

powers. Another is very much interested in the gospel, but immediately he wants you to use your influence in some law suit. The Roman Catholics have done a lot of that kind of work, and they expect the Protestants to do the same. I think I hear people at home saying, "Why don't you tell us the bright side? Tell of your conquests for the Lord? I can only answer, 'The bright side of missionary work is being constantly told, but the hard part of it, half has not been told.' I do implore all Epworth Leaguers to pray definitely that God may raise up many strong disciples amongst the Chinese in our work—Peters, Pauls, etc., to preach unceasingly to their own countrymen, and instil the true idea of the gospel into their minds. If we look at things in the light of what we have learned of these people we cannot expect anything better from them than wrong motives in professing to believe in Christ. They have never been taught anything better in their systems of religion.

"Also pray that the home Church may rise to a sense of her duty and send many more missionaries to this part of China. We few are only like so many grains of sand on the seashore. There must be a sufficient number of foreigners to, at least, very closely superintend the work. It will not be in the first generation that we can trust natives to superintend or establish a new church. Besides we have not got the natives for the work at all. They must first be taught, and, most important, must be converted. If I understand God's book and the way he intends to convert the heathen, it is by the Church sending out preachers and teachers to them. Now this is what we are praying for and also expecting the Holy Ghost to use us in bringing about the conversion of this peculiar, hardened, sinful, needy people."

THE COMING OF THE SPRING.

She has come who tarried long,
Gentle rains have hastened her;
In the woods a welcome song.
On the grass an eager stir,
And she whispers, "I am here,
Sweetest days of all the year."
Green the grass about her feet,
Blue the skies above her head;
Myriad flowers with perfume sweet
Crowd the path that she must tread;
All the world, for love of Spring,
Gives its best of everything.
But where'er the sick and sad
In dark places watch and wait,
Hearts are suddenly made glad
That were lone and desolate.
For the Spring calls Hope to wake,
And be strong for love's dear sake.
Ah! what song of trusts have we
Who through all the winter drear
Saw the thick mists on the sea
And all fair things disappear?
Grown impatient of delay,
Feared that pain alone would stay?
Faint hearts, waste not in regret
These new hours of sun and song;
God will let us all forget
Winter woes that lingered long;
Spring shall banish fear and doubt,
Let the song of praise ring out!

—*Marianne Farningham, in Christian World.*

THE CALLING CROSS.

BY REV. G. H. COBBLEDRICK, B.D.

THE Cross which called Jesus to a sacrificial death calls His followers to a sacrificial life. That which is the remedy for sin is also the inspiration to progress. Lord Tennyson said, "What the sun is to the flower Jesus Christ is to me." Personal salvation is the beginning of a new and better life which is to multiply itself until the world is overtaken by Jesus. In the experience of the individual Christian there comes a time when his faith is no longer fully expressed by the hymn, "Simply to Thy cross I cling," but when he finds himself singing "Jesus, I my cross have taken." Such response to the appeal to his gratitude and loyalty indicates the beginning of a new epoch in his life.

It is the same with every religious organization, and at such a point has the Epworth League arrived. For a time the inspiration of novelty bore it along grandly, and the enthusiasm of numbers ensured further increase. But recent statistics warn us that we can depend upon these no longer. In common with those of the young people's organizations of other churches, our records have begun to show a decrease in membership, which is not altogether a matter of surprise. It may perhaps be said that the chief inducement to joining the League has been what one could get out of it. The beginning of decrease points the lesson that this is an unworthy ideal. The Cross is calling the League to-day as it called the disciples to a larger career in the world of need and sin and sorrow. Future success must be looked for along the lines of our two "Forward Movements." The Movement for Bible Study and Evangelistic Work is the cleansing and deepening of the springs of life in the soul, from which rise the streams which carry in their overflow new life and beauty to the moral and heathen deserts. The Forward Movement for Missions is the logical outcome of that for Bible Study, and the guarantee of the League's success. In this day of military railroads we never hear of one being thrown forward with only one rail. The gospel chariot, like the steam pioneer of civilization, requires the parallel lines of advance, represented by the home and foreign interests. The League's devotion to the latter will be the measure of its success in the former.

This movement also marks a new era in our Church's missionary operations. Bishop Thoburn declared some years ago that all the great missionary organizations had reached their limit on their present method of raising funds, and suggested as the only means of further advance the adoption of a weekly contribution system similar to that in use for ministerial support. Almost at the same time the leading of Providence was seen in the inauguration of the Young People's Forward Movement, in which history is repeating itself. In the eighteenth century a young man was raised up to give the world a revival of vital piety, and in the churches he founded the rule of a penny a week. In the closing days of the nineteenth century young college men have caught the spirit of the latter

half of the great commandment, and ask for a penny a week for our neighbor who is without the world. Into the hands of our consecrated young people, with their eager minds, loyal hearts, and increasing resources, it is given to lead in this new method of missionary activity which will furnish more men for the foreign field than have been sent out in all the history of our Canadian Church. That the heart of young Methodism is sound is proven by its response to this call of the Cross. What more inspiring sight has the Christian Church ever witnessed than that of young people voluntarily subscribing their names to a movement which looks entirely outside of themselves? Such heroism is contagious, and such altruistic effort yields greatness. Emerson has truly said, "He is great who confers the most benefits. He is base—and that is the only base thing in the universe—to receive favors and render none."

Bothwell, Ont.

THE STRENUOUS LIFE.

BY REV. W. L. WATKINSON.

WHEN a young Greek soldier complained that his sword was short, a veteran instantly answered him, "Then add a step to it." And I say to you, who find yourselves short of time, short of money, short of strength, short of opportunity, "Add a step;" in other words, make up for the deficiencies of material, opportunity and instrument by the intenser resolution, enthusiasm and sacrifice. They who would do anything for this world must do it in spite of circumstances, they must do it by the skin of their teeth, they must pull it out of the fire. "Well," you reply, "a man can do no more than he can do!" Now that sounds like a very deep philosophical saying that you must take slowly in, but in fact it means nothing. Men never know what they are, what they can do, until their soul awakes. "Stir up the gift that is in thee." If you seek for hidden riches, dig in your ribs—the splendid treasure, the magic gold is there. The solution of all difficulties is in the soul. Life is not a question of tangible means, deft tools, soliciting opportunity; it is a question of interior power and enthusiasm finding means in things that are not, and making things ridiculously inadequate to have wonderful magnitude and efficacy. "Out of my trouble have I done this," might have been the confession of Tycho Brahe, who made his great discoveries without a telescope, showing that what an astronomer chiefly wants is not a big glass but a big eye. "Out of my trouble have I done this," might have been the confession of Christopher Columbus, who crossed the Atlantic in an old tub that we should hardly use to-day for a New-castle collier. "Out of my poverty have I done this," might have been the plaint of Turner, who painted some masterpieces with colors mixed in broken teacups. "Out of my trouble have I done this," says John Milton, old, poor and blind as he enriches the world with "Paradise Lost." "Out of my low estate have I done this," says John Bunyan,