

The Junior Epworth Era

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The Fall Campaign

In the Junior League, this month ought to be one of renewed activity. The heated term will soon be quite over, the vacation season is past, the Juniors are settling down to the steady routine of school life, and we should have plans for aggressive work well in mind. A personal canvass could be made (by the superintendent, if possible) of all the boys and girls of the congregation, in the interests of a larger, more regular, and interested attendance at the League meetings. And plans should be made to make the whole series of fall and winter meetings so interesting that the Juniors shall be held to them, and voluntarily recommend them to others. A reunion social evening with all the "old" Juniors, will be a splendid way of commemorating the season's work. Whatever your plans may be, be sure to give the members themselves the bulk of the work while you are Director-General.

Weekly Topics

SEPT. 20.—LOST AND FOUND. Luke 15. 3-7.

The occasion on which this parable was spoken is thus given in The Twentieth Century New Testament: "The tax-gatherers and godless people were drawing near to Jesus to listen to Him; but the Pharisees and Rabbis found fault: this man actually welcomes godless people, and has meals with them!" they complained. So Jesus put this case to them:—"Then follows the story of the lost sheep, and the conclusion drawn by Jesus in verse 7 is thus given: "So, too, there will be more gladness in heaven, I tell you, over one godless man that repents, than over ninety-nine pious men, who have no need to repent." Jesus justified His action in mingling with those who were justly considered bad people, by pointing out the worth of even "one godless man." To bring even one such bad man to repentance is worth the best effort of the Christian who has himself been kept from sin and straying by the Good Shepherd's care. Jesus would have us see that in everything, no matter how sinful, there is something of priceless value, and that even the worst wanderer may be brought into the fold. But in this writer I'm treating this topic with the young men who emphasize "the ninety-nine pious men who have no need to repent." Rightly understood by them, they may readily see how much better it is to be among such than to wander out into the wilderness of sin for years, even if they are sure of being recovered and restored in later life. The benefit is not in being the "one," but in being one of the "ninety-nine." As the Divine Shepherd, Jesus is not satisfied to lose even "one," but the "ninety-nine" are His chief joy after all. Our aim, therefore, should be to so feed the lambs that the old sheep will have grown up within the flock; not to turn the lambs out in the "wilderness" to danger or starvation, and in some after period of life rescue them from famine or death. Even the youngest of our Juniors should be encouraged to personal, present, confession of Christ as Shepherd of the whole life, that humbly and with reverent thankfulness He may in adult years rejoice as one of the "ninety-nine" over the restoration of the poor lost "one,"

who had from one cause or another strayed away into years of sin and misery. There is no necessary spirit of Pharisaic self-glorification in the heart of one who has from early youth to mature life known the Good Shepherd's care, thanking God that he is not as the "one," and there is no superior virtue or praise to be attached to the "one" for his late restoration to the fold. To Christ is all the glory in either case, by the "ninety-nine" for His years of shepherding, by the "one" for His persistent and loving search till the "lost" was "found." But whatever you do, don't represent Christ as seeking little lambs out on a wild, bleak, rock weary, dreary wilderness, nor teach them that they must necessarily be ever like "the godless people," of whom Jesus was teaching when He told this story; and please do not sing hymn 263 in the Canadian Hymnal. Study it, and you will see why it is inappropriate. Such hymns as 40, 58, 141, 147, 275, 282, 198, 163, 185, or 411, may be fittingly used to-day.

SEPT. 27.—MISSIONARY MEETING.—DEPUTATION TO VISIT THE CHINESE AND JAPANESE IN CANADA.

SUGGESTED PROGRAMME.
(Canadian Hymnal Used.)

Hymn 163.

Prayer—That we may recognize that all men the wide world over are our brothers, and that we owe them the Gospel.

Scripture Reading—Romans 1, 14-16.
(Explanation by Superintendent.)

Hymn 447.

Address by Superintendent—Our Japanese and Chinese Fellow-Citizens.

Hymn 263.

Report from Deputation—Reporters 1 and 2. Page 29 of this paper.

Hymn 431.

Report from Deputation—Reporters 3, 4, and 5. Page 29 of this paper.

Mizpah.

References: The Story of China in Canada, 10 cents; The Missionary Report; The Missionary Outlook; The Missionary Bulletin, 75 cents a year, 25 cents a copy.

Good examples of the work that has been done in the missions in British Columbia, such as the conversion of Tong Chue Thom, and of Arthur M. Ozawa, is a pastor in Japan.

OCT. 4.—HOW JESUS WELCOMES CHILDREN. Mk. 10. 13-16; Luke 18. 15-17; Matt. 19. 13-15.

In his notes on the New Testament, Mr. Wesley says on our verses from Mark: "The members of the kingdom, which I am come to set up in the world, are such as these, as well as grown persons of a childlike temper." On the verses in Luke he wrote: "Such are subjects of the Messiah's kingdom, and such as these it properly belongs to." In his comment on the passage from Mark he wrote: "Little children, either in a natural or a spiritual sense, have a right to enter into My kingdom." From such notes it is evident that Mr. Wesley believed that Jesus welcomed the children on the ground of their "right" as "subjects" or "members" of His king-

About Joining the Church

Many young people have an idea that they may be Christians and not unite with the church. This is not wise, for while we would not like to say that all Christians are church members, or even that all church members are Christians, we believe that all who are trying to serve Christ should belong to the church. There are many reasons for this, and we want you to know a few that especially refer to young Christians. What is the church for? Do not think that it is a place for old people only, or even a place where people get ready to die. The church is a home, and in it the children should grow up as members of the family. They learn how to live as God's children should. The church is a great industrial institution, in which all who have a place in it should be hard at work for God, and young people who commence early not only grow good characters, but useful lives. The church is a society of kindred spirits who should all be trying to help one another, and in its fellowship young Christians may become skillful in service. The church is Christ's witness to the world, and from its services, fellowship, and communion, we may go out among men to show them the love of Christ and the joy of souls which all true Christians feel. The church is a great army of our Lord's soldiers, and as members of it we can fight against sin and error better than if we fought alone. There are very many reasons why we should join the church,

and as young disciples we do not want you to make the mistake of thinking that the church is not meant for you, or that you must wait until you are older before you unite with it. Too often our girls and boys have looked on joining the church as something unnatural for them. This has been because they have somehow or other formed a wrong idea of church membership. Some have thought that they ought not to think of joining until they have been bad in habits, and then wonderfully converted. But one great reason why the church exists is to prevent you from growing up in sin and then being turned back. There is a greater work than saving a grown-up sinner from the consequences of his sins, and that is preventing a boy or girl from ever becoming such a grown-up sinner. There is something better than saving souls, and that is in growing a beautiful character and a useful life. These are some of the things the church stands for, and if you want to be a wise, strong, pure, useful, happy, and growing Christian, do not wait, but join it now. You need the church in order to be all you ought to be, and the church needs you in order to do all Christ wants it to do for the salvation of the world. The boys and girls in the church of to-day will be the working men and women in the church twenty years from now. Be among them!