



THE ANADIAN EPWORTH ERA

OUR LARGER COMRADESHIP THE TASK OF YOUNG METHODISM

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It is a privilege to be asked to give a call to arms to young Methodists throughout the world. Upon them rests the responsibility under God of so playing their part in the twentieth century that Methodism shall not be added to the spent forces of the past, but should, with splendid faith and consecration, take its part in moulding the spiritual history of the future. The Methodist revival of the eighteenth century has, perhaps, done more than any other religious movement to shape the spiritual convictions and ideals of the English-speaking races throughout the world. All dispassionate historians have recognized its untold influence in renewing and deepening Christian experience, in promoting evangelical aggression, in purifying morals, and in quickening humane sympathies. Its prevailing spirit, rather than its intellectual achievements, has made evangelical theology more gracious and generous than ever before. Its services to the new communities which have sprung up throughout the world during the past two centuries have been unspeakable. No more providential movement has taken place in the whole history of the Christian Church.

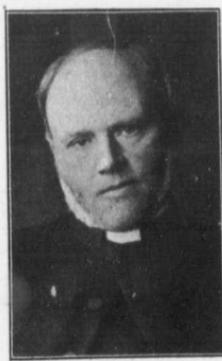
All this has given to young Methodists a priceless inheritance and set them an extremely high standard of consecrated service. Every distinctive element of its influence, rightly understood, is more congenial to the twentieth century than to either of those that have gone before. *Spiritual experience, world wide evangelism, broad humanity, are the religious watchwords of our age.* Of each of these, and of all in combination, Methodism should be one of the mightiest exponents. All that is required is that the rising generation should have the insight to perceive the true meaning of the Methodist tradition, the high courage and unworldliness that are needed in order to give full expression to it at the present day. Concentration upon the highest and consecration to give effect to it,—these are the two things that above all are wanted. All that need be added is the joyful confidence and the boundless energy that marked our forefathers in their service to the Kingdom of Christ.

A new world is at present in the making. The federation of mankind is no longer a dream of visionaries, but is becoming part of the practical politics of the world. The

vision of Ezekiel is being fulfilled on an unprecedented scale. The valley of vision is now the world. The bones and sinews are coming together. The flesh and skin are covering them above. What is needed is the breath of the Spirit; the higher life of inspiration by which they may live. In other words mankind is becoming before our eyes one vast organism, and what it waits for is the redemption and quickening through which the transforming grace of Christ may control and empower the activities of the world.

To make the Gospel known to all mankind, this is the first task. *The missionary call is the first that should be heard by young Methodists.* It should embrace and direct every sympathy and endeavour of their lives. The first-fruits of this missionary endeavour will be the promotion of close fellowship between all churches and all peoples. While promoting this wider fellowship young Methodists should seek to bring all English-speaking peoples together in the closest co-operation, to promote the interests of Christianity and humanity whenever they are endangered by international action.

Another great task is opening up before the civilized communities of the world. This is to secure for the weakest and most defenceless such favourable conditions of life as will promote and not injure their highest welfare. The forces of selfishness, impulse, and arbitrary freedom must be controlled and transformed by the highest conscience of the community as a whole. If the heathen world is to be won for Christ, the Christian peoples must present to the world an object lesson of what the Christian religion can do, not merely in the individual, but in the economic, social, and political spheres, to uplift humanity and to make Christian civilization a pattern to the world. Above all, young Methodists should exemplify and uphold the moral interests upon which the worth and future of our civilization depend. The call and opportunity reveal unbounded possibilities. Happily the grace and power of Christ are more than sufficient to enable us to answer to them. Let us seek the Baptism of the Spirit, and then go forth, with joyful courage, to our great task.



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