

The helping hand calls for personal contact. It is easy to stand apart and proffer advice, but it is not so easy to get close to the fallen and do rescue work at first hand, as occasion arises. It is pleasant to mingle with the rich, the high, the influential of society; but it is often more profitable to go out of one's way to take the hand of a cripple, a beggar, or even a cast-away. The human touch is the mightiest agency on earth for the uplift of the fallen.

Only love divine can make this personal touch effective and complete. Hence we should copy our Lord's example and stretch out our hands towards God in prayer that we may reach them out to our fellow-men in help. Peter and John said to the needy man, "Look on us." They had first looked on God, and the mighty magnetism of their spirit-filled souls held the poor sufferer in a grip so tight and close that his response to their outstretched hands was immediate and his cure complete. When eye and hand thus combine what power we may possess and wield for God.

The helping hand carries with it a double blessing. It graciously blesses him that gives and him that takes, as mercy prompts its ministry. Whether we give or get the greater good by using our hands as our Lord and His Apostles used theirs is a question. The best way to solve it is by experience. Do good and you will soon realize that the boon that comes to your own heart is at least as great as that which you confer on those whom you assist. We get by giving. We grow by exercise. We become veritable giants of spiritual power by imparting of our strength to the weak whose need appeals to us daily. Young folk need to learn this fact, and by their activity in Christ's work prove it as real to-day as when He spoke and ministered to the people of His day.

The Epworth League exists for a dual purpose. It ministers to its members that they may go out and minister to others. It operates among young people to both teach them how to be good in their own personal characters and to be active in their intercourse with their fellows. Hence our motto with its dual appeal to us all: "Look up," "Lift up." The uplifted eye and the outstretched hand meet go together. The first finds in God the impelling spirit and sustaining strength whereby the second may accomplish deeds of power in the name and for the glory of the Lord. Let us learn the fine art of using our hands in daily helpful ministry.

### Next Year's Topics

On the next page will be found in general outline a list of the Topics arranged for our Epworth Leagues and other Young People's Societies for the coming year—May, 1914, to April, 1915, inclusive. A careful study of this list will show its appropriateness to the meaning and purpose of the several Departments. Consider it thus in sections, not merely according to the weekly calendar, and it will be at once evident that each departmental series has its own definite end to serve. For instance, the Christian Endeavor section deals with the particular phases of the Kingdom of Christ as related both to the individual life and the League activities. The Missionary topics show the fundamental basis of the world-wide propaganda of Christianity and how it is to be carried on to a glorious consummation. The Third Department should be in a fine position to give the young people a clear and withal comprehensive idea of the great central figures of Church history and their influence in establishing and extending Christianity. In the Fourth Department the social virtues of the citizen are well outlined, and their bearing on the development of a greater and better Canadian life will become very evident as the studies proceed in course.

A great deal of thought has been given to these Topics by the committee, and they are outlined in this number so that our Leagues, Clubs and Classes desiring such a course, in whole or in part, may have an early opportunity of examining the list, which will be given more fully in a later number, and which will be printed in

attractive folder-card form and sold, as usual, by the Book Room.

We want our Leagues to make each Department count for the most possible in practical study and service, and commend the Topic series outlined to the most careful consideration of all our readers. Arrangements have been made whereby we shall give, from month to month, suitable suggestive treatment in our pages, and we trust that more and more the League life—intellectual, social, spiritual—may become increasingly healthy, strong and useful.

### Our Statistical Returns

On another page will be found the statistical totals, or most of them, for the year 1912-13, as made by the Rev. C. D. Baldwin, General Conference Statistician. The figures are later than usual in appearing, on account of the failure of one Conference Secretary to duly forward the schedule of his Conference. It will be noted that Mr. Baldwin's totals in Sunday School Membership vary a little from those given by the General Secretary early in the autumn. We did our very best to tabulate correctly, but had no official returns from the Conference referred to above. Hence, as the Statistician, when he received the schedule in question, discovered an error in the totals and has made the necessary correction, his totals show a few less members than we announced. Considering the handicap we were under we think we came wonderfully near being correct. The official figures for our work in China, just received from Dr. Endicott, give us 3,720, being 220 more than our estimate.

From a letter received from Mr. Baldwin in reference to these matters of statistics it is clear that:

1. Secretaries of Annual Conferences cannot too jealously guard the official schedules.
2. Exceeding care should be exercised by the Statistical Committee of the Annual Conference in making the totals harmonize throughout.
3. The Secretary of each Annual Conference should personally see that a duly certified schedule of his Conference is forwarded to Mr. Baldwin, *early* after the rise of Conference.
4. At least three of the Conferences have made no distinction between Active and Associate members in the Epworth League, so that we are unable to give the classified members, but only the total membership—a fact which we very much regret.

### Classified Members

We have pointed out (see 4 above) that some of our Annual Conferences are apparently indifferent to the classification of Epworth League membership as provided by the Constitution, and that instead of giving the number of Active and Associate members respectively, only the grand total is given in the Conference official schedules.

This is to be regretted because it seems to indicate an indifference to the Active Members' Pledge which, in our judgment, will seriously affect the efficiency of our young people's work. The pledge is vital to our success. Its principles lie at the very root centres of Christian character. To ignore or belittle these is most dangerous. We remember full well that at the General Conference in Victoria, 1910, there was a disposition in some minds to abolish the pledge altogether. A recommendation was made in committee to make Church membership the ground of Active membership in the League. We opposed this, believing that without the vitalizing and unifying forces of a definite pledge, the League life would soon become weak and spiritless as far as real aggressive work for God is concerned.

We have yet to learn of a League that has well filled its place and performed its constitutional functions in the life of the Church, where the pledge has been obliterated or ignored. It is already apparent that this matter may again come under consideration next year; but we trust that the wisdom of the General Conference will maintain