

Our Contributors.

"HOW SHALL WE INTEREST OUR YOUNG PEOPLE IN OUR WORK?"



TAKE it for granted that we have young people to interest, and that the milk of human kindness is not dried up within our church fold. Every church has to face

certain existing conditions. A problem with many is as follows: The young people, from the age of six years up to fourteen, like the Sabbath school services better than the church services. Also, many young men, from the age of fourteen to twenty-one prefer the streets and the green fields to the Sabbath school or the services.

What shall we do? Make sad complaining? Of course not. Like sensible people we will rejoice that the children *do* enjoy the Sabbath school services, and be glad if our young men do not prefer anything worse than the streets and green fields. *But*, at the same time, we do not propose to stop here.

As a logical sequence, it must be admitted that the children like the Sunday school services because there are points worthy of their liking in them. Now what are these points? (1) You have noticed how children love to get together. It is natural. They like company. (2) They do enjoy hearty singing: something they can have a share in. Bright, inspiring tunes—true, earnest, simple words about Jesus and His love; and there is decided satisfaction in the thought "Well, I helped that hymn out,"—"I took part in that service."

(3) Then there is the responsive reading of the lesson. Everybody taking a fair share and no monopoly. In public services it can be truthfully said "We never weary in doing; the weariness comes in being bottled in."

(4) Then look at our system of teaching. Socrates would grow a foot taller and expand duly in proportion, were he enabled to enter one of our Sunday schools during the teaching hours and perceive how his hints have been acted upon.

It is a sort of "*Quid pro quo*"—"you give and I'll give, and we'll both get some good." The scholars realize it and enjoy it much.

(5) Another point is *short prayers*. Thus we have a five-spoked wheel. That makes the Sunday school services run easy, and delights the young people. The *felloes* are the hearts of love the teachers possess, and the *hub* is the glorious Gospel.

Now how about our young men from fourteen to twenty-one? How reach their case? Will careful selection, wise grouping of subjects (objects understood) in a class—finding the teacher in touch with these very young men—day's outing together occasionally, for fun and for instruction—slight digressions from the lesson, wisely held in, but allowed for the sake of reaching their views—patience with a little mischief, remembering that *we* were once boys ourselves—freedom from cant and stiffness, and a burning love for the souls of these young men—will the above help to reach their case and go somewhat toward solving the problem of the lapsed masses, preventing them from graduating out of the Sunday school into the street or fields?

Now, with regard to the church services: How get them to attend? Taking the hints from our school system. Can we not bring them as much together as possible? avoiding back seats above everything. Of one thing I am confident; if we, as pastors, had from fifty to one hundred of our young people right in front of us, we would need no clock—there would be no long sermons, for so long as we could interest the young, older heads would be satisfied, and drinking at the fountains of wisdom, too. It would change our texts often; it would rejuvenate us. We would preach not to little children, but to the *church of the future*. Thus doing, we would build up our cause every Sabbath. Then we could have bright singing, and why not have more responsive reading in our churches? Simple, short, to-the-point prayers—God knows all that we won't tell Him. We are not heard for our much speaking. Then, a bright little sermonette of ten minutes, on any useful subject. The Bible holds thousands of them. Nature and experience are also full of subjects. Encourage the young people to use the envelopes every Sabbath, even if their offerings be