



The time for the Annual Offering to the General Fund will soon be here. If your League has not taken it, please see to it without fail. Make it as liberal as possible. Your General Treasurer will greatly appreciate your liberality, and the General Board will direct the wise expenditure of the money. Do not, please, be content to contribute a poor solitary dollar, nor two of them. "Double up," and you and everybody else will be the better pleased and provided for.

### Just Between Ourselves

Just run your eye over the list of books advertised by the Book Room this month. You will see some good ones to help you in becoming an acceptable speaker, a competent debater, or a clear writer.

If your Pastor does not readily make arrangements for the Annual Meeting of your League, remind him of it. He has a host of other things to think of at this busy time of the year, but not the least of his important duties is to conduct the election of your President for the ensuing year. Do not allow lax business methods to injure your League.

A concise summary of the work of your Society, sent soon by your Secretary to this office, would be greatly appreciated by the editor. To supply such would not only be a good thing for your own League, but it would stimulate others to better work during the coming year.

Your careful attention to Our Young People's Forum, as you will find it started farther on in this paper, will, perhaps, stir you up to contribute something for the columns next month. Do not be afraid to write what is in your mind on any practical theme. The editor is not your critic, but your friend. Put your ideas on paper and send them on.

The work of the office keeps us busy. Just what the General Secretary's regular correspondence amounts to, you may reckon from the fact that, during January and February, 353 parcels of papers and books were mailed, in addition to 2,708 letters and cards, which passed through his hands, or those of his assistant. This does not include the necessary correspondence conducted by the Field Secretaries.

There are now over 1,600 students enrolled with the General Secretary, in the Teacher Training Department. Several hundreds more are quietly taking some part of the course. We have only made a start, so far. This important section of our work. Could not your League add a few names, and, by conducting a class, not only greatly benefit your members personally, but add materially to the efficiency of your Sunday-school teaching staff? If you have not sent the leaflet, send for it. You will find this study intensely interesting and greatly profitable.

On page 94 is a typically Western picture. The young men, Palmer and Hoakings are splendid specimens of promising young Methodist probationers. The horse-man is our Secretary Westman, who by any convenient method manages to cover

a lot of territory, and is doing excellent service. The lady is Mrs. McIntyre, Sunday School Superintendent at Brant, and with her is her little girl, member of the Cradle Roll. Success to them all, and the noble army of Christian workers whom they represent.

### The Church and the Children

The fact is indisputable:—Thousands of growing boys and girls never come into Church membership. No evasion of such a deplorable condition of things can be made without a measure of guilt. The Sunday School does not obtain all it should, and even those it does obtain it fails to retain. In the middle 'teen period the young people drop out of the Sunday School by thousands, and a great number of them drift away from the Church forever. Is such a loss of young life unavoidable? We may hardly expect to hold all boys and girls as they grow into adult life, but certainly, we should not willingly consent to the wholesale departure of so many of them from among us. Many remedies have been suggested that have in them elements of value; but the Church as a whole is not awake to the worth of a child in himself and for his own sake immediately and now. We see in the little child possibilities of the coming man, but are blind to his present worth. Consequently, we postpone his actual enlistment for Christian training and discipline until he has grown, and then the sad fact is apparent that while we have waited too long, and the equally tragic fact is made manifest that, while we were waiting Satan was working. The results we all know,—he gets the lives on which he has no natural or rightful claim and Jesus Christ loses those who by every legitimate right belong to Him.

The trouble is that we do not go at this business of child culture in His Name soon enough, nor start the process of child training for life-long Christian service early enough. Give a child the idea that he is not a Christian now, but may become one some day, and the probability is that he will never be one. Tell him that until he has passed through some strange and mysterious process he cannot love and serve God, and you prejudice him at once, and more so as he grows, against the whole thought of religion. But proceed on the assumption that the child does here and now actually belong to Christ, teach him so, in process of time explain to him why, make clear to him how he may enjoy and improve his rightful relationship and heritage, and he will turn to rather than from his Lord as years pass by.

Though Jesus never said it, too often children get the impression that his words were "Except ye be converted and become as old men ye cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven." Such words were never spoken by Him, either to or of children. He told grown men that they must become as little children. For the Kingdom of Heaven consists only of such. The first business of the Church in relation to the little ones is not to get them converted to God, but to pre-

vent them from being converted away from God. This work is worthy of the best thought of the Church, it calls for prayer for our children, it requires the protection of their rights as secured by Christ, it demands their preservation for Him, their preparation for His service, and for the dreadful loss of young life that is entailed by the Church's neglect of this, her first business, surely someone must at last give account.

### Primary Impressions

Primary Work is First Work. This is true both in the matter of Time and of Importance. Old people give testimony that the facts and feelings made in earliest life upon their minds and hearts are the most vivid still. The first things learned are often the last things forgotten. Many an aged man fails to recall what he heard yesterday, while his remembrance is keen of what transpired many long years ago. What our little children are learning now they will remember many years hence. First Facts stick! Let them be worthy a place in the memory. Those primary impressions are prime impressions,—first in the matter of precedence and first in the matter of value. They are the foundation on which the superstructure of life is built. They are the spring-time from which the harvest grows. They are the seed from which shall be reaped a crop of good or ill in process of the seasons. The infant nature is a new untilled, uncultivated tract. Virgin soil to be cultivated is here. Some kind of crop is certain. No life is unproductive. Every life is an accumulating record of good or ill, righteousness or sin, a praise to God or a satisfaction to the Evil One. Since a little child's first thoughts, impressions, lessons, desires, duties are productive of such far-reaching and permanent results, making or marring a whole life, the church should see well to it that the Primary Work be true, pure, well and faithfully done. Whether it be in Home, Church, Sunday School or League, these little ones are dependent on us. We are responsible for them. What they need, how they need it, the manner and method of imparting the needed food,—these are for us who have them in charge, to study and apply.

Mistakes committed now may be repented of later on; but perhaps never repaired. "It's never too late to mend," is not in every sense true. A child's well-being is assurable only while he is a child. An old sinner may be converted; but better far had he never been an old sinner. God can save an old sinner's soul; but even God cannot restore the lost years. Better construct a life than save a soul. The former includes the latter. Proceed with your infant on the assumption that he belongs to the devil, and the devil will see to it that he has a corresponding experience. Consider him as a child of the Heavenly Father, and such degradation and misery as Satan ensues will never be known. If we demand an old sinner's conversion of our children, they must necessarily have an old sinner's experience first. God forbid! A little child may be regenerate before it knows what such a word once asked as to the best way to teach popular liberty. "Begin with the infant in the cradle," he replied, "and let the first name he lipsa be 'Washington.'" How shall we teach godliness, purity, righteousness, truth, holiness? Begin with the infant in the cradle, and let the first name he lipsa be "Jesus." So learning, he shall never forget it, or its power.

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