Why I Am a Methodist

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A DMIRATION and reverence for John Wesley, for the history of the church he founded; affection for the memory of Wesleyan forbears; these are reasons, but not sufficient nor the most important, why I or anyone else should be a Methodist.

Before a boy or girl in a Christian home is twenty, he or she should have faced this question deliberately and solemnly, and found an answer.

The members of the church that Methodism needs urgently are not those that are Methodists merely for historical and family reasons, but those that have come to the parting of the ways, have considered and have made a deliberate choice. For I cannot help thinking, that those who more or less mechanically carry on the family traditions are those who will most easily slip away to other churches, or break away from a religious life and society altogether, simply because the root of their bellef is not in them.

On the other hand it is those who are Methodists by deep personal conviction that are going to do the church's best work and leave their mark on their day and generation, for only they can be enhusiastic; their words and their actions will be impelled by a power within that will overcome difficulty and influence

others helpfully. The merely hereditary Methodists are not those who study deeply the history of the Church and its institutions, nor are they those who most share in and profit by its deeper religious life and means of grace. There came to me in my teens, as to thousands more, a time when I wayered, and asked myself this very ques-tion: "Why am I a Methodist?" I was strongly tempted to leave my church for professional reasons and these very potent. Then, the Church of England at tracted me by its beautiful liturgy, by the reverence shown towards the house of God, so often lacking with us, by its attention to music and architecture. For weighed matters carefully, and long I eventually decided to remain a Methodist, for which decision I am every year more devoutly thankful to God.

To-day I am not only a staunch Methodist, but I am proud, ever so proud, to

bear the name.

There are many things about Methodism that have convinced me that it is the church for me.

Its creed, while demanding full belief in the great and vital points, does not harass with petty dogmas and details that restrict and narrow down faith and membership.

Its organization seems to me to be nearest the ideal; while there is great unity of sympathy and interest, there is ample scope for individuality whether of person or community. The control is careful, yet it allows freedom.

Methodism seems to me to be the church that has studied most the conditions of the time, and adapted itself to them. Thus it has at all times won its way and appealed to the race at large.

It has been the pioneer in methods of reaching the masses. It was John Wesley who to any great extent began work in prisons, hospitals, the army and navy. It was Methodism, too, that urged and worked for the education of the lower classes, before any other community took the matter up.

Another point that endears the church to me is its devotion to foreign missions. Never spake Wesley a truer word than when he said: "The world is my parish," and our own Society holds an honored place in the record of missionary labors in all parts of the world. For the lonely soul, Methodism does more, it does God's work; for the Psalmist says: "He setteth the solitary in families." To my mind Methodism has proved to be most homelike, hospitable and friendly. Our much-berated litherant system has this good result at any race, that it is difficult to go anywhere without meeting someone who knows your old or present minister; the constant changing, and our particular system of government, bring members of the Methodist Church in all parts of the world into close relationship. Years ago someone said to me: "The Methodists are the kindest people living, and the most sociable;" an opinion I endorse with all my heart. In fact, in these days of compulsory removal notes and careful looking up, it is impossible to get lost. If we are not attached to the church in a new town, then

Methodism has made it possible for any be, to use it on behalf of the church; indeed, there is not only room for such gifts, but they are urgently needed to complete the whole scheme of the society's life. Gifts, social, artistic, scholastic, domestic, spiritual or secular, unique, common-place,—all are wanted and all

can be used.

Lastly and most importantly, I am a Methodist because this church supplies my spiritual needs as I firmly believe no other can.

Behind, above, below, around all her social, communal, systematic life there is the intense spirituality which we inherit unchanged, undimmed, from Wesley's day and from himself.

There is nothing so lofty, so devotional, so heart-searching, so awe-inspiring as our covenant service, rightly entered into. Other churches are recognizing the value of this and kindred institutions of ours, and are copying them. And this, the first great service of the year, is the keynote of our spiritual life as it is expected to be. If we can live through each year in the spirit of that covenant, then we are Methodists indeed. Our watch-night service is akin to it. And our class-meeting, rightly used, is not only the distinctive feature of our church, but one of the finest means of grace envied by earnest members of other churches. We cannot afford to let this go if we are to keep our church's right place, and our own place in the ranks of that church.

Let every member of our great church be a Methodist from the bottom of his heart, and from honest, devout conviction, and Methodism will be once again—as in the days of Wesley—a power to keep Old England sane, tranquil, safe, and to keep her also the standard-bearer for righteousness, liberty and hollness, the wide world over.—From The Guild.

Systematic Bible Study Popularized

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I T is possible to lead Epworth Leaguers to study their Bibles carefully. This ought to be assumed and carried out more widely, for why can it not be accomplished? Our young people in these days have excellent public school privileges and a very large number of them pass the High School Entrance Examination, thus reaching a standard of mental activity by no means low. Moreover, they read many books and glance through papers and magazines in abundance. The Epworth League in its Bible Study may provide an excellent means for its members to continue their mental activity after leaving public school to engage in business life, and that too in a field vastly more inviting, if properly presented.

Acting with this conviction, the writer suggested to his Leaguers the necessity of a systematic study and gained their assent to engage in the same at each regular meeting of the League for at least one month.

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St. Paul's beautiful and suggestive epistie "First Corinthians," was chosen, as a basis of study. The pastor agreed to act as teacher and guide, and the Leaguers with note-books and pencils, constituted a class. At a meeting for example—after devotional exercises, lasting about twenty minutes, during which time singing and prayer for Divine guidance were the order, the balance of the hour—forty minutes—was spent in study. All were requested to listen carefully to an exposition of a portion of the Epistie for about twenty-five minutes and then for fifteen minutes remaining, as dictated by the teacher, they recorded in brief synoptic form the chief points previously taught. Thus all could listen comfortably, knowing that time would be allowed for the purpose of recording

what was being taught.

To this seemingly crude or kinder-garten method of procedure, it is believed, much was owing. The course was lengthened to six weeks and was carried out with no small amount of

satisfaction to the majority, although some withdrew when they learned that close attention and hard thinking were required. After a brief space allowed for review all were invited to write an

examination based on the notes taken. Eight of the most studious presented themselves for the work, one very warm afternoon in the church and acquitted themselves nobly, obtaining an average of 70 per cent. Their answers indicated an intelligent comprehension of the chief problems in the Epistle. The following is a list of the questions asket:

1. Describe the ancient city of Corinth and its people.

2. Name the parties into which the church at Corinth was divided. What advice did St. Paul give them?

3. Give St. Paul's advice to women concerning their conduct in the church?

4. Name the chief architect wow.

Give St. Paul's advice to women concerning their conduct in the church?
 Name the chief spiritual gifts mentioned. To which did St. Paul attach most importance?

5. What did the Corinthians believe about the Resurrection of Jesus Christ?

about the Resurrection of Jesus Christ?
6. Quote Chapter 187
It is fair to say that throughout the course all critical questions were left untouched and only the unquestionable results of modern Bible scholarship found statement. Occasionally reference was made to passages of exceptional literary merit.

Above all, the spiritual significance of the Epistle was emphasized in its manifold and unique application to modern life. Prof. G. G. Findlay terms this Epistle "The Epistle of the Cross in its social application."

We believe it is par excellence the "Bpistle of Christian Citizenship." Throughout its chapters much valuable advice and admonition are given also that has a personal bearing. Who can fall to be elevated by the refreshing strain of the immortal "Love" chapter and where in the realm of theological adventure is there such a deliverance a we meet in the Resurrection chorus?