

THE HOMILETIC REVIEW

AN INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE OF RELIGION, THEOLOGY, AND PHILOSOPHY
EVERY PHASE OF THE MINISTER'S WORK DISCUSSED

YOUNG PEOPLE'S NUMBER

Modern Young People and Religion

A Vacation Book Shelf for
Children and Youth

Studies of the American Pulpit---
J. H. Goldner

Attaining Maximum Pulpit Power
Through Authority

On to Camp

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YOUNG MEN AND MAIDENS . . . AND CHILDREN

I. MODERN YOUNG PEOPLE AND RELIGION

The Rev. JOHN R. SCOTFORD, Cleveland, O.

MODERN young people are commonly accused of having no religion. This assumption rests upon the truth that the young people of to-day do not express their faith in the same fashion as did the young people of yesterday. In fact they are exceedingly diffident when it comes to revealing their deeper convictions, especially if older folk be about. One can never tell what ideas and ambitions may lurk beneath a mop of bobbed hair. Most young people are far more serious than they are willing to admit. To discover their religion requires much patience, great sympathy, and the ability to discern between irrelevant externals and the deeper things of the spirit.

A young woman once explained the reason for her rolled stockings in this fashion: "I like to be different from other people, and I love to shock folks." To the mind of youth these two reasons are quite compelling. They delight both in expressing their own individuality and in shocking their elders. These instincts explain many of their idiosyncrasies.

Religion is a more natural interest with young people than with older folk, only they ask that it be flavored with novelty and spiced with daring. The worn out religious garments of yesterday they will not wear. If the Church would have their loyalty, it must cut its cloth to fit their needs.

Three qualities in particular will commend both a church and its faith to the mind and heart of youth.

Companionship

Our young people ask that fresh air and faith be married one to the other. The musty odor which pervades many a sanctuary is anathema to them. But the air is not the only thing about our churches which youth would like to ventilate. The young people of to-day have discovered the out-of-doors. Fresh air and nature make a tremendous appeal to their hearts. Youth feels that there is something holy about the beauty of forest and hill, of lake and river. To young hearts nature is often a true sacrament. This experience of youth may be associated with formal religion in a number of ways.

THE author of this article is himself a young man — almost too young (we nearly said) to write so well and so penetratingly. At any rate he is sufficiently youthful to approach and discuss his subject with sympathy and appreciation. We ourselves wouldn't mind a canoeing or tramping trip in his company.

using a similar plan in what is called a "Student Service." They use the service each Sunday evening and following the service have a social half hour for the students. Columbia is

the home of the University of Missouri, Stephens College, and Christian College. The students of these institutions are enthusiastic about the service.

V. THE TASK OF THE CHURCH THROUGH THE EYES OF YOUTH

The Rev. CHARLES HADDON NABERS, Pensacola, Florida

WHEN the young people of the First Presbyterian Church of Pensacola, Florida, were asked to write out their answer to the question, "What is the business of the Church in a modern city?" quite a number of interesting replies were received by the pastor, and some of these are pertinent in that they give a clear conception of the task of the Church as seen through the eyes of our youth.

Here are some of the replies:

The business of the Church is to be an institution for bringing people to God, to be a place of worship, an institution for the building of worthwhile character, a monument to spiritual values, and a place of wholesome fellowship.

The business of the Church in a modern city is to make its services so entertaining and attractive that the young people will want to attend them in preference to dances, the movies, and other things which try to win them away.

The business of the Church in a modern city is to keep up with the times and to interpret life in terms of the youth of today. As the ages advance, new methods and different methods of thought are developed, and the young people can not be reached by the antiquated methods of yesterday. The Church which would hold the interest of its young people must get away from old worn-out methods.

The business of the Church is to work among the poor, the hopeless, the sick, and the distressed. It should strive to

bring the children into the church school, the young people's societies and the boy and girl scout movements. If the young people are taught by the Church to live good lives, the city in the next generation will be rid of its crime problem.

The business of the Church in a modern city is more important than that of any other institution. The Church develops the spiritual side of a person—a side as important as the physical. Man needs spiritual food as well as physical nourishment. No city will ever thrive unless the Church holds a mighty big place in its life.

The business of a church in a modern city is to give the people a place to go to learn about God, to show them the way to go, how to start, and how to keep on going in the way which God approves.

The business of the Church is to make Christians of us, to take more active interest in mission work at home and abroad. If tithing is taught to the young people, it gets them started on a sound basis for financing the kingdom of God. (This group of young people studied tithing during the month of November.)

The business of the Church in the modern city is to create such a sentiment for the right as to keep people, both old and young, from doing many things which are morally wrong. The Church must so hold up Christ as to lead its adherents to believe in him, and to worship God through him. The business of the Church in a modern Florida city is to keep real estate dealers from selling property which is under water.