



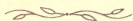
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BOY AT FIFTEEN
BEFORE & AFTER
M'CALL BARBOUR ❧



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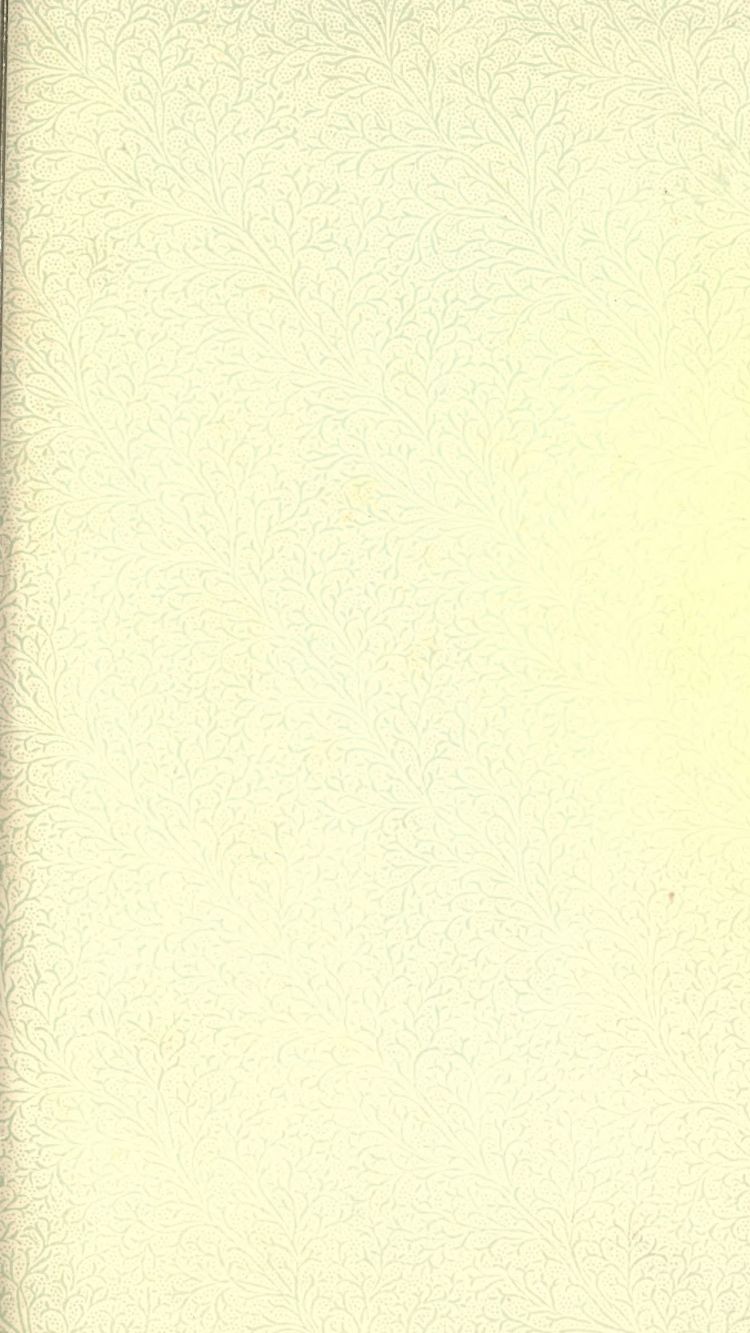
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B. M'CALL BARBOUR

"The Boys' Purity Band"

37 Chambers Street

EDINBURGH





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by
ALAN MANINGTON

A BOY AT FIFTEEN:

Before and After.

“**G**OOD spirits guard that young boy, and give him grace in this his hour of trial! Open his eyes that he may see the fiery horses and the fiery chariots of the angels who would defend him, and the dark array of spiritual foes who throng around his bed. Point a pitying finger to the yawning abyss of shame, ruin, and despair that even now perhaps is being cleft under his feet. In pity, in pity show him the canker which he is introducing into the sap of the tree of life, which shall cause its root to be hereafter as bitterness, and its blossom to go up as dust.”

DEAN FARRAR,
In “Eric; or, Little by Little.”

A BOY AT FIFTEEN:

BEFORE AND AFTER.

BY

B. M'CALL BARBOUR,

Author of

"FOR A BOY," "WHAT'S THE HARM?" "RED AND WHITE," ETC.
AND EDITOR OF "BITS FOR OUR BOYS."

Fifth Edition



EDINBURGH: B. M'CALL BARBOUR, 37 CHAMBERS STREET.
LONDON: S. W. PARTRIDGE & CO., 9 PATERNOSTER ROW.

TO
MY BOYS:
ALL OF THEM.



SYDNEY HOUSE,
AMPHILL,
BEDFORD.

Dear Mr M'Call Barbour,—I feel deeply thankful for the brave efforts you are making to deal with an evil which has assumed appalling proportions. This little book of yours will, I pray and believe, speak the enlightening word which will save many a dear lad from disastrous evil and misery. From facts which have come to my knowledge, I am convinced that the moral perils of our young folks to-day are much graver than they were thirty years ago. It is simply cruel of parents to allow their boys to go out into school and business life uninstructed and unwarned. The father who will read through your book chapter by chapter with his son, will easily find opportunity to say all that needs to be said, and by so doing will earn his boy's deep and lasting gratitude. If he cannot venture so much, at any rate let him put the book into the boy's hands. God bless our lads, and use your words to save multitudes of them from sin and practices which have blighted countless lives.—Heartily yours in the Master's service,

CHARLES G. MOORE.

July 8, 1903.

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A BOY AT FIFTEEN: Before and After.



BOY AT FIFTEEN is little understood. He little understands himself. He is often much misunderstood.

Perhaps, my boy reader, you are *not yet fifteen*. If not, you are getting nearer that age every day, and it is well to be warned about, and helped to understand some of the things regarding yourself at that period of your life.

It is my hope that when you do reach fifteen, what you may learn from these pages will help you to understand what all these strange new strivings mean—mentally, morally, and physically—which take place in you at that age.

To be “forewarned is to be forearmed,” and so by carefully heeding the few words of warning given, you may be able to master and control these new sensations which arise in every boy at such an age, and so be saved from the baneful results, so frequent, of sinning and suffering through ignorance.

Perhaps you are *beyond fifteen*. If so, doubtless these pages will help you to better understand now that strange period of fifteen through which you have already passed, and “the after” which to-day you are passing through.

If you have gone astray through ignorance, through youthful indiscretion and lack of control, it may be it is not yet too late to rectify some of the mistakes you have fallen into, and to stop the follies and habits contracted in the heat of wilfulness and passion. Thus you may be helped to save your life from further foolishness, and by the grace of God, in some measure be a help to other boys who need a word of caution or a helping hand at fifteen—before and after.

For you, my lad *at fifteen*, we cannot wish you better than that you seek from God the

grace that is needed to give your strictest heed to this, the most difficult to manage of all the periods of life.

However difficult it may be, it *is* possible to come through it with the sweetest, highest, and best results. Its peculiar temptations can be overcome ; its pitfalls can be passed in safety. There is one way, one only. It is by facing facts and dealing with them honestly and meeting all that comes, in the grace and strength provided by God to carry us through.

We *must* give God His place in our life even at fifteen. Only so is it possible to pass through this difficult and dangerous period of a boy's life unscathed.

The first fact, then, to be faced is, that a boy at fifteen is passing through a change in his life. Not every boy, indeed, we think, few boys are made aware that life has its stages of transition, its periods of change.

About fifteen is one of these periods of change, and when a boy has reached his fifteenth year he is usually fairly into it.

Let me quote to you from some of those who have made "Boy Life" a special study, some of the facts and well-grounded opinions regarding this period in the life of a boy.

W. Byron Forbush, in his book, "The Boy Problem," says :—

"It (the age of fifteen) 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 functioned, the voice deepens, the stature grows by bounds, and the body needs more sleep and food than ever before. It is the emotional age. No songs are too gay, no sorrows are so tearful. It is the time for 'slang,' because no words in any dictionary can possibly express all that crowds to utterance. It is the time for 'falling in love' most thoughtlessly and most unselfishly. The child wants to be entertained constantly. This is a natural condition. It is the enthusiastic age. The mask-like impressive face at this age is a sign of loss of youth or of purity.

"This emotional, restless disposition, which is so closely associated with rapid and uneven growth ; the new sense of power and of self-life and dreams of adventure, is often manifested in a craving to roam, to run away from home, to go to sea. The boy is simply seeking his place in the world. Ambitions

are strongly evident now, though often irrational and fantastic. Their nurture is the determining factor in the choice of the life work.

“Physical restlessness is often associated with intellectual restlessness and curiosity. It is a time of stubborn doubts, painful and dangerous; but signs of mental and moral health.

“Together with the doubts there is frequently an obstinate positiveness.

“For several years after twelve a boy is apt to be filled with the feeling that there is something about himself that needs to be settled.”

Sylvanus Stall, D.D., in his invaluable volume, “What a Young Boy ought to Know,” writes:—

“When this time (about the age of fourteen) arrives, the boy begins to leave behind him the characteristics of childhood. The body grows rapidly. The shoulders become broader, the chest deeper. The voice loses its boyish tones and becomes deeper and stronger. The skin becomes coarser. The beard starts to grow. The bones become harder. The sexual parts begin to develop, and in a few years the wisdom teeth appear.

“At first the boy feels awkward. His voice breaks. His hands and his feet seem to be in his way. He is sensitive and bashful under circumstances where formerly he was at ease and at home. He becomes the subject of new sensations and new desires, which he is not able to interpret or to comprehend. He becomes more polite, and more manly in his bearing towards strangers and especially towards women. He begins to seek the companionship of girls of about his own age. All this time there is being awakened within him a divinely implanted nature, which is designed to make him more noble and more perfect in every respect than he could possibly be without it.

“But it is now that sexual passion begins to assert itself. If the boy is ignorant, has a weak moral sense, or is under the influence of evil companions, serious dangers are likely to follow.

“It is also at this critical time, between the ages of thirteen and twenty-one, that boys become irritable and petulant. They experience a feeling of contrariness. They are untractable, and at times even rebellious. It is during this period that many boys, whose parents do not understand their condition, and who have forgotten their own feelings and experiences at the same age, desire to break loose from all restraint, and sometimes even to run away from home.

“It is at this time that the boy who was formerly

obedient and studious often becomes restive, disobedient, and unruly.

“Boys between the years of fourteen and eighteen are more likely to be disobedient to their teachers in the day school, and it is just at this age that they are likely to feel that they are too old to go to Sunday school, and not so likely to go willingly to church or attend to their religious duties. The entire nature feels the revolution that is taking place, and all the worst qualities in the boy’s composition appear upon the surface. This is the period in the boy’s experience which the Germans call ‘the period of storm and stress.’ If the boy is made intelligent, and his parents and teachers understand and appreciate what the boy is passing through, all will eventually turn out better than the indications seem to promise; and as the young man approaches the age of twenty and upwards the storms will have passed by. And if he has been guarded from evil and kept from sin, his future will be increasingly calm, blessed, and prosperous. But if vice and evil have come into his life, the years will bring an increasing instalment of passion and sin, of disappointment and suffering.

“You see, my dear boy, how important it is at this time, which is usually the most trying in one’s life, that a boy should not be left to grope in darkness and ignorance among physical and moral dangers of the most serious nature.”

Dr Lymen B. Sperry, in his “Confidential Talks to Young Men,” says:—

“Sometimes budding, unsettled manhood exhibits itself in eccentric and objectionable ways. A rapidly developing boy hardly knows what to do with himself; new emotions, ambitions, and impulses come over him, sometimes faster than he can master them; he becomes restive under restraints, resents the efforts of parents and teachers to direct him, refuses to be disciplined, and on slight provocation, runs away from school or from home. He may have an ambition to become a ‘cow boy’ or a ‘Texan Ranger’ or a ‘Buffalo Jack’ or ‘The Terror of the Sierras.’ At least he wants to be independent of all restraints, and is ambitious for adventure and conquest. The desires that lead to running away from home and kindred conduct, are but the effervescence or the ‘slopping-over’ of a life that is too full of impulse and energy, for the amount of controlling good sense that has yet come into it.”

M. E. Sangster, in writing of “the first great milestone” in a boy’s life, says:—

“You boys reach your first great milestone some-

where along between your fourteenth and seventeenth birthdays. You never know exactly where, but there comes a time, you realise later, when you resented being treated like a child by your mother and older sister, especially in public. Changes there had been earlier, and important ones, such as the losing of your baby curls, the obtaining of jackets with pockets, and being asked to run errands, and to lend a helping hand whenever needed, but you did not think much of them at that time. Youth in the earlier stage is not an easy period for a boy. He is apt to be a little conceited, then to swagger boastfully, and to speak with too much certainty in matters on which he has no experience. People lose patience with him, especially fathers and older brothers."

Dr Elias G. Brown, A.B., says :—

"The *most* characteristic thing about boyhood is that in the life of every boy, at a certain period, a remarkable change takes place. Physically, the small boy begins to grow more rapidly. His height increases surprisingly ; his weight goes up, though the roundness of the small boy quite frequently gives place to the lankiness of youth, the growth in height at first being out of proportion to the increase in weight. These things are easily noticed by any one. But internally, rapid changes are going on as well. Most important are the great increase in size and in power of the heart, and the rapid development of the reproductive system. And this latter is most important of all, for with this development there takes place the most remarkable change of all, a change in the boy's very nature. New feelings and desires are awakened in the boy's mind. Great longings arise ; and the boy feels a power that did not exist before. New mental qualities develop. He becomes critical and desires to judge things for himself ; but at the same time, his emotions are most easily stirred ; he is most easily influenced. . . . During this period of rapid development and of change in nature, known as puberty, and sometimes aptly spoken of as the critical period in the life of a boy, he is most susceptible to strong emotional influences, and his whole future life may sometimes be changed in a day."

Such, then, is a boy at fifteen.

We have quoted so much from different sources in order that it may be plain and easy to grasp the strange combination of changes and forces that are working in a boy at this time. And now, my boy reader, we doubt not but already you have found some explanation and enlightenment. True, you did not understand

what you were passing through. You could not. No one ever told you. No one warned you of this critical period. It may be no one seemed to have sympathy enough with you to gain your confidence and your heart in the midst of all your boyhood's trials. Consequently you have been puzzled and perplexed, maybe have grown careless and indifferent. Perhaps in your boyish ignorance and incapacity you have let the reins of life hang loosely upon your passions, and maybe to-day you are careering rapidly along the path of indulgence in secret and open sin. My boy, will you draw up? Will you ask God's help, and believing that you get it will you yield up to Him the reins and say, "Receive me, my Saviour, for I have gone astray. Direct, control, and keep me, for I cannot keep myself"? Yield to Him, and He will.

The facts already stated about a boy at fifteen detail his natural condition. It is natural for the boy to be so. This very fact demands that attention be given to these changes, and the growing forces in the boy be met by plain and practical information regarding them, so that he be guided and controlled aright. How very much depends upon us who know these facts.

We must face the facts of natural development. We must help our boys to face them for themselves. We must seek to strengthen them in their boyhood's battles by arming them with intelligent and wholesome information regarding these forces and changes within them and around, that they may be able to come through this critical period of life with their strength unimpaired and purity untainted.

If we neglect to warn, we are responsible in measure for their failure.

It seems to us, to meet the conditions of a boy at fifteen, there are three great essential needs which are fundamental :—

First, he needs *Christ*.

Second, he needs the *Bible*.

Third, he needs an honest, true, and sympathetic *friend*.

We do not overlook the fact that a boy at fifteen also needs recreation for his body, food for his mind, companionship, &c. &c., but we believe these will follow in their right and proper course

and measure, when the fundamental needs have been supplied.

Indeed, we have little hope of any true, well-balanced success in any boy's life unless these three great needs that we have noted be met as a first and chief concern.

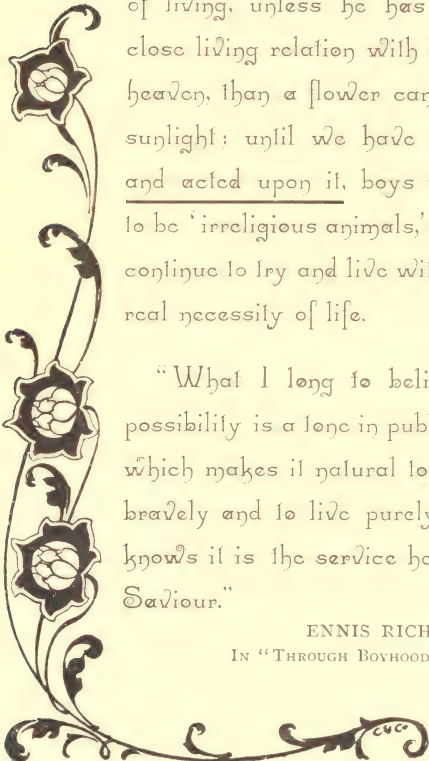
We do not say the boy "wants" these, but we unhesitatingly affirm that he "needs" them. If his "wants" were more in keeping with his "needs," our boys would unquestionably get through life with fewer falls, and success assured and true in the best and highest way.

“**B**OYS are, as a rule, not naturally religious at the age of fourteen, only and solely because they have not been taught to be so.”

“Until we have realised the fact that a boy can no more live the life that he was created for the purpose of living, unless he has an intimate, close living relation with his Father in heaven, than a flower can live without sunlight; until we have realised this, and acted upon it, boys will continue to be ‘irreligious animals,’ and men will continue to try and live without the only real necessity of life.

“What I long to believe in as a possibility is a tone in public school life which makes it natural to a boy to act bravely and to live purely because he knows it is the service he owes to his Saviour.”

ENNIS RICHMOND,
IN “THROUGH BOYHOOD TO MANHOOD.”



CHRIST AND THE BOYS.



HE boys need Christ.

Not so much knowledge *about* Christ, as a knowledge of the Christ Himself, as a personal Saviour and ever-present Keeper and Friend.

When we place this need as the *first* we are simply following the order of God's Word which says, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness."

How true is this remark by one who has studied well boy life: "Nowadays, education devotes itself almost entirely to the head, *and little or not at all to the heart.* The training of the head without that of the heart simply begets intellectual conceit, pride, and selfishness. Youths should be accustomed to self-control, for after all good manners, in their last analysis, are simply self-control and self-denial."

With such absorption in an education which is mostly of the head and for this world, it is evident, if our boys are to be kept pure and free from the world's entanglements, they need that education of the heart, which simply means, to be controlled by Christ.

Granted that our boys are taught religion, how much of it is simply formality, or at best amounts to the exhortation "be good."

Naturally we want our boys to "be good." Doubtless the boys in many cases want to "be good" themselves. But how sickening and wearisome it is to the boy to perpetually *try* to "be good" and as perpetually find his efforts fail. He has a right to know the reason of that perpetual failure. He must know if he is to gain ultimate success and victory. The reason is simple enough for every boy to understand. It is nothing else than this, that *without Christ neither boys nor men can be truly good*, as God desires them and their consciences commend.

We firmly believe that many boys are honest enough to be disgusted with that "being good," because what they know of it simply amounts to

“goody goodyism.” It is only surface show—therefore hypocrisy.

On the other hand we firmly believe that the intelligence of many honest boys would agree with that form of “being good” which has its basis in the possibility of its being done, not by any of their “*trying*,” but by their trusting the Good One—Christ in them to accomplish it.

That this is God’s way of the matter is plain. This must be taught to them. Where it is taught the boy will have had a fair chance to know how his life, even as a boy, can be governed and kept right. Till he is taught this, he is in ignorance of the greatest power at his disposal and the power he needs the most of all.

“Parents hate to talk religion with their boys, in these latter conservative days. Even faithful pastors do most of their religious talking with the saints who do not need such talk. We all of us fear—what? That the boy will not like it, and abstain.”

How true this is! Why, many a boy is longing for some one to tell him how to get victory in his life over the sins which so easily beset him. He is yearning to know where power to live a pure and upright life is to be found. We could understand the silence about Christ if we had other cures. But there is none. Surely he is a boy’s best friend who will introduce him to this One; Christ who shed His precious blood on Calvary to save him, and who lives to keep him by His power.

We may reason “boys are young, and cannot understand such deep teaching,” “Boys will be boys, and you cannot expect an old head on young shoulders,” &c. We admit the reasoning is reasonable to some extent, but we cannot forget that in matters spiritual, even in a boy’s life, the Holy Spirit counts for something. To ignore Him is fatal to all progress spiritual, whether in boys or men. “Without Me ye can do nothing.” He can make clear and simple to the mind and heart even of a boy, what otherwise would certainly be “too deep.”

The boys need Christ, and Christ is for the boys.

The devil is a power too much for any boy to master, but joined to Christ there is certain victory over the devil, for “greater is He.”

Christ is God's gift held out to every boy. Possessing Christ and yielding to Him continually, it is blessedly possible for any and every boy to "be good" and be "kept good" by the power of the Holy Spirit within him, the Good and Holy One. So it is we are "kept by the power of God."

We do not doubt that religion to many boys and young men has become a "humbug" and a something to be avoided, simply because according to most of the information they have got, they have been asked to do that which to them was practically impossible. We must be clear in all our statements to our boys as well as to men that in ourselves and by our own efforts we never can be good. "Ye must be born again."

Boys "must be born again" as well as men. "All have sinned."

When we make this clear to the boys, we believe the Holy Spirit will bless His own Word, and use it to bring our boys to realise their need for Christ, and to an acceptance of Him.

The Holy Spirit will never countenance the error of "try to be good."

Our boys need Christ, and Christ is for the boys.

Christ will solve the problem for our boys of how to get rid of sin; how to get right with God; how to obtain victory; how to overcome; and how to live a healthy, holy, and a happy life.

Will you, then, my dear boy reader, take Christ?

To have Him is to have your life under perfect control and surest and safest guidance. He will govern and direct and settle for you all the questions that perplex and puzzle a boy. He will tell you what you ought to do, and ought not to do. Where you ought to go, and ought not to go. He will be with you always, at school and in the play-ground, at home and in the office, in the busy market and the street. He will be your counsellor in your choice of companions, recreations, and occupations.

"The best friend to have is Jesus."

So, living to please Him, you shall be kept from what is evil, and made strong in good.

Surely it is not too much to ask every boy

who reads these pages to let Christ so rule his life in all its details, when only so can it be lived aright.

Such a surrender to Christ will never rob a boy's life of one single joy or pleasure which is pure and profitable to himself and others, and as for all other sorts, the sooner he is spoiled of them the better.

The boys need Christ—Christ is for the boys.

Only Christ can satisfy the great needs of a boy's heart and life. Only Christ can keep him pure, clean, honest and upright, healthy and holy now, and only Christ will avail him at the end.

My boy, take Christ !

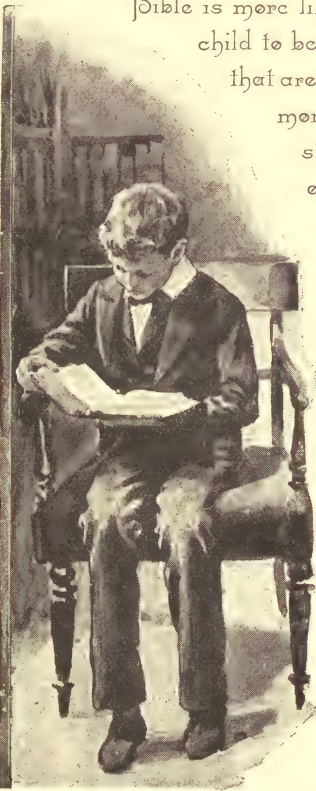
“THE child who is brought up on the Bible, as a whole, will come to know in the very best way possible what a child ought to know very early in life, if he is to be safeguarded against the perils that surround us in our modern life.

“A child brought up on the frequent, thorough, continuous story of the whole Bible is more likely than any other

child to be free from the vices that are sapping the mental, moral, and physical strength of our boys and girls and young men and women.

But the child who is brought up on infidel literature and conversation is the easiest prey there is to the seducer. The next easiest is the one who through neglect of the Bible is left in ignorance of the pitfalls of life.”

DR R. A. TORREY.



THE BOYS AND THE BIBLE.



Do not doubt that every boy who reads these pages has a Bible. What use is it to him personally if it is never opened, if its precepts are not studied and its promises are not believed?

A boy needs his Bible for the light it gives on life and for the strength and encouragement it imparts to life.

He needs it to tell him that he was created for God's glory; that his body is not simply a machine to be used or abused to gratify his natural desires or his impure passions, but that it is "the temple of God" into which He seeks admission by the Holy Spirit that He may dwell therein.

He needs his Bible to tell him that in his natural state he is sinful, fallen—lost, indeed, that he simply is in God's sight a sinner, and therefore must "be born again."

He needs it to tell him God's remedy for this lost condition; that God has provided a Saviour in Jesus Christ His Son and that there is forgiveness and redemption through His precious blood to all who will believe and receive Him as their Saviour.

He needs it to tell him how he may live a pure and holy, a healthy and happy life; how he may overcome sin and be kept by the power of God.

He needs it to tell him God's wonderful plan and purpose in all that's going on around him, so that he may know life *is* worth living when it is lived after its Creator's plan.

He needs it to reveal to him the riches that are his in Christ, indeed, to show him how to get right with God, and keep right with Him and experience the blessedness of being "a son of God."

He needs it for warning to steer clear of all the pitfalls that abound on every hand, and to tell him the unchanging fact that "whatsoever a boy sows, *that* shall he also reap."

He needs it to tell him much more than all this to meet the details of his daily life, and it does tell it to him. Indeed there is no other book does for a boy what this book does. It is the best boy's book we know of.

Can we wonder then that life is such a puzzle and perplexity to boys, if the only book which has a proper explanation of it, and guidance regarding it, is left unopened or treated with comparative indifference. It is no wonder that so many boys go down so easily into sin, even with all their efforts by "healthy recreation" and exercise to avoid it, when they do not heed God's Word, for emphatically it is stated that the *power to keep from sin* is God's Word hidden in the heart (Ps. cxix. 9-11).

It is no wonder that so many boys fall easily into an "unclean way" when the Bible is neglected, for most clearly God has said "by taking heed thereto according to Thy Word" is the means to have our way made clean and to keep it so.

It is no wonder the boys readily imbibe all sorts of worldly, evil, and erroneous ideas when they will not open God's Word to get to know the truth about His way of things and so be saved from error and crime. We know it is not common to find boys at fifteen *deeply* interested in the Bible. 'Tis a pity it is so, but the fact has to be faced and the statement made, for whether interested or not and common or no, the fact remains, boys need the Bible for the pure and proper conduct of their lives, and no book more so.

All the books under the sun will not do more for the health of a boy's body, for the beauty of his conduct and the purity of his character than the Bible, if he takes heed thereto.

When we seek to stir up interest in God's Book in those who have sunk into sin for lack of it, how often we are met with "it's too late now, you should have told that to me sooner."

True, it *seems* "too late" where the seed of impurity sown in boyhood is bearing its harvest of "wild oats" but it is *not* too late. Thank God it is not, and it is God's own Word says so. "Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon

him, and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon" (Isa. lv. 7).

My boy of fifteen, let me beseech you to get at your Bible *now*. You need it. What we have just stated is strongest argument for our entreaty.

God, who made the world and you, knew best what needs would meet you in passing through this world as child, as boy, as man. In His wisdom and His love He has put into your hands a guide book, inspired by Himself to shed light on all your path of life and direct you safely through it to the end.

Such is the Bible, and you will need it every day, and all the day, and every step in life you take if you would walk aright and in the way that pleases God.

Of course you will need to *read* your Bible if you are to know its contents. You will need to *obey* its precepts and *trust* its promises if you would know its practical use and keeping power.

There are lots of other books at hand claiming your attention, and doubtless many of them are getting it.

How is it with your Bible? Is this best and most needful of all books seldom if ever touched?

Will you, my boy, bethink yourself, and see if some place, indeed the first place, cannot be given to this supremely important and most needful book for you, the Bible?

Do not say "when you are older you will give heed to it." "When you are older" is a day that is not yours, and even should it come it will bring with it its own duties and responsibilities. Your need is now, now is the time to meet it. It is *now* you need God's Word, and now you must apply it to your life and conduct if you would be saved from boyish sins and indiscretions which ever lay the foundations of manhood's sufferings and regrets. The time for your Bible, my boy, is *now*. "Thy Word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against Thee." Do it now!

It is a fact that the Bible condemns sin, and of course you will need to part with the one or the other, for no boy can keep both his sin and his Bible. The very straightforwardness of God's Book is its blessedness. It is so honest in its dealings with sin that when we read it we

are not left in doubt about the awful consequences of sin harboured and indulged. It is made quite clear if we will go on in sin we cannot go on with the Bible.

We do not doubt that many boys continue in sin, simply because they do not read their Bible. Of course it is also true that many do not read their Bible because they choose to continue in sin.

How blessed is the fact that the same Word of God which reveals to us our sin and condemns it, also provides for us an escape from it, a cure for it, and a power over it in and through the precious blood of God's own Son, "who loved me and gave Himself for me." If boys will only confess to God their sins, which His Word reveals, and claim the cleansing of the precious blood which it offers, there will be found a sure deliverance from its awful bondage, and a power to serve God with a liberty and freedom in keeping with His will, which is the source of truest and abiding joy.

It is blessedly possible for boys as well as men to be saved from sin and kept from it. Indeed, there is only one way for boys and men to get right with God, and if any boy would be saved, now is the time, and the way is through Jesus Christ his Saviour. There is no other. It is God's own Word that says so.

It is by God's Word we are "built up." "The Word of His grace which is able to build you up." It is only logical to consider that by the *lack* of God's Word we shall "break down." Such is the case. It is true to experience. The boy who reverences, reads, and obeys God's Word, has a character for trustworthiness that is worth untold wealth to him and his relations and employers. The boy who is heedless, careless of, or antagonistic to God's Book, is usually found amongst that class who are "ungodly," "sinners," and scoffers," who grow up in infidelity and selfishness, with little or no respect for either God or man.

My boy, make your Bible your guide book and your God your guide. Don't mind though others talk about God, and live as if He didn't exist. Make up your mind that, as for you, you will "trust in the Living God," and make His Word the law of your life. It is quite clear that

God's Word says, "Blessed is the man who walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, or standeth in the way of sinners, or sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law doth he meditate day and night" (Ps. i. 1, 2). Every sensible boy who reads these words, knows that it is no more right for a boy at fifteen to company with the "ungodly," with "sinners," and "scoffers," than it is for a man of twenty-five or fifty to do so. It is wrong for all. He is a wise boy who will take heed to that fact, and this other that as it is "blessed" for the "*man*" to "meditate in God's Word day and night," it cannot be less beneficial for the *boy* to do the same.

Get at your Bible, my dear boys. It will keep in order all the different spheres of your life, and so it shall be rightly and beautifully balanced. It will tell you that God loves you, in a way no other book or person can. As you yield to that pure, sweet, holy love of God as manifested in Jesus Christ His Son, it will be to you the constraining power to win you from the ways of sin, and keep you in the paths of purity, of pleasantness, and peace.

Boys, get at your Bible !

A BOY'S FRIEND.



WE have said that a boy at fifteen needs a friend. It is not every one who can fill this peculiar post. It demands one who has an intelligent knowledge of a boy's needs and a heart of sympathy toward him.

A boy needs such a friend as will not fail to introduce him to Christ as his Saviour and Keeper. One who will instruct him in the contents of his Bible, so that he may be guided aright in life, not according to the world's customs or opinions, but according to God's mind.

He needs one who will inform him wisely and well as to the development and the exercise of his body, and who will warn him against its abuse in every way.

He needs one who will be a guide regarding the instruction for and education of his mind, with a view to fit him for his work in the world. He needs one whose heart will be tender and yet firm toward his boyish mistakes and moods, and who will sympathise with all his boyish troubles and trials. Indeed he needs such a friend as he can trust *with all his heart* without the slightest fear of being misunderstood or misdirected.

We believe that it is God's purpose that such a friend should be found for every boy in the persons of his parents.

We do not say that all parents fulfil this high and holy obligation of being such friends to their boys. Nevertheless we believe it is expected that they should.

We fear that too much of this friendly office has been delegated by parents to others, with the baneful result that neither boys nor parents enjoy that liberty, confidence, and love which ought to exist between them.

A boy's most intimate, most reliable, and most sympathetic friend ought to be found in either or both of his parents.

Happy indeed is the boy who needs not to go



A BOY'S FRIEND.

outside the circle of his home for the guidance, sympathy, and help his heart and mind and body needs. There are ever rising up within a boy cravings for action, information, and sympathy which are only natural, and the answers to which he has a right to have, at first hand, from those who brought him into this world.

However, as we must face things as they are, rather than as they ought to be, it must be said, that while a deep enough interest is usually taken by parents in certain matters in the life of their boys, others, and generally these, to the boy, the most important of all, are almost entirely disregarded.

Boys, in many cases, find very little sympathy and honest practical help at home upon their most perplexing problems of physical life. What school they will attend, what clothes they will wear, what business they will follow, what position they will hold, seem to be the all important items in a boy's existence. He is left to fight the battle against the world and the devil outside, and the flesh inside him too often on the strength of a formalistic religion, and of course with no success.

It is this inability to find genuine help in his difficulties on the deepest things of life, at home, that begets wonderment and curiosity. The help and information denied him by parents he naturally seeks through other channels, outside, which, alas, so often are corrupted by vice and immorality.

How can we blame our boys for picking up in impure ways that which has been withheld from them in a pure, a proper, and a wholesome course? Surely none ought to be more willing to impart such information to their boys, and none would be trusted more in the doing so, as a loving father or mother! What a safeguard it is to a boy's life, in the midst of all his temptations, when he can unburden himself to his parents, and know that they understand him and will be patient with and helpful to him.

Sometimes a boy has liberty to so trust one of his parents more than the other—most frequently it is "mother" who gets the secrets of his young heart, and is sought to bear with him his troubles.

What a privilege! It is one which every

mother ought to prize, to have the confidence of her boy. She may become to him the very channel through which he is to see the love, the guidance, and the care of God in his young life, an inspiration for all that is truly beautiful and pure and manly, and a terror to all that is base and unclean.

We do not wish to seem to throw the burden of responsibility upon the *mothers*, for the fathers have an equal share in this. However, when facts are faced it is found that as a rule the mothers do have an influence and a hold upon their boys which the fathers cannot claim. Why it is so may be explained in many ways. Impatience and a lack of sympathy on the part of the fathers, through forgetfulness of their own boyish days, have, we think, much to do with it generally. Whatever may be the reason, it is true that "mother" is the one the boy's heart yields to most readily, and has most confidence in.

How needful then it is that "mother" should be intelligent as to all the dangers and developments that her boy is passing through, and that she should be open and honest in all her explanations regarding himself, so that he may find in her, indeed, his truest and most trusted friend.

"To many boys there is but one safeguard from impure thoughts and acts, and that is reverence and love for their mothers. This reverence and love must be an incomplete thing unless a boy can feel that his mother knows what his dangers are."

We are conscious of much that might be prevented of waywardness and sin with their consequent suffering in the lives of our boys, if only they whom God has given to be their "friends" dealt more openly and intelligently with them on all subjects.

It is not likely that boys will care much for Christ and the Bible and religion—their greatest needs—if these are made only names and empty formalities before them. A Christ only spoken about in church and neglected or forgotten all the rest of the week makes the religion of Christ to a boy a disgusting farce. He wants reality. The Bible, that is treated as a book much less important than the latest novel, the newspaper or the magazine, cannot be expected to impress

the boy as the guide book for life and conduct. Is it a wonder that he leaves it alone?

It is a fact when Christ and the Bible and religion are greater *realities* to ourselves, they will become greater realities to our boys.

Nor is it to be expected that our boys will readily seek our counsel about their bodily troubles and temptations if we have never made them aware of our knowledge that they have such, or have deceived them in our answers to their childish questions as to their origin and birth.

We plead for an honest openness with our boys on all subjects from those who are parents, and who ought to be to their boys their truest friends.

There must never be any excuse, that "the boys won't heed them." Whether they heed or not, it is the duty of the parent to help his or her boy in every possible way to meet the needs and conditions of his development. Even if they seem to treat it with indifference now, we doubt not, most boys will remember it some time. Few wander so far away or grow so old as to forget the warning of a mother's holy and tender instruction and her prayers.

What we have said about the "friendliness" of fathers and mothers to their boys of course implies that *the boys will make them their friends*. For a boy to do so is simply to obey the Word of God which says, "Honour thy father and thy mother."

My dear boy reader, to this we ask you to give earnest heed. Tell father and mother about all your concerns, never be afraid to introduce your companions to them, talk to them about your recreations, your trials and temptations. *Give them an opportunity to be your friends*. Don't close your life and heart against them and then say they have no interest in you. The way to interest them in all that you are interested in is to be open with them about all that concerns you. It is never a good sign in a boy's life that he has anything that must be hidden from his parents' knowledge. There may be particular exceptions, but as a general rule the wise words of President Roosevelt are worthy of commendation to the attention of every boy: "Have all the fun and pleasure you can get if you can go

to your mother and tell her about it. Take all of this kind that you can find. It is due to you. But don't take any of the kind you can't take to your mother. Stamp it out."

If it be that any boy who reads these pages has been bereft of parents, or has such parents as are unworthy of the name, to such an one we say most tenderly, do not consider yourself a "friendless one." Yours is still the blessed privilege of making Jesus Christ your dearest friend.

To so make Him your choice and tell Him and trust Him in all things, is to realise His wonderful provision of friends for you on every hand.

How often for such ones He has provided a tender-hearted and wise elder brother or sister, a master at school, or in business who has met the needs of a boy in marvellous ways.

With such a God of love, of wisdom, and of power, no boy needs to be without a friend. It is His promise to supply—ask!

“**A** Boy of sixteen lately wrote to his mother, who had ever been his counsellor and teacher: ‘I lately took from a public library a number of books with such titles as ‘Boys’ Problems,’ ‘Moral Instruction for Boys,’ &c., and not one of these half-dozen of books mentioned the one serious problem of boys. In only one was the word ‘purity’ mentioned, and then only in a general way. Of course, all these books treated of business honesty, integrity, &c., but not one intimated that he might do himself harm through wrong habits of body, or defraud his posterity by failure to realize his responsibility. Are these not problems of boys? Oh, mother, you do not know how many boys are going to ruin every day for lack of knowledge. If only all boys had as good and faithful a teacher as you have been to me, my own dear mother, what an amount of sorrow might be saved to boys. I feel as if I must devote my life to helping my companions to start aright; and, mother, please don’t say that I am doing wrong in this.’

“Such testimony from a boy who knows, from his own inner experience and from intimate acquaintance with the experiences of his friends, what are the needs of the boy, is of far more value in favour of instruction than all the theoretical objections of adults against it. Who knows better than a live boy to-day what are the problems of boys? And such a plea should meet with a prompt response.”

DR MARY WOOD ALLEN.

A BOY'S SPECIAL TROUBLES.

“**I**T is now that sexual passion begins to assert itself.”

We cannot ignore this fact. To deal with any boy at fifteen and be indifferent to this important change in his life, either from so-called “modesty” or ignorance, is to neglect that which to the boy himself is the most puzzling of all his problems.

True, there is sometimes a difficulty in dealing plainly with our boys on this subject, and consequently it is usually let entirely alone. The result is, the boys themselves, through ignorance of physical facts, fall into sin and suffering, having imbibed what information they do have through the channels of impure talk, suggestion, and practices of their companions.

That this is generally the case is abundantly corroborated by the statements and experience of those who are qualified to know.

My dear boy reader, if no one has ever told you about the proper and holy use of the members of your body, let me, as your friend, impress upon you the vital importance of its preservation for its proper and its high and holy uses in all its various parts.

“No boy,” says Dr Butler, “ought ever to be allowed to go to school, without learning from his father or his mother, or from some brother, or tried friend considerably older than himself, the simple facts as to the laws of birth, and the terrible danger of ever coming to talk of these phenomena, as matters of frivolous and filthy conversation.”

That many boys are not so warned, we are aware. That many of them do fall into sin and suffering because of not being warned, is a sad fact which none can deny. It is therefore my object to say this word of warning, so much needed, that *you*, my boy reader, may be saved from this shadow ever falling on your young life, if it has not already done so.

Your body has its various parts for various special purposes, and only in the rightful use of these can you expect God's blessing.

The very highest possible privilege has been given to you, namely, that of transmitting life and bringing into being other immortal souls.

By the appointment of God, this has been reserved for the marriage state, and *any* trespass against this order is met by the severest judgment of God upon it.

For the carrying out of this most high and holy object, God has provided certain organs or members of the body, and *all* abuse of these members for the purpose of sinful gratification and lust, incurs physical suffering to those who so indulge, and to their offspring after them.

To be plain, my dear boy, understand that the private members of your body are meant by God for this holy purpose of reproduction of the race at such a time in life as He shall guide and appoint to you, and in connection only with the marriage state. Therefore, be most careful **NEVER** to use these organs of your body for any sinful indulgence. To so sinfully indulge is to abuse your body, and will most certainly reap the result of God's judgment upon the sinful act, whether it be committed in solitude, alone, or in company with others.

We impress upon you, get right with God's thought about your body, and hold it as a sacred charge in all its parts, to be used only for that purpose for which God created and designed it.

Your body is the creation of God, and is to be used for His glory, by letting God Himself dwell within it and control it entirely. Here is God's own word about the matter: "Know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have from God? and ye are not your own; for ye were bought with a price; glorify God, therefore, in your body" (1 Cor. vi. 19, R.V.). "Know ye not that ye are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man destroyeth the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are. Let no man deceive himself" (1 Cor. iii. 16, 17, R.V.).

Be most careful, therefore, to avoid all thoughts and actions, sights and sounds, which

would in any way degrade this high purpose of your body. Steer clear of all such places, people, and things, which in any way would suggest its degradation for selfish and sinful purposes.

The Rev. George Everard, referring to this subject in his capital book for boys, called "Your Innings," says: "There is a snake or a serpent, or whatever else you may call it, that creeps into many a school, and leaves many of the lads with a bite that injures them for life. They never are the same as before. They carry the mark of it to their graves. In many cases it takes all the brightness out of their lives. It always brings with it a bondage and tyranny which follows them every step of their journey. Only lately a few young men were talking over the matter. They came from fifteen public schools, and in every one of them this terrible enemy was known to exist.

"I daresay many of you have guessed already what I mean. If not, I will tell you. There is a sin of secret impurity frequent among lads, and the misery it causes no tongue can ever fully tell. I know it for a fact. I have had numbers of letters from themselves about it. I have the experience of others which has been far greater than my own. You may take it, my young friend, as a truth that none can gainsay, that through this sin a dark veil has been cast over the lives of tens of thousands of schoolboys, and that all the freshness and gladness and power of youth have perished beneath it."

We feel sure your conscience will tell you most plainly of the sinfulness of such indulgence in secret sin. We do beseech you to take heed to the warning voice. Otherwise, you will most certainly reap the inevitable result of a shattered frame, and possible insanity and early death. To enforce the truth of these statements let me quote to you the words of Dr S. Stall, whose authority on this matter is unquestioned: "*Every* young boy should be properly informed upon this subject, for even those who may be safely guarded from defilement of thought and life from *outward* influences are nevertheless exposed to those *inward* physical conditions which may produce local irritation and disease; and where such a diseased condition is ignorantly

permitted to continue, masturbation soon becomes a fixed habit, and is likely to be practised, with such violence, that idiocy, and even death, may, and often does come speedily."

"Nothing so much favours the continuance and spread of this awful vice as ignorance, and only by being early and properly taught on this important subject can the coming boys and men be saved from the awful consequences which are ruining morally, mentally, and physically, thousands of boys every year."

See, my boy, what information you do get on these vital matters is got from a pure source, and not through the vitiated habits of immoral school chums and work-fellows.

We have said enough to enlighten every boy sufficiently on the subject of his body so as to preserve it properly from sin, and lead him to determine that as for him he will "keep himself pure."

There is certain blessedness for every boy who will take heed to the instruction given. There is certain loss and misery to all who treat it with indifference or opposition. "Be not deceived, God is not mocked : for whatsoever a boy soweth that shall he also reap" (Gal. vi. 7).

But, what shall we say to the boy who has sinned, to the boy who in ignorance or wilfulness has fallen a prey to this filthy habit, and who to-day is bearing in misery the suffering of his body and reproach of his conscience in solitude. This is our word—nay, God's own word to you, my dear lad—"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts ; and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him ; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon" (Isa. lv. 7).

"He that covereth his sins shall not prosper ; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy" (Prov. xxviii. 13).

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John i. 9).

"The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John i. 7).

"Come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord : though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow ; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isa. i. 18).

“Washed white in the blood of the Lamb”
(Rev. vii. 14).

We cannot leave this subject without noting some simple rules for the general guidance of our boys regarding the care of their bodies and their habits.

First of all we would say accept Jesus Christ, God’s Son, as your Saviour and Keeper from all sin. Without Him there is no hope of being pure or keeping so. Thus belonging to Him you may reckon that you are kept by the power of God. Doing the will of God, seeking to please Him in the daily conduct of your body, you can then count on the help of God to support and protect you. Watch, you will not be free from temptation, but you will have given to you a power to resist it. Do not be distressed because you are tempted in a multitude of ways. Take your stand on the word of God, that “greater is He that is for you than all that can be against you.” Count on His strength and help. Consider the awfulness of sinning against the love of God who gave Jesus Christ, His Son, to die for you. Appeal for His aid, and by faith believe you have it. “This is the victory that overcometh, even your faith.” Such a determination for purity, backed up by the power of God, will keep you proof against all the wiles of the devil, and make you strong.

“My strength is as the strength of ten,
Because my heart is pure.”

Secondly, consider well what books you read. What a mass of filthy, exciting, poisonous matter is printed in these days. Boys, beware! Read nothing but what will add genuine and healthy information to you. Avoid the rubbishy papers and “comic” periodicals, which lend levity and emptiness to life, and make the mind an easy prey for the suggestions of unclean thoughts. Read your Bible; study it. Listen to God’s own word: “Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to Thy word.”

“Thy word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against Thee.”

To read the Bible, and live according to it by the help of God, is the sure means of keeping

the heart from sin. Read, study, love, and live your Bible.

Put away from you all pictures which incline you to impure thoughts. If you have any, or books with such in them, burn them.

This is a day in which the devil is peculiarly busy presenting to the eye bills and advertisements which excite the passions and drag down the life. Boys, beware! Help God to keep you pure. Close your eyes at the first glimpse of such things. Turn away from them as you would from deadly poison. They are the devil's "decoy ducks" into his paths of vice and sin, death and eternal woe,

Third, companions. Watch them. "Choose companionships; don't drift into them." One bad companion will pollute a whole community of innocent boys. If you have a bad companion who talks about nasty stories, and suggests evil indulgences, tell him of the sin and misery of which we have tried to tell you in these pages. If he will not desist, cut his company. Better—a thousand times better—you should go through the world companionless than have such an one as shall pollute you, and others through you. Watch your companions. Very frequently boys, in their search for exercise and recreation, are led into "cricket clubs," "football clubs," "cycle clubs," and such like, which, while they give them recreation and exercise, also bring them into association with immoral companions. The talk and manner of such companions act upon a boy, and very often all the good he would get from the exercise and recreation he seeks is overbalanced by the filthy, impure habits which he contracts from his companions in the club with which he associates. Avoid all such companions. If you must have exercise and recreation, and you cannot get it in such clubs without imbibing moral filth, do without such, for God's sake, for your own sake, and the sake of others, and God Himself will make up for all you lose by greater purity, strength, and happiness of life.

Fourth. Be careful in the following matters:—Bathe the body frequently, especially the lower parts of it, in cold water. Do not encourage lassitude and laziness. A hard bed to sleep on is best. Get up the moment you are awake. To lie in bed awake is to make yourself an easy

prey to sin. Avoid all alcoholic drinks and stimulants. Do not smoke. Never be idle. "An idle mind is the devil's workshop." Fill your mind with "whatsoever things are pure." "Set your affections on the things that are above." During business — provided it is an honest calling — let your mind be given to serving your master with all honesty and faithfulness. When out of business fill your time with some useful and profitable occupation, something that will elevate and help others, as well as glorify God.

Pray, lads, pray !

Never forget the purpose of your being is to glorify God.

"Therefore, glorify God in your bodies which are His."

RECREATION.



THE settlement of this we may quite safely leave to every boy, without any fear of his going astray in it, when once he has accepted Christ as his controller, and made Him his keeper, and the Bible his guide.

There is a place for recreation in a boy's life, but it is not the *first* place.

The boy who gives it the first place will very soon find his life all out of order.

The first business of every boy, as of every man, is "to seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness." When that is done, the boy has got into God's order, and in such a course will have God's guidance as to his recreation as well as all else, and His blessing upon it.

It will then be an easy matter to settle what sort of recreation he ought to and can indulge in, how often and how far he may go into it, what sort of company he may keep, and what to avoid regarding it.

When this difficult question is settled according to God's will, the boy shall be saved from that selfishness which so often sets all else and all others at nought to obtain its gratification.

The present is an age in which there is an undue glorification of the physical side of our being, and, therefore, a glorification of sport to the hurt of the higher and more enduring interests of soul and spirit.

It would seem that the general mind is that the muscles must be exercised, and the limbs developed that we may look well—no matter if our morals be extremely lax, and our heart be unregenerate.

We fear, with this passion for the cultivation of the physical at the expense of neglecting the spiritual, much of the advice and liberty given to our boys to-day tends to "make them lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God."

It is well for us to keep in mind that "bodily exercise profiteth little" (for a little). We admit

there is profit in it, and it would be fanaticism to ignore or deny it, but let us not be blinded to the fact that its profit is only "for a little." How very little is the span of physical existence when we compare it to the eternity in which the soul and spirit live.

It is on this ground of considering things in their proper relationships that we plead for greater interest in the concerns of greatest import.

We most firmly believe that no boy's body ever yet suffered by a right and proper concern in, and attention to, the interests of his soul and spirit.

On the other hand, many who have made pleasure and physical development their only end, have lost all that truly makes a man, and have become weak through their follies and their sins.

There is great need for our boys to weigh well the very common advice given them to-day to "go in for all the athletics possible."

We have no objection to "all the athletics possible" if the boy will give as much attention to the culture of his soul and spirit as he expends on his body. When it comes to choice as to which is to be pre-eminent, call halt, and remember the only safe and proper standard for success is God's. "Seek first the kingdom of God."

How many boys are wrecked because of the habits they contract from those they associate with for the sake of their "recreations." No boy should ever risk his soul's welfare for the sake of any bodily advantage.

It is true that certain circumstances in the lives of all of us, both boys and men, demand that we move and mix amongst the ungodly and unbelieving, "else we must go out of the world." When, however, it comes to a matter of choice, we must be careful, for we are responsible as to where we go, what we do, and what companions we select.

Is there not a principle to guide us all about this? We believe there is. It is in God's own Word. "Blessed (happy) is the man (or boy) who walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, who standeth not in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful" (Ps. i. 1). It

is questionable if that which we seem to gain physically is not outweighed by what we lose morally and spiritually. So, after all, we ask "what will it profit a man (or boy) though he gain in size of muscle or in length of limb, if he lose his own soul."

We do advocate that a boy should have physical exercise as recreation, but not at the expense of neglecting or ignoring his higher interests. We believe that if the higher interests are attended to, the boy will have a guide to, and a safeguard in all his physical recreations which will build up the whole man proportionately and make him strong in all the parts and spheres of his being, spirit, soul, and body.

If our boys were trained to reverence in a real way their Creator who gave them life, and were led to live that life according to His standard for them, "recreation" would be less the snare it is and would be all the benefit it was meant to be. Life for our boys would not be a bondage because they were debarred from what is wrong, but a blessed liberty in ever doing what is right.

I cannot say, my boy reader, what line of recreation you should take, or how far into it you should go. There is, however, a rule for boys and men alike, whether it be golf or cricket, cycling or gymnastics, walking or reading, and it is made for the schoolboy and the apprentice, for the rich and the poor alike: "Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

Beyond this no boy has any right to go, and he goes beyond it to his hurt in every way.

To obey the will of God in all things, business and pleasure alike, is no bondage but perfect liberty. Only they who go the way prove it.

LETTERS TO LADS.

THE BOY AT BUSINESS.



MY DEAR LADS,—Few steps are more important for any boy than this of entering business, and it is well that every boy should have a sense of its importance.

It is good when a boy has made up his mind as to what he is “going to be.” Then he is likely to start right from the first. It is not the best to drift into “anything.”

We do not here purpose to help you in the decision as to what business you should adopt ; that, with the aid of your parents, you may best settle for yourself. We rather desire to encourage you to maintain a clean, honourable, happy, and helpful course in the business upon which you have decided or may yet decide.

Nearly all boys have to face the world of business about the age of fourteen or fifteen. This is just the period of life at which a boy needs help and sympathy most, for not only are the outward circumstances of his life changing, but his nature, physical, mental, and moral, is also in the process of transition.

To leave “the world of school” and enter “the world of business” is for the boy to find a quite new condition of affairs. Doubtless he finds much that is unexpected, much to disappoint and discourage him.

The school and playground stand in decided contrast to the office or the shop, the workroom or the warehouse.

Be encouraged, my dear lads, the “new sensation” will soon pass away, and that all the quicker, if into your new associations you can carry the old principles of honesty and uprightness, and the presence of your truest and abiding friend, Jesus Christ, your Saviour.

Your future is now more than ever in your own hands. Almost everything depends upon how you start your business life. Start right. “Get right with God,” and keep right with Him.

Your associates will doubtless be of both the



THE BOY AT BUSINESS.

bad and good. Make it your aim to be kind and obliging to both, and while you shun the habits of the bad, seek to cultivate those of the good.

At such a time of life boys are most susceptible to all sorts of influences. Be watchful that the influences you yield to and receive are such as make for purity and right and good. Avoid all others.

Do not fall into the delusion that because you are in business, you are now a "man." It will save a deal of trouble to remember that you are only an apprentice boy. Few things are more disastrous to the boy at business than that conceit which apes the ways of those above them because they are considered "smart." Such a disposition makes it easy to follow in the paths of sin which may be frequented by their older associates.

It may be you will be fortunate enough to find yourself in an office or a shop where the bad habits of your associates are few; but while so many situations of the opposite sort exist where sin is made light of, and indulged in freely by word, act, and suggestion, we must put you on your guard and tell you to beware. Beware of the first enticement to smoke, to swear, to gamble, to bet, to drink, and have no part in the unclean story or the impure joke or suggestion.

It needs no one to tell any boy to-day that such habits are wrong because of their harmful effects on both the individual and the community.

Then let it be known at once that as for you it is settled that you have no part in such things. Maintain your ground, and though at first the struggle may be severe, when it is found by those around you that you are no "humbug," but mean what you say, you will be respected and let alone. Such a victory is well worth winning. Hundreds of men of business have been lost morally and socially because as boys at business they lacked the courage to take their stand in the endeavour to "keep themselves pure."

It is possible that you may be asked in business to do what is wrong. Be clear, my lads, about this. **IT IS NEVER RIGHT TO DO WRONG.** Whether it be master or workman who asks you to do so, at once refuse to act against your conscience and your God. Your character is at

stake. No matter what the cost may be, be no party to wrong-doing for no one and no thing. It is never necessary to do wrong. Your character is the costliest thing you can lose, be careful to preserve it blameless at all costs.

We have noticed that not unfrequently the boy is not long at business till he assumes an air of independence and superiority over others at home and in social life.

This sometimes shows itself in matters of dress and deportment. Now there are few persons but delight in seeing their boys at business smart and tidy, but this is a different thing from their boys being conceited, snobbish, and overbearing. It is at this stage that the boy usually dons a high collar and develops a peculiar taste in neckties. To his collar and necktie there would be little objection, if only it did not seem to send his head aloft with an air of independence that ill matches his slender salary of three-and-six per week.

Such an independent air may creep in unconsciously, and so we draw attention to it, and ask you, my dear lads, to discriminate between "self-importance" and "self-respect."

When a boy becomes "self-important" the truest "self-respect" has gone.

The next development along that line is seen in a spirit of impatience at restraint and control, and indifference to and rebellion against the advice of parents and elders, and a general downgrade tendency from all that truly makes a man.

Often at business this tendency shows itself in a disposition to do only his share of work and not one stroke more, because "it's all he's paid for, and he's not going to work for nothing." Every right-thinking boy will at once see that such a spirit is wrong. The interest of the master ought to be the interest of his apprentice also, and for the apprentice to help his master even at personal inconvenience ought to be his delight.

We want to say further to you, lads, avoid "working by the clock."

It is indeed a saddening sight to see a boy who is so selfishly interested in his own affairs that his work is ever done with "his eye on the clock," and who is weary to lay down his tools or pen at the stroke of release.

There are some such boys, and almost invariably it is found that those are the very boys who take advantage when the master's back is turned to spend *his* time in idleness or frivolity.

It is good to cultivate the habit of willingness to help in emergencies, when the work is excessive and business hours need to be extended. Of course, "Remember the Sabbath Day to keep *it* holy."

We were struck by the following sentences which we recently read regarding "working boys": "How difficult it is to teach boys care and accuracy in their work, promptness and punctuality in their relations with others. They have frequently a way of dallying over their work and of keeping their minds pre-occupied with other things that retard their accomplishments, or they have a slipshod way of hurrying through things that is wholly destructive of good results."

The tendency of these days, with the love for athletics, sports, and pleasures of all sorts, is not unfrequently the cause of this unhealthy state of affairs.

How often is a boy's mind so occupied with the last and the next "football match," that he cannot honestly concentrate his attention on his work in hand. This means cost to his master in time, money, and material. It is not fair for any boy to give his best attention to the affairs of the football field or other outside attractions, so as to unfit him for his master's work in the office or the shop. Remember, lads, it is your "business" and not your "pleasure" to which you look for your support for life. Then do not let your business be overruled by pleasure to the hindrance of your master's interests and your own hurt.

This principle may be applied to many spheres of "recreation," so-called, any form of which is hurtful if it so absorbs the mind and attention as to make us less fit for the work we have to do.

It is a common occurrence that the boy at business seems to have no scruples about the appropriation of certain articles of his master's property for his own private purposes. My dear lads, take care of this. The master's envelopes and paper do not belong to you. They are *his*. Use your own paper, pens, ink, and time for

your own purposes. Doubtless you have no intention of being dishonest. Notwithstanding your intention, such a habit can be termed nothing else. Boys, be honest !

Now for all this watchfulness, tact, and unselfishness which is demanded of the boy at business, we are conscious we should fail to help you, my lads, in the truest sense, if we did not add that the secret of success in all these is HAVING CHRIST.

Let me right here quote to you these wise words of M. E. Sangster : "When you begin to think about what you are to be by-and-by, first of all decide that you will be a Christian. Choose to be a doctor, a lawyer, a farmer, a merchant, whatever you will, but first of all be a Christian. I take it for granted that you will choose some trade or profession, and learn it from the bottom up, and stick to it. But what says the Bible? 'Seek ye FIRST the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.' First get your relation right with the Master."

It is surely the aim of every honest boy at business to be something more than "an eye-servant" and a "man-pleaser." The only way to be more, and to go through business better, is to give God the first place in your heart and life, and to do all "as unto God" and for His glory.

Let it then be a fixed principle in your life, that for you God shall be acknowledged in *all* your business, and that business which you cannot do "as unto God" is not fit for you to engage in for men. To so "acknowledge God in *all* your ways" will most certainly promote prosperity of the only sort that yields true joy, and abides for ever—for thus saith the Lord, "Them that honour Me I will honour ; and they that despise Me shall be lightly esteemed" (1 Sam. ii. 30). Wishing you that success in business which is pure and real as in God's sight.

Your true friend,

B. M'C. B.

ON GOING WITH GIRLS.



MY DEAR ALEC,—You ask me a question—“If it is my opinion that it is wrong to go a walk with a girl (say once a week). Of course I mean a good girl?”

Well, Alec, my opinion on that matter very much depends on circumstances.

First, if *you* are the boy who intends to walk out “a girl,” even a “good girl,” once a week, it is decidedly wrong.

How?

Well, because you are a boy of only fifteen years of age, and at such a period of life neither you nor “a girl” can have any properly formed ideas of what you are doing, and the awful results it may involve.

At such an age it is natural to have such desires, but it is not proper to let such desires control you. Your knowledge of your own life, and the life of the world around you, is very small. You have not lived long enough to *know* yourself or others. A boy’s life at your age is in a state of transition both of body and mind, and it is most important that the wisdom of others who “know better” than you should be listened to with respect and obedience.

Again, at the age of fifteen, your time should be better employed than in “walking out a girl,” even “once a week.” Very soon you will need to face the world in earnest, and what will be the result if you have played away the hours in which you ought to have been laying a solid and strong foundation in your life. Very soon you will need to contend with “the world, the devil, and the flesh,” in forms you little conceive of, or at present understand, and how shall you meet and overcome them, if the hours given you to prepare for the fight be frittered away in needless occupations. Very soon for you the freedom of the boy will pass into the responsibility of the man, and to fit you for such you will need now all your energies put to the best use, all the time

Then I have been wondering, Alec, my lad, what can a *boy of fifteen* want in walking out a girl once a week?

It cannot surely be that you at such an age are thinking of "marriage." What then is your object? Is it just a little "harmless flirtation"? My dear lad, I want you to watch these two words, and avoid everything that bears such a title as "harmless flirtation."

There are few things which tend more to destroy the purity and modesty of girls, and the chivalry and honour of our boys, than this devil's trap of "harmless flirtation."

The depths of depravity and destruction into which it leads you cannot at your age possibly know, but as one who has seen something of the awful misery, I ask you, my dear lad, beware. Behind it lies the ruin of the body and the soul of boys and girls alike, who indulge in it.

"But she is a good girl," you say. Well, Alec, I don't forget that point. However, she will best prove her "goodness"—the quantity and quality of it—by her actions, and no "good girl" spends her valuable time in "playing at courtship," or indulging in "harmless flirtation." If home has no demands upon her she will find some other sensible and helpful employment for these precious hours of early life.

Again, Alec, let me say, to have your mind so taken up with such a matter at all at your age will certainly unfit you for even your daily toil. Whether you be in school or in the workshop, at the counter or the desk, your mind is sure to be affected by such engagements even "once a week." Should you be hindered from carrying them out by the duties of the moment, your work will become irksome, and your sense of bondage will be sure. It is better a thousand times to be free from all such engagements at such an age.

Again, I must impress upon you a fact which is seldom considered in such a case. If you are a boy who is battling for purity of life against the passions of your nature which are rising up with a new power within you at this age, by associating yourself with a girl so needlessly, you are only weakening your strength to resist such forces, and making all your hope of victory void.

Another result of this indulgence in "walking out a girl" very frequently is a growing disposition to be heedless of parental control. Beware of this.

Now, Alec, dear lad, I have written the foregoing simply on the ground of common-sense, but I remember that you are a **Christian** boy. That being so, my appeal to you is ever so much stronger. Is there not some better business YOU can be employed with than this time-wasting and soul-destroying foolishness. You did not mean to make such a choice, I believe, my lad, but now that it is put before you, surely such a choice is not for you.

Think, my lad, if in these days of so much pressure from "the world, the devil, and the flesh," you cannot give the "once a week" to the study of, and meditation on, God's Word.

The spiritual life of a boy, as much as a man, needs nourishment. "Take time to be holy." Consider the claims of Christ upon you as one of His, and your responsibility to the world as a Christian boy, and set your face to meet such in the strength of the Lord.

Of course what I have written in no wise is meant to convey that the **NEEDFUL** and **RIGHTFUL** company and intercourse with girls has to be avoided. It may be in God's plan for you that you must daily mix with girls. In relationships of a social or business kind which are needful, God your Father will give you all needed grace to act your part in a pure, manly, and upright way toward such. So guided and kept by the presence of God with you, such associations will in no wise be harmful, but fraught with highest mutual good.

If after all, that "walk once a week with a girl" is a longing of your heart, let me suggest perhaps you have some sister at home who would not be the worse of such a brotherly attention. I fear it is because so many boys neglect their own sisters that other boys desire to pay attentions. One thing I'm sure of, Alec, is that when the proper time comes, you will be all the better fitted to mind some other boy's sister, because you have been, throughout these years of boyhood, a reverent respecter of the claims of your own.

Then my answer is, "Yes, in my opinion it is

wrong for a boy (of fifteen) to walk out a girl once a week." Five years after this will be time enough for any boy to think of such an occupation.

God bless you, my lad. Seek grace to "trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not to thine own understanding.

"In all thy ways acknowledge God, and He shall direct thy paths."

Your true friend,

B. M'C. E.

ON GAMBLING.



Y DEAR LADS,—Do not touch the gambler's or the better's gains.

Don't gamble! don't bet!

Why? Because there is not only the *possibility* of your losing your money, but there is the certainty of your losing your character.

The character of a lad who gambles and bets is worth nothing. It has gone. No amount of money that you could ever gain by such a means as betting and gambling will ever recompense you for the loss of manliness and honesty which you suffer by the transaction.

The fact is, when you take from another anything, whether money or material, by such means as gambling or betting, you are no different to a thief, for you have taken that which manifestly he does not want you to get, and you have given him nothing in return for it.

This process, once indulged in, rapidly increases the hardening of your nature to all that is good and pure and noble and true.

With such a loss, it is easy to see that *all other forms of sin will readily lay hold of you* and draw you down the path of destruction with increasing rapidity, till you are a hopeless and helpless wrecks.

Before me as I write is the following sad record :—

ANOTHER GAMBLING VICTIM.

A young man of twenty-eight, methodical, punctual, and zealous, and living apparently an irreproachable life,—such is the description of G—, the bank clerk, who is wanted in connection with the robbery of £170,000 from the Bank of Liverpool. Unfortunately, it is not quite complete. Behind the fair surface of his daily life a fatal love of gambling lay hidden, and at last he has been tempted to indulge in extensive frauds. A large amount of sporting literature was found amongst his property, and many telegrams re-

lating to betting and horse-racing, as well as other papers referring to speculative business. It is believed that G——'s accomplices must have received more benefit than he, but the fact remains that once again a young fellow has ruined his career through yielding to the seductive snare of gambling—an excitement that naturally makes honest work distasteful, and ruins the moral character of those who indulge in it.

Doubtless none of you lads who read these lines would ever dream of perpetrating such a crime, but remember, my dear lads, to *take a penny from your master's till to pay the price of a lottery ticket* or stake it on a game of cards, is in God's sight just the same abominable sin as appropriating £170,000 to lay it on the horses in a race.

Dr Thain Davidson makes the following appeal:—

“Young men! as you value your self-respect, as you look forward to an honourable and successful career, as you prize the comfort of a good conscience, and as you shrink with horror from the prospect of a death-bed of remorse, don't bet. I defy any man to look me straight in the face, and say that he could kneel down and thank God for a shilling or for a hundred pounds which he had acquired by a bet. No; there can be no blessing upon it. There is a curse upon it, and you can't do better than fling such ill-gotten gain into the sea. In nearly every other form of vice there lurks some minute shade or semblance of good, some microscopic atom of plea or excuse; here there is none; it is 'evil, only evil, and that continually.' Set your face determinately against it. Refuse to stake so much as a sixpence. Young men, whatever you do, don't bet.”

The meanest men on earth are those who live on that which is gained through the unrecompensed sufferings of others. All gamblers and betters are of this class. Avoid all such. Your only safety lies in absolute abhorrence of all this evil way. Do not touch!

Keep no company with such as are ever ready to “bet you this” and “I'll bet you that.” The possibility is that the devil will some day ensnare you in his trap through them. Avoid all such company, shun all such practices as would tend to lead you in such a direction. You will regret going too near the enticing and enslaving evil, but you will never regret keeping

away from it and those who practise it as far as possible.

Take *no interest* in the game that is played for money, or the stake that is laid on the race, whether it be run by horses, yachts, or men. Steer clear of all "lottery tickets" and "bazaar raffles." The principle in these last mentioned is as clearly from the devil as the stake that is laid on the horses on the racecourse on the Derby day.

Around the habit of betting, circles all the vile train of the devil's inventions,—drinking, smoking, swearing, deceit, lust of the flesh, delirium, and suicide. **BOYS, BEWARE! DO NOT TOUCH!**

When you yield to place your first "bet," whether it be on a single game at cards at home or on some favourite horse on the race-course, you have let yourself go into the hands of the devil, and you may be quite sure he will make it his business to see you taste *all the unhallowed* cups of sin which he proffers to the fools who will not take God's warning word.

"The wages of sin is death."

We cannot now enlarge on this sinful indulgence further, but we are sure it is a doorway to all secret sins of thought and action, and the lad who gives himself to gambling and betting in any degree has made himself an easy prey to enslavement in the whole range of sin and vice invented by the devil.

But we cannot close this letter without saying—there is a **STRENGTH FOR EVERY LAD WHEREWITH TO STAND AGAINST THIS SIN IN CHRIST. THERE IS A REMEDY FOR DELIVERANCE FROM IT IN CHRIST.**

Let Him control your hearts and life, and your desires shall be toward the things of God, and you shall hate the "pleasures of sin," no matter how enticing are their offers of gold or gain.

If you have been gripped by this great and growing snare—come to God in confession of your sins—find cleansing in the precious blood of Christ from all your sins (1 John i. 9), and trust Him to abide in you, by His Holy Spirit and to keep you, for "He is able to keep you from falling."

God's word to all lads is, "Provide things

honest in the sight of all men." It is impossible for the lad who bets or gambles to do so.

My dear lads, may "to please God" be more precious to you than all the pennies and pounds you can pocket in this way of ungodly gain. May purity of life and character, and a conscience at peace with God, and right with men, be to you the highest prize.

Your true friend,

B. M'C. B.

ON SMOKING.



Y DEAR LADS,—“Do not touch”
THE DEADLY CIGARETTE.

The warning is needed—sadly needed. When our country in various quarters is beginning to move for the prohibition of the sale of cigarettes to boys, surely it is time that every lad took some serious thought about the subject, and displayed some patriotism in this direction.

Regarding smoking of all sorts, we say, “Do not touch,” but we specialise the cigarette, as it is peculiarly fascinating, and not only dangerous but disastrous to youth.

My dear lads, do not soil your hands, much less your lips, your system, and your conscience, by these tiny innocent-looking rolls wrapped up in white. They are simply a devil’s concoction to ensnare and enslave the bodies and the souls of boys and men. Their innocent look is their most subtle delusion and snare.

But it is only the careless, the selfish, and the foolish who will be entrapped by them. It is very easy, however, to be careless, and selfish, and foolish, and not think it, so beware.

How “careless” and “foolish” is the lad who inhales into his system that poison which he knows from warning voices all around can bear only a harvest of disease and death. His foolishness is evident in the fact he spends his money to purchase only that which creates nearly “all the ills that mortal flesh is heir to.”

How “selfish” he is who cares not for the influence of his bad example upon younger lives, or the infliction upon others of a poison-laden atmosphere by the fumes from his deadly cigarette.

Deadly! yes, the cigarette is deadly, notwithstanding the fact that so many fine healthy-looking fellows indulge in it. My dear lads, don’t be deceived, it is deadly.

The “fine healthy-looking” cigarette smoker

of to-day will not look so fine and healthy in a few years hence. When pressure bears down upon him, his reduced vitality and diseased system will not stand it.

True it is, slowly but most surely, the poison is sinking in and permeating the system, and the seeds are being sown which can result in no other form than a harvest of premature decay.

Why, we may ask, is it that the number of our best soldiers who have *died through disease* in South Africa far surpasses the number of those who were *killed*? Is there not some explanation in the fact that the most of them have weakened their systems by excessive smoking and other sins in their earlier days, with the result that they were unable to combat with the severe effects of hardship, fever, and climate.

But we need not go to South Africa for examples. Around us there are those dropping daily whose life would certainly have been prolonged but for the enweakened systems through their smoking habits.

Dear lads, "remember, appearances are deceptive. Many a rosy apple is rotten at the core, and many a healthy-looking smoker is sowing seeds of disease in his frame. The worst of it is that the witcheries of tobacco 'are so seductive that the victim is willing to attribute to any other cause the mischief which it is working in his constitution.' Slowly but surely the evil works. 'Little strokes fell great oaks;' and as the hand of the clock, which seems not to move, surely points at last to the hour, so certainly do evil habits and outrages against nature, such as smoking—'sly, treacherous miners working in the dark'—land many a one in a premature grave."

My dear lads, there is one sure way to ward off such evil effects, and the way to do it is, "Do not touch" the deadly thing in any shape or form. Neither sell it, nor buy it, nor use it. Never once let your fingers hold the devil's trap within their grip, and there will be little or no fear of it ever being placed between your lips, and its obnoxious fumes finding its way into your frame. Lads, "do not touch."

To a Christian lad the sin of smoking is doubly great. When a lad is washed in the blood of Jesus, and has accepted Christ as his

Saviour, he belongs no longer to himself, but is the property of Christ. How can he then yield his hands as instruments of unrighteousness unto uncleanness. Our hands are only ours to be yielded up to God for that service which is holy, pure, and good.

To disobey such facts so plainly stated in God's Word is to close our eyes against the light, and choose the results of a befogged intellect, an enslaved will, a wasted body, and an endangered if not a lost soul. Lads, "do not touch."

The late Rev. J. Angell James said, "I never see a lad with a cigar in his mouth, but I consider him at least on the first stage to ruin."

There is blessed victory for all over this temptation and sin, as for all other sins, in the pardoning blood of Jesus Christ, and His indwelling spirit, who empowers us to resist and overcome.

To such as may be in the bondage of this snare, we say by faith accept the living Christ who died for you as your Saviour and Sanctifier and yield your life to Him. Christ is the certain deliverance and cure.

"The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin."

The following is a message from a boy to boys, as he lay on his death-bed in agony, his young life cut short through the effects of cigarette smoking :—

"TELL THE OTHER BOYS."

One of the most terrible warnings against cigarette smoking was given not long ago by a chorister boy in one of the Brooklyn churches, who died in great agony at St John's Hospital. This is the story as given in the *Laws of Life* :—

Almost his last words were : "Let any boy who smokes cigarettes look at me now and know how much I have suffered, and he will never put another into his mouth." He was a bright boy, an exquisite singer, and had many friends. He lived with his grandmother and worked in a chandelier factory.

Here is his story as he told it to his nurse, Sister Cornelia :—"To me he confessed that this trouble had originated from cigarette smoking. Some days he said he smoked twenty cigarettes. At first he kept his grandmother in ignorance of his indulgence. As he continued to smoke the appetite grew upon him

with such force that he could not break it off, and it began to affect his constitution.

“‘Why,’ I asked him, ‘did you not stop when you saw what it was bringing you to?’

“‘Oh, I could not,’ he replied. ‘If I could not get to smoke I almost went wild. I could think of nothing else. That my grandmother might not suspect me, I would work extra hours instead of spending my regular wages for cigarettes. For months I kept up this excess, although I knew it was killing me. Then I seemed to fall to pieces all of a sudden.’” His disease took the form of dropsy in the legs, and was very painful.

Sister Cornelia continues the story:—“During all his sufferings he never forgot what had brought him to this terrible condition. He kept asking me to warn all boys against their use. A few days before he died he called me to his bedside and said that he thought he had not lived in vain if only those boys who are still alive would profit by his sufferings and death.” There is no other form of tobacco so dangerous as cigarettes, because the nicotine in the smoke is not absorbed in the loose tobacco, smoked clean up to the end, but is taken, unfiltered and undiluted, into the lungs. It was not the poison in the paper, but the poison of the tobacco which killed Samuel Kimball, and is ruining the health of thousands of other pale-faced boys.

May God bless this to you, my lad, and others through you, in a determination in the power of Christ never to touch the deadly cigarette.

Your true friend,

B. M'C. B.

P.S.—For further details on the evil of smoking see *What's the Harm? A Word to our Boys on Smoking.* Price One Penny.

ON SLANG AND SWEARING.



MY DEAR LADS,—“Evil is wrought for want of thought.” We are sure the evil of using “slang” and bad language is the result more often of thoughtlessness than of any direct desire to do wrong.

Of course that does not lessen the evil. But we do want our lads to give thought to this subject for a little, for we believe that when the harm of it is seen, every honest, right-minded lad will avoid the indulgence.

There is no doubt whatever that the most of boys who indulge in slang, and vulgar and profane expressions, do so to “look big.” If only they knew how “very small” it really does make them in the eyes of those who know the real value of such talk, they would very quickly lose all desire for “bigness.”

More than anything else our words display what is in our hearts, for “out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.” The boy or man who habitually uses slang and vile expressions may not think so, but it is nevertheless fact that he is simply displaying his ignorance.

To indulge in such talk is really to associate himself with the lowest class of men.

Slang really is “THIEVES’ LANGUAGE.” It derives its very name from the bad language which the thieves were in the habit of letting forth when they were bound in the “irons” or the “SLANGS.” This fact of its origin ought to make every right-thinking lad drop the use of slang at once.

Do not, my lad, think it loses any of its disgusting and foolish nature because crowds of your school-fellows or office-fellows or work-mates do it. It is usual for the “crowds” to do what is not right. Those who have manliness enough to steer clear and stem the force of such popular errors are very few. But right is might.

Further, if we consider the utter nonsense which is expressed in the slang phrases so common, even amongst boys who in other respects are most respectable, it will be seen that the practice is most foolish and resentful.

For instance, what sense is there in calling one's home or lodgings his "digs," or mother "the old woman," or father "the Guv'ner"? What sense is there in continually interpolating in our conversation such expressions as "Great Scot," "Great goodness," or "Goodness gracious."

If any lad will carefully consider what relation such expressions have to the topic of conversation, they will find they usually have none.

We are much impressed about the use of slang and empty expressions by our boys, because we believe that it is an easy step from it to openly bad and profane language.

Slang is very often the results in those boys who, failing in wit, nevertheless desire to be considered "smart" by others. It is such conceited boys as find it very easy to go a step further and land themselves in open profanity. This is inevitably the course of the boy who is conceited about his "smart talk." The next grade we find him in is telling, without a blush, the indecent story and indulging in coarse jests.

If a certain sense of propriety does keep him from lending his lips to tell it, he at least is usually of the set who listen to it with their ears from the lips of others without giving any reproof.

Lads, we want to give a word of warning. You may almost unconsciously imbibe this empty and profane talk from the matter you read. There is a mass of corrupt "comic" literature poured forth from the press of to-day which is nothing short of poison, and is largely responsible for the widespread evil in the talk of our boys. These publications in many cases are nothing else than sinks of slang and lewd and impure suggestions. Often these contain suggestions most subtle, concealed in "puns" and slang expressions.

Not a few of the "school stories" of to-day are larded thick with this sort of talk. Some of our so-called "high class" novels also, in their desire to be "realistic," have filled the

minds and mouths of our boys and young men with the talk of "the alley and the gutter." Under the plea of being "true to life" they have poisoned many a young life by their polluted pages. Granted it is "true to life"; there are some things "true to life" which it is highest wisdom not to detail for the mere sake of passing pleasure.

We ask our boys to carefully avoid all such reading matter, and "think on whatsoever things are lovely, pure, and of good report." It is a fact, we grow like what we feed upon. If we imbibe the foolish, empty, profane talk so widely published to-day, we shall naturally adopt it as our "course of conversation" too.

The mere fact that in certain companies we desist from using slang and loose language is a sufficient stigma on its use at all. What could not be spoken in the presence of the purest, or of our mother or sister, is no talk for our school-fellows, our companions, or our office mates.

Lads, remember that GOD'S presence is ever about us. This fact should help to restrain the conduct of your life and lips.

There are few prayers more comprehensive and more suited to our daily life than that in Psalm xix. verse 14, "Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in THY sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer."

Prince Henry was the son of James I. He died when he was only seventeen, to the grief of the nation, as he was already a great favourite. He seems to have had more character than usual amongst the children of palaces. Swearing was a very common practice in those days, even amongst young boys when at their play. The Archbishop of Canterbury mentioned in his sermon, preached before the young prince's death, that Henry had been asked why he did not swear in play, as well as others, and that he answered, "I know no game worthy of an oath."

May the same high standard prevail with every lad who reads these lines, in the matter of slang as well as swearing, or the use of lewd and impure talk, in the school, in playground, in office, street, or home.

We doubt not that such lads will enjoy life all the more that it is unencumbered by habits that need to be watched. Should the mind in any way be weakened and control of thought be lost, what is in our hearts and mind would undoubtedly come out on our lips. The hidden recesses of our heart would then give forth their foul brood. It is best, boys, to have no "hidden recesses," but to so act, and speak, and think before God now as we will wish we had done and will want to do when we stand before Him face to face. If we live our life and speak our words in the presence of God now, we shall be kept all right as regards the presence of men.

Maybe some lad who reads these lines has been guilty of foolish, impure, and improper talk. What shall he do?

My dear lad, do the only thing you can. Take your past impurity of life and speech to the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, for the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from ALL sin.

Tell Him all about it. Ask His forgiveness for it. Accept it, and give your life and lips to Him to keep for you. "Yield your lips as instruments unto God."

Say, "Keep Thou the door of my lips." Let Him, and He will.

"Take my lips, and let them be
Filled with messages for Thee."

Your true friend,

B. M'C. B.

ON DECISION.



MY DEAR LADS,—Let me ask you a question. Is there “a decision day” in your life?

What do I mean? This—Can you point to a certain day when, knowing yourself to be a sinner, you came to Jesus Christ as your Saviour, and believed that through

His precious blood your sins were all forgiven and put away, and **you decided to be His, and His for ever?** Have you “a decision day”?

How needful it is to be **definite** about this. We are constantly meeting with dear lads who are simply drifting along through life into all sorts of sin, secret and open, because they have no fixed, definite purpose—*They have never decided.* They do not mean to be bad boys; they never expect to be the slaves of impurity and the companions of the vicious and dishonest, of the gambler and the drunkard. Nevertheless they very soon find out that this is where they land, simply because of their *indecision.* They have never taken a definite stand.

If you want, my dear lads, to ensure safety against all such “drifting,” **BE DECIDED!**

“A correspondence fixed wi’ Heaven
Is sure a noble anchor.”

It is a certain fact, if you are not decided you will “drift.” No power on earth can prevent it. You may maintain an outward respectability to some extent, but the principles of your inner life can never be right and stable till they are adjusted to God’s way of things, and only then are you safe.

With an experience of multitudes of young lives wrecked through nothing else than indecision, I beseech you, my dear lads, as you read these lines, make up your mind that, as for others they may drift if they choose, but you will now **decide.**

Decide for who? and for what?

Oh let it be for Christ, and for a pure, clean,

manly, useful, and upright life. It is the only decision that befits a lad with reason. It is the only decision that will yield true joy here in time, and bliss in eternity. Decide for Christ!

Can you say now you have "a decision day"? Is this the day that is to be for you—

"The happy day that fixed my choice
On Thee, my Saviour and my God"?

My lad, let nothing keep you back. No longer be deluded that it is not manly to decide for Christ. For one boy who has the courage of his convictions and boldly stands out for Christ, and determines to live by His grace and keep a pure and noble life and be a blessing to his country and a glory to his God, there are ninety-nine who in fear and cowardice are being carried along in the flow of sin, and reaping its consequent misery—suffering and death.

Think for yourself, my lad, which is the more manly? If either may be termed such, who is the "soft" and the "weakling"? Is it not the one who will not exert his manhood to take and make his stand, but rather "drifts"? It takes all that makes a man to make a stand.

Be strong, my lad. Though all the other lads you know are in the "drift," and you along with them *till now*, let this be your "decision day." Right here and now, say, "Christ for me."

DECIDE !!!

Be sure of this, mylad, there will be "a decision day," and if **you** do not make it, it will make itself, only then it will be settled **on the wrong side**. It is your blessed privilege to fix it on the right side now, and once fixed there, praise God it is fixed for ever. If you say "Christ for me," and yield to all that means, He says, "My sheep . . . they shall never perish."

No lad ever yet "drifted" into heaven. It is decision takes us there. That decision is based upon God's directions in His Book. "This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (1 John v. 11, 12). "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name" (John i. 12).

Have you, my lad, believed on His name?
Have you received Him? If not, do so now.

DECIDE !!!

We write these things plainly that there may be no mistake. It is not going to church saves you. It is not reading your Bible or saying prayers or singing in a church choir saves you. It is Jesus saves, and unless you have given your life to Him and taken Him as your Saviour, you are not saved. Be *clear* about this, my dear lads, and **be decided**.

When it is done, *it is done for ever*, and "being justified *by faith*, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. v. 1).

Is there any little lad who reads these lines, who scarcely understands what such a "decision day" means, he is so young? Well, my dear boy, it is your right to ask father or mother to explain it to you, and it is their privilege, and it should be their joy, to tell you.

May be father or mother may not know for themselves, therefore they cannot tell you. Then ask somebody who does know Jesus, and who is seeking to serve Him. As they tell you of Him and His wonderful love, and you get to know that it was for *you* He died upon the cross on Calvary, then, my dear boy, let your young heart yield to His love, *and make that your decision*, that you will there and then give your young life to Him and take Him as your Saviour; "who so loved you and gave Himself for you."

Truly happy is the boy, whether young or old, who can say—

"'Tis done, the great transaction's done;
I am my Lord's, and He is mine."

Then it is we are able to say further—

"He taught me how to watch and pray;
And live rejoicing every day."

It is not an entrance on a life stripped of all joy and filled with depression and gloom. No! no! It is the beginning of life in reality, filled with the purest joy, because it is lived out under the eye of God, and with the object of pleasing Him, who is not only our Creator but Redeemer. There never is any real joy in sin. There is no satisfaction in indecision. The joyful life is the

life that is right with God and has a holy decision and determination in it to be "ever, only, all for Him."

My dear lad, let me ask *you*, if you have never done so, **decide now**.

Will you in silent prayer yield now to Jesus, and to be *definite* about it will you set down with your own hand in this blank space your name and date of your decision?

"Just as I am, young, strong, and free,
To be the best that I can be,
For Truth, and Righteousness, and Thee,
Lord of my life, I come."

Name.....

Date

It may be some dear lad who reads these lines has tasted of the bitter fruit of sin. Through indecision he has drifted far away from purity and right. He cannot say with honesty "young, strong, and free," because even now he feels and knows the awful bondage of sin's chain, and is reaping the misery of his misspent life.

Well, come, my lad, just as you are, this verse may suit *your* special case, and praise God, for *you* as for the others He is just the same Jesus—the same wonderful Saviour, who in His matchless love still says, "Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out" (John vi. 37).

"Just as I am, Thou wilt receive,
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve,
Because Thy promise I believe,
O Lamb of God, I come."

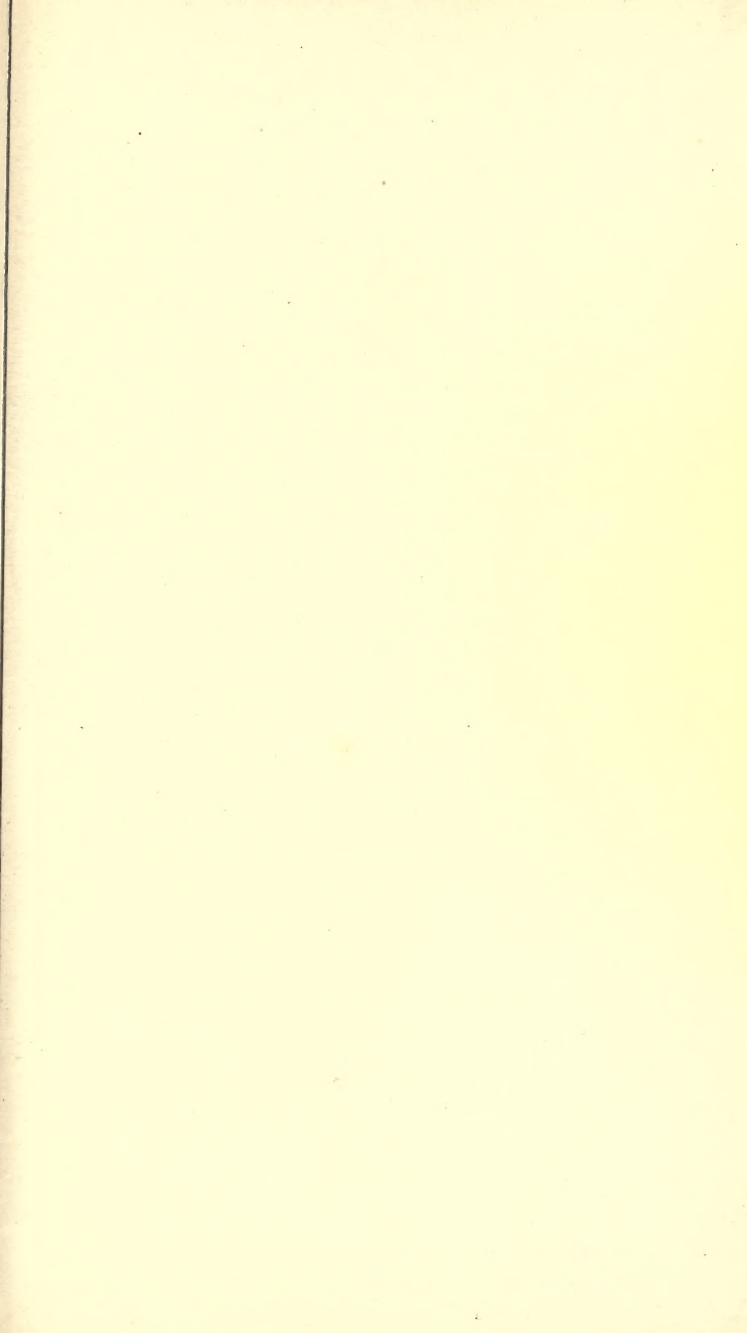
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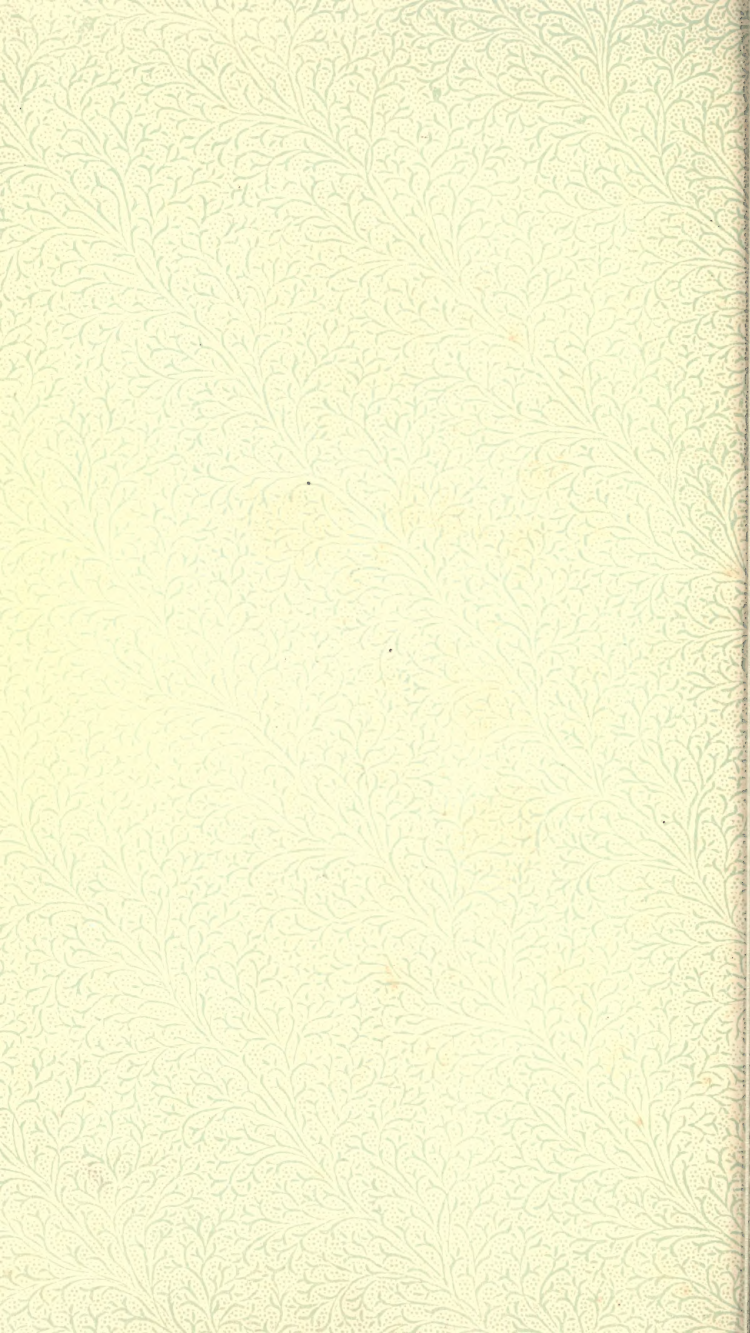
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That this may be "the decision day" for many who have never yet decided, is the prayer of

Your true friend,

B. M'CALL BARBOUR.





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