

# Our Young People

## Thanksgiving Meeting.

Topic for November 26.—“Our return for thn Lord's benefits.”—Ps 116: 12-19.

### Thanksgiving.

BY WOODFORD.

The verbs “think” and “thank” are from the same root; the actions are also closely allied. Those who “exercise the power of thought” will make acknowledgment of gratitude for benefits, favors, or kindnesses. There will not be many in our Canadian C. E. Societies, who, although Thanksgiving Day for the Dominion has been observed, if they care to think, will not find much to interest them in a second consideration of a Thanksgiving Topic.

TOPIC.—What definite answer will those who study their topic give to the question in v. 12 of this reading? In the daily readings that follow a clear line of thought is suggested, showing that our returns for all our benefits ought to be to God for His favors to individuals, to the church, to the nation. When the first has been thought out, and the blessings to the individual, the church, the nation outlined there may well follow papers on giving of thanks by word and by life.

MONDAY.—Thanksgiving is to be to God for we ourselves are not our own but His. And from Him cometh down every good and perfect gift. He made us to be capable of receiving, appreciating, and using these good gifts. His mercy and faithfulness are shown alike in our creation, redemption, and sanctification. In His works God hides Himself, in the multitude of His good works, as the stalks of some rose trees are themselves hidden by the profusion of bloom. This reading seeks for recognition of Him in and behind these manifestations of His love so that all our gratitude to nature, to nation, to father, to mother, to companion, to friend: could be thanksgiving to Him. In the alchemy of piety all our joy may be turned into gratitude.

TUESDAY.—Think carefully before going to the meeting of the works and acts, the greatness, goodness, and righteousness, the tender mercies, the longsuffering, the mercy, the glory of the kingdom, the power, the raising, the sustaining power of God, His open-handedness, how gracious He is in all His works, how high He is to all who call upon Him in truth. One great cause of our insensibility to the goodness of the Creator is the very extensiveness of His bounty. Think how God has shown Himself to you in all the ways spoken of in this psalm, and see if your mouth shall not also speak the praise of the Lord, and that in such a way that your doing of the same will in some way be the means of bringing all flesh to glory in His holy name.

WEDNESDAY.—The joy of the whole earth, as that is the Lord's, is in the

church of God; the salt of the earth and the light of the world are the saints of God. The palaces of the church have at times been the dens and caves of the earth, but there as much as elsewhere God has made Himself known for a refuge. Kings and rulers have taken counsel against her, but their counsels came to nought, for it is written: “The gates of hell shall not prevail against her.” Who can outline God's favors to the Presbyterian church in Canada during the past year, in connection with our congregational work, our home and foreign missions, the inspiration rousing us to shoulder-to-shoulder support in the matter of the Century Fund? What shall we return unto the Lord for all these benefits?

THURSDAY.—Plans were formed last year for the nation, some bad, some good. Some of both fell through, not all of either. But since it is righteousness which alone exalteth a nation it is good that the bad miscarried; and because God standeth behind the shadow keeping watch above His own we know that if we continue to put our trust in Him He will make all that is had to miscarry and prosper what is right now and forever. For all gifts then, all overruling, all inspiration resulting in spiritual uplifting let us thank God—as also deplore all abuse of His mercies there has been in our natural life.

FRIDAY.—If it has been thought out why our acknowledgement of favors is due to God, and the facts calling for thanksgiving have been clearly outlined it is now in order to consider how we ought to express our thanks. Let us speak our thanks to God then for His goodness, and cry unto Him in our trouble that He may deliver us out of our distresses. Forget not His promise that He will satisfy the longing soul, and fill the hungry soul with good. It shall indeed be good for us to think so carefully that we shall be able to put in words a certain measure of thanks for some of the innumerable blessings He has bestowed upon us.

SATURDAY.—There is the danger of course of approaching Him with our lips while our hearts are far from Him. It is possible for people to content themselves with saying “Lord, Lord” and not seeking above all to do the will of the Father in Heaven. Such a life as is set forth in this Psalm is true thanksgiving—saying and doing are both alike the expression of a regenerate nature.

Who knows? God knows, and what He knows  
Is well and best.  
The darkness hideth not from Him, but glows  
Clear as the morning or the evening rose  
Of east or west.

—Christina Rossetti.

### Missing Praise.

It is said that once when Sir Michael Costa was having a rehearsal, with a vast array of performers and hundreds of voices as the mighty chorus rang out with thunder of the organ and roll of drums and ringing horns and cymbals clashing, some one man who played the piccolo far away up in some corner said without himself, “In all this din it matters not what I do;” and so he ceased to play. Suddenly the great conductor stopped, flung up his hands, and all was still, and then he cried aloud, “Where is the piccolo?” The quick ear missed it, and all was spoiled because it failed to take its part.

O my soul do thy part with all thy might! Little thou mayst be, insignificant and hidden, and yet God seeks thy praise. He listens for it, and all the music of His great universe is made richer and sweeter because thou givest Him thanks. Bless the Lord, O my soul  
—Mark Guy Pearse.

### Thanking God First.

The conduct of men in great emergencies often rebukes the ingratitude and lack of self-control in every-day life. Nansen's countryman, Dr. Sven Hedin, after suffering from hunger and thirst for hours in unexplored Asia, found a large pool of clear water. “I thanked God first,” says he, “and then I felt my pulse. I wanted to see the effect that drinking would have on it. Then I drank.” Religion and science, in the face of the imperious demands of the physical nature thus asserted their controlling power.—  
The Youth's Companion.

### Hints for Talks and Testimonies.

How is it possible in everything to give thanks? What are some of the Lord's benefits that we are most likely to overlook?

What reasons are there for giving thanks?

What are some of the causes that will prevent thankfulness?

What connection is there between gratitude to man and gratitude to God?

How is thankfulness connected with other Christian graces?

How does recognizing God's benefits add to one's joy?

In what way does God expect us to make return for His benefits?

How may we make return to others for the Lord's benefits to us?

What are tests of sincere thanksgiving?

### For Daily Reading.

Mon., Nov. 20.—To God. Ps. 100: 1-5  
Tues., Nov. 21.—For blessings to the individual. Ps. 145: 1-21  
Wed., Nov. 22.—For blessings to the church. Ps. 48: 1-8; 97: 1-7  
Thurs., Nov. 23.—For blessings to the nation. Ps. 124: 1-8  
Fri., Nov. 24.—By word. Ps. 107: 1-9  
Sat., Nov. 25.—By life. Ps. 15: 1-5  
Sun., Nov. 27.—Topic. Our return for the Lord's benefits. Ps. 118: 12-19. (A thanksgiving meeting.)

Speaking upon the question of the decoration of St. Paul's Cathedral, at a meeting of the City Corporation, Mr. Morton said a great deal of money spent on the decorations had been wasted on High Church accessories utterly out of place in a Protestant cathedral.