

Current Topics and Events.

THE WESLEY CENTENNIAL.

In the month of March twenty-five millions of "people called Methodists" will have their thoughts directed to the centennial anniversary of the death of John Wesley. The General Conference has directed that on Sunday, March 1st, sermons commemorative of that event shall be preached in all our churches. We would take the liberty of making the further suggestion that our Sunday-schools and Epworth Leagues throughout the country should also have a suitable commemoration. That it may be worthy of the occasion, no time should be lost in beginning to prepare therefor. Where practicable, we would further suggest that, on Monday evening, March 2nd, the combined Epworth Leagues or Sunday-schools in our towns and cities should have a joint meeting, at which short papers should be read, or addresses given on the Epworth rectory, its home-life and influence, and on the different aspects of early Methodism, and its development. A selection of the excellent hymns of John Wesley in our hymn-book might be sung, such as Nos. 54, 131, 207, 392, 494, 594, and 611. In this way the thought and attention of the young Methodists of Canada might be directed as never before to the providential origin of Methodism and its development throughout the world. To hold such meetings successfully will require considerable local energy and effort. A committee representing the Young People's Associations or Schools should take it in hand at the earliest opportunity. If a public meeting on a week-night be not held, we hope that, at least, special prominence will be given in all our Epworth Leagues and Sunday-schools to the lessons of the life and labours of the founder of Methodism.

We shall give several illustrated articles in both *MAGAZINE* and *On-*

ward on early Methodism, and on the life and death of its founder. Dr. Ryerson's book on "Epochs of Canadian Methodism" will also give much interesting information, and so especially will the new centennial volume now in press.

The Rev. Dr. M. P. Morrow, in the *New York Christian Advocate* says:—Students of literature are familiar with the evergrowing fame of Mr. Wesley among the great teachers of our time. Macaulay's declaration that "he had a genius for government not inferior to Richelieu," was followed by Buckle's finer characterization, that "he was the greatest of ecclesiastical legislators;" and now comes Mr. Leckey, saying, "he has had a wider constructive influence in the sphere of practical religion than any other man who has appeared since the sixteenth century."

In spite of this, I do not think that Mr. Wesley is honoured enough by his followers on this side of the Atlantic. Whitefield received his award. Like Petrarch, he put his hand upon his own laurel wreath. A preacher only, yet what a preacher! His work was ephemeral, for it was unorganized. But within Methodism Wesley is immeasurably greater than Whitefield, and we, beyond the touch of his vanished hand, ought to keep his memory green.

To do this we may surely seize the centennial of his death as a providential hour in which to tell the story of his life and speak his praise. Many of our people stand under the shadow of his name knowing not his history or the world-wide, many-sided influences of his conduct and teaching. These justified the historian Green in saying, "The Methodists themselves are the least result of Methodism." Let something be done to arouse interest in the first and greatest Methodist.