

# THE CANADIAN EPWORTH ERA

PUBLISHED MONTHLY AT TORONTO, ONT.

REV. A. C. CREWS, - - Editor.  
REV. WILLIAM BRIGGS, Publisher.

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## Editorial.

### Reasonableness of the Pledge

One of the topics for consideration early next month in our Young People's Societies is "The Pledge and How to Keep It." We are glad that this subject will be up for consideration, as it will afford the opportunity of showing what a reasonable thing the pledge really is, and perhaps misconceptions and prejudices may be removed.

Where there is objection to the pledge it must surely be because it is misunderstood or misconstrued. It creates no new obligations whatever for the young Christian, but simply states and emphasizes the duties that are already binding upon the true follower of Christ. It makes our obligations visible. Whether he takes the pledge or not every one who calls himself a Christian ought to do the things enumerated, as nothing is demanded which is not helpful to Christian character.

To "make stated seasons of private prayer, and the daily study of the Bible the rule of our lives," is only to undertake to do what is absolutely necessary to growth in grace. This cannot be neglected without serious danger of declension.

To "abstain from all amusements upon which I cannot ask God's blessing" is certainly a common-sense and reasonable decision. No particular forms of amusement are mentioned, but the whole matter is left to the individual conscience to settle.

To promise to "honor God with my substance as He has prospered me" is nothing more than every person undertakes to do who answers the questions that are asked of candidates for membership in the Methodist Church.

Perhaps the part of the pledge that is most objected to is the sentence: "As an active member of the League I will, except when excusable to my Master, be present at and take some part in the meetings of the Christian Endeavor Department," and yet how reasonable and fair it is. Notice that this promise applies only to the devotional services of the Society, and has no reference whatever to the missionary, literary and social meetings. Some persons interpret this clause to mean that the active member is under obligations to attend every meeting, and to speak or pray, no matter what the circumstances of the hour may be, but it does not say so. If there is any genuine cause why the member should not participate in the service he is excused, and if there is no such reason, why, of course, he ought to take part. Notice that the excuse is not to be rendered to the president or to the pastor, but to the Master himself, so that again it is simply a matter of conscience. If you feel that

you have a good and sufficient reason for remaining silent at the League prayer meeting, you can certainly do so without breaking your pledge. What could be more satisfactory than this?

The more thoroughly the pledge is examined the more its beauty, its simplicity and its reasonableness appear evident.

### A Valued Worker Gone

We regret to announce the death of Rev. T. J. Parr, M.A., of Hamilton, at the early age of forty-four. He was a fine type of the Christian gentleman, who won for himself a large circle of friends. Splendidly equipped for Christian service, with a fine education, unusual natural talent, and intense devotion to the cause of Christ, many years of successful service might have been expected for him, but his useful life has been cut short.

From the very first Mr. Parr has been closely identified with the Epworth League, as a district and Conference officer, a member of the General Board, a prominent speaker at Epworth League conventions, and as the writer of the prayer meeting topic expositions in this paper. Many persons in all parts of the Dominion, who never saw his face and never heard his voice, have been helped and inspired by his written words, and will join with the Editor in extending sincerest sympathy to the friends who have been left to mourn.

It has not been an easy task to write prayer-meeting helps that would prove satisfactory to our wide constituency, but Mr. Parr's work has been well done, and at no time has it been more efficient than during the past few months. The change of treatment which he commenced about the beginning of this year called forth many expressions of appreciation from our workers. It is impossible to estimate the good our brother accomplished by thus touching the lives of the thousands of young people who study these topics from week to week. Mr. Parr's death is a distinct loss to the Epworth League.

### A Bold Stroke

The United States Government had considerable trouble in the Philippine Islands with the natives, after the defeat of the Spanish. Quite a number of shrewd adventurers kept up an insurrection for some time, pillaging the country, under the pretence of fighting for independence. When peace had been secured, these leaders instead of being punished, were put into positions of responsibility. The Government appointed them provincial governors, giving them an income and a social standing, which did away with all further inclination to resume command of their robber bands. The men who served under these leaders were enlisted as native policemen. One of the magazines says that "the whole transaction was a bold stroke, and one regarded by the more conservative as extremely dangerous, but it has met with almost unqualified success."

The same plan might be adopted to good advantage in Junior and Senior Leagues where there are mischievous and unruly young people who sometimes disturb the meetings. Instead of trying to expel these lively youngsters, it is better to give them work to do, to thrust responsibility upon them, and make them feel that they are a necessary factor in carrying on the organization. This has often transformed a thoughtless and giddy member into a useful and energetic worker. The president should continually exercise his ingenuity in discovering ways and means for giving employment to all the members.