

# THE Canadian Epworth Era

DEVOTED TO THE STUDY OF PRINCIPLES AND METHODS OF  
WORK IN YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES AND SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

## At Home with the Editor

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### Find the Question

—No organized society for Christian work is automatic.  
—It cannot run itself, but must be controlled by orderly arrangement and intelligent management.

—Whatever its name, and no matter how complete its component parts, it will fall unless the organization is used as a means, not an end.

—To organize simply means that each unit of membership is put into such relation to the rest that effective work may result in consequence.

—Until each member feels a sense of personal responsibility for the success of the whole, best results are practically impossible of realization.

—No individual, therefore, can be inactive without in some measure retarding the rest, and to some degree his inactivity must certainly detract from the greatest practical efficiency.

—When all individual units act in harmony and co-operation, according to the governing principles and laws of the organized body, no circumstance or combination of circumstances can prevent success.

—Our fear is that we have too many members of organizations in church, Sunday School and League, who are quite satisfied to "belong" only, without feeling any responsibility of helping to make the machinery go.

—In the face of the foregoing, we must conclude that every individual among us is either a helper or a hinderer; that to be the former, even though in weakness, is a credit; but to be the latter is a damage and a disgrace. The question now is, "Which am I?" Intelligently ask it, honestly answer it.

### A Good Grip

The old-time message to the Philadelphian Christians may well be repeated to-day. "Hold fast that which thou hast," was good advice. The danger was then, and is now, that the most valuable things in life be held too loosely, so lightly indeed that they became lost. The early believers had not all Spiritual treasure, but what they had was well worth preserving, even though in defence of it, much else should be given up. So to-day. You have something of value. Therefore hold it fast. Take a good grip of it. Apply this to Truth. You cannot compass it all. But do not part with what you have. Take Faith. Yours may not be great, but you cannot afford to lose it. Yes! a good grip is necessary. Take a fast hold on Duty. Do it steadily and with stolid determination. Never compromise. Take a good grip on good habits. Do not hold these so carelessly that you can part with one and scarcely know where, how, or when it left you. The habit of prayer, practice regularly. The habit of Bible Study, make your daily usage. Get a good grip of public worship. Hold tight to the Sabbath. Let clean thoughts, helpful books, wholesome companionships, recreative pleasures, only, get hold of you. For the process is mutual. What we seize with a tight grip, grips us in turn. And what is more painful and pitiful than to see a young person held in the unrelaxing grip of evil habit? Satan is well satisfied if he can induce a young Christian to slacken his hold on any Christlike virtue or practice. Yes! there is so much at stake that none of us can afford to be careless, therefore "Hold fast!" If the good habits for which our League stands are daily practised there

will be little danger of loss. But if our young people are yielding, pliant, easy-going, they will surely loosen their hold, and that may involve loss irreparable. We must have a good tight grip, and like Holdfast, never let go, if we would have God keep and preserve us to His Eternal Kingdom.

### Card Playing

We know of no way in which the popular use of cards has been improved or purified since the late Dr. Holland, wise observer and accomplished writer, said, "I have all my days had a card-playing community open to my observation, and I am yet to be made to believe that that which is the universal resort of the starved in soul and intellect, which has never in any way linked to itself tender, elevating or beautiful associations—the tendency of which is to unduly absorb the attention from more weighty matters—can recommend itself to the favor of Christ's disciples. The pretence of culture and genius may embellish, but it can never dignify it." And that the ultimate end of the habit is as disastrous as its passing practice is unwholesome, the doctor emphasized when he continued, "I have at this moment ringing in my ears the dying injunction of my father's early friend, 'Keep your son from cards. Over them I have murdered time and lost heaven.'" It is not for us to dogmatize or make harsh assertions regarding a "lost heaven"; but we can with confidence and assurance deplore the "murdered time" of many hundreds of modern card-players; and for the crime, for it is nothing less, surely God will hold them to account.

The parent who would keep his son from cards, as the dying man implored, must first keep cards from his son, and if other wholesome and equally attractive forms of amusement and recreation be provided at home in the boy's early years, there will be but little fear of that lad, in growing youth, bringing sorrow and heart-break to his parents by inordinate love of cards, with the almost uncontrollable tendency to gambling that grows therefrom.

### A Great Occasion

In one of his letters to young men, preachers in particular, Dr. Buckley wrote over twenty-five years ago this tersely-stated sentence: "Make every occasion a great one." The advice was not lost upon us. It is of special force to young beginners still. Not only is it a great occasion to preach God's word, but it is none the less so to teach it. To stand before any kind of an audience to make application of the truths of the Gospel is a great occasion. Whether the congregation be gathered in spacious church or in lowly log cabin does not matter. Whether there be thousands or a score, the occasion is still great. The preacher who does less than his best because numbers are few or circumstances unpropitious will make an irreparable blunder. The Sunday school teacher who does not make the best possible preparation for the teaching period because the occasion is considered small is untrue to both the Book and the class. Have you an Epworth League meeting to lead, a lesson to read, a topic to prepare, an address to give? Do not think it trivial, and consequently neglect it, or at best slight your preparation. It is not a small, inconsequential affair. Make it a great occasion, and do your best.

"They who march in faith pray better than those who kneel in fear."—Meyer.