

The Junior Epworth Era

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Time

"Time's a hand's breadth, 'tis a tale;
'Tis a vessel under sail;
'Tis an eagle on its way
Darting down upon its prey;
'Tis an arrow in its flight
Mocking the pursuing sight.
'Tis a short-lived fading flower,
'Tis a rainbow on a shower;
'Tis a momentary ray
Smiling in a winter's day;
'Tis a torrent's rapid stream;
'Tis a shadow; 'tis a dream;
'Tis the closing watch of night,
Dying at the rising light;
'Tis a bubble; 'tis a sigh—
Be prepared, O man, to die."

—Francis Quarles (1592-1644).

Weekly Topics

JAN. 12.—THE BOY JESUS IN HIS FATHER'S HOUSE. Luke 2. 45-50.

In verse 40 of this chapter we have four things told us about the little growing Babe. In His earliest years He grew in body, mind, and spiritual understanding. The incident recorded in our Topic study occurred when He was twelve years old. The custom of devout Jewish families was to go to the capital city, Jerusalem, to attend the festival services of the great feast. Jesus went with His parents, and as this was probably the first time He had been with them there on such a visit, we may be sure that there were many things to attract His attention, and interest His mind. But there was one place that was more attractive to Him than any other—the Temple. We would call it to-day, in our cities and towns, the Church. Our topic suggests to us that Jesus was drawn to the Temple not by His grandeur as a building, or by its beautiful services, but because it was "His Father's House." He seemed to look on it as the place where His "Father's Business" was to find its central headquarters. Our churches ought to be such. Our boys and girls should have the thought of the Church that makes it the centre of active, busy, loving industry. The Church is not just a place of rest, but one of work. And in it, and by it, our youth ought to be fitted and prepared for out-reaching activities in the "Father's Business." Notice, too, that Jesus was well acquainted with the Scriptures. The wise teachers ("doctors") that were in the Temple were amazed at His knowledge and insight. Does He not teach us that every child of similar age should know God's Word? God's House, God's Work, God's Word, should, all three, be very dear to every youthful disciple. Jesus did not know all the Scripture at twelve, but what He did know was so much, so clearly understood, and so wisely applied, that the learned men were "astonished." Verse 52 tells us that He continued to grow, and "increased in wisdom." But at twelve He was fully committed to God, deeply revered His House, intelligently studied His Word, and realized His duty as a loving son to do the "business" of His Heavenly Father. Our growing children should be reared in this atmosphere of filial reverence and loving obedience. Only when they realize the gracious relation of the Father can we expect them to manifest the spirit

of sons and daughters, and only so can His service be made what it always ought to be—a glad, hearty, willing, loving acknowledgment of His loyal and faithful children.

JAN. 19.—CHRIST'S TEMPTATIONS AND OURS. Matt. 4. 1-11.

Temptation must not be so explained to the Juniors that they shall think of what we may term "its bad side." Too frequently the minds of the young are confused over it. Temptation means trial, test, proving, and may be one of the best things that can come to us. To stand the test, endure the strain, bear out the trial, will find us all the better for the proving. So while we should never solicit temptations, we should never run away from them. If they come to us in the way of duty we may be very sure that God will make us "able to bear" them. The main question with us should not be, "How may I live free from temptation?" but "How may I endure when temptation's come?" No one may expect to go through life free from temptation, yet no one need yield to the tempter to wrong doing. Satan tempted our Lord to satisfy His natural hunger by supernatural power. Jesus told him that there was something more needed than bread for the body. We must always remember that our chief needs are not physical. Then the evil one tempted our Lord to act in a presumptuous way. We must remember that our Lord's reply teaches us not to impose on God. His promises are not given that we may prove them at any whim or caprice that may come to us. It was altogether out of Christ's way of duty to throw Himself down from the Temple. We have no right to put ourselves willfully into danger or sin, and then ex-

Why do boys and girls so often say, "I hadn't time?" Too many have thus excused themselves for having left undone duties that were really pressing. But generally the excuse is not a good one. It is but a question of how much time we have; but rather of what use we make of it. We really have all the time there is. How is it then that some young people always seem to have time enough, while others are ever in a hurry and are constantly trying to overtake the time that is gone? Let us be sure of this:—Time wasted can never be recalled.—Lost time can never be caught up with. What then? Do not underestimate the present hour. Do not waste it. The greatest waste in the world to-day is not that of money, but of precious moments that are not properly valued because they are so small. The little minutes grow swiftly into hours, soon the days lead up to months, and before we are well aware of it, the year has gone. Be methodical in using the passing hours. It is a good habit. Get into the way of doing daily duties at the same time each day. So you will find everything fit into its own place at the proper time. There is nothing like system in either work or study, or play. Be prompt. Do not "dawdle." Much time is wasted in this way. If we form the habit of putting off we shall merit the name we once knew given to a boy

who so did this that they called him "Peter Put-off." He was always late—even to his meals, and that is an unusual thing for a healthy boy. But a lazy boy, or girl either, will spoil many a day by such a "dilly-dally" fashion of living, and become a nuisance to all about them. What you have to do, do at the right time. Be punctual and prompt about it. Be thorough. There is always time to do a thing well. Have you a lesson to learn? Learn it well. You will really save time in this way. Have you some work to do? Do it well. It is the "botchers" that have to go back over their studies or labors to do them again. Had they taken time in the first instance to master what was before them, they would not have lost the time they had to spend in doing it the second time. So, do not put it off. "Take your time" is good advice, but "don't waste it" is equally good. In these ways you will find not only that "time flies," but that it leaves behind it a blessing for you. "Old Father Time" is the enemy of no one who uses him wisely and well; but he always "gets even" with such as treat him foolishly. Use him kindly this year, and see how he will bless you as the months pass by. And a year hence you will not only be older, but wiser, richer, better, and indeed, bigger in every way.

JAN. 26.—DEPUTATION TO THE MISSION ROOMS AND GENERAL EPWORTH LEAGUE AND SUNDAY SCHOOL OFFICES.

SUGGESTED PROGRAMME.

Hymn 453.

Prayer.—That God may bring us to realize more and more that we are all parts of the great missionary enterprise.

Scripture Lesson—1 Cor. 3: 7-13.
(With explanation by the Superintendent.)

About Your Time

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