

THE TEENS.

A TALK WITH BOYS AND GIRLS.

What do you think is the most important time of life? Boys will probably answer, When we go to business or to college. Girls will say, When we go into society or get married. But I think it is when you are going into your teens.

I know that it does not seem so to most people, for boys and girls are more unnoticed at that age than at any other. The baby or the big brother or sister get all the attention, while Master Knee-breeches and Miss Ankle-skirt are crowded into the corner. You are not so interesting just now as you have been, or will be. Your time of blossom has gone; but your fruit time has not come.

But the life of Jesus, as told in the Gospels, makes much of this time of life. The only thing that is said about him after his babyhood until he was thirty years of age was: "When he was twelve years old." What he did then is told us because it was a sort of prediction of what he would be and do when he became a man.

The Jews regarded this age as the turning point in life. Until the boy had passed twelve, he was called a child; after that, a man. He must then learn his trade, put on phylacteries, began to study the Talmud or holy books, be called to account for breaking any of the laws of worship, take the name of Ben Hattorah, or son of the law, and go up to the great feast at Jerusalem—which was about equivalent to joining the church. The Jews also said that this was the age when Moses first refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, when Samuel heard God's call, and when Josiah had his first dream of becoming a great and good king.

Now those old Jews were wise in making so much of the time of going into the teens. A portrait painter once told me that a picture of a child younger than twelve would not be apt to look like him as he became a man; but that one taken after that age would show the settled outlines of features which even the wrinkles of old age would not crowd out. Your physician will tell you that about that time the body too gets into its shape. If you are to be spindle-shanked or dumpy, the stretch or the quat will have begun to grow into you. A great writer, who has had much to do with educating boys, says: "The latter life of a man is much more like what he was at school than what he was at college."

A Swedish boy, a tough little knot, fell out of a window, and was severely hurt; but, with clinched lips, he kept back the cry of pain. The king, Gustavus Adolphus, who saw him fall, prophesied that that boy would make a man for an emergency. And so he did; for he became the famous General Bauer.

A woman fell off a dock in Italy. She was fat and frightened. No one of a crowd of men dared jump in after her; but a boy struck the water almost as soon as she did, and managed to keep her up until stronger hands got hold of her. Everybody said the boy was very daring, very kind, very quick, but also very reckless, for he might have been drowned. That boy was Garibaldi; and if you will read his life, you will find that these were just his traits all through—that he was so alert that nobody could tell when he would make an attack with his red-shirted soldiers; so indiscreet sometimes as to make his fellow-patriots wish he was in Guinea, but also so brave and magnanimous that all the world, except tyrants, loved to hear and talk about him.

A boy used to crush the flowers to get their color, and painted the white side of his father's cottage in the Tyrol with all sorts of pictures, which the mountaineers gaped at as wonderful. He was the great artist Titian.

An old painter watched a little fellow, who amused himself making drawings of his pot and brushes, easel and stool, and said: "That boy will beat me one day." So he did; for he was Michael Angelo.

A German boy was reading a blood-and-thunder novel. Right in the midst of it he said to himself: "Now, this will never do. I get too much excited over it. I can't study so well after it. So here goes!" and he flung the book out into the river. He was Fichte, the Great German philosopher.

There was a New England boy who built himself a booth down in the rear of his father's farm, in a swamp, where neither the boys nor the cows would disturb him. There he read heavy books, like Locke "On the Human Understanding," wrote compositions, watched the balancing of the clouds, revelled in the crash and flash of the storm, and tried to feel the nearness of God who made all things. He was Jonathan Edwards.

After the melted iron is poured into the mould, it is left for a while that it may take shape. But the first few moments are the most important; for then the surface of the great iron globule, which comes into contact with the damp sand of the mould, is cooled, and the shape is set. The time after that serves to harden the metal, not to change its form. Life in this world is the mould in which our souls are shaped for eternity; and the first years after we have begun to

rating, grand; all true life is. But take care! For your soul's sake, don't drift in among the rocks and whirlpools without the grip.—James M. Ludlow, D.D., in S. S. Times.

THE BANKER'S EXPERIENCE AND THE SERMON.

BY C. H. SPURGEON.

It is very delightful to hear testimonies from actual life confirming the witness which the preacher bears from the pulpit. We have just reached one which is well worthy of being preserved in this magazine of facts.

In our sermon published for November 21st occurs the following passage:

"If it be true that you are willing thus to follow Christ, reckon upon deliverance. Nebuchadnezzar may put you into the fire, but he cannot keep you there, nor can he make the fire burn you. The enemy casts you in bound, but the fire will loosen your bonds, and you will walk at liberty amid the glowing coals. You shall gain by your losses, you shall rise by your down-castings. Many prosperous men owe their present position to the fact that they were faithful when they were in humble employments. They were honest, and for the moment they displeased their employers, and in the end earned their esteem. When Adam Clarke was put out apprentice, and his master

sermon, 'Is it true?' No. 1,930. Referring to the latter portion of page 635, I wish to send you the following statement of facts: Just forty-six years ago I was in a situation, and I was called upon to do that which I believed to be wrong. I was compelled in conscience to decline, and ultimately I received three months' notice to leave. I had a wife and one child, but no property. My father asked me if I was bereft of my reason for acting as I did, and I had no idea what I should do or where I should go. I mentioned my case to a dear Baptist minister, and his reply was, 'My young friend, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord.' The result was that, in a most marvellous way (I will not weary you with details), before the three months expired, the Lord gave me a new appointment, at exactly double the salary I lost; and that double has since been trebled; and here I am to this day! All praise and glory be to his great name! He is true and faithful! If you think well, you can make what use you like of this statement."

We have not given the writer's name, but it is one which is deservedly honored. The writer is a man who could not mis-state or exaggerate; what he records is plain, unvarnished fact. How it ought to encourage every young Christian to "dare to be a Daniel!" The Lord has delivered, does deliver, and will yet deliver. A man may lose for Christ, but in the long run he shall not lose by Christ. The tempted servant of the Lord should make a note of the incident here recorded, remembering that the Lord is the same to all who put their trust in him. —Sword and Trowel.

PARAFFINE.

Such has been the demand for paraffine for the manufacture of chewing gum and confectionery that not less than seventy-five barrels a week are shipped to New York and Boston for the Standard Oil Company's refineries. At least fifty percent of this is made into chewing gum. This wax, although the residuum of the most offensive product imaginable—the tar deposit left after the kerosene has been extracted from the crude petroleum—is made into the purest and sweetest of substances used in the most delicate of industries. Two firms—one in New York and the other in Boston—purchase the most of this wax, and subject it to another refining process. The wax is worth seventeen cents a pound at the refineries, and when ready to manufacture into gum or candy is worth thirty cents a pound.

It is only within a few years that the second refining process was known in this country, and all the paraffine required for use in that form had to be sent to Scotland for refining, the extracting of fine paraffine wax from the bituminous shales of that country having been a profitable business there for many years.

Every person who sinks his teeth into chewing gum now-a-days chews paraffine. Every delicate caramel or other confection sold in the candy stores contains the wax, and the paper it is wrapped in is saturated with it. For the insulation of electric wires paraffine wax has taken the place of everything else. It will defy the action of sulphuric and other acids, and it cannot be adulterated for that reason. It has displaced all other wax in the manufacture of candles. Brewers find it invaluable for the coating of the inside of barrels, keeping them absolutely sweet and clean. It has taken the place of French wax in the manufacture of wax flowers. It is a perfectly pure hydro-carbon, without taste or smell, notwithstanding that it is made from the worst smelling tar imaginable. It defies the strongest solvents of all kinds, and is yielding more profit to those who handle it in all branches than any other substance of American trade.—Household.

think for ourselves, to feel the pressure of right and wrong, to determine duty or indulgence—these first years have more to do with the making of us than all the rest.

Have you been in the Adirondack woods hunting and fishing? If so, remember that your guide, when he came to the rapids in the stream, did not dash carelessly down it. He stopped the cranky little craft, balanced the boat, got a sure grip on his paddle, then let her drift slowly to the centre of the narrow sluice until the skiff's nose was in the smooth water which shows that there it is deepest. Then, with eye and nerve and muscle all working together, he kept her head on, just so, and you shot down the rock-strewn stream as swiftly and safely as a water-snake. Ask your guide why he was so careful at the beginning, and he will tell you that if he starts the boat right he can keep her right; but the twisting waters would be too much for him if he did not have her safely in hand at the word "go!"

Boys and girls entering your teens, you are at the head of life's rapids. Your craft is already catching the drift of strong desires, ambitions, passions. You feel them. They almost affright you sometimes. Have no anxiety except to aim at the very centre of what is right, at the purposes which are deepest and purest. Knit the nerves of your strongest resolution. Vow to yourself and to God, who will help you. Then away down life's stream! It will be exhilarating, grand; all true life is.

showed him how to stretch the cloth when it was a little short, Adam could not find in his heart to do it. Such a fool of a boy must be sent home to his mother; and his godly mother was glad that her boy was such a fool that he could not stoop to a dishonest trick. You know what he became. He might have missed his way in life if he had not been true to his principles in his youth. Your first loss may be a life-long gain. Dear young fellow, you may be turned out of your situation, but the Lord will turn the curse into a blessing! If all should go softly with you, you might decline in character, and by doing a little wrong learn to do yet more and more, and so lose your integrity, and with it all hope of ever lifting your nose from the grindstone. Do right for Christ's sake, without considering consequences, and the consequences will be right enough. If you take care of God's cause, God will take care of you. Rest assured that uprightness will be your preservation, and not your destruction. It will be your highest wisdom to let all things go that you may hold fast your integrity, and honor the name of the Lord."

Immediately after the issue of the sermon, we received the following letter from a gentleman who has been our friend and helper all along:

"DEAR FRIEND,—I have just read your



SOUTHWARD BOUND.