

JUNIOR TOPICS

JUNE 20.—THE WESLEY SCHOOL-DAYS. Eccles. 12.

John Wesley was eleven years old when he left his home in Epworth to attend the Charterhouse School in London. Though the school was one with great traditions and a high standard of scholarship, it was a rough, almost uncivilized place, and very different from the home in which John had been brought up. The stronger and older boys robbed the younger ones of their meat, and during the greater part of the six years Wesley spent in that school he suffered that daily theft and practically lived on bread. But a boy trained as he could be could easily survive even the raided meals of the Charterhouse School.

Wesley's father advised him to run three times round the Charterhouse garden every morning; so, early each day, a little, lean, boyish figure might have been seen flying with nimble legs around the grounds of the school. This constant exercise in the keen morning air helped to give Wesley a strong physical toughness which enabled him, when eighty-five years old, to walk six miles to a preaching appointment and declare that the only sign of old age he felt was that he could not walk nor run quite so fast as he once did.

John was an ideal student, quick, tireless and methodical, improving every minute of his time. The six years he spent at Charterhouse, though the life was somewhat rough and harsh, gave him an ample foundation for his after studies. It also gave him more than a book education. It developed in him courage and self-reliance, and he left the school not only with a tough body, but with a certain toughness of character which helped him all through his life.

When John Wesley was seventeen years old he left Charterhouse School and entered Christ Church College, Oxford. Those were lazy days at Oxford, and if Wesley had not been a born student he would have done very little work. One writer of the time said that Oxford was full of lecturers who never lectured and students who never studied. There were, no doubt, some workers among the hundreds of students by whom Wesley was surrounded; but, taking them as a whole, they were an idle, dissipated lot. But John Wesley, though the merriest and wittiest of them all, never joined in their dissipations. During his years at college he never disgraced the old home at Epworth or the honorable name he bore.

Wesley had a very successful year at Oxford. He graduated at the age of twenty-one, and the next year was made Fellow of Lincoln College. Hundreds of people now visit the college every year to see the rooms where he lived and the pulpit from which he preached. Wesley was at Lincoln College for two years, then went back home to help his father in his work on the Epworth Parish. He did not stay long at Epworth. (Next month we will learn about his later work at Oxford and his early preaching.)—H. M. B.

JUNE 27.—GEORGE YOUNG, PIONEER MISSIONARY TO THE CANADIAN NORTHWEST. Psalm 24.

Dear Girls and Boys.—One day when John and I were going along Richmond Street, Toronto, we saw on the opposite side of the street an old gentleman having his picture taken.

"Who is that old man?" John asked, as he watched the camera snap.

"Take a good look at him, John," I replied, "for that is Dr. George Young, one of Canada's great men."

"What did he do?" He looks about 100. Did grandfather know him?" said John all in a breath.

Some time I'll tell you about him, for he was a "Master Scout." I noticed that John, my scout, stretched himself as tall as he could as he asked, "Are you sure he was a scout?"

"Wait until I tell you what he did, and then you'll find out," was all I said, but I knew John would not forget my promise of the story.

As you have asked me to tell you about Dr. Young, I shall tell you some of the story I told John.

George Young was born in 1822. His father died that same year, and he and his mother, who was only nineteen, went to live with his grandfather and grandmother in a great farmhouse on one of the best farms in old Ontario.

He lived only a few years with his grandfather, but all through his life he remembered the farm and the good times he had in the woods and orchard, and what fun it was riding the horses and bringing the cows home from pasture. He never forgot his grandmother's big roomy kitchen where "church" was held when the minister came, for in those days there was no church in the settlement. One of the ministers, who sometimes stayed at his grandfather's, one day put his hand on George's head and prayed God to bless and save the fatherless little boy. That prayer was answered, and down through the long years it was remembered.

When his mother married again he went with her to their new farm home. When he was about eighteen he was in the barn early one morning feeding the cattle. A tornado struck the barn, blew the roof off, and almost destroyed the whole building. Hearing the timbers falling everything, said "Kneel down and pray." He got down on his knees, and his prayer was like that of the publican who went up into the temple. In a few minutes all was dark, and George thought he was buried under the hay, straw, grain and timber, and that escape was impossible. He pulled at the hay with all his might, and after a few minutes' hard work he saw daylight, and was soon free and safe. Everyone who saw the ruins said it was a miracle he wasn't killed; where he had knelt was the only place he could have escaped.

In 1837, when the Mackenzie rebellion broke out, George enlisted to fight for his Queen and country. Three years later he gave his heart to God and enlisted as a soldier of the cross under the great Captain, and became a Methodist minister.

In 1868, when he was the minister of Richmond Street Church, Toronto, then one of the most important Methodist churches in Canada, George McDougall, a missionary to the Indians away out near Edmonton, came to Ontario—a journey of many weeks—for more missionaries to go to the Indians, and he pleaded for a minister for the white people, who were beginning to settle in the Red River district. George Young volunteered to go, for he had enlisted to serve, and to serve where he was needed most. A farewell meeting was held in Richmond Street Church. Ministers of other denominations, as well as Methodists, were present; speeches were made and long good-byes were said as he started, with the missionaries to the Indians, for the Great West, which was then a very far country.

They left on May the 10th, and travelled through the United States by way of Milwaukee and St. Paul. From St. Paul the missionaries travelled to St. Cloud. Here they left the railway to continue their

journey in creaky old Red River carts. When they were once more in Canada, Mr. McDougall put up a Union Jack, and all joined in singing "God Save the Queen." Every one was glad to camp for a few days before they began their long journey of six hundred miles over the prairie to Winnipeg. They did not see many settlers during the whole month as they travelled along toward Winnipeg, but the few they did see were delighted to meet them, but always asked, "Aren't you afraid of the Indians?" No wonder these lonely settlers asked this question, for the Indians had a little while before killed some white people, and the tribes were often fighting with one another.

George Young had enlisted, and knew his duty, so he and the other missionaries went bravely on and reached Winnipeg on July 4th, 1868, and set up their camp on the prairie.

Here they found the best trading post of the Hudson's Bay Company, Fort Garry. A few shops, one tavern, and about one hundred people. The mud was everywhere slippery, sticky and black. There was no sign of a church, a school, or even a house which could be rented. After a few days together in Winnipeg the other missionaries said good-bye to Mr. and Mrs. Young, and left them in their tent home on the prairie.

It was not long until a kind-hearted man and his good wife rented Mr. Young one room in their little rented house, so one of the missionaries, with their camping outfit, moved in, and thankful they were, even for one room. Mr. Young soon began to hunt for the settlers. His first drive was sixty miles along the Assiniboine River. Several of the settlers asked him to come back and hold services in their homes. These invitations made him think of the old farm away back in Ontario, his grandmother's kitchen and the "preacher's bedroom" in the comfortable old farmhouse.

The first winter in the new land was a hard one, the grasshoppers had eaten the crops, the buffalo hunt was a failure, food was scarce and the people were hungry. Many thought they would starve before spring, and I believe they would if Mr. Young and some other good men had not sent word to the people in Ontario that help was needed immediately in the Red River district. The next year crops were good.

After much hard work Mr. Young built a small house, one room he called Wesley Hall, and here the first Methodist church for the white people in the Northwest was begun. A year later the Governor gave Mr. Young an acre of land for a church and parsonage.

In building the parsonage and church, and in opening a day school, Mr. Young "attempted great things for God, and expected great things from God," and you know that was Carey's motto. The Sunday school at Oshawa sent Mr. Young a church bell, and it was hung in a room in the wooden frame which stood between the church and the parsonage.

Mr. and Mrs. Young and their son made many friends in their new home and among the settlers scattered for many miles over the broad prairies.

About this time Riel stirred up a great many of the French half-breeds to rebel against the Government of Canada. These rebels seized Fort Garry, with its stores of food, and took many of the white settlers and kept them prisoners in the old fort. Mr. Young knew how the prisoners were suffering, and so made application in the fort. Riel refused this request, but sent word that Mr. Young could not speak to any of the prisoners nor meet them together, but that he might pray with them. Although it was hard to pray, guarded by the rebels, Mr. Young was thankful he was able to comfort the men and women who were in great distress in