

by the Holy Spirit to our labor of faith and love among God's little ones.

What is the value of Junior work to the Church? This, too, is a practical question.

To have its life warmed and thrilled by a continual accession of enthusiastic young disciples in all its glow and ardor of their loyal devotion to Jesus Christ, is surely one effective way to keep its own heart from growing cold and hard; to bring into its working forces a number of ardent young disciples who are keen to show their love by active service, is surely one good way to retain something of the fire and fervor of primitive Methodism; to feel the contagion of the spirit of these trained young enthusiasts in the work of the Church is surely to realize somewhat of the inspiration and uplift of an enterprise great enough and glorious enough to unite in its programme all ages and all powers of service.

But I am unable to estimate how much Junior work, conducted as I think the Master would have it, would be worth to the Church. Of one thing I am sure: the Church has never yet reaped anything like the abundant harvest that is possible to her, from the children placed within her charge by the great Father. Would that the Methodist Church, mother as she ought to be to millions of youthful souls, the wide world over, valued them as did the mother of my little friend, her own baby boy, and that she said as well by deed as by word, "They are worth more than money; for I sometimes have a strange fear that the gold of the mint may loom up larger in the esteem of the Church than the gold of consecrated youthful character.

If, theoretically, we place so high a value on the child, how can we consistently hold as of little worth the organized work for which the Junior Societies in our local churches stand? If, practically, we neglect our children, how can we expect that they shall know and fear the Lord as they grow into young manhood and womanhood? We are dealing with living beings not with inert matter. The figure of a child as of so much cold, insensate clay, that may be shaped and moulded by deft fingers manipulating it

from without, into beautiful shapes or figures, is not true to nature. The child is a living entity, and if his character is to be fragrant and lovely, he must be grown from within as flowers are grown, and no culture is too painstaking to effect the most desirable results. If our society to the boys as "plants grown up in their youth," they must be *grown*; they cannot be manufactured. Too many artificial flowers already claim a place in the Lord's garden, but only those that live and bloom from the full flow of life expanding from within are acceptable in His sight. Junior work says, "We will claim the child for Christ, we will grow the Christian from within, we will train the worker to prove his life by service to others," and only as these essential steps in a child's life are well attended to may the Church expect the highest results for Christ and His Kingdom.

What is the value of Junior work? I confess I cannot sum it all up. If I could know the actual loss sustained by the life that has been soiled and stained by sinful habit; if I could count up the tragic devastation and ruin wrought in human life and destiny by early neglect; if I could fathom the awful depths of meaning in the words "eternal death," then would I begin to know the value of any plan which seeks to prevent these terrible results by the prevention of the causes leading thereto. If I could estimate the work for God that might have been done by the many thousands of lives that have been ruined through early neglect, had they been pre-empted for Jesus Christ in their childhood, and trained to a life of useful service to humanity in His Name, then I would begin to understand the value of the work for God that might have been done by the many thousands of lives that have been ruined through early neglect, had they been pre-empted for Jesus Christ in their childhood, and trained to a life of useful service to humanity in His Name; then I would begin to understand the value of the work for God that might have been done by the many thousands of lives that have been ruined through early neglect, had they been pre-empted for Jesus Christ in their childhood, and trained to a life of useful service to humanity in His Name.

For all these things, and others associated with them, our Junior Work stands, and in the realization of them, we Methodists, by the grace of God, wherever we live or labor, should seek to excel.

ment, the concert, the theatre, the lodge, the League, the mid-week meeting in the church, the formal dinners and receptions.

Man is a social being, and it is right that he should have social enjoyment, but there seems to be a tendency in the present age to overdo it. The normal life of the home has been disturbed in the wild craze for something not found there, as the home to blame? Or are the social instincts of our nature at fault?

Many seek their social life on the street. The best street corner or elsewhere. Among the new arrivals in our country there are many who have always sought their social life in public places.

#### THE CHURCH A SOCIAL CENTRE.

Increasing emphasis is being placed upon the social side of church life. Religion is both individualistic and social. Socials, lectures, concerts and institutional features of all kinds are occupying a larger place in the programme of the church's activity.

Among the Roman Catholics and Jews and the large foreign population in our country much of the social life centres about the great religious feasts and special church observances connected with all the important events of life. Among the Jews, the circumcision of the child, the betrothal and marriage of the son or daughter are occasions for religious joy and merrymaking. Among the foreign immigrants there are many societies and clubs, some national, some political, some educational or social. But the festivities connected with their weddings appear to be the most elaborate of all their social functions. In Great Britain the custom is beyond the ability of the working class to bear. But in some way money is saved and provided for these festivities. The wedding often closes with much dancing and drinking and carousing, and sometimes quarrelling that is settled next morning in the police court.

It is the duty of the Christian church to direct the social activities of these people. Their social functions must not be indiscriminately condemned. The Y. M. C. A. and the Y. W. C. A. reach only a very limited number of people. Some form of recreation and amusement that is both innocent and legitimate must be provided for the masses, or else the social instinct will find satisfaction in ways that are abnormal and demoralizing.

There is need of a suitable social centre. In some American cities the public schools are being used for this purpose. This is a move in the right direction which might with advantage be copied in Canada.

#### SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS AND PROVERBS.

"Nothing can be sweeter than friendship."—*Petrarch*.

"Life has no pleasure nobler than that of friendship."—*Dr. Johnson*.

"He who has no friends only half lives."—*A German Proverb*.

"Birds of a feather flock together."—*Proverb*.

"Evil communications corrupt good manners."—*Paul*.

"Keep company with good men, and good men you will learn to be."—*Chinese Proverb*.

"Friendship is a plant that one must often water."

"He who has a thousand friends has not a friend to spare; He who has one enemy shall meet him everywhere."—*Persian Proverb*.

## Social Life in Canada

DR. J. H. McARTHUR, ERIN.

#### VARIETIES OF SOCIAL LIFE.

There are many kinds of social life—the life in the home, in the workshop, on the street, in the social club, in the place of public amusement, at the church; and each of these is different in each class. Contrast the social life in the home of the humble laborer with that in the residence of the wealthy magnate; and the fellowship of an Epworth League meeting with the fellowship of the saloon. All the different varieties of social life of half the countries of Europe and Asia have been imported into our Dominion with our immigrant population. These different races, strange and diverse, bring with them their own peculiar customs, ideals and forms of social life. Here in this Dominion, by the mingling of different peoples and under the stress of new conditions, are being worked out hitherto unknown forms of social life.

#### THE HOME SUPREME.

Among Anglo-Saxon people the home has in the past been the centre of life for the people. But many forces are at work to-day that tend to lessen the predominant influence of the home. The members of the family do not spend their evenings at home quietly together as much as in the past. Every week brings its numerous engagements alike for parents and children—the church entertain-

MAN is a social being. It is natural for men to seek the company of their fellows. Social life affords a change from their everyday employment, and it should be a beneficial change. "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy." The social enjoyment of friends and neighbors acts as a tonic to the system, and practically all men need it. Men who bear their full share of this world's cares and anxieties and sorrows, are in need of such a tonic. The man who drains his sorrow in a glass of liquor administers a tonic to his sorrow but none to himself. The man who salves his sorrow with the communion with his friends not only reduces his sorrow but also administers a bracing tonic to himself. A French proverb has put it thus, "Company in distress makes trouble less." Friendships multiply joys, and divide griefs.

When friends meet together in a social way they come near to one another, not only in body but also in spirit. They meet together not as business men, nor as professional men, but in their own real characters. They are expected to take off their professional mask, so that we may get a view of the real man behind. When friends meet friends hearts warm. When two faithful friends meet, God makes up a third. The social life of a community is an index to the character of its people.