

indolent. He dreams either on the sunny side of the street while he props up some house wall, or lies prone on the lounge in a comfortable library with the book closed. Not only is he mentally and physically indolent but he is pliable and vain and so becomes an easy tool for the designing knave. He never gets a chance because he never deserves one, and would let the best go by if he had it. Not having sufficient stamina to lead he is content to follow and the animal in him generally leads him to follow the worst, so, if it were possible, he deteriorates, and finally contributes a large quota to our poor-houses, insane-asylums, and prisons. What can we do for him? I know he does not want us but he needs us, and we want him; for we are the only ones who can do him good. There is no power that can touch this human drift wood vitalizingly but the regenerative power of the New-Birth. No human effort can rouse him from his deadly inertia but the awakening of a new manhood in Jesus Christ, and we must try and surround him with such pressing influences that he may drift our way and then pray him into the kingdom. Our motive makes us strong and our love makes us wise while our help is omnipotence. The only help of the Drifter is in Christ let us then try and gather him in.

II. THE SIFTER.

The next class of young men for lack of a better term I shall call sifters. Like the former class the marks of their character may be early discovered. They are not a loveable class but they are a go-ahead one. They are boys, who are at the front when there is anything to get, and out of sight when there is anything to do. They will do more for the gift than they will do for the giver. When they grow older they believe in Missions beginning in Jerusalem and staying there. They are suspicious, critical and selfish. Their idea of other peoples goodness is based on their own, and to them all generosity means a prudent investment. They freely criticize and readily condemn. If they are moral it is because it pays and not because it is right, and they are comparatively honest from the same standpoint. Have they any good qualities? Yes, as a rule they are intelligently industrious. They pay their debts, and soon have a balance at the saving bank. Convince them that any project will pay and they will determinately advocate it and they are as free from offensive as they are from distinguishing virtues.

What can we do for them? Everything that they need most. We can allay their suspicions, for Christianity has nothing to conceal. We can restrain their critical spirit by living a consistent life and we only can cure their selfishness by bringing them into contact with Christ. If the Drifter is the mouldable clay the Sifter is the granite column. The one must be pressed and the other chiselled into shape. The latter requires most labor but the marks of labor endure the longest on the latter. Without us the sifter only gathers the chaff and stones, and sticks out of grain but gathers no grain himself. With us he sifts the dross from the grain and carries it on to the hopper. We can use him, for truth needs no bush to hide in, and the more light cast upon it the clearer it becomes, so does the grain often winnowed become the purer thereby. Put the sweetest and purest of your Lookout Committee on his trail or it will be hopeless to gather in the Sifter.

III. THE LIFTER.

He is not an angel but he has the best human chance of becoming one. I have termed him the Lifter from the time he lifts the baby out of the cradle to lighten his mother's cares until the time the bearers carry him to the grave he has been a burden-bearer. Again the Lifter like his confreres is to be found everywhere. Amid the news-boys on the street, the gutter-snipe of the slums, the dux of the college class or the Little Lord Fauntelroy of the Castle, in all he is in evidence and we are thankful. I find three characteristics of him shining out everywhere. He is willing to learn, willing to help, and willing to obey. He is his mother's "little man," his sister's chum, and his father's boy, when he grows up he is a sportsman but not a sport, a student, but not a recluse, a woman-lover but not a rake, a prudent business man but not a skinflint. If we can gather him in; and we should not miss one of them, for they are our natural allies, he is a treasure. The willingness, unselfishness, and true manliness which characterized him in the world will follow him into the Church and make him one of our most useful members. He is my hero this morning perhaps—

Not with a beautiful face or form

But a beautiful soul within

With a heart that is good and brave and true
And has conquered hateful sin.

The first two classes need us most, but we most need the latter. We can do the most for the first and the latter can do most for us. We hate to leave the comfort of the warm fireside, and good fellowship and face the biting blast and most the bitter

friction of the daily battle of life in the world. But I would earnestly remind my fellow-workers that while the Drifter may become a Lifter, it is possible that the Lifter, by an apposite but analogous process, may become a Drifter. Life is not easy to live; duty is not always pleasant to perform, nor is the reward always in sight. The next step upward may be found in the ward of a tenement house and not in the soft cushions of the church pew. If we would sweeten the tongue of the Sifter, lay loving hands on the Drifter, and link the Lifter more closely to us etc., if we are out on search for the young man whoever he is, and wherever he is to be found; if we are unselfishly seeking his good, he is to be had, and he may be garnered in if we not only seek him for the Master, but seek him in the Master's way and in the Master's spirit.

"And this my daily prayer shall be
That thou wilt show thyself to me
That thou in me may more abide
That I in thee myself may hide,"

for the hiding of self is not only the finding of the Master, but also those whom the Master seeks, including the young men of our congregations.

HOW TO OBTAIN A MORE THOROUGH KNOWLEDGE OF OUR OWN CHURCH LIFE AND WORK.

BY REV. R. D. FRASER M. A., DOWMANVILLE.

"How to obtain a more thorough Knowledge of our own Church Life and Work." That such a knowledge ought to be obtained might be taken for granted. It would prove an inspiration. The deepest source of inspiration was the Bible itself, its doctrine studied at first hand, and its unequalled examples of labor and suffering. Next to this was our own beloved Church, which the speaker held to be closest to Scripture in her doctrine and polity. Her creed was an inspiration, its chief glory being the place it gives to God. The great truth of the sovereignty of God, for which the Calvinistic system peculiarly stands, was the very spine of all the evangelical creeds. By throwing men directly upon Almighty God, it made stalwart Christians. As to the polity of Presbyterianism, such principles as these were at the basis of it—the Church counts of the people—the only King and head of the Church is the Lord Jesus Himself, allegiance being due to Him alone—the only term of membership is acceptance of Christ as Saviour. It was not to be wondered at that such a polity developed on the one hand a love of liberty and on the other hand a broad and Christlike charity. The history of the Presbyterian Church was itself an inspiration. Its giant heroes, such as Calvin and Knox and Cooke, and the Hodges, and Duff, and Geddie, its fierce and often bloody battles for truth and freedom, its mission work,—according to Professor Ramsay, of Glasgow, one fourth of all the missionary work of Protestantism, a knowledge of these could not but create enthusiasm.

A thorough knowledge of their own Church was also necessary to the most efficient work. The Christian Endeavor movement emphasized this in its motto "For Christ and the Church." One's own Church was truly the avenue to readiest service, the most convenient channel for effort, the best strategic position in the battle with evil, the most promising field of labor, the most effective engine for the destruction of the kingdom of Satan.

The speaker next discussed the question how such thorough knowledge might be obtained. He held that a most important element was the atmosphere in which the young were trained and urged strongly that the Church and its concerns should have a larger place in the family life. He also held that Presbyterian organizations, by providing the young people with a larger outlook on Church life and work, aided in increasing their knowledge of it. Systematic study was another and most important means. This, the General Assembly had recognized in its "Plan of Study," now before the Church and which although only in its second month, had been received with marked favor. Mr. Fraser outlined the Plan, which provides for weekly study of doctrine through the Shorter Catechism and one meeting a month devoted wholly to some topic appertaining to Church life or work. Several of the most distinguished men in the Church were writing "helps" for these topics and in addition to the discussion of the first topic "Why I am a Presbyterian" in the Societies, it had already been made the subject of a Sabbath sermon or a week night lecture by a large number of the ministers. The "Plan of Study" had been heartily endorsed by Endeavorers generally and the *Endeavor Herald* and the *Golden Rule* organs of the Society. A third method of increasing one's knowledge of the Church's life and work was by taking an active part in it, which the young people were doing to the manifest advantage of the Church, whose future depended largely on how she gained and held their affection and co-operation.