

The Closing Year

With this issue we close the year. During the past twelve months we have tried in these columns to assist our young people realize as far as possible the purpose of their organizations. We have tried to convince them at all times that the highest good in their societies is practicable only as they personally achieve the highest character. Character is both a condition and prophecy of acceptable service in our Master's Kingdom. The Pledge is, therefore, of vital importance, and its principles should be ever held forth to our youth as embodying the New Testament standard of living. Your League, Circle, Club, Brotherhood, or whatever its local designation may be, can accomplish permanent good only as it helps to fashion Christian character according to the standard of the Pledge. Close the year by giving it a high place among you.

From various sources we have received appreciative words relative to the influence of our pages in helping form a high type of young Christian man and woman. For this we are thankful. Our Life Talks with Young Men have been held in high regard. Written by a young man for his fellows, they were helped many. The writer of them all is Mr. Will Vaughan, of Woodgreen Church, Toronto, and we are sure our readers will be glad to hear from him again from time to time. The articles that have appeared monthly in our World-Wide Young Methodism series have stimulated very many, not only to high living, but to united action in organized work for the Master. For this series we are most indebted to our friend and brother, Rev. W. B. Fitz-Gerald, General Secretary of the Wesley Guild, in British Wesleyan Methodism, for it was at his suggestion in the first instance that the plan took shape at the Ecumenical Council held in Toronto in October, 1911. Not the least, even though it be the last of this series, is the article from an old-time Leaguer and present-day Leader, Newton Rowell, Q.C., whose clarion call for the banishment of the bar should be answered promptly by every true citizen throughout Ontario. Mr. Rowell both learned and served in the Epworth League ranks of twenty and more years ago. To him the Epworth League owes much, and whether for Missionary expansion or Temperance Reform, the Epworth League may well follow his lead. We commend his article in this number, and his leadership in the present fight against the licensed liquor bar, alike to the attention and approval of all our young men and women, for we believe both of equal force. It would be well if every Leaguer and other Young People's Society in Canadian Methodism would close up the year by more strongly than ever swearing allegiance to both great enterprises—the universal extension of the Gospel, and the extinction of the legalized sale of intoxicants. Determine to make your society a power for the spread of the principles of purity at home as well as of the spirit of peace abroad. Round out the year with no uncertain pronouncement on these vital subjects.

We rejoice with our young friends who have the true student aim before them and who want to make their Leagues stand for an intelligent appreciation of the wondrous beauties of the Bible. Hence we are glad that the Weekly Topics as treated in our pages have infinitely more friends than critics. Some have wished the topics were a bit easier sometimes, but, Leaguers, you don't want to be babes intellectually all your lives surely. We want you to think as well as say prayers. We want your

League to help you express your thoughts when you have intellectually digested them. We want your thinking to centre in the Bible and the great body of good literature that has found its inspiration in the Book of books. We want your programmes to contain something of real value, such as will abide with you and make you strong within as well as valiant in the fight for God and righteousness in your land. Give time, thought, preparation, and prayer to your topics, and they will afford you lasting good. We commend to you the last two topics of the current year especially. If you apply yourselves to the attainment of the highest good personally, study the art of making others happy, and retrospecting the year, learn its lessons well, you will surely close 1912 wisely and enter upon 1913 with splendid prospects.

We are conscious that our pages have not been all they should have been for our young friends during the year. But the Editor has no apology to make. He has tried to do his best, and for the coming year has had the same assurance to give, he will continue to do his best for them. And, like his many readers, he hopes that the best in 1913 will be vastly better than the best of 1912, both in himself and in them. Will you join with him in thanking God for any measure of good that may have accrued from the past, and in praying that the future may be more fraught with blessing of every kind? If so, there is a bright prospect ahead of us, and the coming year will be brighter, happier, holier, and more useful than the closing one. In this spirit we most cordially thank all who have in any way contributed to our paper during the past, and solicit from all our friends their continued sympathy and support in the future.

in every part of Canadian Methodism once a year, tends to strengthen our connexionism and develop loyalty in all hearts. Rally Day emphasizes the oneness of our Sunday School work whether conducted in some large city church or in a tiny hamlet far removed from all busy centres. The very thought of this unity of aim and purpose, of plan and programme is uplifting. From many letters received since September 29th, it is evident that many hearts were cheered on that day by the growing interest in and concern for the Sunday School on the part of the people generally, and the inspiring thought that the Sunday School as a Nation Builder is becoming more and more, influential.

Much interest was manifested in hundreds of places in the platform decoration for Rally Day, and the suggestions of the programme were developed and improved in many places. Some excellent photographs of platforms have been sent in. Of these we use two in this number. Look them up and see if they are not most creditable. Surely they show what loving hands can do to make the house attractive and the platform a place of beauty. We cannot praise too highly our friends at Haldenbury and Port Carling and all others who worked like them, and strongly commend their examples to others who seemingly thought the time too precious or the labor too hard to do much in the way of platform or school decoration. Many have reached the point, others are fast approaching it, and sooner or later all will attain it, that nothing is too good for the Sunday School, whether it be time, thought, labor, prayer, or money. When that glad day comes there will be better equipment for Sunday School work, more exalted standards of Sunday School excellence, a deeper devotion to Sunday School service, a more wide-spread concern for Sunday School success, and in every way the influence of the Word of God on the lives of all the people will be more powerful for the construction of godly character in both individual and nation. Do



PORT CARLING CHURCH AS ARRANGED FOR RALLY DAY SERVICES.

Sunday School Rally Day

From all quarters most encouraging reports have been coming to hand regarding the 1912 Rally Day in our Sunday Schools. The service, "Building a Nation for God," was generally used and as far as the Editor knows gave good satisfaction. Of course no printed programme may be expected to please everybody, nor to be appropriate in all details to all schools; but with some little adaptation our Rally Day Order of Service may be made of use by the vast majority of our people. Certainly, the service of this year was most favorably commented on by very many. The unity of spirit engendered and promoted by such a programme

not begrudge anything you can either do or give in order that the Sunday School may realize in actual practice the high ideals that are imbedded in its very heart, inbreathed by the Spirit of God and practicable only under the Leadership of the Great Master. Let all the Church unite in accomplishing the Divine Teacher's royal mandate, "Go ye therefore . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and let every heart be cheered by the assurance which is coupled therewith, 'Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.'"

SHOW THIS PAPER TO YOUR FRIENDS.