

part in all that goes on, being always careful to set a good example because they know that example speaks more loudly than precept. At the lesson time, they gather their little ones around them and tell them the story and then watch with interest while the little ones picture the story in sand or on paper or with plasticine.

In the training class they study their Bible, their Prayer Book, their Church History, the history of Missions; in the School they learn to teach by teaching and withal they are always unconsciously studying the child. Is this not where we have made the mistake in time past? We have not sufficiently studied the child and so we have tried to force him to take what we believed to be good for him instead of leading him along the road that God desired him to follow.

There is plenty of work for the lads in connection with the Kindergarten Sunday School or any Sunday School organised on reformed methods. Apart from the duties of secretary, librarian, etc., there is a host of activities always at work. Every week the room has to be got ready, the sand trays and plasticine prepared. Then you want models to illustrate your lessons. Chairs have to be put together, painting of blackboards and plasticine boards done (and what boy does not revel in using a paint brush?) and a hundred and one other things that an average boy rejoices to help you in. And so you gather your lads and maidens around you. They work with you and for you, and all the time you are making them feel that they are working for the School, for the Church and for the Master, and, learning the joy of giving by giving, and the blessedness of service by service, they become in deed doers of the Word and not hearers only.

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The Girls' Friendly Society Lodge, Marine Parade, Napier, was formally opened by the Bishop of the Diocese on September 15th. There was a large attendance at the service. The usefulness of the Institution has been already proved in the fact that the Lodge is more than fully occupied, and steps have been taken to acquire houses adjoining for the extension of its work.

God is our Hope.

(Psalm 62, verse 8.)

A Sermon preached at the Synod Service, held in the Cathedral, Napier, by the Rev. J. B. Brocklehurst, Vicar of Hastings.

Anyone who has tried to keep pace with the opinions of thinking men and women since the war began, must have noticed many criticisms of Christianity. Let me quote two or three:—"Christianity has failed," "The Church has no weight in the world," "Nationality has proved stronger than Christianity," "Men are looking to the Church for a lead, and they do not find it there—they find better guidance in the secular press."

Now, whilst it is good for us to know what men are thinking, yet phrases like these don't stagger us; because we know the Founder of the Church died on a Cross. He, too, was a failure from one point of view, and many then thought that His death would mean the end of His influence and power. We, however, know better, because His death was followed by His resurrection.

And this is the truth, the world is going to re-learn. I, for one, do not believe that religion is finished, nay, on the contrary, I believe the best days of Christianity are to come. I cannot say how or by what means this will be brought about, but I can see that what is wanted at the present moment is a crusade, declaring all the fundamentals of Christianity. The signs of the times show that men are hungering and thirsting for these. Perhaps I can make this clear by glancing at three obvious facts:—

The first fact that stands out clear is *the possibility of human nature*. Since the war began we have been given a vision, such as the world has never seen before, of what human nature can do and bear.

Am I wrong when I say that the men who left our shores have shown a side of their nature which no one previously saw? Did you in your wildest dreams of what mankind could do, ever think that the commonplace individuals who walked our streets were capable of such heroic deeds? Did the parents who know these men better than anyone else ever think that their sons were made of stuff like this?

Go and ask the man who claims to know human nature if he ever thought that the men in our towns and backblocks would bring their souls and bodies and offer them as living sacrifices to crush out the evils of militarism.

When a miner is prospecting for gold, he looks out for indications; did any of us see indications of the gold in the souls of these men—I, for one, am willing to admit I did not.

What they, and those they left behind, have done then gives a strong hint that they possessed some kind of buried treasure; for their natures are like a tract of country unexplored and undeveloped. The humdrum life gave no signs that deep in the valley of their souls were the seeds of justice, honour and heroic deeds.

What I claim, then, is that we should recognise that there are depths in human nature, as yet unfathomed. For the sake of the days to come, we cannot afford to lose sight of this fact, for if the Church has always gathered inspiration from her saints and martyrs, here to-day we can find inspiration in what we call the "average man"; for he has shown that when stripped of the conventions of life, he has a soul that soars above self interest: which gives us a glimpse of the wondrous possibilities of human nature.

The second fact, which stands out, is that *the call to self-sacrifice meets with response*. This fact is blazoned forth every day of our life—turn where you will, you meet it in some form or other. Think, the word "sacrifice" has forced its way to the front,—before the war it was in the shade; you heard it in the Churches, and occasionally in the home, but it was never heard on the lips of politicians and seldom used by editors of papers; but to-day it stands out alone and amid the few grand strong words in our language it has taken its right place.

It is not simply the word itself, but that for which the word stands, for if sacrifice means "something that hurts," which it does, then we see it not only in the work being done and the money being given, but behind the closed doors of our homes, we see what sacrifice means among the mothers and wives of the land, who gladly, yet with a pang, gave up their sons and husbands.