

DR. FRANCIS E. CLARK.

A Character Sketch.

BY REV. W. W. ANDREWS, M.A.

IT is not easy to describe this modest, lovable man, for he possesses none of those eccentricities which add picturesque to a character. There are no points on which a writer can hang his adjectives. Yet this well-rounded character, living in the blaze of his fame, has not attained his present position as the leader of a great movement in the church without possessing some of the attributes of greatness. He is not a great speaker, nor a great writer or thinker, though he carries himself well in all these lines of effort, but his character exhibits a set of safe and useful qualities which make a great combination, and constitute him the typical man to be the exponent of a great idea, to be the safe guide of a great mass of enthusiasts, and to embody in his

churches, who are engaged in somewhat similar lines of work, and is to regard itself as the servant of the interests of the denominations as parts of the Church of Christ. Dr. Clark has seen that on no other working principles can Christian Endeavor be a safe movement for the churches. As another example of a wisdom which has never entertained the desire to make the Boston office the guiding centre for a world-wide movement, may be noted the formation as soon as possible of a United Society of Christian Endeavor for Great Britain, another for China, and another for Australia, each having its own board of trustees wholly independent of the Board in America. It has taken a long time for these principles to become thoroughly understood and appreciated, and when for this reason misinterpretations, unjust criticisms and hostile action have been brought to the attention of the Board of Trustees, all who have watched Dr.

Another quality is his interest in individuals, and the ready sympathetic regard he gives to all. It has never occurred to him to develop a machine. He seeks to help people. This quality makes itself felt not only in private conversation and correspondence, but also through his addresses and annual messages, and has touched the hearts of tens of thousands, and the cognomen, "Father Endeavor Clark," expresses their answering love.

During the last few years there has been a deepening earnestness in his addresses and familiar letters. The conviction possesses him that what the young people need now more than all else is a deepening of the spiritual life. He has grown fond of Meyer's phrase, "We must practise the presence of God," and consequently the comradeship of the Quiet Hour is being fostered as one of the internal movements of Christian Endeavor. More impressive to him, and



CALVARY.—By MUNKACSY.

own convictions the thoughts and hopes of thousands.

The most prominent of his intellectual qualities is a fine common sense, which clearly distinguishes between the essential and the non-essential, and enables him to adapt himself readily to new circumstances. His great organizing power is only a special form of this quality. This facile adaptability and saneness of judgment are enhanced by the spiritual qualities which accompany them.

His common sense has shown itself in the formulation of the principles for which from the beginning Christian Endeavor has stood, namely, that the right of pastors and other denominational authorities to control their own young people must not be encroached upon; that Christian Endeavor is to be a movement more than a society, an influence rather than an organization, and that as far as it is organized it is merely to provide for actual fellowship among the young people of the evangelical

Clark in debate will bear witness to the fact that his voice has always been for charity and for patience. The final result has always justified his position.

This calmness of judgment may be partly natural, but it certainly has been in part a result of his humility and faith. A score of years has not yet passed since into the soil in Portland, Maine, his hand dropped a seed which has become a tree whose branches fill the earth, and so unexpected has been this development, so far beyond human power or calculation, that the human leader has felt an awe which has hushed all boastfulness in the presence of the greater Leader whose guidance in this movement he, above all others, has felt. No self-gratulation, no self-assertion, no jealousy as to his position has ever shaped itself into expression. This quality seems to be growing with every year. He is serene in his faith that God is in the movement, and that its human leaders need not be too jealous for Christian Endeavor.

more hopeful than the sight of the upturned faces of a great convention, is the thought of hundreds of thousands of young people keeping the "morning watch" in solitary communion with God. Therefore this character sketch may close with Dr. Clark's solution of all the dangers and doubtful questions besetting the young life of the churches, "Raise the Standard, Raise the Standard."

May the still small voice of a holier life spread through all the hosts of our Canadian young people, and the standard be kept high in our ranks. Only then can we be safe and strong.

Sackville, N.B.

You may examine a drop of water with a microscope and make some very interesting discoveries; but the process will not quench your thirst. So you may analyze the Bible word by word and learn many wonderful things; but it will not satisfy the hunger of your soul. You must learn how to appropriate the Word.—*Bible Reader.*