

"Young Folks Circle"

Where Uncle West Presides

MOTTO:

"In life, as in football, hit the line hard. Don't foul, don't shirk. Hit the line hard."—Col. Roosevelt.

Dear Nephews and Nieces:—I hope you have been thinking of the Progress Clubs. Nothing I feel sure will help us to do good work together during the coming year more than to be united for the up-building of this glorious country. I hope to receive many letters during the coming week, so that you will all be in shape to open up a Progress Club as soon as school opens.

The rules are as follows:—

Art. 1.

The club to be known as The Canadian Progress Club (each branch add school name).

Art. 2.

Objects.

To inspire young and old to help themselves upward and onward.

By such training and education, experience, and development, work and play, that each may use and enjoy all her or his physical, mental, moral and spiritual powers.

For health and happiness, efficiency and prosperity.

To cultivate patriotism, non-sectionalism, loyalty, character, honesty, earnestness of purpose, faithful service, obedience, reverence for the laws of God and man.

To make the Golden Rule a living reality and thus unite young and old in truer brotherhood.

The aim will be to make the Canadian people leaders in everything that conspires to human welfare and the true progress of the world. This movement shall consist of Progress Clubs formed by boys and girls and older people also. Such clubs may be organized within the schools or without, or may consist of pupils at school or those who have left school.

By joining a Progress Club you will get much more fun and benefit from the experiments, tests and exercises that will be suggested from time to time for use in the school, than if you are not a member.

To join the club also gives you experience in organization. Remember this is the day of organized efforts. Three girls or three boys who unite their efforts can accomplish more than a dozen girls or boys each working singly.

Wisely directed organization is one of the greatest forces. It makes for human progress. For further particulars ask your teachers to write to Uncle West, or write yourselves and show your letters to the teachers.

From your own,

UNCLE WEST.

THE SACRIFICE OF FATHER DAMIEN

Two brothers in Belgium were in the same college preparing to become priests. The elder brother was soon to become a missionary, and go away to the South Sea Islands. His eyes used to sparkle, and he would rub the palms of his hands together, smiling and showing all his teeth, whenever he spoke of the work that waited for him across the sea.

One day, however, he was taken seriously ill, and was carried to his bed. Fever wasted him. He fretted and grew pale and melancholy. His younger brother came to his bedside and said softly, "Would it make you happier if I took your place as a missionary?" The eyes of the sick man lighted up for a moment, and he squeezed his brother's hands, smiling. Then the younger brother wrote secretly to the authorities, begging that he might go in place of his brother.

As he sat at his books one day, the superior of the college came and told him that he was to go. The boy sprang up, rushed out of the room, and careered about the playground like a wild animal.

"Is he crazy?" asked the other students.

And why should Joseph Damien have been so glad to go into exile? Why should he wish to forsake the happy land where people spoke his language, and where all the customs and habits were so familiar to him? Why want to go and work among savages, far away out across the wild seas, unseen and forgotten by his friends?

Well, he had already given up the world to become a priest, and so it was clear that he was glad to become a far-away and forgotten missionary because he loved, more than the pomp of the world, more than the happiness of home, more than the love of father and mother, the Saviour who went about doing good, and who called upon all who loved Him to take up their cross and follow Him.

Joseph Damien, bubbling over with the excitement of a boy, started out for the South Sea Islands and became a missionary. He worked nobly and well till he was thirty-three. Then, while he was working among the people, he one day heard the good bishop say that, alas! he had no one to send to the poor lepers in Molokai, and that these poor, stricken creatures were abandoned to this most dreadful disease and to the most dreadful sins.

Joseph Damien, whose heart had often grieved at stories he heard of the lepers, begged the bishop to send him, and the bishop accepted his offer.

So here was another "giving-up," for to go from the savages to the lepers was a far greater sacrifice than going from Belgium to the savages. The lepers lived all by themselves, separated from healthy people, shunned by all mankind. They were outcasts. The dreadful misery of their bodies made them evil in their souls. Their hovels were like pigsties; they lived no better than beasts; they were horrible to look at and viler to know. You cannot imagine the horrors of Molokai. If I were to tell you a quarter of them, it would make you ill.

But Father Damien came to these outcasts with the simple message that God loved them; and his cheerful face, his caressing voice, his loving eyes, and, above all else, the living faith that was in his words, changed them from beasts to men, and presently from men to children of God. They began to be ashamed of their sins; they began to feel that perhaps God did really love them after all. One thing was true. Father Damien loved them.

For sixteen years this holy and devoted man lived among the lepers. He built them a church, which they loved, he built them better houses, he gave them a proper water supply, he nursed them, he dressed their frightful wounds, he comforted them when dying, and he dug their graves for them when they were dead. And people in the great world outside heard of this lonely priest toiling among the lepers. People wrote to him, sent him cases of comforts for his people, and some even came out to see him and help him. You will be glad to know that England honored this Belgian priest, and helped him. In England his name became a power for good.

One day the warning came. He happened to spill some boiling water, which splashed upon his foot. He was surprised to find that it did not hurt him. He went to a doctor. "Have I got leprosy?" he asked. "I hate to tell you," said the doctor; "but, yes, you are a leper." From that moment Father Damien said in his sermons, not "my brethren," but "we lepers."

He was perfectly happy. He said that if he could be cured by forsaking the island he would not desert the lepers. So he worked on as a leper, with death creeping swiftly and fiercely through his body.

When he was carried to his bed, he thanked God for all the blessings and comforts he received. Two priests and Sisters of Charity knelt at his bed.

"When you are in heaven, Father," said one of the priests, "you will not forget those you leave orphans behind you?"

"Ah, no!" smiled the good Father. "If I have credit with God, I will pray for all in the Leprosy."

"And will you" whispered the kneeling priest, "like Elijah, leave me your mantle, my Father?"

"Why, what would you do with it?" asked Father Damien. And then he added slowly, "It is full of leprosy."

What a fine coat to put off after one's life's work! No king ever wore a finer.

And soon the soul of Father Damien was received by the angels. His whole life had been a golden deed.

WESTERN WOMEN READ THIS



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