

HOW TO CELEBRATE THE BICENTENARY.

Two main objects should characterize the bicentenary celebration in Canada: First, a revival of that old-time Methodism by which the mighty victories of the past have been achieved—a fresh consecration of “the people called Methodists” to the high ideals which animated the Wesleys—“the spread of scriptural holiness throughout the land.” Second, the consecration of the growing wealth of Methodism to the highest objects. We have just passed through a great thanksgiving movement. Many persons have with a considerable degree of self-sacrifice, laid their offerings on God’s altar. None, we think, are a whit the poorer, none wish to recall the gift.

It may seem soon to present another great forward movement, but the urgency of the missionary crisis in the great North-West makes this imperative. The thanksgiving fund was largely devoted to payment of church debts and the aid of our colleges. Now is the turn of the great missionary cause. The Church, through its representatives in the General Conference, fully seized of the importance of the crisis, has asked for a bicentenary offering of a quarter of a million dollars for missions in addition to the fifty thousand of an emergency fund already in part contributed.

With the rescue of St. James’ Church which is in sight, and the great movements of the last two years, the connexional spirit has been greatly quickened and Canadian Methodism has been worthy of the best traditions of its heroic past. The wealth of the country is increasing even faster than the givings of the Church. If the dry-rot of worldliness is not to destroy its spiritual life it must maintain with its increased ability increased liberality. Toward this idea it has been generously striving and must not cease to strive. So shall be illustrated the wisdom of the ancient rhyme:

“There was a man, some thought him mad,
The more he gave away, the more he had.”

A third way of wise commemoration is to recall the stirring story of early Methodism in the home land and our own land. This we strive to do by a series of articles in this magazine, and in our Sunday-school papers, which shall recall the heroic deeds of the fathers and founders of the Church we love. May we be worthy descendants of such

saintly sires. “Let us now praise famous men and our fathers that begat us. The Lord hath wrought great glory by them through his great power. Their bodies are buried in peace, but their name liveth for evermore.”—Ecclesiasticus xlv. 1, 14.

FORWARD METHODISM.

Mr. W. T. Stead is reading a lesson to the English Wesleyans on the right use to make of their new purchase of the Royal Aquarium, which they design making an evangelistic centre. He says:

“The Wesleyans will have to put their best foot foremost if they mean to compensate London for the loss of one of its best-known places of amusement. It was often used as a rendezvous for people who were no better than they should be, but it will be a thousand pities if the Methodists blot out a third-rate centre of recreation, and put nothing in its stead beyond a Wesleyan imitation of the Church House. If they would try the experiment of running a first-class cafe, a decent music-hall, without the drink, a variety show like an improved Dime Museum, where something was constantly going on, and a first-class theatre, they would do much to convince the man on the street that, after all, the Methodists lived up to the standard of their hymn, which says:

“Religion never was designed
To make our pleasures less.”

Mr. Stead predicts that the church of the future will run a bar-room and a theatre, but some of us conceive there may be a more excellent way of uplifting the masses.

CHURCH FEDERATION.

We are glad to note the organization in Ottawa of a Council of Federated Churches. The objects announced are “To aid in the most economical organization and the most effective direction of the Christian forces of the federated Churches by considering any matters brought before it concerning proposed sites for new church buildings; organized united action of an evangelistic nature; to review the social and moral condition of the aforesaid district, and to secure unity of thought and concerted action on matters of common interest; to prepare the way, by study of the problems involved, for the yet closer union of the denominations.”

Such a confederation will focalize