

Practical Plans.

Twentieth Century Fund.

The following valuable suggestions concerning the Twentieth Century Fund, so far as it relates to our Young People's societies, have been sent out by Rev. Dr. Potts:

To the Epworth Leagues and Other Young People's Societies of Our Church:

DEAR FELLOW WORKERS.—The Methodist Church has learned to expect great things of its young people. It is grateful on this account; for no Church ever expended so much loving energy upon its children, or gave them so early a recognition among its enterprises and its honors.

We confess that our hope at this hour lies in the interest with which our young people approach the Twentieth Century Thanksgiving Fund. It is not to be looked upon as a sublime occasion taken advantage of to gather up money for ourselves as a people; but, rather, it is to be our recognition of Divine favors and honors bestowed—a free expression of our appreciation, poured out in offerings at the altars of God for use in the extension of His kingdom in the earth. To the unbelieving world it will be the most marked manifestation of devotion to Christ and His cause ever set forth.

We feel confident that you will look upon this approaching century as *yours*. You are to be its governors and counselors and workers. Its destiny is in your hands. Begin it by a consecration worthy of the honor and of the responsibility.

In your organizations, we have ventured to suggest that each department should take up the theme and give "An Evening with the Twentieth Century Thanksgiving Fund." There are many ways of making such an evening profitable and interesting. Take an illustration:

I. CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR DEPARTMENT. "TWENTIETH CENTURY THANKSGIVING FUND."

Retrospect:—Thanksgiving for What? Let a paper be read enumerating the blessings for which, as a Church, we have reason to be truly grateful, and "let our songs abound."

Prospect:—Called Unto What? Let the leader of the meeting then review the grounds of thanksgiving expressed and show that we are *responsible* for everything which has awakened our gratitude; that our privilege and our responsibility must not be divorced. Emphasize the Saviour's counsel, "freely ye have received, freely give;" and let the evening close with consecration to this end.

II. MISSIONARY DEPARTMENT.

Retrospect: Thanksgiving for What? A brief review of the work by centuries would be very profitable. This could be brought out in a paper on "The Torch-bearers of Christendom" (one of the League Reading Course books). The

past century and its work is easily illustrated. Rev. J. S. Ross's pamphlet on Missions will render excellent service.

Prospect:—From the study of the past we must learn for the future. What shall we outline and expect in the coming century? What shall we undertake as our honest portion?

III. THE LITERARY DEPARTMENT.

Thanksgiving for What? This is an opportune occasion to deal with the relation of our educational institutions to the work of the Church. A good setting forth of what Methodism has done in this regard would emphasize another of the Beneficiaries. The study of our hymnology and the relation of music to service would be interesting topics to enrich an evening's programme. The claims of this branch of Christ's work should be clearly indicated. They are too often overlooked. It is the work of the Literary Department to be their advocate.

IV. THE SOCIAL DEPARTMENT.

Our Local Church.—Its History; Its Present Operations; Its Needs; Its Possibilities; Our Personal Relation to Them; How to Meet Its Claims! Such a theme would form a good field for an arousement of local interest, and our immediate bearing upon the social life of the coming generation. Much of the prosperity of Christ's kingdom will be found in the social influence of the Local Church.

Of course, this is only one of the many outlines that could be arranged for this work. In making our offerings, an intelligent conception of their use will add much to the pleasure of giving.

We want to secure the names of all our young people on the Historic Roll. There are many such rolls in the Bible. Look them up. We want a historic record of those Methodists who registered their names at the gate of the Twentieth Century and marched in with a song and a sacrifice. In order to accomplish this, we have allowed the younger members (who have hardly reached the days of earning) to be put upon the Roll on the gift of a dollar. All who have reached the years of earning, we have kept at the "guinea" idea inaugurated by the first movement in English Methodism. It will be a glorious achievement for our toil and sacrifice. Young People, arise and shine, and the glory of the Lord shall be risen upon you.

How to Secure Subscriptions.—It is the business of the Literary Vice-President to canvass the League for subscriptions to THE CANADIAN EPWORTH ERA. Where there is no such officer, the work should be attended to by the Secretary or some one specially appointed for the purpose. The best plan is to set apart a few minutes for the purpose of bringing the paper to the notice of the members upon some evening when the attendance is good. Let the President, pastor, or third Vice-President explain the purpose of the ERA, and tell of the good things that it contains. Of course there should be a copy or two on the table for examination. After explanations have been made, call for subscriptions at once, and follow this

up by asking every member personally to subscribe. Regular readers could help the circulation very much by speaking of our paper to their friends, and occasionally loaning a copy.

The Home Prayer Meeting.—At the devotional service of the Monona Lake assembly, held at Madison, Wis., the following pledge was prepared and adopted for the home department of the church prayer meeting: "I ask to have my name enrolled as a member of the home department of our church prayer meeting. I promise to observe the hour, joining with you in spirit and in prayer for the welfare of our church and the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom in the world." It is thought that the use of this pledge by old people, invalids, and others detained from this important midweek service, would double the interest and influence of this service in any church.

Selection of Leaders.—It is not a good plan to place a prayer meeting entirely in the hands of an inexperienced and inefficient leader. Of course one object of the League is to develop the talent of its members, and every one should be asked to do something, but the most important service of the society must not be sacrificed. There may be a number of members who are not fully qualified to take charge of the meeting, but they should not on that account be altogether excused. They should be associated with some more experienced leader in conducting the meeting, so that the full responsibility may be divided. The timid and diffident ones should be initiated in this way. They can read the lesson, offer a short prayer, give out a hymn, or make a few remarks on the topic. After a time they will perhaps be qualified for more difficult work.

Various Methods.—At the Annual Convention of the Milton District, the first president, Miss Mary Easton, of Appleby, read a most excellent report of the work of the first department throughout the District. The following plans were referred to as being in use by different societies: One reports appointing two leaders in place of only one, the one being a new beginner, the other an old one. Another reports securing a number of the members to take part in the topic, speaking to them a week ahead. This League says that this plan does away with all dull meetings. Another League has a song service once a month, which has proved very helpful. A number of Leagues prepare a programme for several months ahead with the names of the leaders, and those to take the topic for each evening. This is placed where all may see it, so that each may know when his turn comes, while some Leagues supply each member with a copy. Another reports that in addition to the regular League meeting, they have a prayer service every Sunday evening before church, led by a member of the League; also a young man's class each Sabbath evening. At the consecration service, each month, the members kneel while repeating their pledge.