will deny before the Father the one who denies Him before men. See Jno. 4: 23, 24; 9: 13-18; Rom. 10: 9, 10.

A number of the Juniors at Fairville have confessed Christ during the Union meetings. After the pastor, Rev. Mr. Marshall, will hold a meeting for the boys and girls every Saturday afternoon.

Carlton Baptist church has a Junior Union of 32 members, of whom 20 are active.

B. B. B. no longer means in Baptist newspapers a patient nostrum that we should thank our friends and friends for the boys and girls every Saturday afternoon.

We tender our thanks to many corresponding secretaries for their co-operation during the past months. We also thank our friends and friends for the boys and girls every Saturday afternoon.

The quarterly meeting of the St. John Baptist Union was held on New Year's evening in the Carlton Baptist church. The meeting was one of more than ordinary interest. Rev. Mr. Shenton gave an address on "Enlarged Christian Citizenship." Rev. Mr. Gates on "Enlarged Missionary Effort," and Rev. Mr. Fotheringham on "Enlarged Interdenominational Fellowship."

The addresses met with hearty responses from the large audience. Five Baptist churches are represented in the union, with a total membership of over three hundred. The Carlton Baptist Young People provided refreshments and served their guests at the close of the meeting.

In the issue of December 9, 1898, the Young People's Union began a symposium on the Boy's Brigade. The question first in order, and probably of importance, is, "Do you approve of the military life in training the boys under church auspices?" Thus far twenty-five papers have responded. Eleven say, without hesitation, Yes. Seven say, Yes, with qualifications. Seven give an emphatic No. Rev. O. C. S. Wallace, Toronto; Rev. Donald Grant, Montreal; and Rev. C. W. Townsend, Sherbrooke, answer No. Rev. P. K. Daylock, St. John, and Rev. C. W. Williams, Saint Martin's, answer Yes. These are the only Canadian pastors heard from to date. Personally we have not had much experience in the Boy's Brigade business since we left our form in the old country school house some years ago. Then we did occasionally "knock the chip off" a boy's shoulder. We do not recall that the exercise ever proved a very blessed means of grace, although we invariably "made up."

We note that some of our brethren who are enthusiastic for the new movement point out that it takes hold of a boy's instinct. Yes—yes, a good many boys seem to have the pugilistic instinct, and it is quite possible that we ought to train them away from some of their instincts. Some boys have a strong fishing instinct during school days. The wide-awake pastor might take advantage of this instinct when the springtime comes and organize along this line. We have several boys in our home and find that the distinctive nature of a boy manifests itself in a great many directions; and we are very much afraid that some of them cannot be easily used to religious ends. We wish Bro. Wilkins had asked the brethren to "symposium" on this question also. Have you any boys in your own home? Perhaps this wouldn't be fair, but it may have something to do with the question. A few brethren have been struck with Paul's use of the military life. We have been struck with Paul's use of a good many ideas, but we have yet to learn that he thought it advisable to engage a Christian company to organize and train a company of boys in order to lead them to Christ and "hold" them. Doubtless the military instinct was pretty strong there. But we wait for light.

Minard's Liniment cures dandruff.

Sabbath School.

BIBLE LESSONS.

Adapted from Peabody's Select Notes.

FIRST QUARTER.

Lesson III. Jan. 21. Gen. 4: 3-13.

CAIN AND ABEL.

GOLDEN TEXT.

"By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain."—Heb. 11: 4.

EXPLANATORY.

3. And in the process of time. Literally, "at the end of days," an indefinite period after the brothers had entered upon their respective occupations, as stated in the preceding verses. Others make it mean also the celebration of the end of some period, as a week or year. Cain brought of the fruit of the ground. Fruit, vegetables, grains. An offering unto the Lord. Jehovah's name was written in capitals. "This was a very natural method of expressing gratitude to God as the bountiful giver of all." It was an act of worship. Worship is natural to man, as the proper expression of his feelings toward God. 4. And Abel also brought of the firstlings of his flock. Either the first-born, when God afterwards demanded Ex. 13: 12; or the choicest and best (Job 18: 13). And of the first thereof. Literally, "the fattest of them," i.e., the fattest of the firstlings, the best he had. The Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering. It is impossible to know in what way the Lord showed his favor, but in any case, a visible sign of satisfaction. In the apostle's (Heb. 11: 4) informs us that God testified his approbation of Abel's offering, it is reasonable to suppose that this was done by the visible token of fire from heaven consuming it upon the altar. Theodotion, in his Greek version, renders it "kindled" or "set on fire."

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE OFFERINGS. There must have been some essential difference between the two offerings or the Lord would not have made so marked a difference in His treatment of them. (1) The central difference was in the heart and character of persons who made the offerings. The apostle (Heb. 11: 4) tells us that "by faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent (i.e., more complete) sacrifice than Cain." Faith implies here a heart of obedience and love, a right disposition toward God. This character was wanting in Cain (7 and 1 John 3: 12).

(2) The fundamental difference was expressed in different ways, as, for instance, Abel offered the best of his flock; but Cain's offering is not spoken of in that way. He did not give his choicest things (7 and 1 John 3: 12).

5. And Cain was very wroth (literally, it burned with Cain exceedingly). Anger is like an unquenched fire in the soul. His countenance fell. The expression originated in the fact that, under the influence of anger and mood, feelings, men are apt to go about with their heads hanging down, and their faces and eyes turned toward the ground instead of holding their heads up and meeting others with frank, cheerful looks, as they do when they are pleased with them.

6. And the Lord said. . . 7. If thou doest well. The Lord does not give up Cain as hopeless. He seeks to bring him to a better life. "He is willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." He is patient and long suffering, and shows Cain the real source of his failure, in order that he may turn to a better life. "If thou doest well, sin shall be at the door." "That is, if thou doest well, the sin is not Abel's nor any one's, but thine own, and therefore anger at another is not the proper remedy, but anger at yourself, and repentance. Sin is here represented as a wild beast crouching at a man's door, and ready to spring upon him and destroy him when he comes out. And unto thee shall be his desire. Sin is as eager for your soul as a wild beast is for its prey. See Luke 22: 31; 1 Pet. 5: 8. And thou shalt rule over him. The pronoun "him" and "him" refer to sin here conceived of as a beast of prey. All ambiguity is removed in the margin of the revision by rendering, "unto thee is his desire, but thou shalt rule over him."

V. 8. And Cain talked with Abel his brother. Hebrew, "And Cain said unto Abel his brother"; after which there is, in many of the Hebrew copies, a blank space left, as if something had been omitted. He talked over the matter with his brother. He went on in familiar intercourse with him, and it was during one of these conversations that his anger was again inflamed. It has been well said that "we cannot suppose that this murder was premeditated. Cain did not even know what a human death was." And it came to pass, when they were in the field. The open, uncultivated land, where Abel's flock would find pasture.

THE FIRST MARTYR. Abel died comparatively young. He is the shortest recorded life in the first 2,000 years of the human race. But notice: (1) No man is a failure who retains his manhood and his character unimpaired, whatever else he may lose. (2) His life was more successful than that of the long-lived Cain. No one would hesitate which life to choose. (3) His life has been an example and inspiration to all ages down to the present day, and his goodness and faith are still working good in the hearts of men.

V. 9, 10. 9. And the Lord said unto Cain. Mark how close on the heels of sin God's question treads! How God spoke, we know not. We know that to us God speaks by the voices of His Word, of our consciences, and of His Holy Spirit, by society, by the consequences of our sin, asking us the same question He asked Cain. "Our sin is like touching the electric bells which people sometimes pull at their windows to give notice of fire. As soon as we step beyond the line of duty we set the alarm going, and it wakes the sleeping conscience." Where is Abel thy brother? The word "brother" is introduced no less than seven times in the short narrative, as if to call attention to the unnatural character of the crime.

And he said, I know not. A direct falsehood. The current Moslem tradition

is founded on a Jewish one, which states that "Cain was not aware of the Lord's knowledge of hidden things; he therefore sought to make one sin cover up another; but the devil only made two sins instead of one." The young, especially, should be taught that confession is noble, and to deny the truth is mean as well as wicked. Am I my brother's keeper? As I had no responsibility in the case, and as I was concerned in him, what business of his was it, and he could not be expected to know. Cain is not content with simply denying all knowledge of his brother's whereabouts; he intimates that there is injustice in the attempt to hold him accountable for him. So Adam's friendship with God (8: 12).

Am I MY BROTHER'S KEEPER? Only Cain-like men ask such a question. We are our brother's keepers. God has made the circles of family, friendship, acquaintance, race, humanity, so that we are responsible for that influence. No one lives or dies to himself. And God gives us wealth, position, intellect, or for ourselves alone, but that we may be better keepers of our brother.

10. The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground. On which was spilt, or in which the body was buried. Abel's body was dead; but his cause was not dead, and his avenger was not dead. Cain's was a complete failure. No power on earth could silence the voice that demands the punishment of sin.

THE FIRST FRUIT WAS MORE SILENT, LYING, selfishness of obligation to others. THE SECOND FRUIT WAS THE CAIN STOOD IN CHARACTER AND IN ALL HIS RELATIONS.

THE THIRD FRUIT.—THE CURSE FROM THE GROUND. I and now thou art cursed from the earth. The ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee its strength. It is not necessary to suppose that the crops were withheld from Cain through any miraculous intervention. (1) The restlessness of the murderer, and his inability to do his duty, the companionship of simple husbandmen and their innocent life, would render it impossible for him to till the soil successfully, and would make him a rover. (2) His remorse would drive him into the more lonely and wilder portions of the earth, more easily cultivated. The fertile valleys would be too painful to him.

FOURTH FRUIT.—SEPARATION FROM COMPANIONSHIP. A fugitive and a vagabond (or wanderer) shalt thou be in the earth. Banished from the land, and flying from the face of man. He would be "homeless"; and his conscience condemning him, he would flee even when no man pursued. Sin is a separator, a divider between man and man. It destroys mutual confidence. It sows distrust.

FIFTH FRUIT.—FEARS AND REMORSE. 18. My punishment is greater than I can bear. The word rendered "punishment" means either "sin" or "punishment for sin." It is the divine expression of the weight of the consequences, its burden of punishment, that was greater than Cain could bear, but he seems to have looked only at the consequences (v. 14). Punishment shows to men the evil of sin. It is the divine expression of the awful nature, written in language that all men can read.

THE CAIN MARK. Cain was afraid that everyone who saw him, and knew his guilt, would abhor him and kill him for his crime. As we have seen, there must have been quite a population in the world at this time, and there would naturally be a bitter abhorrence of this moody, passionate man, lest he might also slay others as he had his brother. Who would be safe while he was roaming through the land? His guilty conscience no doubt magnified the danger.

Therefore God "appointed a sign for Cain, v. 15, or set a mark upon Cain, v. 16." It is a question whether this means, He imposed a sign to him, or pressed it on him, or He "gave him a sign," i.e., assured him of his inviolability by some external occurrence.

Child Conversion.

BY EDWARD JUDSON, D. D.

Becoming a Christian is like crossing a river from bank to bank; passing from the worldly country to Immanuel's land. Now, if we follow a river beyond its silences, we find it keeps eddying, swirling, and turning, in only a silver thread, winding through the meadow. You have to part the grasses to find it. Like James Angelow's streamlet—

"A tiny bright beck it trickles between." Only a step will take you across, and you may even pass from bank to bank without a wink of an eye.

Child conversion is like that. The change of position is imperceptible, but there is a wide difference in the ultimate result. Now, suppose a person does not cross the river near its source where it is so slender that the grasses touch each other about it—in other words, is not converted in childhood,—but travels along down the stream on the wrong bank, pursuing the natural course of the worldly life. By and by the river becomes wide and deep and noisy. He says at last to himself, "I must cross the river." He plunges in. He buffets the waves. At last he gains the opposite shore. Drenched and panting, but full of joy, he clambers up the bank. There he meets a person who crossed the river when he was a tiny streamlet, and has been travelling down the right bank in Immanuel's land. These people are sure to misunderstand each other. The one who has forded the stream lower down will have a long and stirring conversation to relate of the anguish he endured while wrestling with the flood, of the joy which he felt upon arriving at the bank, and which he can scarcely find words to express. The other, who crossed the stream near its source, will reply: "I never experienced anything of that kind. In fact, I hardly know the exact time when I crossed the stream." Then the other may say, "Then you never experienced the cross at all." "But the answer will come, 'I seem to be of the same bank you are on. I am conscious of forgiveness. I am living the Christian life. I love the people of God. His word is sweet to my taste.'"

K. D. C. RELIEVES DISTRESS AFTER EATING.

"Well, the other will say, 'That makes no difference. Unless you have passed through experiences similar to mine, you are not a Christian.' What a mistake this is! The fact is, that many of the best Christians in our churches crossed the stream in early childhood, and so cannot tell you the exact date of their conversion. Those who are converted in mature life, and have such wonderful experiences to tell, are prone to bring with them, into the church, worldly habits; they are less docile, more worldly-wise. Happy the church in which the children are growing up whose second birth follows close on the first! Bless the garden in which these tender plants are springing up like willows by the water-courses!—S. S. Times.

How a Woman Can Train Her Nerves

Delaric said, "Drop all useless contractions before you try to express or act." This thought, planned for dramatic training, has been found to be valuable to all arts, all living. How and why Grace Kempton explains in the Christian Union.

As we watch the motion of an animal we shall see that there is no unnecessary use of force. Each muscle contracts just enough to accomplish the action, then instantly drops into relaxation; each nerve directs its relative muscles with perfect adjustment. In man it is not so. A muscle rarely contracts just enough for its action, but over-contraction, with bad results of different degrees; the nerves directing the action, instead of giving just the help needed, strain in doing what the lightest touch should have accomplished. In consequence of this misuse, we have yearly many cases of nervous exhaustion and its too numerous names.

If we could make the tension of a sewing machine far too great, and then set our machine running at a rapid rate, we should expect it to break. But we do simply drop into relaxation; each nerve directs its relative muscles with perfect adjustment. In man it is not so. A muscle rarely contracts just enough for its action, but over-contraction, with bad results of different degrees; the nerves directing the action, instead of giving just the help needed, strain in doing what the lightest touch should have accomplished. In consequence of this misuse, we have yearly many cases of nervous exhaustion and its too numerous names.

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Nearly in Despair,

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