

sidered wild than good, and, once getting a name for badness, will go to great lengths to maintain it.

He is gregarious in his instincts, and when reinforced by his comrades is much less tractable than when alone. The natural channel of his interest is that in which flows also the interests of his comrades.

He is a human dynamo, constantly generating more power than he can either utilize or store. He, therefore, indulges in wild outbreaks for which he can offer no logical reason.

Knowing this to be the case, some of his elders have wondered if "bad boys" really exist. Unfortunately, but most certainly, they do.

No one who has worked with boys believes that the bad boy does not exist. He is the product of his forefathers, true enough; but he exists as a fact. He is not beyond redemption, but is certainly very greatly in need of it.

Thank God, the good boy is far more numerous; not so good that he can do no harm; not so good that he needs no redemption, but teachable and lovable and a joy to the heart of his director, whose lot would indeed be a sorry one if he did not have the cheer and joy of seeing the right-minded normal boy responding to his efforts.

On Being a Superintendent

By a Sunday School Worker

IX. THE SUPERINTENDENT AND THE BOYS

Boys are the great Sunday School problem. No practical worker doubts this. Their attendance is as much a problem as their attention when they attend. They are easily turned aside from Sunday School by what they deem superior attractions, and they are held in the Sunday School with difficulty after the ages of fourteen or fifteen.

To solve the boy problem, the superintendent must, in the first place, know the boys. He must know their names, and be able to recognize them quickly and heartily on the street. He must salute them frankly, happily, naturally. The superintendent cannot know the boys without being with them. He will visit them at their homes and have them visit him at his home. Of course he

must not do this if his visits are looked upon as visitations and their visits to him are regarded as bores.

I do not mean that the superintendent must "play boy." Any pretence is transparent to the keen-eyed lads, most of all so violent a pretence as that. Moreover, it would throw away the superintendent's chief hold upon the boys, namely, his manhood. A man, sincerely and openly interested in them and sharing their life with genuine pleasure, compliments them and delights them immeasurably. A man acting boyishly disgusts them.

Therefore it is important that the superintendent should not "talk down" to the boys. Talk with them on a level, and you will flatter them and lead them. Talk about their life plans, what they mean to be and to do. Give them the advice and the practical assistance that can be given only by a man of broad experience. If you have not precisely the knowledge and information they need, get it from other men.

Do not be afraid to talk religion with the boys—not *to* them, observe, but *with* them. Boys will quickly respond to large appeals. Make them see, in the first place, how foolish it is for them to be solely interested in the affairs of a life in which they are to dwell for only a minute part of their existence. Then point them to the only one who has come out of the next life into this, to tell us about it. Exalt Christ as the ideal man as well as the incarnate deity. Speak of Him as your ever-present friend and helper. Make Him so real to yourself, that He must seem real to them.

Go for the leaders among the boys. Courageously win them, and the rest will follow. Win only the weaklings, and you will not hold even them very long. It is easier to win a strong boy than a weak one, any way, if you have the right stuff in you.

It will be a great help with the boys if you excel in something in which the boys have an eager interest. You need not be an athletic wonder to fascinate the boys—just know how to do one athletic feat well, better than they can. It may be only the ability to take long walks. Then get up a hiking club. It may be a new swimming stroke that you can teach them. It may be a knack at jumping. It may be a shrewd twist of a baseball. What-