

Contributions.

The Songs We Sing.

ANNA D. BRADLEY.

Being in a fault-finding mood to-day, I fell to criticising the songs we sing, and wondering if they are always a correct expression of the soul's desire.

Song in worship is, or should be, either praise or prayer. We have no right to say to God in music what we cannot reverently say to Him on bended knee.

I remember once seeing a Sunday-school, I believe it was on some gala day—perhaps a picnic—all gathered together, and, in their holiday dress, with their fresh young voices in sympathy with every glad sound of nature, all bubbling over with life and sunny youth, they sang in full, strong, joyous tones.

"I'm weary, I'm fainting,
My day's work is done;
I'm watching, I'm waiting
For life's setting sun."

How they did sing! The air was filled with the music, and rock and hill and tree caught up the song, and, in answering echo, flung it back again at those young singers, and all of nature seemed to shout in merry tones.

"I'm weary, I'm fainting."

But yet, despite this strong assurance, and their united petition to be allowed—because of the shadows which were "stretching afar o'er the way"—to "anchor beyond the dark sea," I could but fancy that these young folks seemed well content to continue in the present life. Existing circumstances did not seem to be very trying to those glad youths and maidens. And while it might have been true that "The heart was panting and sighing," still I could not force myself to believe that it was death for which they were longing.

And we older ones sometimes sing this beautiful hymn—fit only for the fully ripened saint—with as little meaning as did the merry boys and girls.

We, in the rich prime of life; we, whose work is scarcely well begun; we, to be weary of doing our Master's service! We, to be waiting with folded hands for the promised rest of the faithful!

Again, is it really true that all who sing that song are anxiously watching for "life's setting sun"? Are we really yearning to be speedily anchored "Beyond the dark sea"?

"Lord, I care not for riches,
Neither silver nor gold,
I would make sure of heaven;
I would enter the fold,"

shows a very beautiful spirit, if it is ours. But we so strive for riches! We so hoard our silver and gold! To outsiders we appear to be so absorbed in accumulating the temporal comforts, and so slightly concerned in "making sure of heaven," that it is very possible they may doubt the sincerity of our words.

"Holy Bible! Book divine!
Precious treasure, thou art mine!"

One would think, to hear us sing this glad triumph song, that of all the possessions which the world can offer, there is nothing so priceless as the "Book divine."

But is this so? Is it really true that nothing we have is so highly prized and so constantly handled as is the sacred Word of God?

"Jesus, I my cross have taken,
All to leave and follow Thee!"

Ah, if this were only true! Yet too often I lay down my cross; turn my back upon my Saviour, and follow the world instead of Jesus.

"Nearer my God to Thee,
Nearer to Thee;
E'en tho' it be a cross
That raiseth me,"

has been sung by countless lips. But

when the cross is really pressed upon us, our bursting hearts grow numb with anguish. With shirking, trembling hands we strive to press it from us, and with whitened lips we cry—"Not this, O God, not this."

Yet there are moments in our life when, by God's grace, we can sing this song, aye—and sing it from the heart. Pallid lips have whispered it above the coffin lid where rested every earthly hope the loving heart had cherished. And yet they have forced themselves to lift their cross and pray God's blessing on it. In this one act of trustful submission they have, indeed, been drawn immeasurably nearer to the divine heart of the Father.

"Saviour, more than life to me,
I am clinging close to Thee!"

The words seem to be wrung from a bursting heart which has found how hopeless a task it is to cling to aught else beside. Yet alas! Not one who reads my selfish, narrow life would ever dream that I was really clinging very close to the crucified Son of God.

Dear Father, help me to remember that every word I sing during the hour of worship is addressed to Thee. Help me to be so enveloped by Thy sacred presence that no word of idle form will ever be found upon my lips. Be Thou indeed and in truth

"My everlasting portion,
More than friend or life to me,
All along my pilgrim journey,
Saviour, let me walk with Thee."

And if length of days should ever make me tired of my earthly existence, and I really be "weary and fainting" from my day's work fully done, then indeed, dear Lord, may I find grace to sing, "The cold surging billows that dash at my feet
Have lost all their terror; their music is sweet.

My Saviour is stilling the tempest for me,
Now, oh, let me anchor beyond the "dark sea."

Young People's Work.

COMMITTEE ON YOUNG PEOPLE'S WORK: W. W. Coulter, Chairman; J. J. Smallman, Mrs. R. H. Cameron.

The Bearing of C. E. on our Plea for Christian Union.

What is our plea for union? For nearly a century we have been pleading for the union of God's people upon the divine basis. We have set forth the unity that characterized the Apostolic church, and now demand the same unity upon the same foundation. We denounce all human creeds and party names as divisive, and these divisions of Christ's church as sinful, "we therefore urge the world of God against human creed, faith in Christ against faith in systems of theology; obedience to Christ rather than obedience to church authority; the church of Christ in place of sects; Christian character in place of orthodoxy in doctrine as the bond of union, and associations for co-operation in good works instead of associations to settle questions of faith and discipline."

We also repudiate, says Hopkins, the union sentiment abroad in the land as detrimental to Christian unity as is the sectarian spirit a sickly, flimsy, union sentiment which takes no cognizance of sound doctrine, right conceptions, fundamental principles, involved duties, or any other intelligent position, condition or basis. Christian unity—like the bridge pier—must be lowered through the sand, shoal and rubbish until it rests upon the bed-rock of truth and righteousness.

Christian union must be one born of Omniscience. It must of necessity be a scriptural union. No other is either practicable or desirable. "Truth—clear truth—born in Heaven must keep pace with and underlie every step,

every effort; at forming a union that ought to be called Christian."

Now keeping before us our plea for union work, what is the bearing of C. E. towards it?

If C. E. is detrimental to, or antagonistic, or in any way hinders the development of the spirit of unity, we as a people cannot consistently give it our support or encouragement. If C. E. strengthens denominational walls, gives nourishment to the spirit of sectarianism; or if it tends to create and develop in the hearts and minds of Endeavorers a love for division, for human creeds, party names, and for the spirit of sectarianism and to stultify the desire for Christian union, then we must sound aloud the alarm, denounce it as a sin, an invention of Satan to strengthen denominationalism and to further postpone the day when Christ's prayer for oneness will be answered; but, on the other hand, if C. E. is not inimical to, nor subversive of Christian union, but its friend and supporter, then we must, if we would be consistent, extend to it the right hand of fellowship.

I believe that C. E. is not opposed to our plea for union; but that it is in harmony with, and that it has been raised up by God for the purpose of hastening the day when we shall all be one; by preparing the church for union, for the following reasons:

1. C. E. fosters and cultivates the spirit of interdenominational fellowship. We never can exert any appreciable influence for Christian union if we stand at a distance and hurl our thunder-bolts against the walls of denominationalism and issue our invectives against those behind the ramparts. Before the religious world is ready to listen with any degree of interest to our plea for union, we must come into closer relationship. There must be a cultivation of the fraternal spirit.

There was a seeming necessity for the denominational movement growing out of the confusion attending the coming out from the great apostasy. There is now no excuse for it; but the first step towards Christian union is interdenominational fellowship. We must know each other better.

The closer denominations come together, exhibiting the one towards the other the Christ spirit, the nearer we are to union. One great barrier in the way of the onward march of the union movement is our own sectarianism. While we have been so eloquently denouncing this evil of sectarianism, we have in some places become narrower, more bigoted, and more extremely sectarian than those whom we have opposed. Never was there a sect more hide-bound than some sections of our own people. In many instances we have warped, and twisted, and dwarfed the fundamental principles underlying our restoration movement into as cast-iron a creed as was ever framed by ecclesiastical court or ecumenical council. What we need is to come into closer contact with our brethren in these denominations to discover that many of them have travelled further along the road of Christian perfection than we, and that they are not wholly bad. C. E. is a potent factor in purging us of our sectarianism and in giving us a broader view of our work. It removes and eradicates that narrow spirit which characterized the Apostle John in his early days with Jesus. Luke ix. 49, 53-56. Our attitude towards them cannot be the same as our attitude to the world. We manifest more indignation against denominations than Christ did against sinners. Christ opposed sin, we denominationalism.

There has been no other religious movement since the days of the great apostasy that has brought the people of all religious organizations into such

close relationship as the Y. P. S. C. E. The result has been the disappearance of much that seemed to have been a barrier, and the bringing into prominence of those great principles on which all agree—a diminishing of our differences and a mighty magnifying of our points of harmony.

2. C. E. is teaching the religious world the power and necessity of a united church.

Never in the history of this dispensation have there been such conventions as those held at Minneapolis, New York, Montreal, by the Y. P. S. C. E. Christ prayed that we all might be one for a purpose, viz.: that the world might believe that God sent His Son to redeem it. This continent never before so felt the power of Christianity as it did at New York in 1892, when nearly twenty-five thousand C. E.'s from all parts of the world met in that great metropolis for the purpose of magnifying and glorifying "Christ and the church."

This power was felt not as an ecclesiastical body, who through its systems of underground railroads was influencing by hook or by crook the legislative assemblies, parliaments and congresses; but as a mighty army of consecrated men and women, unitedly standing for purity, morality "for Christ" and against all forms of vice and political corruption. The church is beginning to realize her power for Christ when united, and she is using her strength to purge herself of the evil of division. Such eminent divines as Parkhurst and others are speaking in more forcible language if possible against the sin of division than did the pioneers of the restoration.

It was the French and Indian wars of 1690, and later which, compelling the thirteen colonies to unite in a common cause, gave them the knowledge of the power of their united forces, that when the time came they were able to free themselves from the oppression and blinded tyranny of the parent land. C. E. is teaching the religious world the power of a united church, and is thus a potent factor in arousing her to over-throw the walls of denominationalism and to unite as one in answer to Christ's prayer against the powers of darkness.

3. The creed of C. E. or its battle-cry is the creed of the church; the battle-cry of Christendom—"For Christ and the church." The very object towards which we have been working is the elevation of Christ to His proper place in the church—the Head.

Father Clark at New York expressed himself with some surprise at seeing the striking resemblance between the principle of C. E. and that underlying our movement. Would you ask for a better creed, "Christ and the church?" and will not young people trained and taught to acknowledge Christ as the Head and to look to Him as the one of supreme authority in time repudiate all human creeds and confessions as authoritative?

4. Any movement that will give the church a larger and grander conception of Christ's mission, and a fuller and richer measure of the Christ spirit, will immeasurably affect and hasten the day when Christian union will be consummated.

It removes from the hearts and minds of the young men and women all bias and prejudice which are inimical to union. Hopkins says, "The Y. P. S. C. E., whenever born, bursts the shell of denominationalism and seeks the freer atmosphere of a broader fellowship among the people of God." Would that C. E. might be born in many of our congregations if it would but burst the shell of sectarianism in which they are encased, giving them a fuller and broader conception of our

plea. C. E. is the power that is forcing open the floodgates that confine the rivers of free investigation. City and county unions of C. E. are bringing the best of all the denominations together, broadening their conceptions of fellowship and impressing upon their hearts and minds the joy and blessedness of a united people working together in Christian sympathy and love. In fact, C. E. is the beginning of C. U. In view of these facts then, as a people, can we consistently do otherwise than give C. E. our earnest and hearty support? GEO. FOWLER.

Annual Address.

BY REV. FRANCIS E. CLARK, D. D.
President of the United Society of
Christian Endeavor.

Delivered at the Thirteenth International Convention, Cleveland, July 12, 1894.

A picturesque scene is that which the Scriptures record as occurring near the close of the life of the Prophet Elisha. The dying seer places his hands upon the hands of King Joash, which hold the royal bow and arrow, and he tells him to shoot. The King obeys, and out of the open window the arrow speeds, while the prophet cries out, "The arrow of the Lord's deliverance and the arrow of deliverance from Syria."

Then said the prophet, "Take the arrows, and smite upon the ground." And he smote thrice, and stayed. "And the man of God was wroth with him and said, "Thou shouldst have smitten five or six times; then hadst thou smitten Syria till thou hadst consumed it, whereas now thou shalt smite Syria but thrice."

Some such message comes to us, Christian Endeavorers, on the occasion of this our thirteenth Convention.

"Strike. Strike in the name of the Lord."

"Strike again for the principles that have made you strong."

"Strike once more for converted loyalty and outspoken devotion and definite service."

"Strike again for Christian Citizenship and for the Extension of the Kingdom in all lands, and for your World-wide Fellowship."

"Do not be content with one, two or three blows for the right. Strike, and strike, and strike again until the day is won."

If I can read aright the times, this is the message for to-day.

1. Strike once more for the principles that have made Christian Endeavor strong.

As an organization becomes popular and vigorous, it sometimes forgets the principles that gave it strength and vigor.

Let that never be said of the Society of Christian Endeavor.

What are our principles? If I know anything about them, they are the ideas involved in the Pledge, the Consecration Meeting and the Committees.

We have struck with these arrows three times, but let us not excite the just wrath of God's prophets by staying our hands. Four, five, six, perhaps sixty-six times do we need to reiterate the truth involved in our pledge; that it is reasonable to vow and to pay unto God our vows, that there is nothing in the Christian Endeavor pledge that the weakest and obscurest young Christian cannot fulfil; that this, more than all other things, gives lasting power to our Society, and that without it, in its substance, no Endeavor Society is worthy of the name.

So for the Consecration Meeting. This is our land of Florida, where we not only seek, but find the fountain of perpetual youth. Our hour of consecration is our hour of rejuvenation. Antæus touched earth with but one