

within a decade. The young people of both sexes have been banded together into Endeavor societies, Epworth Leagues, Christian unions and the like, and their members are numbered by the million. By organization for prayer, praise, and Christian work, and particularly training in public service, a great body of young believers have been made a positive, aggressive force in all our churches. Who can measure the influence which these young people thus organized will exert in the immediate future? Not many years ago the cry was raised, "We are losing our hold on the young people. They are not coming into the Church. They are growing up indifferent to religion." To-day we have no more devoted and enthusiastic and helpful workers in the Church than the young people.

The methods of reaching the unconverted have changed in the last quarter of a century. Professional revivalists were then considered a necessity. Now the idea is, "Every pastor his own evangelist." We have, it is true, general evangelists like Moody, and Mills, and Munhall, but the meetings which they hold are not congregational, but community meetings, in which the various local churches unite. Each pastor gathers in his own share of the results. The settled policy of pastors is to reach the unconverted by ordinary methods, and they resort more and more rarely to the extraordinary. The result is not a spasmodic effort once a year, but a constant endeavor to draw men and women and children into the fold of the Church.

No doubt this outlook will seem too optimistic to many. Perhaps it is; but I have tried to keep constantly in mind the unfavorable indications and to make due allowance for them. If I were writing on the perils of the future, I should have something to say on certain tendencies to lower the standard of belief, to open too wide the doors to church membership, to relax discipline, and to let in secularity. In time of great prosperity it would be wise to be on our guard against the development of special evils. This, however, is not the purpose of this article. I have simply described the leading characteristics of Evangelical Christianity as they are manifested to-day in the United States, and I find, on the whole, much to encourage and little to discourage those who hope and pray for the increase of His kingdom.

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### III.—THE HOMILETIC VALUE OF THE WRITINGS OF JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

BY PROFESSOR JAMES O. MURRAY, D.D., PRINCETON, N. J.

As the title of this essay suggests, it is not any critical estimate of Lowell's poetry or prose that is in view. It assumes, of course, that his poetry and prose are among the best products of literary genius, since it is