

## C. L. S. C.

It may safely be said that of all who glance at these apparently cabalistic symbols, to not one-tenth do they convey any meaning. And yet, here we have one of the most far-reaching movements in the modern world, and one which is doing much to lift to a higher plane, to give a purpose in life, to bind together in one far-reaching circle "all sorts and conditions of men."

To Bishop Vincent is due the honour of inaugurating the movement—the work of the Chautauqua Literary and Scientific Circle, a home college encircling the earth with a band of now, perhaps, a hundred thousand enthusiastic students. Think of it, Canadians, and blush! There are already in Japan two thousand who are reading the course—as many as in all Canada. At Chautauqua Lake, not far from Buffalo, met about a dozen years ago a band of Sunday School workers. Next occurred the idea of a four years' course of reading. A summer assembly, with educational classes, was inaugurated, with a varied programme. Thousands flocked to the spot; classes were formed in Hebrew, Greek, German, elocution, calisthenics, clay modelling; for those who did not wish to work entertainments, lectures, sermons, concerts, were provided. Forty-six assemblies, bearing a more or less close resemblance to the original Chautauqua, have been opened.

It is to our Canadian Chautauqua we wish to introduce our readers. The projectors could not have found, in all the land, a more beautiful spot. On historic ground, near where La Salle was wrecked, two hundred years ago, when setting out to explore the Mississippi; on the very ground, drenched with the blood of Canadian and British soldiers in 1813, in view of Forts Niagara and Mississauga, where the broad Niagara falls into our beautiful Lake Ontario, the old Crook's farm has been turned into the Niagara assembly grounds. A spacious amphitheatre, the acoustic properties of which are unsurpassed, and rivalling that at Chautauqua, New York, in size, has been built; also, one wing of a magnificent hotel, this year crowded with guests, twenty or more beautiful cottages have risen, as by magic; white tents dot the sward; noble oaks and fruit trees give a grateful shade. The facilities for boating and bathing are unequalled, that beautiful accomplishment swimming being taught. Visitors from different parts of the world are struck with the many beauties of the spot. The sunsets are magnificent. The beauties of sunrise are not so well known; one gentleman remarks that from one spot both sights might be seen. Not soon can be forgotten the sight of the sun slowly sinking in the lake, while a flood of glory fills all the air and gorgeous tints follow quickly each other.

Strange to say, there has been much opposition to the scheme, principally from that potent and not easily removed factor, ignorance. The general idea of a camp meeting prevailed; but while the religious element underlies all, denominationalism is not breathed, and certainly the chief feature is educational. Again, among some educated people, it is customary to sneer at the movement, and it has been called superficial. Let those people, who have themselves a classical education, pause before they put one straw in the way of this educational wave. The Chautauqua diploma does not ape the college degree. This is a misconception, for while there is a Chautauqua University, the diploma of the C. L. S. C. is simply a statement that a certain person has read certain books. While the course may be superficial as compared with the college curriculum, were it more exacting, it would not reach the many. It is more what it opens up, what it leads to, than what it is. And that the course is one of real merit is shown by those who take it up. Many professional men, who have already a degree, have not disdained it, glad to review what they either have forgotten or only half understood in those early days. One advantage of the course is that the work can be done alone, in the prairie home, in the distant mission field, the lonely lighthouse, or in the city, where groups meet in circles to dis-

cuss the readings, aided, perhaps, by college professors or specialists; or, still again, in the many homes, where the tired mother finds something to lift her out of every-day cares and worries, to hold her to companionship with her boys and girls, perhaps learning to despise her ignorance of their school studies, while she reads trippingly in English what they read, with pain and difficulty, in Latin, Greek, French or German; helping them to see new beauties, and thus gaining a fresh lease of power over them.

The use of these summer assemblies is now seen to be to give not entire idleness, but a change of work. Many go to study and find the ministry of sun and fresh air, clear sky, and the exercise of boating, bathing, swimming, a wonderful factor in restoring and building up the mental and physical powers. The children are delighted with the kindergarten, club swinging, calisthenics. Briefly, let us recount the work of this assembly. There were classes taught in sketching from nature, elocution, music, Sunday School work, besides the classes for the children mentioned above, and an enthusiastic rambling class in botany. Something corresponding to the teacher's retreat was begun, as interesting lessons in literature and algebra were given. We had a young Japanese minister, who showed us that Eastern civilization need not blush in the presence of our Western patronage of the "heathen." The acute Japanese intellect is ready to receive Spencer and Huxley, if we do not give it Christianity. A missionary from China showed how keen must be the intellect to argue with the Chinese men of learning; lecturers of great ability took us with them to all parts of the world; music lent its varied charm; Prof. Clark delighted us with his readings and recitations, the chariot scene in "Ben Hur" being a supreme effort; Dr. Duryea gave us his intense vivid, positive opinions; Dr. Ostrander, in his Oriental and spectacular entertainments, threw a flood of light on many passages of the Bible; Mr. Benjamin Clark, from England, gave much light on Sunday School work, boy life and English colloquialisms; Bengough gave some of his inimitable caricatures in recitations and chalk; Dr. Vincent—but what can we say of Dr. Vincent, unequalled in the control of an audience, possessing wit, humour, magnetic force, pathos, power, and last, but not least, common sense. Would that thousands more had heard his exposition of the Chautauqua idea. Twenty-seven received from him their diplomas, having finished their four years' course, some of them being from the other side of the boundary, thus showing the international character of the assembly. Last year over four thousand, from all parts of the world, received diplomas, eight hundred of these being present at the mother Chautauqua, New York. To the young these assemblies are safe places of meeting and present many advantages. No liquor is allowed on the grounds, no boating on Sunday, no ballroom dissipation, but, instead, pure intellectual enjoyment and opportunities for the best physical culture, with a mingling of sentimental and common sense. Badges are worn, flower girls strew the way, a camp fire, with a liturgical service, memorial days of the great poets, are observed, round tables are held to discuss plans of work. It is hoped that every Canadian town and hamlet may soon have its Chautauqua readers, so that instead of two thousand there may be twenty thousand.

The promoters of this Niagara Assembly have so far spent \$50,000, and must spend much more before any returns can come in. Lots are being sold and cottages built. It is pleasing to know that here were readers from at least four of the provinces of our Dominion, as well as from the State of New York. At a very enjoyable Vesper service we had words of greeting from Nova Scotia, Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, Prince Edward Island.

But a word now as to the readers, the reading, the expense, the general *modus operandi*. Send to Miss Kate F. Kimball, Plainfield, New Jersey, or to Mr. Lewis C. Peake, 18 Victoria street, Toronto, 50 cents fee, for which sum all circulars, memoranda, etc., are sent. The *Chautauquan Magazine*, having a circulation of 60,000, is acknowledged by good judges to be the best magazine of its kind published, in light reading and not a dry article in it. Much of the course of reading is here contained; price, \$.50. The four years' course embraces a little history, chemistry, literature, theology, astronomy, geology, botany, poetry, the books costing about \$5 each year, all of them books which form a welcome addition to one's library. Memo. to be filled up, not as a competitive examination, but merely to show that the reading has been done. The readers are old and young, professional and non-professional, clergymen, farmers, railway employees, teachers, servant girls, artisans, wives, mothers, husbands, sons, daughters; sometimes three generations in one family; an old lady of eighty, and a boy of fifteen. Forty minutes a day, for nine months in the year, is the time required. The central office keeps itself informed of each individual member, and thus we feel ourselves part of an active, working, literary organization.

Some of the objections are: We have no time; we can not afford the money. Of the few it may be truly and sadly said: But can not many, by denying themselves some little pet luxury, the price of an ornament, a dance, a day of pleasure, obtain instead a store of boundless enjoyment. With regard to the time required, truly the idle have no time, but the busy can always find time for other tasks; take care of the minutes and the hours will take care of themselves. There must be time to bring in a new current of thought—something nobler, higher than the everyday cares and worries, time for a rest, an oasis in the monotonous treadmill of life is to some. A suggestion here is in point: Is not a great deal of time frittered away on the newspapers, on the novel, too; and by a course of solid reading the taste for fiction—at least trashy fiction—dies. We all do far more desultory reading in the course of the year than this course. Why not then read with an object—with others gain inspiration. It would be interesting to see in what parts of our Dominion the Chautauqua idea has taken root most firmly; whether in the cities, towns, villages, or lonely farmhouses, through our land, and where these readers are. And this course is only a beginning, for special courses of reading are provided for those whose taste or fancy incline them to the lofty truths taught by astronomy, to the minute analysis of plant life, to the fascinating study of philology, or the interesting lessons on history's page. Besides the diploma, there are other higher grades: The Order of the White Seal, the League of the Round Table, the Guild of the Seven Seals. One old Presbyterian Doctor of Divinity has his diploma filled with seals, forty-three in number. We close with a C. L. S. C. sonnet:—

Encircling our fair globe, behold a band  
Of tens of thousands, turning eager eyes  
To that fair lake, and to that leader wise,  
Who formed the generous plan, far reaching, grand,  
Circle to circle, stretches each a hand,  
With faith and hope, the student lone replies.  
And down the ages still the echo flies;  
No work is lost. There sweeps o'er sea and land  
The influence of those mystic letters four,  
From west to east, Ontario to Cathay,  
What empty hearts are filled. Let us recall  
Chautauqua's gifts. Science and Art's rich store,  
History's bright page, and Poesy's mild ray,  
Religion purifies and sweetens all.

Niagara, August, 1888.

J. C.

THE HORSE MINDS HIS STEPS.—Every one has noticed, while driving, how rarely a horse steps on a stone even when going rapidly. A writer in *Golden Days* quotes an old cavalryman as saying that a horse never steps on a man intentionally. It is a standing order with cavalry that should a man become dismounted he must lie down and be perfectly still. If he does so the entire company will pass over him, and he will not be injured. A horse notices where he's going, and is on the lookout for a firm foundation to put his foot on. It is an instinct with him, therefore, to step over a prostrate man. The injuries caused by a runaway horse are nearly always inflicted by the animal knocking down, and not by his stepping.