

in a Chinese mother's arms, unwelcomed and unloved, unless by that poor mother's heart. One little maiden out of every five grows up in ignorance and neglect, drudging in the daily toil of some poor Chinese family, or crying over the pain of her crippled feet in the seclusion of a wealthier home. Among all the youthful brides who day by day pass from the shelter of their childhood's home, one out of every five goes weeping in China to the tyranny of the mother-in-law she dreads, and the indifference of a husband she has never seen. . . . One out of every five, at the close of earthly life, passes into the shadow and terror that surround a Chinese grave, never having heard of Him who alone can rob death of its sting. One-fifth of all the women are waiting, waiting in China, for the Saviour who so long has waited for them. What a burden of responsibility does this lay upon us—the women of Christendom!—Mrs. F. Howard Taylor.

#### TAKING STOCK.

In every counting-house and store and factory in the world that adopts correct business methods the annual stock-taking is an imperative affair. So, too, as churches and as individuals we should take stock of our standing at the beginning of another year. We should use these milestones on Time's highway to measure our progress. In many things we see marked advance—the growth of our country in population, in trade, in manufactures, in wealth, are gratifying. But this is not enough.

Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,  
Where wealth accumulates and men decay.

We have unbounded faith in the future, but there are things in our moral and religious condition that give us pause. Take the temperance situation. We boast that Canada drinks less liquor than any country in the world, that in Ontario tavern licenses have been greatly reduced. Very good as far as it goes, but it does not go far enough. As a matter of fact, more liquor is drunk than ever before. We remember when, with a fourth of its population, Toronto had twice as many taverns, but the drink trade to-day is a menace and an evil as it was not in those early times. The greater monopoly of this drunkard-making business gives it a greater power and wealth and influence. The good-will of some of these taverns has sold for an enormous sum, an unearned increment which goes to the big

breweries and distilleries which control the trade. In England forty thousand pounds has been paid for the good-will of a tavern near the great Armstrong works, from the facilities it offers for taking enormous toll from the earnings of the workmen.

The organized power of the liquor traffic is greater than ever it was, and the fact that an ex-distiller, whose great wealth is derived from this wretched trade, received over 12,000 votes for the highest office in the gift of this city, shows how many people are willing to wink at and condone the infamous business.

In the religious world there is much to encourage us. The increased interest in missions, the volunteers, by scores in Canada, and by hundreds on this continent, for mission work, the increased gifts to missions, home and foreign, the growth of our Young People's Societies, and their increasing devotion and missionary zeal, these and many other marks of religious progress are causes of devout gratitude to God.

But with improved machinery and wealth and agents our Church is not making all the progress that it should. The eye-opening letter of the Rev. W. McMullen in *The Guardian*, and the discussion on the subject in our churches, shows the need of taking stock, of discovering the nature and cause of leakage, and of seeking, by God's grace, a renewal of the old-time power whereby Methodism, with far inferior equipment in numbers, in wealth, in education, was doing relatively far greater work. We hope that every official board, every League and Sunday-school, every pastor and teacher, every individual member of Canadian and world-wide Methodism will take this solemn question to heart and seriously take stock of the situation, and with renewed consecration and zeal pray mightily to God, "Wilt thou not revive us again, that thy people may rejoice in thee?"

#### IS METHODISM DECLINING ?

In his sermon on this subject, the Rev. W. H. Hincks, said that all the Churches, under the influence of the evolutionary hypothesis and the higher criticism, especially as taught by extremists, have lost much of their old evangelistic zeal and have changed some of their revival methods. He argued that a higher type of quiet, practical efficiency had been gained. He was prepared to