

The Junior Epworth Era

Edited by Rev. J. T. Bartlett, Associate General Secretary of Sunday Schools and Epworth Leagues, Sackville, N.B.

Weekly Topics

NOV. 17.—WHAT GOD THINKS OF THE WICKED. (The Wicked.) Nahum 1. 3.

"Wicked" means those who are guilty of wilful offences against the laws of God. Our Juniors should be shown that they need never be numbered among this class. Our Junior League is a place where wickedness is not so much exposed or condemned as prevented. To shun evil, to learn to do well, to take God's Word into the heart "that I might not sin against Thee," to form habits of goodness, purity, truth and love, are some of the vital principles of our work among the young. Not to persuade them to a life of obedience to God through fear of Divine wrath, but to "bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," is our chief business. Do not try, therefore, to present this topic from the standpoint of Divine judgment on sin, but from that of human decision not to become "wicked." The child may make this decision. God has made provision whereby it may be carried out in the child's own life. If the child is taught to live as God wills he should, the defiling influences of sin will never be felt or shown in the child's character. Thus the "anger" and "affection" of God on the "wicked" they shall never personally know. Teach the children that whatever these awful denunciations on "the wicked" mean, they, as happy and obedient members of God's family, need have no fear. We shall never truly win our children to God if we first frighten them about God. True affection, the outgrowth of the filial relationship that God's little ones hold towards their Heavenly Father, is the only spirit to which we can effectively appeal in our training of the young. Do not teach them in this way:—"God will be angry with me, and will punish me if I am wicked. Therefore I must try to be good." But rather lead them to say, "God is my Father. He loves me and longs to have me grow up pure and good. I love Him and do not want to be bad. Therefore I shall seek to do His will always and never become 'wicked' before Him." Any other teaching will give wrong ideas of God and holiness to the little child. Never let a boy get the idea that he must "sow his wild oats." It is a pernicious doctrine, wrong in principle, and untrue in fact; it caricatures God, dishonors His Word, and often destroys the boy. Don't send him out as "a wicked" boy, "to become more and more 'wicked';" but save him from being numbered among those of whom the text says that the Lord "will not at all acquit the wicked." Thus the condemnation of such as "are guilty of wilful offences against the laws of God," your boy will never know.

Nov. 24.—TO QUEBEC FROM AFRICA, CALLING AT NEWFOUNDLAND.

Suggested Programme.

Hymn 447.

Prayer—For our missionaries in Newfoundland and Quebec.

Reading of the Scriptures—Ps. 24.

First Guide—From Africa to Newfoundland.

News Agent will tell about Newfoundland.

Hymn 453.

Second Guide—From Newfoundland to Montreal.

Third Guide—Montreal and the French Missions.

News Agent will tell about Quebec.

Hymn 356.

For Use in Preparing for the Trip Meeting:

Problems in French Evangelization, 15 cents.

Preparing the Way, 25 cents.

(The two pamphlets will be sent for 30 cents.)

Methodist Missions in Canada and Newfoundland, 35 cents.

Trip Tickets, ½ cent each.

Order from F. C. Stephenson, Methodist Mission Rooms, Toronto.

DIRECTIONS FOR THE GUIDES.

FROM AFRICA TO CANADA.

It is with a certain feeling of regret that we say farewell to the Dark Continent. It has been the scene of such missionary marvels; it is a place of such great need, that we feel we should like to have stayed longer, and found out more about it all. But we must hasten on. In a few days more we shall see again the shores of Canada. What a long time it seems since we began our journey round the world. We discuss the places we have visited as we travel across the Atlantic. The weather is a good deal colder now than that to which we have been accus-

tomed lately, and every day takes us farther and farther north.

THE FOG OFF LABRADOR.

The captain tells us at last that tomorrow we shall see land. We go to bed quite excited, but in the morning we find that the vessel has stopped. What is the matter? Surely we are not in port. Some of the boys have been on deck, and while we are wondering they come back with an explanation. We are in a dense fog, and the captain does not dare to proceed. All day long, at regular intervals, we hear the dismal sound of the fog-horn. The fog is so thick that it is impossible to see any distance, and the air has a chill, penetrating dampness.

OUR MISSIONARY AT HAMILTON INLET, LABRADOR.

We are glad next day to find that the fog has lifted, and we can resume our journey. We are going to call at Hamilton Inlet, in Labrador, and see the missionary there. He is very pleased to welcome us, and show us about his parish. It seems very lonesome to us, and we wonder how he spends the long, cold winter, but he is very bright and cheerful, and talks very kindly of the fishing people, who constitute a majority of his congregation. But we realize that the isolation is great, and have an increased feeling of respect for these lonely men who are ministering to the spiritual needs of this scattered population.

NEWFOUNDLAND.

Down through the Strait of Belle Isle our steamer passes. On our left is New-

About Your Books

The question that comes to you is not "Shall I read?" but "What shall I read?" Books and magazines were never so numerous or so cheap as now, and it is a very easy matter for our Juniors to secure plenty of reading matter. But it is desirable that you read only profitable books. Much time is wasted by reading poor stuff, and life is too short for this. And the harm that results from reading bad books cannot quickly or easily be undone. So it is very important that you know what is best to read. No book that gives an unreal idea of life is a good book for you. The chief fault with many of the most popular books of to-day is in this point. They do not help the girls and boys to live the kind of life God wants them to live. Anything that makes light of a life, that seems to teach that it pays to do wrong in anything, is bad for you. You will learn that "tis only noble to be good," as you grow older, and it will save you from future regrets if you start out with that idea right from your childhood. Books that describe dishonesty as it does in nature, that seem to teach you that it does not matter so much what you do as long as you are not found out, are bad books. There are plenty of books that, after you have read them, make you feel that you want to be a manly, truthful boy, or a happy, useful girl. Read them. Stories that are unnaturally exciting are not wholesome reading, but such as fill you

with a deep love of country, or home, or your fellows, and which, when you lay them down, make you feel like going out and doing something good in itself, and helpful to others, are good for you. The silly nonsense that fills the minds of so many young people with wrong ideas of living, are to be dreaded. Do not read too much. Much better to read one good book until you are sure you know it than to run quickly through a lot of books very indifferently. Read thoroughly. "Understanded thou what thou redest?" was asked long ago of one man by another. Mark it with you: If you have a good book, and do not at once see what the writer means, do not throw it down in despair. Stick to it, and you will come on step by step all right. Books are good for us only when they make us think. Hard thinking is a good thing for us all. "Light reading" is often "light" in more ways than one, and tends to darkness of both mind and morals. Keep your books carefully. A boy or girl who is careless in using books will likely be unkind to living creatures. Cherish your books as your friends, and they will cheer you when you are lonely. Remember, above all, that the very best reading is in the Bible. There are no such short stories as it contains, and the best of all books is God's Word. Read! Read good books! Read thoughtfully, and you will never want a friend.