

ed that, on the coming Children's Day, each school shall rally round the Century Fund standard by adopting the following resolution:—

The superintendent, officers, teachers and scholars of ——— Presbyterian Sabbath school, resolve:—

1 To volunteer for active service on behalf of the Century Fund.

2 To remind each other about the scheme and to seek God's blessing, especially on the first Sabbath of each month.

3 To be gathering throughout the year, so that on the next Children's Day our contribution may average at least ——— for each member of the school.

4 That under the guidance of the teachers and friends at home the scholars shall work and deny themselves, and thus bring gifts that have been largely provided by themselves.

5 That contributions to the Century Fund shall be additional to those which have hitherto been given in this school.

The form of the resolution is here suggested, as being that which may be used by the committee in preparing a large card, which may be displayed in each school that identifies itself with the movement, and it is the hope of the committee that ministers and superintendents may so present the matter that such a card shall have a prominent place in each of our 2,500 Sabbath schools.

R. CAMPBELL.

Renfrew, July 28th, 1899.

### Can Preaching be Made Interesting?

The question itself, at any rate, is an interesting one. Ministers are not the only ones who ask it. It is a question which haunts not a few people. There are some preachers who will carry it away with them into the woods or other place of vacation resort. And likely some members of the congregation will turn the same question over in their minds while the preacher is away.

Can preaching be made interesting? Firstly, that depends. There is no music that will interest the deaf. There is no food that suits the dyspeptic. There are two parties to the transaction. It is necessary to take into the account not only the party of the first part, but as well the answering party of the second part.

The preaching of Jesus did not affect all alike; indeed, apparently, there were some who, strange as it seems, went off as though it were all nothing to them. Yet, as a rule, it is certain that the preaching of Him who spoke with authority, did arrest attention. No arrow missed its mark. And there was no throwing out of words at random. He who knew what was in man, and was instant in seeing the meaning of every modern instance, the pertinence of every occasion, the advantage of every element of timeliness, made no mistakes in suiting the word to the opportunity. And there are still some preachers who, in their measure, have the same qualities. Somehow their preaching is wonderfully apt to interest people.

Can preaching be made interesting? That is another way of saying, can people here and now be made to see things as they are? The Gospel of the grace of God in Christ for us men is in itself a fact that is infinitely interesting. It comes home to the business and the bosom of men as nothing else can. It has to do with everything that is deepest and highest in human nature; with everything that is most vital and commonest in the daily concerns of life; with everything dearest in human affection; with all that is most serious and consequential in one's relations to others; with all that is most steady, most sustaining, most inspiring in men's outlook toward the future. For a preacher who actually knows what

it is, and has daily experience of it, and who sees, sees with his heart as well as with his head, what it must be to others also, the wonder would be if he could not make it interesting to them.

Of course there are the elements of timeliness and pertinence which the preacher has got to heed. As we have said, Christ's words never missed their mark. They were always to the point, always timely, always intensely apt. The same thing was true of the preaching at the Pentecost, as it has also been of the preaching in every Pentecostal period in the history of Christianity from that day to this. That preachers who have such power to awaken and to lead men are profoundly, pungently, totally in earnest, is to be taken for granted. That is only another way of saying that they are real, and no make-believe, no sham. Put over and above all that, there is the spiritual sense, the mental alertness which makes them as it were instinctively match their mode of appeal to the instant mood of the hearer. We all know what it is to be addressed at times in an out-of-sorts way. The photographer when he would catch the image in his camera takes the plate that has been duly sensitized for the purpose. He, moreover, uses it in the time of it. He would only be playing the fool with himself, his instrument and the person before him, were he indifferent to these conditions of success. The fisherman who succeeded, dropped his line where the fish were, not where they were not. The young fellow from the city who had spent the day on one of the inland lakes of Michigan "without a bite," gave an explanation that was good as far as it went, when he said, "We didn't seem to catch their attention."

Can preaching be made interesting? In other words, can the preacher of to-day, who has Christ's message to deliver, manage so to deliver it in these times of numberless distractions, and in the midst of other absorbing mental pre-occupations, as to arrest public attention, and hold it to the realities of the soul's inner life and the laws and interests of the spiritual world? Certainly, not easily can this be done. Success in every instance will be a victory. He will want to be utterly honest, totally in earnest, and withal be willing to pay the costs of success in the assiduity of the all-round preparation of himself for it. It will not be by scamping his work as a student. It will not be by throwing away his notes, nor yet by using his notes. It will not be by trying to imitate somebody else. There are no pulpit mannerisms, no unnatural tones, no pulpit drawl or awful explosive half-whispered cadences of voice, that will help him in the least. Some may succeed in spite of these unrealities of manner and affections of tone, but the odds are heavy against them. For, in these times, at any rate, many men like the preacher to use many tones and speak straight out in pure, clear, fresh, wholly vital, soulful, and so manly and convincing, utterance; as if he meant simply and exactly what he is saying and all that he is trying to say. Whatever else may become outworn, the essential Gospel of Christ can never be out of date; it will forever be, from the nature of the case, the latest thing there is, and the right delivery of it the most continuously sensational. Paul understood the case when, in his letters he urges his dearest friends to pray for him, that "utterance" may be given him, that he may speak the word "boldly, so as I ought to speak it."

Can preaching be made interesting? Not long ago a young minister out West, intent on making, if possible, the message which was burning in his own heart interesting to others also, was moved to put it into the form of a parable or story. "A sower went forth to sow." The story was told in the simplest, directest possible way, with not a word that did not fit the purpose and help

tell the message. Having preached it, he printed it. People began to buy and read and talk about it. It was carried across the sea and printed there, until within less than a year now as many as two million copies of it, it is said, have been sold. It has therefore probably been read by three times that number, until there is nobody but has heard of the book, "In His Steps—What Would Jesus Do?" Helped by a fine genius for intellectual and spiritual sympathy and taught by the ever-glorious Spirit himself, the preacher in this instance was enabled to make his way of putting the message match the popular mood of the moment, and to strike into startled responsiveness, on both sides the Atlantic, the thoughts and feelings of men that were already "in the air."

No, the gospel of Jesus Christ has not lost its power or outlived its timeliness. Yes, preaching can be made interesting.—The Interior.

### Literary.

During the summer months, fruit is a subject of no little importance, and many interesting and helpful hints have been given for the benefit of the consumer or the preserver. Of the fig as grown and utilized in California; of the melon and its relatives; of the proper serving of various fruits—their uses on the menu and recipes providing for present and future consumption, is information to be gained from the August issue of Table Talk. Other topics of interest are "The Early Training of Children," "Cooking in Stoneware," "Dishwashing as it Should be Done," "Walking as a Fine Art," etc., etc. Table Talk Publishing Co., Philadelphia, Pa.

The August number of Every Month is to hand. "Midsummer Modes," with the latest hot weather fancies, and the "Garden in August," will appeal especially to the women who love either flowers or fashions. The fifteen pages of popular music which continues to be the prominent feature, is unusually attractive in this issue, and whoever purchases or subscribes to the magazine may congratulate themselves on obtaining more than their money's worth in securing "Treasures That Gold Cannot Buy," a sentimental song by Will A. Heelan; "The Oceanic March and Two-Step," "Plantation Echo Song," with its characteristic dance; and "Violet Gavotte." To give two vocal and two instrumental pieces of music, clearly printed on good paper, with all the illustrations, stories, interviews, etc., for 10 cents, is certainly most liberal of the publishers. Every Month, 1260 Broadway, New York.

A valuable handbook descriptive of the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art and the treasures contained therein is now in press, and will soon be issued under the title of "The Treasures of the Metropolitan Museum of Art of New York." The book will be profusely illustrated by beautiful full-page half-tone pictures, many of which are of subjects never before reproduced, from photographs taken by the official photographer of the museum. The text is ably written by Arthur Hoeber, the art critic of the New York Commercial Advertiser, and his description covers all of the collections now contained in the museum—architectural casts, ancient and modern sculpture and plaster casts, Greek, Roman and Egyptian antiquities, paintings and drawings of all ages, porcelains, arms, lacers, embroideries and tapestries, musical instruments, American antiquities, coins, gold and silver ornaments, etc., etc. This attractive book cannot fail to stir up a new enthusiasm in the contents of the great museum, and will be pleasantly received by lovers of art and sightseers all over the continent. It will be on sale in the museum, as well as in all bookstores. Size, 6x9 inches; cloth; sixty illustrations. Price, \$1.50. It will also be issued a little later in a popular edition, in paper covers, at a much lower price. R. H. Russell, 3 West 29th street, New York.