

# The Canadian Epworth Era.

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## THE WORLD IS GROWING BETTER.

BY ELLA WHEELER WILCOX.

Oh, the earth is full of sinning  
And of trouble and of woe,  
But the devil makes an inning  
Every time you say it's so ;  
And the way to set him scowling  
And put him back a pace,  
Is to stop this stupid growling,  
And to look things in the face.

If you glance at history's pages,  
In all lands and eras known,  
You will find the vanished ages  
Far more wicked than our own.  
As you scan each word and letter,  
You will realize it more,  
That the world to-day is better  
Than it ever was before.

There is much that needs amending  
In the present time, no doubt,  
There is right that needs defending,  
There is wrong needs crushing out ;  
And we hear the groans and curses  
Of the poor who starve and die,  
While the men with swollen purses  
In the place of hearts, go by.

But in spite of all the trouble  
That obscures the sun to-day,  
Just remember it was double  
In the ages passed away ;  
And these wrongs shall all be righted,  
Good shall dominate the land,  
For the darkness now is lighted  
By the torch in science's hand.

—*The Youth's Companion.*



## A Great Wesleyan Preacher. —

Perhaps the most popular preacher in the Wesleyan Methodist Church of England is Rev. W. L. Watkinson, whose portrait adorns our first page. He will be sixty-two years of age next August. For the past six years he has been editor of the *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, and during 1897-98 was President of the Wesleyan Conference. He is of tall, lank and somewhat angular build ; his voice is not strong or musical, but his thought is unusually bright and original. The sermons preached by Dr. Watkinson during his visit to Toronto in 1896, will not soon be forgotten by those who were fortunate enough to hear them.



## Wanted—An Easy Place!—

The late Henry Ward Beecher once received a letter from a young man who recommended himself very highly as being honest, and closed with the request : "Get me an easy situation, that honesty may be rewarded." To which Mr. Beecher replied : "Don't be an editor if you

would be 'easy.' Do not try the law. Avoid school-keeping. Keep out of the pulpit. Let alone all ships, stores, shops, and merchandise. Be not a farmer, nor a mechanic, neither a soldier nor a sailor. Don't study, don't think, don't work. None of them are easy. Oh, my honest friend, you are in a very hard world. I know of but one easy place in it. That is the grave."



**Vacations.**—To most of us vacation periods are short and rather far between. We would be the better for more of them. Henry Drummond once gave a definition of a holiday, as follows : "Norway did me a world of good ; it was a clear month out of reading, out of thinking, out of planning for the future, out of responsibility for others. Not a shred of these things followed me. I forgot them all, and this I think is the true holiday—to be one's simplest self, forget the past and ignore the future."



**Helpers, not Substitutes.**—The Bishop's address which was presented to the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church contained the following reference to the Epworth League :—"The report of the Epworth League shows a quadrennium of notable activity and usefulness. A great capacity for good is in this organization. The past has proven this. But it should in no case be diverted from the local aims for which it was constituted. And the great problem which lies before this and all other auxiliaries of the Church (as Sunday Schools, Men's Brotherhoods, and King's Daughters) is to make them helpers of the church life, not substitutes for it, nor directors of the affairs of the Church. We do not affirm the existence of a marked tendency in any of these organizations toward an opposite result, but deem this word of caution not inopportune, and also of wide application."



## Interesting the Young People.—

A correspondent of the *Church Economist* writes a little parody of the entertainments that are becoming so popular in certain quarters. He says : "Our 'measuring party' was good, and after we paid our expenses we turned over \$5.46 to the parson's salary account. We took in a good deal more, but we broke some crockery and had to pay for it. Everybody was supposed to put in a little bag. We gave five cents for every foot tall we were, and one cent for every inch over five feet. But I started to write to you about our winter stocking social. This was very, very good. We advertised it in every way possible, and had a big sign painted and hung up over

the bulletin board for two weeks. Perhaps some people would not know when our hours of service were, but that had to be risked. Every one had to pay for admission twice as many cents as the size of stocking worn, and you can imagine what fun we had. Indeed, it was so good that I thought you would like to have your readers know about it. Do you with a chest-measure social or a collar-and-cuff party based upon the size worn ? You see, we must interest the young people, and if we can get them to come and have some fun they will be attracted to the preaching services." This communication illustrates how easy it is to overdo the entertainment business.



**Great Men.**—Dr. Watkinson says : "The world is always glorifying its great men. According to its estimate, the great men are everything and do everything. They build the palaces, win the battles, write the songs, electrify the crowd, paint the pictures, rule the nations, make and unmake the world. The great men are the men, and the rest of us are of very little consequence. Now, in the Church of Christ we are taught another lesson. We are taught the greatness of the least, the strength of the feeble, and the wealth of the poor, the serviceableness of the commonplace. The Church of God is the paradise of mediocrity, it discovers the dignity of the un-gifted, it makes the world honor not only burning and shining lights, but the dimmest gleam of the vital spark. And in the Church of Christ we are not only taught how essentially great is the least, but we are taught also what great things the lowliest can do for God's glory and human good. Substantially the world has been upheld by the faithful services of commonplace people. Do not despise yourself because you are dull, or slow, or poor, or undistinguished. In the parable it was the man with one talent whom our Lord represents as unfaithful, to teach us that such are under special temptation to undervalue themselves. Greatly gifted men are tempted to vanity, respectably gifted people have generally a sufficient sense of their personal importance, but the slightly gifted soul is specially tempted to despise itself and its mission. Take care that none of you yield to that temptation. The mediocre are magnificent ; the dimmest image of God is brighter than the sun ; the lowest gift of reason is beyond the grandeur of worlds ; the narrowest mission of any human life is wide as eternity.

How great the weakest child of Thine !  
His meanest task is all Divine,  
And kings and priests Thy servants are."