

OUR JUNIORS

What Every Church Should Have:

It is encouraging to mark the increasing interest being shown in the Junior work. Many questions regarding it have been recently received. We are pleased to be able to give the following succinct account of a successful Junior League in a country village as an illustration of work being actually done, and as a sample of what might be done in many other places if our leaders only thought so. The following statement is from Miss Elsie Cornish, secretary, and clearly shows by what is in Little Britain, that which might be in scores of similar places.

Little Britain, Ont., has a Junior League of which the Methodist Church in that place is justly very proud. The present membership is sixty-nine and this has been attained by a steady increase. A meeting for the younger boys and girls was first planned about six years ago by the pastor, Rev. W. G. Clarke.



JUNIOR EPWORTH LEAGUE, LITTLE BRITAIN, ONT.

The young people met weekly at 4:15 p.m., and under his direction studied the Gospel of John and the Catechism, of which they each possessed a copy.

When Rev. J. E. Moore became pastor, he also took a great interest in the boys and girls. The form of their meeting was changed somewhat. The pastor still acted as president, but a secretary-treasurer was appointed and also an organist. A Scripture lesson was read and explained by the pastor, the Catechism studied, and quite frequently a recitation or reading was given.

About a year ago, when Rev. J. F. Chapman became pastor, a fully organized Junior League was formed. Since that time the plan of each meeting has been posted a few weeks ahead.

With the help of the Epworth Era, about twenty of the Leaguers, the majority of whom are High School students, prepare excellent papers on the regular topics. All who are capable assist in turn

in taking the Scripture Lesson, which is read alternately by the leader and the League. Those who are too young for this part are given a place in recitation and in song. The Catechism is still studied, and at each meeting Miss Mabel Smith (Superintendent appointed from Senior League), or the pastor, asks questions after the topic has been given, and strives to impress the lesson.

At the first meeting of each month, the convenors of committees are called upon for reports. These are given promptly and concisely. Each convenor first gives the names of the members of his committee, then tells what that committee should do, then what they have done. In their last report the Look-Out Committee not only reported new members, but the encouragement of some who were somewhat careless.

The Social Committee are usually the first to arrive and the last to leave, their work being the distribution of Bibles and seeing that all Leaguers are comfortably

ing together, have brought most of our young people into the church, and so a Catechumen Class is held after the Sunday morning service and is well attended by our Juniors."

Is There a Santa Claus?

No Santa Claus? Yes, my little man, there is a Santa Claus, thank God! The world would indeed be poor without one. It is true that he does not always wear a white beard and drive a reindeer team—not always, you know—but what does it matter? He is Santa Claus with the big, loving, Christmas heart, for all that. Santa Claus with the kind thoughts for every one that make children and grown-up people beam with happiness all day long.

And shall I tell you a secret which I did not learn at the post-office, but it is true all the same—of how you can always be sure your letters go to him straight by the chimney route? It is this: send along with them a friendly thought for the boy you don't like; for Jack who punched you, or Jim who was mean to you. The meanness he was the harder do you resolve to make it up; not to bear him a grudge. That is the stamp for the letter to Santa. Nobody can stop it, not even a cross-draught in the chimney, when it has that on.

Because, don't you know, Santa Claus is the spirit of Christmas; and ever and ever so many years ago when the dear little Baby was born after whom we call Christmas, and was cradled in the manger out in the stable because there was no room in the inn, that Spirit came into the world to soften the hearts of men and make them love one another. Therefore, that is the mark of the Spirit to this day. Don't let anybody or anything rub it out. Then the rest doesn't matter. Let them tear Santa's white beard off at the Sunday School festival and growl in his bearskin coat. These are only his disguises. The steps of the real Santa Claus you can trace all through the world as you have done here with me, and when you stand in the last of his tracks you will find the Blessed Babe of Bethlehem smiling a welcome to you. For then you will be home.—Jacob A. Riis, in *Our Dumb Animals*.

"A Funny Christmas"

"We have had such a funny Christmas! Four miles from here there is a little Zulu church. Those Christians have had a Christmas tree before, but never any white friends with them. This year they wanted us to come.

"We hired a cart and six oxen, and started about nine o'clock. It was a blazing hot day. Our kitchen boy said,

"O, the sun is big today!"
"Our driver was a big heathen fellow, with beads on his head, and we had a little boy to lead the oxen. After riding two hours we came to the top of a steep hill, and below us, half-way down, was the chapel. The oxen were outspanned and we scrambled down the hill.

"The chapel had an iron roof, mud walls, and six tiny windows. A hundred natives were crowded into it, and a lot of heathen outside were peeping in. The house was so full there was no room for the tree and the floor, so they had hoisted it 'way up to the beams overhead. It looked so funny upside down, hung up by the trunk. The tree was mimosa, covered thick with thorns, on which they had stuck a lot of handkerchiefs and shirts, and all the cloth things. On the floor under the benches were pans and baskets full of presents the people had brought for each other—pieces of bread done up in paper, and lots of cakes of yellow soap, and some tin spoons. The grandest thing we saw was a glass sugar-bowl! Before

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