

Our Young People

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THE C. E. TOPIC—Oct. 16.

THE POWER OF PERSONAL INFLUENCE.

John 1: 35-39.

Spurgeon used to tell of a man in Scotland who had come under the terrible power of strong drink. One day he went to the tavern, and took his little girl with him to lead him home after he had become drunk. He carried her on his shoulder. The poor child, as they approached the tavern, heard from within the sound of shouting and fighting, and begged her father not to go in. As she pleaded, a tear from her eye fell on the man's cheek. Big man as he was, the influence of that little tear saved him a temperate life, and he became one of the engineers of the great railroad bridge across the Firth at Edinburgh.

One of the most delightful of our studies up in heaven, I fancy, will be the history of the influence of little words and deeds. We shall find that the progress of the world has depended on these far more than on what the world thinks great. How interesting will be the revised histories in the libraries of heaven!

It is literally true that every word we say sets in motion vibrations of either that widen out and go on beating forever. In the same way every act of ours, though done in secret, makes an impression that nothing can efface. Somewhere there is ringing every sentence that fell from the lips of our Lord; somewhere there are impressions of every act of Judas.

Now if this is literally true, as every student of physics knows, of our words and deeds, it is true also of the spiritual result of whatever we do and say. Every act has some influence, for good or evil, and it is an undying influence. As Henry Burton sung:

Never a word is said
But it trembles in the air,
And the truant voice has sped
To vibrate everywhere;
And perhaps far off in eternal years
The echo may ring upon our ears.

When we go to bed at night, do we think of our day's work as done? It is never done; it has only begun. That cross word is still at work, poisoning some life while we are asleep. That kind smile is still at work, making some life sweeter, though we have forgotten all about it.

Do such thoughts make our life too solemn? Do you feel that you never can stop to think of the influence of

your every word and deed?

You need not. Only make the heart right and all your influence will be right; for "out of the heart are the issues of life."

The brook does not need to plan all its lovely curves, its dancing ripples, its pleasant songs as it flows over its stony bed, the drinks it gives to thirsty passers-by, the contributions it makes to the mill-wheel and the great river and the ocean. The brook merely flows on, from a pure source, and the rest takes care of itself. But if some one should put a package of arsenic in the source of the brook, how sadly all this would be changed! Yet even then the brook would not plan the harm it would do; it would only flow on, out of an impure source.



SIGNS OF GROWTH IN GRACE.

There are some proofs that we are growing in grace that are good tests for each of us to apply to our own experience.

1. Easier victory over the trials which are inevitable in this life. We can easily discover whether we are as much annoyed as formerly by poverty, anxiety about the future, losses, slights and insults.

2. Quicker recognition of the Divine will. The better acquainted we become with the Holy Spirit, the more readily we ought to recognize his leadings and commands.

3. Less severe temptations from the world. The world is our enemy, seeking either to allure us or to frighten us. We ought to care less, the better we know Jesus, for the influence of the world that seeks to drag us down to its level.

4. Deeper insight into the Word of God. It requires spiritual sight to behold the beauties of God's Word and to see its spiritual lessons. As grace increases, insight into the Word of God increases.

5. Better knowledge of the devices of Satan. The apostle says, "We are not ignorant of his devices." We ought to know the author after a while, as soon as we hear his suggestions.

6. Fiercer attacks of the devil. The further along we get in grace, the more Satan will attack us. Greater temptations give greater victories, and hence greater installments of grace. God will not allow him to "tempt us above that which we are able," but Satan will meet our increased strength with fiercer attacks.

7. Greater charity for the infirmities of others. The more we grow in grace, the more we will love other people, and make allowances for their weaknesses and sorrow for their sins.

8. The establishment of the faith habit. Faith after a time ceases to be a series of spasmodic struggles, and settles into an unbroken life.

9. A greater love and practice of secret prayer. Certainly, the more we love God the more we shall feel the need of so doing.

We are sure that those who find these marks of increasing grace in their experience may well thank God, and take courage.—*Christian Witness.*



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The Congregation: What The Young People May Do For It.

In order to rightly determine how, as young people, we may best help the congregation, we must have our minds a clear conception of what the church exists for, and what its mission in the world is.

The church is not a club, in which people of like minds and similar tastes gather together with a view of enjoying one another's society and deriving personal benefit from such intercourse. The church exists to represent and exemplify its great Head. It will do this best by remembering that he came "not to be ministered unto but to minister," and when he came in contact with weary and hungry souls, he did not instruct his disciples merely to "entertain them," but he said, "Give ye them to eat." The mission of the church is not centered in self. It is indicated in the words of its Master, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel."

In the community the congregation must make its influence felt through its members. An aggressive work is incumbent upon it in beating back the rising tide of indifference and godlessness in the State and in helping on such measures of reform as tend to the uplifting of mankind and the establishment of the kingdom of righteousness.

The pastor stands for God before his people and ministers to the congregation in spiritual things. Let the young people give to him their hearty support. Let them speak a word of commendation to others as they meet them. And when his words have helped you, tell it to some one else. A hearty spirit of loyalty to the pastor will do as much as anything to make a congregation strong and useful. The young people can do a great deal along this line.

In the mission work of the congregation, let the young people recognize the general Missionary Committee of the congregation and work in harmony with it. Let the missionary funds contributed go through the general funds raised by the congregation; and should there be special collections for specific purposes, let them be reported to the missionary treasurer of the church.

When the church is called upon for any aggressive work in the community, such as the defence of the Sabbath or the putting down of intemperance, let the young people offer themselves at once for service to any such committee appointed. The readiness to act may help the congregation in rallying to the assistance of the few who on nearly every such occasion have to bear the brunt of the battle.—*Selected.*



HOW TO HOLD YOUR FRIENDS.

Those who would make friends must cultivate the qualities which are admired and which attract. If you are mean, stingy and selfish, nobody will admire you. You must cultivate generosity and large-heartedness; you must be magnanimous and tolerant; you must have positive qualities; for a negative, shrinking, apologizing, roundabout man is despised. You must cultivate courage and boldness; for a coward has few friends. You must believe in yourself. If you do not, others will not believe in you. You must look up, and be hopeful, cheery, and optimistic. No one will be attracted to a gloomy pessimist.

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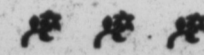
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of courtesy, you will get his attention and will interest him. You will tie him to you just in proportion to the intensity and unselfishness of your interest in him. But if you are selfish and think of nothing but your own advancement; if you are wondering how you can use everybody to help you along; if you look upon every man or woman you are introduced to as so many possible success-capital; if you care for people by the amount of business they can send you, or the number of new clients, patients, or readers of your book they can secure for you, they will look upon you in the same way.

If you have friends, don't be afraid to express your friendship; don't be afraid to tell them that you admire or love them. If you love anybody, why not say so? If you enjoy any one's company, why not say so? It costs you nothing; it may mean everything to your friend and to your friendship.

A lady was asked how she managed to get along so well with disagreeable people. "It is very simple," she replied; "all I do is to try to make the most of their good qualities and pay no attention to their disagreeable ones." No better formula by which to win and hold friends could be found.—*Success.*



TOBACCO USERS ARE SLOW.

Like all elements which have an effect upon the nerves, tobacco differs widely in its action upon different individuals, and no sweeping statements can be made. Upon most constitutions its action is deleterious. It is always injurious before the period of complete development, and cannot be used before the age of twenty-five without harm. Dr. Seaver, director of the physical laboratory at Yale, tabulated the records of the students entering that university during nine years, when the young men were examined and measured. The smokers averaged fifteen months older than the non-smokers. They were also shorter in stature. Nicotine interferes with growth, and its effect in that regard is very measurable.

At Yale during the four years' course the non-smokers of tobacco, although taller when they enter, gain 24 per cent more in height and 26.7 per cent more in growth of chest than do the habitual