

THE CANADIAN EPWORTH ERA

ORGAN OF THE EPWORTH LEAGUES AND OTHER
YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES IN THE
METHODIST CHURCH.

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COMMUNICATIONS for this Paper, News Items, etc., should be addressed to the Editor, REV. A. C. CREWS, Wesley Buildings, Toronto.

Editorial.

"Happy New Year" to all our readers! Do not forget to renew your subscription to the Era for 1904. Let this be one of your New Year's Resolutions that shall surely be kept. We want all our friends to remain with us for the coming year, as we have some good things in store for them.

Organize Study Classes.

The object of our new Bible Study Course is to interest all the members of the League in the work, if possible. In some places, however, this can scarcely be done, as many of the Leaguers have their time already wholly occupied. When this is the case, do not give up, but go ahead with as many as will agree to take the course. Organize a Bible Study Class, even though not more than three or four can be induced to join, and conduct it much in the same way as a Mission Study Class. Meetings can be held in each other's homes, and a very profitable time spent. Now that the Christmas festivities are over start in and see what can be done. "Studies in the Life of Christ" is an exceedingly attractive book with which to commence the course. An explanatory booklet for the use of leaders has also been prepared. For full information write to the General Secretary of the Epworth League, Wesley Buildings, Toronto.

The Sacred and the Secular.

Rev. R. J. Campbell, at one of his recent Thursday services in the City Temple, London, said that he had received letters from many city men deprecating his intention of devoting the Thursday service to the discussion of any social question, however urgent. As they had to work in the midst of things material, they did not wish to hear these things material discussed when they entered the house of God. Mr. Campbell said he had felt both glad and sorry to get these letters—glad, because they were an evidence that there was a desire for the Gospel message, and one of the signs of the times for which he was profoundly thankful was that at these mid-day services there should be such a hearing for such a Gospel. On the other hand, he was sorry, because it was an evidence of dichotomy which existed in the minds of many Christian people between the sacred and the secular. These were not two, but one. They might secularize the sacred, but to the man who had been set on fire of Christ there was nothing common or unclean.

It is very difficult for us to get away from our old ways of thinking and speaking. Even in our own Epworth League work, we have people who draw very sharp lines of division between the departments which they label to suit themselves. Who has not heard the Convention delegate make his report in a self-satisfied kind of way by saying, "We hold nothing but religious meetings in our League"? This usually means that the Literary and Educational features of the League are neglected. It is about time that we got rid of such narrow and one-sided ideas of "religion" as this. Rightly conducted every part of the Epworth League organization is religious, and ought to be made to bear upon the development of character.

For the Stay-at-Homes.

This paper makes a specialty, in its advertising columns, of calling the attention of its large constituency of young people to a number of very excellent educational institutions, all of which we can highly recommend for thoroughness of work. Those who are in a position to patronize them are fortunate, but the many who cannot do so, and yet long for an education, need not despair. The Correspondence School is one of the newer educational features whereby the experience and skill of the best instructors are made available to those who cannot afford the time or money to attend college. It is surprising how much can be accomplished in this way in the direction of self-improvement. It will be seen by advertisement in another column, that we have an institution of this kind in our own country, known as the Canadian Correspondence School, whose instruction is in harmony with the educational system of Canada, and ought, therefore, to be of greater value than foreign schools. The teachers are experts in their various departments.

The Weak Spot.

A few months ago a large fire occurred in the town of Tilsonburg, which swept a whole block. Out in the country there was a barn filled with hay. On the side toward the town there was a window which had a small hole not more than two inches in diameter. Strange to say the wind carried a brand from the fire two miles, directly to that small opening, and set fire to the hay, consuming the whole building. Even so the forces of evil—the temptations of the world assail us at the weak point in our nature. Many a man has been morally strong in every respect except one, but that is exactly where the enemy makes his fiercest assaults. Above all else, this point should be watched and strengthened. How necessary it is to

"Leave no unguarded place,
No weakness of the soul;
Take every virtue, every grace,
And fortify the whole."

Never Finished.

Referring to a town in Nova Scotia, a gentleman made the remark: "That is a finished place," meaning that it had ceased to grow. This statement did not, however, express the whole truth, for the town was found to be actually in a condition of decay, with the grass growing in the streets. There is reason to believe that there are some "finished" churches in which there is no development. Their glory is all in the past. In some cases circumstances beyond the control of the members have caused the decadence, but in others it can be traced to indifference, indolence, and lack of generosity. A live Church of Christ will never be "finished," but will be