

The Teachers Monthly

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There can be no more important matter than the question of decision. To decide for Christ is *the* vital thing in life. All else turns on this. And not to have made that decision till childhood and youth are past, is to run a tremendous risk of never making it. We commend the articles on this subject in the present number to pastors, parents and teachers.

A sixth Teacher Training Handbook has now been published, its subject, The Books of the New Testament. The name of the author, Rev. Dr. H. A. A. Kennedy, Professor of New Testament Literature and Exegesis, Knox College, Toronto, is sufficient guarantee of its scholarship and spirit. It is a valuable addition to a valuable series.

The Neutrals

By Rev. J. M. Millar, B.D.

The ancient curse fell on the people of Meroz because they held aloof at the critical hour, and sent no contingent to the battlefield on which Israel's freedom was to be lost or won. Their "masterly inactivity" became a by-word and a shame. The children of Israel smarted under the rod of the Canaanite; but no brave word of protest came from Meroz. Other communities bade the tribes "aspire", Meroz bade them "crouch".

This old incident illustrates a distressing weakness in many lives. Our temptation is not to commit flagrant crime, but simply to withhold our hands from the duty of the hour. It may be a very plain and modest duty, or it may demand sacrifice of ease, and we may have to offend the deities of popular favor. In any case, it is very tempting to acquiesce

in things as they are, and to be languid on the shore, while God's occasions go drifting by. It is easy to sink into the idle spectator, who forbears even to cheer while others are playing the game of life with all their might.

Let us ask ourselves, "What have the neutrals ever done for our world?" Our blessings come to us from the red-blooded men of the past, who had overwhelming convictions; and we too shall "give forth a like cheer to our sons", only if we have positive enthusiasm, a glowing love of Christ, and a burning hate of all hypocrisy and dishonor.

About us, alas! are many whose religious zeal flamed brightly for a season, but the light is gone now. They declined the tasks God set them, and so they failed. The church shall march prospering; but not through their presence. Like the ignoble citizens of Meroz, they have forfeited their share in the sweet joys of victory. It is the sad wail of the Meroz type that we hear in the lines—

"I hear the reapers singing go
Into God's harvest. I, that might with them
Have chosen, here below
Grove, shuddering at the gates of night".
Nanaimo, B.C.

Hope Amid Tears

By Rev. Professor John E. McFadyen, M.A.

"They that sow in tears shall reap in joy." Thus wrote the Psalmist in one of the most beautiful songs in literature. He traverses swiftly, but in images of surpassing beauty, the strange vicissitudes of human life—its laughter and tears, sorrow and joy, dejection and exaltation, exile and redemption, spring and autumn, the beautiful dream, and the cruel reality: but the sorrow of it all is swallowed up in the lovely vision with which