

tunity to Christianize China through Japan is at once obvious and imperative."

Mr. Wicher, another Canadian minister in Japan, says: "The awakening of Asia is coming slowly, perhaps, but terribly surely. China will soon begin to move and her progress will be as irresistible as an avalanche. It is of the utmost importance for our New World that Japan and not Russia should be the teacher of China."

For these and other reasons I feel that Japan should win and my feelings often find expression in prayer to God that she may win.

Brampton, Ont.

On Joining the Church.

BY MACK CLOIE.

SOMETIMES when I have proposed the matter of joining the church to certain persons, I have been told, "Oh I can live a good Christian life outside the church," or, "There are as good Christians outside the church as in it," or it may be replied, "I mean to do my duty and live right, and I do not think I need fear condemnation because I do not unite with a church."

Experience has shown me that replies of this kind arise out of a lack of consecration to God, an undecided spirit for Christ, a lingering clinging to the world that does not promise well for the Christian life. Testimony in this matter ought to be worth something, and the universal testimony of devoted Christians is, that uniting with the church has been a great strength and protection to them, besides opening to them a much larger field of usefulness. It is not the case that the truest and most efficient Christians are not members of the church. Both history and present day observation will show that they are church members somewhere. Joining the church is just making the best of the best that is offered to us for our spiritual development, for growing in grace and for engaging actively in the work of God; for the living church can always find you a job.

Young People's Friendships.

EARLY friendships have a great deal to do with after life. The ideal of manliness which a boy gets from the first men he sees has a lasting influence over him. A writer in an English magazine, speaking of Henry Drummond, says: "Long before the world knew him, Drummond was my hero—the kind of hero that only a big boy can be to a little boy." It is most unfortunate when a boy's first vision of manliness is that of a rough, swaggering, swearing, drinking man, unclean in speech and act, rude, noisy, brutal. It is scarcely less unfortunate when a boy's eyes open first on a dainty, idle, cigarette-smoking, over-dressed specimen, which he supposes to be the ideal of a man. It is a blessed thing when a boy's first companions and earliest friends are pure, true, honorable, diligent, with clear eye and the upward look.

The power of life over life is something almost startling. There have been single looks of an eye which have changed a destiny. There have been meetings of only a moment which have left impressions for all life. We cannot understand that mysterious thing which we call influence. Yet we know that from every life there goes out continually something which is of the essence and quality of the life itself, and which enters into other lives and affects them.

A young man does not know what hurt he is letting into his life when he admits to his confidence even for an hour a companion who is not good, not pure, not true. On the other hand, good companionship leaves only benediction. There have been mere chance meetings, just for a moment and then away, as when two ships meet on the sea, speak each other, and then pass each on its own course, never to meet again, which have left blessings whose influence never shall perish. There is an old legend about the origin of the pearl—that a star dropped out of the sky and fell into the sea, and was folded into the shell, and there became a pearl. So it is that the influences of good lives—beautiful words, kindly deeds, the inspiration of noble things, drop out of the heaven of holy friendship into the depths of hearts, and falling are folded there and become gems and ornaments in the life.

An unworthy friendship debases the character, but to have

a friendship worthy, honorable, noble, good, is to be on the mountain-climb of life which lifts one's feet ever heavenward. In every true friend's character we see some little glimpse of life "as it is in heaven," some fragment of the beauty of the Lord. There is wonderful restraining and constraining power in the life of the friend we honor. We dare not do wrong in such a presence. We know how unworthy we feel when we come with the recollection of some sin or some meanness into the presence of one we revere. One writes of the hallowing influence of a pure presence:

"Each soul whispers to himself: 'Were like a breach Of reverence in a temple, could I dare Here speak untruth, here wrong by inmost thought. Here I grow strong and pure; here I may yield Without shamefacedness the little brought From out my poorer life, and stand revealed And glad and trusting in the sweet and rare. And tender presence which hath filled this air.'"

In "Middlemarch" George Eliot puts it thus: "There are natures in which, if they love us, we are conscious of having a sort of baptism and consecration. They bind us over to rectitude and purity by their pure belief about us; and our sins become the worst kind of sacrilege which tears down the invisible altar of trust."

Another says: "A friend has many functions. He comes as the brightener into our life, to double our joys and halve our griefs. He comes as the counsellor, to give wisdom to our plans. He comes as the strengthener, to multiply our opportunities and be hands and feet for us in our absence. But above all use like this, he comes as our rebuker, to expose our failures and shame us from our lowliness; as our purifier, our uplifter, our ideal, whose life to us is a constant challenge in our heart: 'Friend, come up higher, higher, along with me; that you and I may be those truest true lovers who are nearest to God when nearest to each other.'"

A special word should be said about a young man's women friends. In one of George Macdonald's poems there is this hungry-hearted aspiration coming from the heart of a man in behalf of a woman friend:

"For God's sake be as beautiful As the white form that dwelleth in my heart; Yet, better still, as that ideal pure That waketh in thee when thou prayest God, Or helpeth thy poor neighbor.

Justify my faith In womanhood's white-handed nobleness, And thee, its revelation unto me."

To a young woman the coming of love should be a call to whatever is worthiest and best in her to awake and shine out. Every young man's ultimate success or failure depends far more than he dreams upon the women he chooses for his companions and friends, and most of all on the one woman whom he takes from among all these into the innermost and most sacred place of wife.—*Forward.*

The Power of the "Littles."

THOSE small acts of kindness that children and young people are constantly doing. These acts are the "littles"—what is their power? The answer is given graphically in the *Sunday at Home*:

No greater mistake could be made, however, than that of counting these little services as trifling. God judges of things not by their bigness or glitter, but by this: have we done what we could? By this test the seemingly small off-hand kindness may one day be found greater than many a deed that gets into the papers and which everybody praises. A wise engineer thinks just as much of a pin or a bolt as he does of the great driving wheel, for he knows that nothing can go rightly unless every pin and nut is faithfully doing its duty. For want of a nail the horse's shoe came off, for want of the shoe the horse was lamed, for want of the rider arriving in time the battle was lost. This is the whole story of the power of what we call littles; there is nothing really little or really great with God; if it is right, if it is kind, if it is good, then what we call little is as great in His eyes as the thing that every one speaks about.

Go on, then, my bairnies, with your quiet deeds of kindness; these are the seeds out of which the bigger fruits you wish for will yet come.