

An Epoch in Canadian Endeavor

The First Dominion Convention at Montreal Marks the Dawn of a New Era

MONTREAL '99" had been the watchword for progressive Canadian Endeavorers for three years of expectant service and preparation. Hopes and fears mingled as the time drew near for the great federating convention that was to present to the world the vision of Christian Endeavor with a united front for inspiration and effort from ocean to ocean throughout our Dominion. There had not been lacking doubters here and there who with feeble croak foretold failure; but the time has come and gone, and they are silenced by the honest verdict of events which pronounces this first great Dominion gathering a success. In many features it was uniquely successful. It was unique in having representation from every province in the Dominion, and from several foreign countries. It was unique in the strength of its programme, notwithstanding the disappointing absence of Dr. Chapman. It was unique in its great mass meetings. It was unique in the practical nature of its sessions. It was unique in its blessed Quiet Hour gatherings in the mornings; but time would fail me to tell of its numerous other points of strength and helpfulness. Montreal has given a new impetus to our work, it has crystalized a new idea in Canadian Endeavor, the national idea; let it be our aim to cultivate carefully the good seed sown, so that we may reap a rich harvest when the next federal gathering is held in Toronto in 1903.

The Opening Meeting.

The opening session was held in St. James Methodist church on Thursday evening, October 5th. Over 2000 people thronged the magnificent edifice and listened attentively to the addresses of welcome and replies. Mr. James Wilson spoke for the Committee of '99, and the Rev. William Sparling, B.D., for the ministers of the city. In response, addresses were made by the Rev. S. P. Rose, D.D., for the Canadian Council, Mr. W. L. Shurtleff for Quebec, Rev. E. S. Rowe for Ontario, and the ubiquitous C. J. Atkinson for Manitoba and the West. At the close of the session a reception to the delegates was held in the spacious schoolroom. Social intercourse, light refreshments, and sweet music held a vast concourse of happy people until long after ten o'clock. It was an auspicious opening for the great convention.

The Quiet Hour.

Friday morning found a gathering of some two hundred delegates met at eight o'clock for the Quiet Hour. This continued to be, each morning with increasing attendance, one of the most helpful sessions of the convention. The first business session of Friday was taken up with the report of the Canadian Council found

elsewhere in this issue. On its completion, Mr. John Willis Baer, who had in the meantime arrived, was introduced to the convention and enthusiastically received. He gave an interesting account of his recent visits to many portions of the C. E. vineyard, and reported everywhere growth and fruitfulness. Rev. Dr. George, of the Congregational College, was then introduced to deliver the convention sermon on "Christian Stewardship for the World's Needs."

He took as a basis for his remarks Matt. 21: 41, "Who shall render Him the fruits in their season." There was no patent plan to accomplish this. Methods belong to the individual needs of churches. Because "Zion is small"—only a fraction of the peoples of the nations being Christians—is no excuse for non-performance of duty. The Church is not built up by grand edifices, or any other attraction, but by the power of God. By what mediums does He exercise Himself? (1) Providence; God's hand is in the affairs of the world. (2) The work of the Holy Spirit. (3) Human instrumentality.

To be successful workers we must have purity—it is absolutely necessary to be fashioned after the life of Christ. All sin is besetting. None of us is stronger than our weakest side. Our hope and strength is in God.

We must be wholly given up to the service of God. We must not tarry for special and extraordinary opportunities for work.

We need special equipment. Fit yourself for your work. Skilled workmen always find work.

We should recognize the importance of our stewardship and be satisfied with our position. The place God calls us to is the most important work for us to do, and we should not underestimate our position or our ability. Dr. George gave an illustration of two young men—one of whom felt that he was called of God to the mission field, the other who was equally persuaded that it was his duty to give up fitting himself for a professional career and devote himself to the support of his widowed mother and younger brother and sisters by becoming a clerk in a hardware store (an actual case of the kind had occurred in Montreal). It was noble to go to heathen lands and give up home and kindred for the sake of the Master; was it not equally valuable service that the hardware clerk rendered at home? The Church did much for the young missionary—it paid his expenses; it sent him off with prayers and good wishes. What did the Church do for the young man in the hardware store? The tendency was that such were often neglected; but in that day when the Master should call His own many would come forth, not only from the colleges and the pulpit, but from the obscure and neglected allotments in life in which humble service had been rendered.