

YOUNG PEOPLE'S DEPARTMENT.

The Children our Helpers and our Hope.

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Many times while in India I used to thank God for the help the dear boys and girls gave me in my missionary work. Better than your placards and posters were the little fellows who ran into every nook and but of the village shouting "*Jesus Christ's man has come.*" In twenty minutes scores and sometimes hundreds of eager listeners were standing under the big banyan or mango tamarind tree, and I could not but heartily thank my little herald before beginning to preach to the people. In every age of the Church and in the ages before too, children have done much towards propagating truth, and in our day we cannot afford to loose the help and the hope their efforts bring.

Since coming home from Bengal nothing has cheered me more than the ready and repeated evidences of a growing interest on the part of the children of our communities in the great missionary enterprise. The Liverpool "lines" brought me to New York last Christmas day, and that very day, and many times since then, has my attention been called to what our American children are doing in response to the piteous plea of the pagan world.

It was perhaps that noble missionary, Dr. John Scudder, of Madras, who first devoted special attention to the children while making missionary addresses in this country. It used to be thought that our great sermons and learned lectures to grown up folk did the work. Times have changed and opinions too. Now I believe that many a missionary from Africa or Asia, were he to have but one chance for reaching the good people of a city or country church, would unhesitatingly say: Let me meet the Sunday School and tell my story to the children and young people.

How may this rising interest among the children be encouraged? We should aim at intelligence, strength and permanency. Only an intelligent interest in the missionary enterprise can be either strong or permanent. Little is gained and much may be lost by stirring up merely a quick, short, sensational feeling in favor of helping the heathen. On the other hand much is gained and nothing lost by beginning intelligently, and feeding the growing interest of our children with fresh facts from the great field itself. These will stimulate thought by imparting knowledge, and this will in turn move the heart and influence the life.

A few points may be noted indicating a general line of action, for of course each case should be treated upon its own merits. What works well in one place may not work at all in another. This remark, however, applies to minor details in carrying out our plans for interesting children in Missions. The following hints may be helpful to some workers, who are sometimes at a loss to know what to do next:

1. A select missionary shelf should be found in every Sunday School Library. It is wonderful how much our boys and girls are reading in these days, and this keen appetite for information of every sort should be taken advantage of. There are scores of excellent books treating of missionary work in many lands, that need only to be put on the library shelves to be eagerly chosen and read. No better books could be read by our children than some of these records of Christian effort and adventure in pagan lands.

By reading them their thoughts will be early enlisted, and their sympathies too, in the glorious work of publishing the blessed gospel among the ignorant and destitute of far-off benighted lands. If the mere looking at a picture of cruelty towards Christians in Madagascar so impressed a child so as to make a missionary of him, who can doubt that the regular reading of missionary literature will prove very fruitful?

Every Sunday School Library should have, in addition to such books as I have spoken of, at least one first class missionary periodical for circulation among the pupils. It pays to thus provide food for thought on this subject.

2. The children should have a part in the monthly concert of prayer for Missions. This monthly concert may be made one of the most interesting and attractive meetings in every Church, and surely our boys and girls should be present to enjoy it and profit by it. The best way I know of for getting them there is by giving them something to do. It may be a missionary dialogue, a stirring hymn with a rousing chorus, or a brief recital of experiences on the Congo or the Ganges, or report of monies collected during the month for some definite field or some particular missionary; anything of this kind helps wonderfully in attracting or holding the children. And the children of the Missionary Concert will be heard from by and by, if not on foreign fields, in sterling church work at home, that extends its sympathy and support to the regions beyond.

Several years ago I was raising an endowment fund for a Bible School in India. In an Ohio Church the largest three subscriptions came from three ladies who were sisters, and upon inquiry I learned that in childhood they had been accustomed to the Monthly Concert of prayer for Missions in a Presbyterian Church of Western New York.

3. The boys and girls of the congregation should be taught to give regularly for Missions. Be it but a cent a week, let each child be taught to give something and to give it every week. Had we and our fathers learned this simple rule, millions more would have been raised in the American Church for the great missionary enterprises of our day.

Let our children learn that pennies and prayers should go together on every Lord's day as we attend Church, and our benevolent work will rejoice over large opportunities and more abundant means for improving them. System will take the place of spurts in our giving, and so Christ's work will be carried on more steadily and satisfactorily.

The Sunday School teachers who are organizing their pupils into Mission bands, and teaching them to bring in their weekly gifts into the Lord's treasury are doing a great work, the golden fruit of which will appear in due time, both at home and abroad.

Let every one who reads these lines cheer on the children to think and pray and work for the heathen. To some children this very interest for others will prove to be the opening up of a new life in the heart, for watering others they will be watered also themselves.
—*Gospel in all Lands.*

Royal Temple Visitation in Siam.

Of the one hundred and fifty or more Buddhist temples in Bangkok, Siam, one-third of them, the largest and finest, are under the special patronage of the king; and he, as the head of the state religion, visits them officially once a year. This annual visitation, called *Taut Ka-tin*, occurs in October, and great preparations are made for