

Pastor and People.

THE HOLY LAND.

How dull is life, and what a petty round
Of selfish duties fill the passing days.
I long for some fresh sight, or some sweet sound,
My feet are weary with these common ways!

Oh! could I but for one short hour stand
Where Jesus stood upon Mount Olives' height,
And tread the paths He trod in that far land,
My life might blossom with a new delight

Toward thee my pilgrim soul forever turns,
Thou Holy Land, than other lands more blest.
Still for thy hallowed groves my spirit yearns;
There I might find content and peace and rest.

Nay, foolish heart, how slow to learn what He
Would teach by His brief sojourn on our earth
That not a little time or space should be
Illumined by the glory of His birth.

Put every human life and all the lands
Are holy since He walked and talked with men.
Toil is divine touched by His gracious hands;
His presence filleth all things now as then.

So in the desert or the crowded street,
On mountain slope or by the white sea sand,
Behold the imprint of His sacred feet,
And know the whole earth is a Holy Land.

—Mrs. F. L. Ballard.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETY OF CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOUR.

BY REV. J. A. R. DICKSON, B.D.

Many are asking to-day: What is the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavour? and the question is a sign of a widespread interest in a movement that is meeting a deeply felt want. It should have therefore a respectful and satisfactory answer.

The Young People's Society of Christian Endeavour came into existence to meet a spiritual need, as to Bible study and prayer and the exercise of gifts in the prayer meeting of a large body of young converts, added to the Church in a season of gracious quickening in 1881. That year there were but two societies, with a membership of sixty-eight. Last June, 1890, there were 11,013 societies, with 660,000 members. That is one of the best possible proofs that it has a work to do, that it satisfies a want, that it supplies something that was lacking in the provision made by the Church for her young people.

For a long time previous to the organization of this Society many schemes were wrought for "the good of the young people." Literary Societies and Mutual Improvement Societies, etc., with their entertainments and concerts and socials, and these, with whatever of good was in them, were so overbalanced by objectionable elements that they were, after repeated trials, abandoned as unhelpful. Their force was centrifugal rather than centripetal. Instead of drawing the young people to the Church and to Christ, they were ministers of evil driving them away from the solemn and sacred by giving them a taste of the ludicrous and the theatrical and the fleshly, and so separating between them and Christ. This was the foolishness of worldly wisdom. The Church cannot save the young by becoming worldly or fleshly, as they are themselves. Its weapons are not carnal, but spiritual. Its power is not human but divine. Its saving energy is not in the witcheries of human wisdom, but in the gracious love of God which hates everything that deadens the conscience and increases the distance between the soul and Himself, and sinks the souls deeper in the horrible pit. Those societies kept the young people together, but they did not keep them around the right centre. It was self rather than Christ. And the Church is not instituted to nourish self, however good and beautiful and attractive the self may be. It exists to hold up Christ crucified as the salvation of men, and to draw all men unto Him. He says: "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me." The Christian Endeavour is in line with Christ's purpose. It lays its work along the line God describes. It keeps close to the law and to the testimony. It calls the young people to the exercise of their gifts whatever they may be. It is a Christian school where lessons of the greatest value are learned. Such lessons as are given in no other department of church life and work. It teaches them to open their mouths in reading portions of God's word; portions that have been sought very earnestly for, and at length chosen thoughtfully as germane to the topic taken up for the evening. Said one lady to me: "Why, Mr. Dickson, we never thought so much about our Bibles before. It is the topic of the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavour on Monday morning and all the week. We do think about God's word so much now. And what blessing we get." Ah, this is the old cry: "Oh, how I love Thy law, it is my meditation all the day." It encourages young men to take part in prayer. The exercises are all brief, as the time of meeting is only an hour, and so no one is afraid of doing some little thing.

This is the pledge each active member takes:—

"Trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ for strength, I promise Him that I will strive to do whatever He would like to have me do; that I will make it the rule of my life to pray and to read the Bible every day, and to support my own church in

every way, especially by attending all her regular Sunday and mid-week services, unless prevented by some reason which I can conscientiously give to my Saviour, and that, just so far as I know how, throughout my whole life, I will endeavour to lead a Christian life.

"As an active member, I promise to be true to all my duties to be present at, and to take some part, aside from singing in every Christian Endeavour prayer-meeting, unless hindered by some reason which I can conscientiously give to my Lord and Master. If obliged to be absent from the monthly consecration meeting of the Society, I will, if possible, send at least a verse of Scripture to be read in response to my name at the roll-call."

Signed.....

The marked features of this pledge are the promise to read the Bible and to pray every day; the engagement to do some thing at each meeting; the relation in which each soul is made to stand to Christ; the sense of brotherhood and kinship it awakens in all who accept it. It is a good thing.

Some find objections to the pledge, either in whole or in some of its parts, but these objections fall away in the outworking of it. The elimination of any part of it weakens the Society rather than strengthens it. There is power in the pledge. It certainly insists not on anything which does not rightfully belong to the obligation of each young or old Christian. We gain nothing by laxness. We may seem to do so at first, but ere long we discover that we have lost materially. Earnest and true Christians will find no fault in the pledge. And tried workers will cling tenaciously to it as a most useful and necessary instrument. I think it may be said it has built up the Society.

How are the meetings conducted?

The president, a young man or young woman, takes the chair at the hour, announces a hymn, calls on some one to pray, then reads the Scriptures containing the topic for the evening and makes a brief comment and then throws the meeting open. Then follows from the members Scripture passages most apt, brief prayers, choice select hymns, or short, crisp, earnest addresses till the hour is up. It is a prayer meeting, but on a new model.

Everyone takes some part. And when all do that it is the best meeting the individuals ever attended. I have listened to the beautiful Word of God read in this way in the solemn stillness of the meeting, and it has had great power over the spirit. This kind of dealing with the Word makes me heartily thank God for the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavour. It is one of the very best societies in connection with the Church. It is in the Church and of the Church. Its motto is "FOR CHRIST AND THE CHURCH." It breathes a Spirit into the Church that is devout, prayerful, quickening and full of hope. It has many committees, which if they work will do much for the upbuilding of the Church. These are:

1. The Sunday School Committee. It shall be the duty of this committee to endeavour to bring into the Sunday school those who do not attend elsewhere, and to co operate with the superintendent and officers of the school in any ways which they may suggest for the benefit of the Sunday school.

2. The Calling Committee. It shall be the duty of this committee to have a special care for those among the young people who do not feel at home in the church, to call on them and to remind others where the calls should be made.

3. Music Committee. It shall be the duty of this committee to provide for the singing at the young people's meetings, and also to turn the musical ability of the Society into account, when necessary, at public religious meetings.

4. Missionary Committee. It shall be the duty of this committee to provide for occasional missionary meetings, to interest the members of the Society in all ways in missionary topics, and to aid in any manner which may seem practicable the cause of Home and Foreign Missions.

5. The Flower Committee. It shall be the duty of this committee to provide flowers for the pulpit and to distribute them to the sick at the close of the Sabbath service.

6. Temperance Committee. It shall be the duty of this committee to do what may be deemed best to promote temperance principles and sentiment among the members of the Society.

7. The Relief Committee. It shall be the duty of this committee to do what it can to cheer and aid, if possible and necessary, by material comforts, the sick and destitute among the young people of the Church and Sunday school.

8. The Good Literature Committee. It shall be the duty of this committee to do its utmost to promote the reading of good books and papers. To this end it shall do what it can to circulate the religious newspaper representing the Society among its members, also to obtain subscribers for the denominational papers or magazines among the families of the congregation, as the pastor and the church may direct. It may, if deemed best, distribute tracts and religious leaflets, and, in any other suitable way which may be desired, introduce good reading matter wherever practicable.

We hope the best possible things from this Society. It is just what many pastors want "for the good of the young people." It does not need many to work well. It is better to begin with a few warm-hearted Christians who are trustworthy, firm, reliable. These will give it tone and determine its character and control the outgoings of its life. They, having got a "core of heat," shall influence others and draw them in to the warm, loving atmosphere, in which they shall delight to remain. Better have a small society than none.

The old folks who feel young may join too, and bring their big hearts into sympathy with the rising generation. A rejuvenation of this kind is a great blessing. God bless the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavour!

CHRISTIAN LIGHT.

When Christ told His disciples that they were the "salt of the earth," He did not intend that such an idea would describe their whole relation and utility to general society. So He immediately adds: "Ye are the light of the world." These two expressions do not, at first glance, seem to have any sympathy with each other; but they really come to each other's aid in the Christian's active relations with the world. In the first place, they are both very silent forces; in the second place, they are both penetrative in their operations; in the third place they are both pure in their original and essential qualities; and in the fourth place they are beneficial in their workings. Now, Christians are needed as preservers of society—to act as checks to the disintegrating tendencies of a corrupt humanity; and then Christian light is needed to show corrupt humanity the way which leads out of moral corruption into the possession of incorruptible life, even life and glory everlasting. If Christians were nothing but salt, those with whom they come in contact would feel no warmth from them; but being also the light of the world, they exert a warm influence upon their ungodly neighbours. And yet the degree of such an influence depends upon the intensity of the light which Christians possess. A little flickering light hardly keeps warm the one who has it; but if he be "a burning and shining light," then the unconverted not only see it, but are warmed by it, even unto an admiration of his Christian qualities, and from thence they are led to glorify God. Get filled with the light of Christ!—*Zion's Herald.*

THE DECEIVED YOUNG MAN.

Lately I heard a young man express the desire of his heart in the following language: "I do not care for my soul, it is money, money that I want. I want to get rich."

How different this from the prayer and desire of the young man Solomon, who prayed for understanding that he might rule wisely the people over whom God had made him king. The young man referred to is not the only one of that class. He is the representative of a great army of young men who are now making their way up to take the places, many of them, of pious fathers whose hairs are whitening, and whose forms will soon be ready for the tomb. From the language above quoted it will be seen that the soul is put into the background; the body is placed above it. The fleshly desire is pre-eminent. First the comfort of the body, then if there is the incitation the soul may be cared for, but by all means the body first.

This is the great deception that is leading the young man of this age on. It is the mirage of his life, painting to him scenes of transcendent beauty upon the horizon, only to fade away when approached. He has altogether a wrong conception of life, but it is a prevalent one, and one that in many cases he has received under the parental roof. The great object to be attained is not wealth of soul and character, but the mere accumulation of material wealth. This certainly is a reversal of the command of Christ, who said, "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and these things shall be added." But with the burning desire to be enumerated among the well-to-do people, the soul is forgotten, the religion of Christ is made of no account, and the untold wealth of heaven is trampled under foot. It is with pain that I see this spirit encouraged in the young man, and it is so evident that this dangerous tendency is gaining ground that we may well fear the time is approaching when materialistic philosophy will be in the ascendancy, and when men will doubt the existence of soul or spirit altogether. There is danger of this.

The young man is deceived with the idea that wealth constitutes the sole basis of all happiness, that it is impossible to enjoy life unless one has a large quantity of the material. There is, however, always abundant evidence at hand to expose this deception. Who are the happiest young men? Are they always the richest? They may be the gayest, but there is a world-wide difference between gaiety and happiness.

Another deception under which the young man labours is that wealth admits him into better society. It may be that it admits him into gayer society, but by no means into better. He accounts himself as being of the best society, and that his wealth will be a passport into the society to which he thinks himself entitled. No deception could be greater than this. The society which keeps its doors closed, except to the wealthy, can by no means be reckoned the best. The world over, the good, pious, manly young man will always be welcomed into the very best society—the society of Christian men and women, and this side of heaven there is no better society than this. Would that I could sound into the ears of every young man in the land this warning: "Not money first, but God first, character, eternal life first, because these things endure."

How deceived men will be when they come to the end of life to find that though they have gained the desire of their hearts, they have lost everything that is truly good. They have no right to the tree of life, no admission to the pure society of heaven, and no rank among those who have gained everything, and whose treasures are laid up where moth and rust doth not corrupt. The deceived young man will finally be the disappointed old man.—*Rev. E. Herbruck, Ph.D.*