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Educational Courses for Young People in the CHURCH

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146 RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

ally justifying only in terms of power to develop moral character. He shows how this ethical aim will organize the minutest details of the school work. The first volume reveals this fundamental law at work in instruction and the second volume shows the application of the same law in management and discipline. The old artificial distinction between secular and sacred truth never once clouds the moral issue. The author says, (Phil, of Teaching, P. 19.) "The mind is a unit, and the entire soul must be addressed in every lesson. The proposition in geometry as well as the poem should delight the heart and prompt to new issues of life. The simple intellectual truth, that five and five are ten, is warm with emotion and charged with ethical force when wielded by the efficient teacher." This is no mere sentiment, not even only an abstract ideal with Mr. Tompkins. It is his working formula. He sets forth a lesson on the pyramid, on the heart, on Lowell's description of a June Day, etc., also a case of punishment in a way calculated to produce just these results. Because of some prejudices and superstitions among many teachers concerning the word "philosophy," these works are not used as much as their very practical worth warrant. The author was a great soul with philosophic insight and also a practical teacher with the whole range of experience from the country school to the university. Every school problem and the school subjects are illustrated with concrete examples, each one a work of fine teaching art.

Educational Courses for Young People in the CHURCH

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I do not attempt a full statement of fact but rather to offer those suggestions likely to have most immediate practical worth.

Relation of the Topic to the General Subject.

The phrasing would seem to indicate the use of the word "education" in its proper and comprehensive sense, including training as well as teaching. This paper was evidently intended to be limited to "study" courses rather than to cover all that lies in the term "educational." Nevertheless, I ask your notice for a moment on the whole subject of the religious education of the young in the churches, because the fate of study courses depends upon a complete view of the whole subject.

But a comprehensive view of the whole subject is precisely what we do not have, either in local churches or in general agencies. Very few churches have in any way attempted to lay out

a full program for the Christian nurture of the young. Scarcely any have tried to harmonize the Sunday school with the young people's society, or in the case of large churches with the half-dozen or more clubs, guilds or associations, likely to be found. Moreover, the multiplication of general agencies does not tend to help unification in the local church. As to my own church, for example, the Presbyterian, there are no less than sixteen prominent agencies appealing for the attention of our young people. Some of these are departments of Presbyterian boards or organizations, others are general. Of the whole sixteen, not one is taking up the main question of Christian nurture. This makes it doubly hard for the local church to take up the main question.

The statement of the main question is comparatively simple. Here is a boy of six or seven years of age in one church. What are the things to be done with him and for him so that when he is twenty-five years old, a full grown man, he will be the sort of Christian and churchman we think he ought to be?

The importance of this general subject to the topic before us is evident. For example, all our great churches are responsible for extensive and important enterprises in foreign lands. No one will deny that somewhere in the process of education in the church, these foreign affairs ought to be made interesting to that boy. Somewhere there must be intelligent instruction concerning these great enterprises. Any individual church that is really taking up the main question, with an attempt to deal with that boy properly, would certainly include this instruction about the foreign work of the Church as a necessary feature of a rounded training for modern churchmanship. But instead of taking up this main question as a whole and as a single question, most churches have organized a Sunday school and promoted it, a young people's society, a boys' club, a mission band or two, and what not, without any thought whatever as to the part each of these was to play in a comprehensive system of Christian nurture. In such a church it frequently happens that some young people are instructed in missions in the Sunday school, some in the Christian Endeavor Society, many not at all and some in societies exclusively for missions where they lose the benefits of other features. Of two churches, which is likely to have results with educational courses, one that has a disjointed and unrelated general work among the young or one that has taken up the main subject as a whole, with an attempt to do justice to every part?

In any case it is clear that educational courses for young people cannot possibly have adequate place until haphazard dealing with the general subject shall give way to more logical plans.

Miscellaneous.

In the promotion of various study courses for young people, no denomination has accomplished so much as the Baptist through their Christian Culture Courses. The records show that during the past fifteen years over one hundred and fifty thousand examinations in these courses have actually been taken, while probably almost a million young people have engaged in the study. The method has been mostly that of individual private study. One of the most recent volumes in this series "The Young Christian and His Work" is an ingenious and helpful text in elementary ethics. General courses in the Methodist Church are evidently successful inasmuch as more than two thousand junior societies are now using the course for Junior Leagues. One of the Presbyterian Boards offers several text books in church history and doctrine. The Christian Endeavor movement promotes several correspondence courses, although the private reading suggestions of "The Christian Endeavor World" are much more widely followed.

Possibly the most effective courses of all are those of individual men in their own churches. It is impossible to estimate the number of these but their influence and worth is undoubtedly very great. They have wide variety. A minister in a New York City institutional church is leading a club of older boys through a course about stars. A new England Christian Endeavor Society has finished a thorough-going and deeply interesting series on ethics, conducted by the pastor. A Minneapolis pastor has built up a captivating work in home missions in his boys' club on the basis of Indian myths. Suffice it to say that any worker among young people will undoubtedly be paid large returns for any hard work along the lines of original studies.

Courses in Church Affairs.

The outstanding successes today in educational courses are the studies promoted by the official home and foreign missionary boards of the several denominations. It is said that during the season of 1906-07 fully one hundred thousand young people studied these courses, double the number of the season two years previous. The full records of this season are yet to be made but the publishers of the texts report that undoubtedly the number of the students will pass one hundred and fifty thousand.

The current text book in foreign missions is "The Uplift of China" by the celebrated missionary Dr. Arthur H. Smith. More than sixty thousand copies of this book have already reached the hands of students. In estimating the worth of these studies in foreign missions, we must bear in mind the reflex influence

upon the student as well as its value to the foreign enterprise. Those young people who fail to take up this study are losing a sense of the full sweep of the Kingdom's power, losing the best modern apologetic of Christianity and missing acquaintance with many interesting and inspiring heroes.

The courses now being presented by home boards deserve especial notice because they open a range of interest far wider than that ordinarily included in the term "missionary." The study of "Aliens or Americans?" last year has led the way to the use of "The Challenge of the City" by Dr. Strong during this season. The book is timely. It is fascinating. It cannot be read without opening to the mind the whole range of social and economic problems of the day that come flooding in to demand attention. Here is a thing that stirs young people. They make charts of cities. They see that one assembly district in New York has ninety thousand people with but a single protestant church. They study housing, food, schools, amusements, play grounds, municipal departments—all the things they can think of that effect people's lives for good and ill. They ask the question: How far is it the business of churchmen to have practical interest in social or public modes of promoting God's Kingdom? Well for the Church that her youth are doing this thing. It forestalls reckless thought of which there is a plenty. And it augurs a day of fuller and wider service by the church for mankind. Where is the minister who prays in secret for some touch of prophetic fire who would not have the minds and hearts of his young people stirred by the great issue raised?

Among the studies which have been successful in winning the attention of boys and girls, special mention should be made of "Coming Americans" by Miss Crowell and "Uganda's White Man of Work" by Mrs. Fahs.

Method of Study.

These studies are used in a variety of ways. Some young people's societies take them up in the regular meeting each week until the course is completed. Some Christian Endeavor Societies substitute them for the regular missionary topics each month. Some societies are divided into study groups for simultaneous work. In a few cases whole Sunday schools have devoted a series of Sundays to these courses in place of the regular lessons. A field for larger development may be found in young men's and young women's Bible classes.

But the best results have come from a special small class of a few sufficiently interested to do careful work. The more general scattering method rarely makes a decided impression anywhere. The smaller group is the better place to intensify inter-

est and cultivate capacity for leadership. Let a church begin this way and it has already secured guarantee of a few efficient leaders.

The educational courses of the day for young people of the Church are so successful in thousands of churches as to make it a great pity for any church to be without their benefits; so progressive, so timely and so hopeful as to add great zest to the whole cause of religious education.

The N. E. A. Declaration

The National Education Association, at its convention in Cleveland, set forth a full declaration of principles and aims; from which we quote those sections that refer particularly to religious training:—

"There is concededly a grave moral depression in our business and social atmosphere. The revelations of the financial and legislative world for the past two years denote a too general acquiescence in questionable practices and standards. We earnestly recommend to boards of education, principals, and teacher the continuous training of pupils in morals, and in business and professional ethics, to the end that the coming generation of men of affairs may have a well-developed abhorrence of unfair dealing and discrimination. The establishment of the honor system in schools, the ostracism of the dishonest or unfair pupil, the daily exemplification in the routine life of the school of the advantage of honest and truthful methods, are commended to the especial attention of teachers as a partial means to this end.

"The National Education Association indorses the increasing use of school buildings for free vacation schools and for free evening schools and lecture courses for adults, and for children who have been obliged to leave the day school prematurely. We also approve of the use of school grounds for play grounds and the use of school gymnasiums and bath rooms for the benefit of the children in the crowded districts during summer.

"The National Education Association wishes to record its approval of the increasing appreciation among educators of the fact that the building of character is the real aim of the schools and the ultimate reason for the expenditure of millions for their maintenance. There are in the minds of the children and youth of today a tendency toward a disregard for constituted authority, a lack of respect for age and superior wisdom, a weak appreciation of the demands of duty, a disposition to follow pleasure and interest rather than obligation and order. This condition demands the earliest thought and action of our leaders of opinion