

In many places instead of having the surfeit of books and papers which many possess, these Sunday-school papers are almost the only reading of any sort that they get. By means of this Society schools have been planted, out of which in many cases churches have grown, among the fishing villages along the stormy coasts of Newfoundland and Nova Scotia, in the lumbering settlements of New Brunswick and the Upper Ottawa, among the scattered farmsteads and ranches of Manitoba and the vast North-West Territories, and among the mining camps of British Columbia. I get many letters which touch my eyes to thankfulness and tears, expressing the good which is being accomplished by means of these papers, from such remote and lonely places as Topsail Harbor, Nipper's Cove, Seldom-Come-by Inlet, in Newfoundland, and from Red Bay, Labrador, to the Upper Skeena and Naas River on the borders of Alaska. By these means many devoted Sunday-school workers are aided and cheered, who, in isolation and loneliness, far from the knowledge of the praise of men, but not unnoticed by the eye of God, are seeking to lay broad and sure and stable the foundations of the commonweal in righteousness and truth and the love and fear of God—the great principles which are the corner-stone of our national greatness and which are the pledge of the stability of our institutions.

It will be observed that though there is a steady increase in schools from year to year, there is also an increase in the number of preaching appointments, and there are still over a thousand appointments where no schools are organized. In a very large number of these which are chiefly in remote and mission circuits, there are union schools. In many places it would be impossible to organize an exclusively Methodist school. But year after year there are an increased number of distinctly Methodist schools being organized in connection with our work.

It is a cause for devout gratitude that nearly fifty thousand young people in our schools are active members of the Church, and that 10,331 conversions are reported in the schools during the year, but in the 180,000 who are not yet enrolled in the books of the Church there is a hopeful field for training in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

TEMPERANCE IN THE SCHOOL.

The number reported as having taken the pledge makes a very respectable army; but several of the Conferences report the fact that only those who during the year have taken the pledge are reported, whereas the intention was to have all who have signed the pledge enrolled, and this would make a very considerable difference. We trust that superintendents and teachers will do all in their power to get all the children enrolled; thus will be trained up a mighty army who, in a few years in the home and at the polls, will do much to drive out of

the community that crime against humanity and sin against God, the sale of intoxicating liquors. Our publishing houses at Toronto, Montreal and Halifax, issue pledges in many forms. In the Sunday-school class book is also a form of pledge, in which every teacher should induce the young people in his class to subscribe their names.

The number learning the catechism exhibits a slight increase but still the number is much too small. A committee has the revision of the catechism in hand to somewhat simplify it. We trust that the new catechism will be far more extensively taught our young people.

THE EPWORTH LEAGUE.

The age in which we live is especially characterized by its world-wide organizations and by its new applications of great forces. It is the century of Christian missions, of the employment of the Sunday-school, of the Woman's Missionary Society. The latest outcome of the organizing spirit of the times is those wonderful associations, the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavour, with 1,100,000 members, the King's Sons and King's Daughters, and last but not least, that newest development of all, the Epworth League. Only a little more than three years old, it has already 9,000 chapters and nearly half a million of enrolled members among the Methodist churches of the United States and Canada. It is one of the most inspiring signs of the times that the earnest souls of the youth of the Church of God are consecrating their young energies to His service, are marshalling their cohorts under the banner, of King Immanuel, and are going forth in the battle against the world, the flesh and the devil with the assurance of glorious victory. Never were the young people rallying in such numbers with such enthusiasm, with such intelligent zeal, and in such well organized battalions for the great conflict of eternal right against ancient wrong, as at the present day. Never was such a significant convention held on the face of the planet, one so full of hope and promise, as that at New York a few months ago, never had the world so bright an outlook as to-day. Standing on the threshold of the twentieth century, whose outlook is so full of promise, we feel how blessed a privilege it is to live in these days of the Son of man and of power. Our young people are summoned to be the soldiers of a new crusade, of nobler warfare than that of arms, the symbols of which are the white shield and the white cross, its great purpose to maintain purity of soul, and through that sign of grace to conquer. They are summoned like the grand old covenanting heroes of Scotland to form a solemn league and covenant "against all sin and the man of sin" —to an effort to bring the erring to the feet of Jesus—to lift the world up nearer to the heart of God.

It will be observed that the number of Epworth Leagues is a very handsome increase