

"Evangelism in the Sunday School"

(From Address delivered at E. L. and S. S. Convention at Durham).

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It is evident that our subject naturally It is evident that our subject naturally has two divisions; World Evangelism through the Sunday School and Personal Evangelism in the Sunday School. Both are fruitful fields and will bear emphasis. We, however, believe that it is the intention of the committee that we deal with the latter.

Personal Evangelism: mean by the term? We n What do we We mean simply the personal salvation of the members of the Sunday School. And certainly it should demand the serious attention of this Convention. The report of the Sunday School Secretary of the District shows school Secretary of the District shows that we need to get down to business. Out of a total force of Sunday School scholars of 1,460 only 29 united with the Church last year as against 84 the year These things ought not so to be

before. These things ought not so to be. The Methodist Church has ever stood for the principle and practice of personal evangelism. That has been the outstanding feature of her work. It, however, was a significant spectacle that was seen in a Methodist Preachers' Meeting in New York a year or so ago, when an Epis-copal layman, Mr. Don. O. Shelton, stood before one hundred Methodist Ministers and pleaded with them " not to forsake the old traditions which had caused Methodism to be known far and wide as an Evangelistic Church." It surely is a striking and suggestive thing that a layman of the Anglican Church should deem it necessary to urge a warmer and more aggressive evangelism upon an audience of Methodist ministers. If there is not a tendency in our church to fall away from the practices that have accounted for our life, why do we hear these words from one of a persuasion so different? Surely facts and figures call loudly for action.

The proper attitude of the church to The proper attitude of the church to-ward the child is presented in Ruth, 4: 16, "And Naomi took the child and laid it in her bosom and became nurse unto it." This has not always been the attitude of cultured civilization toward the child. An expectation of the child and the child the child. An expert tells us that not one the child. An expert tens us that het one book for children was ever written by a Greek or Roman author. Plato taught that all bables should be reared by the state in a common enclosure. Seneca praises the drowning of weak children. The world, however, has been simply fas cinated by the words of Jesus when He "Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not for of such is the kingdom of heaven." And thus from every Christian fireside, from every pulpit, from every Sabbath School come pleadingly these earnest words: "Take heed that ye despise not one of these lit-

TWO DUTIES ARE CLEARLY LAID UPON THE SARRATH SCHOOL.

1. To save the children from ever being lost, and 2. To save those already lost and keep

them saved.

To save the children from ever being lost. What rational law of human or Divine Economy can there be that would make it necessary to serve an apprentice-ship in evil as introductory to a good

Christian life? It is a great calamity to allow a child to drift away into the paths of evil because we think they are too young to be troubled about church matters. And, moreover, it is an extremerisky practice. Many a parent has ly risky practice. Many a parent has withheld instruction, intending to begin after a certain time, only to find the child grown away from them with the word "lost" written across the young life. Let us remember that evangelism consists as much in keeping people from besists as much in Keeping people from be-ing lost as in saving those already lost. If in the Sunday School we fail to do something definite for the children in the way of personal salvation the world will do its part. They will be sealed

one way or the other.

It is natural for the child to look up towards God. This is a divinely given towards God. This is a divinely given qualification for his early acceptance of Christianity. Let us seize this natural upward tendency of the young life before it is perverted or lost, and lead him onward to a consciousness of personal salvation. Not long ago it was my privilege to be engaged in conversation with one of the men on my circuit who told me of an event that took place shortly after his wife died. The children one his wire died. The third window on the west side of the house. They were talking about their mother. One of them drew the attention of the others to a dark thunder-cloud rising in the western sky, and said: "I think if others to a dark inharmatical artists in the western sky, and said: "I think if we could get up on top of that cloud we could see mother." They all rejoiced at the thought. The father had to turn away from the window. These are the ideas that are in their minds. God has put them there for a purpose. Don't let them be wasted on the desert air. Just take these God-given qualifications for Christianity and lead them through them to Christ. And don't let us forget them to Christ. that eighty-five per cent. of those who ever accept Christianity accept it during childhood. Little do we know of the movements or of the prayers of the child mind. Let him speak for himself. Teacher, hear his little prayer as he thus addresses it through you to God:—

"I'm not too young to sin, I'm not too young to die,
I'm not too little to begin
A life of faith and joy.
Jesus, I love thy name; From evil set me free: And ever keep thy feeble lambs Who put their trust in Thee.

If the children are not brought during the period of childhood to confess Christ as their Saviour, and to unite with the church, the probability is that they will be drawn utterly away. Childhood is the proper time.

To save the lost and keep them saved. It is to the credit of the Sabbath School to save the lost, though it is not to her credit that they have become lost. We must stem the tide of influences that tend to bear the boy downward, and we must take him with us against the stream. Boys learn to do evil very young. When going along the street in Toronto one day a little lad stepped up to me with one hand behind his back and the other one hand back and said, "Please sir! Will you give me a match?" "What do you want it for?" said I. "To light this," said he, showing a cigarette. Another day I saw a young lad run out to a coachman who was driving down Yonge St., put up his hand and receive a stub of a cigar

was about to throw away. In this and many other ways, the boy is being caught in the maelstrom to be drawn down, down into the very depths of evil. Save the boy! Sin is treading down many a promising life. Many a child is thrown beneath the feet of the tramping monster. By failing to rescue, you join in the treading process, and are there-fore a party to his fall.

HOW ARE WE TO ACCOMPLISH THIS WORK OF PERSONAL EVANGELISM.

The Teacher must be an Evangelist. do not wish to say that he must be schooled in all the arts of the evangelist. But he must be an evangelist in spirit. Whilst we as Christians value highly the wholesome teaching imparted to us in our earliest days in the Sabbath School, we wish to emphasize that that which impressed us most was the Christian zeal of our teachers and their anxiety on our behalf. I have in my home a Bible which I received from one of my first Sunday School teachers which I prize above any other Bible in my home. He gave each scholar a Bible. Frequently he would invite us to his home, have a ple ant evening with us, closing it with a light lunch and prayer. We talked about Another teacher showed great interest in us. As she taught the great tear would start down her cheek. We never forgot that tear. Teacher, you little know what great good a little personal interest in the boy will do. Some years ago a young man sixteen years of age was brought into a Sunday School in Boston. He had never been in such a place before. He was put into a class of boys about his own age. The teacher welcomed him warmly and said, "Our lesson is in John 13, please turn to it." He did not know the Bible much, and had not been raised in a Christian home. He began looking at Genesis, and the young men com-menced to laugh at him. The teacher immediately handed him his Bible and young men com-nim. The teacher said, "There it is my friend, just read the tenth verse." He read it with great difficulty. He became so embarrassed by their continual whispering and looking at him that he decided never to go to another Sunday School. The teacher, however, secured his name and address "I hope you will come back and said, and said, "I hope you will come back again." He said nothing however, and went out. The teacher visited him during the week, and in closing said, "I shall expect to see you back next Sunday." Well," said he, "I did not intend to go back any more, but since you have been — bind at to see me I will come on your so kind as to see me, I will come on your account." And he did come. And the teacher kept with him until he was converted. That young man has moved the world as no other man has. It was D. L. Suppose that teacher had thought his duty done with the explanation of the lesson, and had said to himself, "Well, what if he doesn't come back? He'll never amount to much." D. L Moody might have been lost to the world. Teacher, it may be that beneath the rough exterior you have a Moody in your class. Save him for God and the world.

Pray to God to help you to save each

Teach the lesson always keeping in view

Teach the lesson always keeping in view the salvation of each boy.

Bring it down where he stands and show him the way in, and pray him in.

Follow it up with tactful personal work.

Let Teachers and Officers unite upon this great purpose. Let it become a co-operative concern between the teachers and officers on the one side and the pupil on the other. Each Sunday should be a time of special effort. Yet we are glad that our church has put its seal on the methods of Decision Day and recommends it. For then we can focus all our efforts upon a great climax. Personally, I would like to see Decision Day exercises extend over two weeks or a month, having the

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