



THE CHURCH AND THE BOY

Sermon by Rev. J. K. Unsworth

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"Is it well with the child?"--2 Kings iv. 26.

IS it well with the child?" The child was a boy. "Is it well with my boy?" That was the question that the woman of Shunem kept asking herself that long anxious forenoon, as she bent over her pain-stricken son, and it is the question every mother asks as she sees her baby lad growing into boyhood and manhood. It was the question that Elisha, the man of God and spokesman of the Church of that time, sent out from his sympathetic heart, and it is a question that the modern Church may well ask in grave concern about the boys of her congregations, the boys of the city, of our nation, yea, of the world—Is it well with the boys? I would raise that question this morning. The question is already raised; the boy himself is very much in evidence. The hosts of boys at the home tables, in the schools and on the streets make a clamorous appeal to the Christian heart, Is it, is it well with us boys?

I desire to speak of the boy during adolescence, the years from twelve to seventeen. For these are the fateful years which make destiny. What manner of man he will be depends upon what manner of boy he is during this momentous period.

The period of adolescence is the time of change. "By fifteen the brain stops growing, the large arteries increase one-third, the temperature rises one degree, the reproductive organs have fr actioned, the voice deepens and the stature grows by leaps and bounds." These are the physical signs that the boy is passing from childhood to manhood. Within the nature of