

to forget the deep debt of obligation which is owed to him who first ventured into what was then a hazardous and unprofitable field."

The Wesleyan Methodist Magazine which Wesley founded, now in its 125th year is the oldest of the multitude of monthly periodicals of which it was the pioneer.

It was reserved to American Methodism, however, to make largest use of the religious press as the lever of more than Archimedean power, to elevate and bless the world. The host of "Advocates" and other periodicals which fly abroad on all the winds of heaven may well be likened to the mighty angel of the Apocalypse, "having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." And most efficient preachers of the truth they are. The galleries of their congregations are in the Rocky Mountains, the back seats are on the distant frontiers and in the isles of the sea. They go where the human voice cannot be heard—to the miner's cabin, the lumberman's shack, to the sod hut on the prairie, and the lone fisherman's hut.

Never were these ministers of grace so needed as to-day amid our crowded and hurried life, with its swift rush and hurly-burly, with its tide of secular thought, flooding even the Sabbath day with the enormous issue of Sunday papers. Thank God we are free from these as yet in Canada, and we hope will long remain so. Where they abound they prove the most deadly and dangerous enemies of the Christian Sabbath. They fill the mind with worldly topics and leave scant time or taste for religious thought or worship. All the more need for the still small voice of the religious paper to recall men to nobler ideals than money-grubbing or pleasure-seeking.

The present writer was brought up in a Methodist home, where the Sabbath was a sacred day. I said one day to my revered father, "Have you read Beecher's last sermon in the 'Independent?'" "No, my son," was the reply, "I began it, but thought it was not good Sunday reading." This was an extreme view, perhaps, but better learn to keep than to break the Sabbath—the bulwark of the Christian faith, the great barrier to the tide of worldliness which would drown out the highest interests of mankind.

BROAD GAUGE PAPERS.

With all the current breadth of liberality it is in the highest degree important that the religious press, without being narrow or sectarian, shall be frankly denominational. If it is not frankly so, it is pretty apt to be so anyway and to sail under false colours. It must have denominational leanings of some sort—unless its editor belongs to no denomination, in which case I doubt his right to pose as a religious teacher. There are indeed certain papers, especially certain Sunday-school papers, which are built on the broad gauge principle of being all things to all men. They have a column of religious teachings for Epworth League, Christian Endeavour, Baptist Union, and Westminster League; and if there be anything else that is likely to bring grist to their mill, they will adopt that, too—there is nothing narrow about them. But intelligent Methodists, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and Baptists despise that kind of thing, even though it be a few cents cheaper, and maintain their own denominational literature.

There are also religious saffron journals, which run the secular yellow press a close run in being sensational and up-to-date—or a little ahead. Some of these make a specialty of castigating the churches for their many faults of omission and commission. One would infer from their pages that the churches were the main support of the bar-rooms and theatres and tobacco shops, from the way they contrast the sums paid for liquor and cigars and immoral plays compared with the meagre amounts paid for churches and missions—a mere trifle of only about a billion dollars a year. These papers are the curse of so-called religious journalism; they cultivate a spirit of wrath, malice, and all uncharitableness. "The lie that is half a truth is ever the blackest of lies."

The churches should stand for something—for definite ideas and positive convictions, for the principles of righteousness and truth, not for a nebulous cloud nor a clot of jelly. Their members should be able to give a reason for the hope that is in them, should understand the principles and polity of their own Church. It is impossible to be an intelligent Methodist, to be in touch with the many-sided operations of the Church, with its manifold benevolences, its far-