

OLD HEADS ON YOUNG SHOULDERS.

J. L. Glascock.

"You can't put old heads on young shoulders," is a statement that one often hears made. If by that statement people are understood to mean that young people, by their inexperience, make many mistakes, are sometimes impulsive, need the forbearance of older people, etc., we have no objection to offer to it. But, if by that statement, we are to understand that no curb is to be put upon young people, but that they are to be allowed to mingle with the world and partake of its pleasures, and to indulge in its sinful amusements and entertainments, and that the salvation of Jesus Christ is inadequate to satisfy, we enter our most solemn and emphatic protest. It is this cry for worldly amusement, worldly pleasures, and worldly companionships that is striking at the very foundations of organized society, family discipline, and religious training, both in the home and in the church.

That wholesome exercise and recreation are necessary for both the bodies and minds of young people, no one will for a moment deny. But there can be no apology for the craze that is manifested on every side for the picture show, the dance, the theater, the card table, and many other wicked and worldly amusements.

It is related that a small boy who had just returned from the circus, remarked to his mother that, if she would attend the circus once, she would never go to the prayer-meeting again. A similar experience has come to the young people all over the country. Attendance upon the world's shows has incapacitated them for any appreciation of spiritual things, and in many cases has proved their utter ruin. A prominent member of a large church, in which we once held revival service, said of her only boy, who was then a mere lad, that she did not want her boy tied to his mother's apron-strings. With parental restraint and religious training thus withdrawn from that boy, by the time he had reached eighteen years of age, he was a confirmed drunkard and had gone deep into many other forms of sin. His mother wept over his condition, and longed to see him the pure and untarnished boy he once was, but it was too late. She had her opportunity and missed it.

A Methodist bishop, in open conference session, declared that since the Methodist Church in its Book of Discipline prohibited its young people from indulging in many forms of worldly amusement, such as dancing, card-playing, theater-going, etc., the church is under obligation to furnish amusements for them. There is absolutely no warrant in God's Word for this contention. The church was never organized to furnish amusements of any kind for any of its people, young or old; but it was organized to save the world, through the atonement made by Jesus Christ. The hue and cry for worldly amusements and entertainments is one of the most serious drawbacks to spirituality in the church, among old and young alike, and needs to be curbed rather than pampered. The stereopticon shows in the church, the cheap theatrical performances that are

enacted at Christmas time and on other occasions, the story paper and the light literature handed out in some Sunday Schools are the natural outcome of the amusement craze, and are incitements to worse things, and have been most detrimental to the spiritual life of the young people.

The cure for the amusement and entertainment trend of the times must begin in the home. Let the children be taught early in life the way of the Lord. Then lead them to the sanctuary, and teach them the sanctity of divine worship. As soon as they have arrived at the age of accountability, get them converted. Then lead them on into the experience of entire sanctification. Impress upon them the possibilities, responsibilities, and privileges of Christian service, so that early in their religious experience they may become imbued with a passion for soul-saving.

Inspire them with a larger vision of what Christian love and service mean, and when the passion for soul-saving comes, their hands and hearts will be so full of labor for the Master that they will have no time or taste for the cheap amusements that so fully occupy the time and attention of the generality of young people, and they will find no pleasure in them; but their chiefest joy and their delight will be to do the will of their heavenly Father and to finish the work He gave them to do. With John Newton they can sing:

"As by the light of opening day
The stars are all concealed;
So earthly pleasures fade away,
When Jesus is revealed.

Creatures no more divide by choice,
I bid them all depart;
His name, His love, His gracious voice,
Have fixed my roving heart.

Let worldly minds the world pursue,
It has no charms for me;
Once I admired its trifles too,
But grace hath set me free."
—Christian Witness.

HIS BIBLE.

One night, just before the late Captain Bickel was retiring to rest, he met at the deckhouse door a ruffian who had been wonderfully converted on one of these voyages. Although a rough, untutored man, he had gone at once to others, telling the story of his conversion and of Christ as he had received Him.

Mr. Bickel was very tired, but he had a little talk with the man. He asked him if he would take a Bible to a certain man on the morrow. He shook his head. "No, no, captain; he does not need that." "But why not?" "It won't do him any good." "But why?" "Because it is too soon. That is your Bible, and, thank God! it is now mine; but it is not his Bible." "What do you mean by that?" "Why, simply that he has another Bible; you are his Bible; he is watching you. As you fail, Christ fails. As you live, so Christ is revealed to him."

Writing of this incident, Captain Bickel said: "Friends, I did not sleep that night. I knew it in a way, of course, but to say, 'As you live, so Christ lives in that man's soul, in that house, in that village, in four hundred villages.' God help me! I had been called a thief, liar, foreign spy, traitor, devil in public and private, and had not flinched; but to face this! As you live, Christ lives in a hundred thousand hearts. As you fail to live Christ, Christ is crucified again. What a wonder that the message of the converted ruffian sank deeply into my heart! What wonder that I slept not!"—Sel.

SECRET PRAYER.

Prayer at its best is always secret. It is then most real. When we pray before others the temptation to unreality is severe. This temptation we escape when we are alone. And it is when prayer is secret that it is deepest. The loneliness of the human heart is strikingly shown by the fact that its deepest things it can share with none but God. It is because of this that the life of the ungodly is necessarily shallow. Human life can only be fully developed in fellowship with God. We must be alone with God in order to enjoy the full blessedness of prayer.—George H. C. MacGregor.

WALKING WITH GOD.

A child gave a most exquisite explanation of walking with God. She went home from Sunday School, and the mother said: "Tell me what you learned at school." And she said: "Don't you know, mother, we have been learning about a man who used to go for walks with God. His name was Enoch. And, mother, one day they went for an extra long walk, and they walked on and on, until God said to Enoch: 'You are a long way from home; you had better just come in and stay.' And he went." That was true. Enoch had become so familiar with God that he just went in and stayed.—Selected

There has never been a great and beautiful character but has become so by patiently and faithfully doing the duties and bearing the trials of life.—Bushnell.