

FIFTH ANNUAL REPORT

—OF THE—

Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor, Knox Church.

To the Members of the Session and Congregation :

GENTLEMEN AND CHRISTIAN FRIENDS,—It may be permissible for purposes of information and inspiration to introduce the Report of our Society by a brief history of the origin and growth of the Christian Endeavor Society movement.

The first Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor originated in the winter of 1880-1881 as the outcome of a revival in the Williston Church of Portland, Maine, under the pastorage of the Rev. F. E. Clarke, D.D., and in response to a real, felt necessity to bridge over the crisis period between conversion and church-membership and as a means by which to train young Christians for active and personal Christian work in bringing about the conversion and connection with the church of the unconverted or inactive members and adherents among the young people, of strengthening the hands of the pastor and of carrying out such schemes as wisdom should dictate and opportunity permit.

The Society was, as some one has put it, "contagious, like the measles; if one church had it the church next to it was pretty sure to catch it also," and it now numbers twenty-two thousand, with a membership of one million five hundred thousand, representing thirty Protestant evangelical denominations, the Presbyterian denomination being somewhat in the lead. There are eight hundred and sixty Societies in Ontario.

Of the five trustees of the united Societies two, Rev. William Patterson, Toronto, and Rev. T. S. Tamlin, D.D., are Presbyterians, the remaining three being a Baptist, a Methodist and a Congregationalist.

The platform or basis principle of the Society is that the religious features of the organization shall always be paramount and that the source of power and energy shall centre in the weekly Prayer Meeting.

This principle it is believed has faithfully been kept in view in our own Society, which may account for the unobtrusive yet none the less, but rather the more, effective character of its work and the smallness of the membership as compared with the size of the constituency served. No extraneous means have been employed to popularize the Society.

A membership of some seventy members may not seem to represent great progress for about four years of existence, but the majority of the seventy will each engage to enter into a pledge which reads, as recently amended :—

"Trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ for strength, I promise Him that I will strive to do whatever He would like to have me do; that I will make it the rule of my life to pray and to read the Bible every day, and to support my own church in every way, especially by attending all her regular Sunday and mid-week services, unless prevented by