

## The Presbyterian Review.

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Toronto, July 25, 1895.

The Y. P. S. C. E.

AT the time of the annual rally of this organization, there appears in *The Presbyterian Quarterly* an article, so severely condemnatory, that if we believed the one half to be true, we would regard the Christian Endeavor movement as the most formidable foe the Church has encountered in modern times. According to the writer, the Rev. E. Brantly of Decator, Texas, they have ignored the Holy Ghost, place no reliance upon Him, but depend on the prayer meetings, Committees, pledge and consecration meeting. The machinery is the Holy Ghost of the movement. They also he says ignore the sacrificial work of the Lord Jesus Christ. "The pains that are taken to secure by promise, by mere human effort, the obedience which Christ only can furnish, and the life which only the Holy Ghost the Sanctifier can give is painful evidence of the absence of Christ's atoning work and of the want of recognition of the Spirit's sanctifying grace."

The natural results will be a misconception of the nature of sin, of the new birth, repentance and faith in Christ. "The doctrine of the perseverance of the Saints, as taught in our confession is already impugned by the business given to the Lookout Committee to look after those who absent themselves from the prayer-meetings; by the renewed pledge and roll-call at the consecration meetings; by the binding force of that pledge." "The power and sufficiency of the Church of Jesus Christ as a saving instrumentality are impeached. The work of the Church is discounted. Its authority is defied." "The supercilious pride and arrogance of this movement, together with its boastful spirit well become the spirit of this age. It deals in statistics and makes its wonderful progress one argument for its right to a place in every fold. It is obstreperous. Its self-applause does not well become the infant of a decade. Its manners are like those of a spoiled child." All this and much more of the same kind make us feel that the critic is not in a happy mood for his work. That in an article of considerable length, upon a movement so widespread and fraught with such infinite possibilities, the writer has not found it in his heart to express one kindly and appreciative sentence is to us a sufficient reason for concluding that he is not an impartial witness—his entire dictum is discounted. When he asks the question "what shall we do with this overgrown society? Shall we teach our own children or shall we sit at their feet?" our answer would be at least treat them fairly, recognize what is good in them as a first condition of being able

to deal with them at all. It would be an easy thing to follow the writer step by step, but that is needless. It surely needs no argument to prove that because this Society has not embodied in its constitution or pledge a statement of doctrines, it does not therefore ignore those doctrines. Had they gone into the business of formulating standards, the case would be indeed serious. As it is they are understood to accept the doctrines of the churches to which they belong, and to which they wish to be loyal if the authorities of these churches only give them an opportunity. But when multitudes of young people who wish to be actively useful—and who were inactive before this Society enlisted their services—find these from whom they have a right to expect sympathy and encouragement, looking suspiciously upon them, it is only human that a spirit of discontent and even rebellion should occasionally appear. Let the Church only accept the movement, which is a fact none can ignore, and turn it to good account, and the possibilities for good are unlimited, but if that is not done very unhappy consequences are possible. The Boston Convention was a declaration of strength and of doctrine as well. They believe in a present salvation. A new feature was the Evangelistic effort. Companies of singers and speakers visited many parts of the city and held meetings that were productive of great good. As an immediate result the number of arrests during these days was less than half the usual record. Boston Unitarianism never had such an exhibition of Christian enthusiasm—it may perhaps be said that the world has never seen such a gathering of young people animated by Gospel life. Another doctrine in which they heartily believe is, that the Churches should obey the Saviour's command and "Preach the Gospel to every creature." "The world for Christ" is one of the Society's favorite mottos. And we do not hesitate to say that any church or organization that will concentrate its energies, upon that supreme duty deserves the sympathy of all and is not likely in such practical obedience, to depart seriously from the old paths. Aggressive Christianity is very much less to be feared from any stand point, than inactivity however orthodox.

### Singing in Congregational Worship.

What place should singing hold in congregational worship? Should it not be one of its chief elements? And should it not therefore have a very prominent place? Should it not come more distinctly to the front than it does now? It has always been an element in true spiritual worship, but like the mercury in the thermometer it has risen or fallen according to the warmth or coldness of the spiritual life. In Old Testament times the service of song in the House of the Lord held no subordinate place. In 1 Chron. vi. we have the names of those who "ministered before the Tabernacle of the congregation with singing, until Solomon had built the House of the Lord in Jerusalem, and then they waited on their office according to their order." When the ark was brought up from Kirjathjearim and an act of worship was becoming the occasion, we are told, that "David and all Israel played before God with all their might, and with singing, and with harps, and with psalteries, and with timbrels, and with cymbals, and