

nity of interest and association. It is of course possible to carry such a thing so far that it becomes a mere formality. Yet that need never be the case. Rev. C. H. Smith, of Kimball, Dakota, has organized a praying league, with certain specific topics for each day of the week. The plan is simple, with no formality, and it seems possible that it should accomplish a great deal of good. The book-mark pledge is neat and useful.

A "Foreign Missionary Prayer Union," has also been formed in England, which has sent out its circulars over all Christendom. Its membership is open to all missionaries and to all interested in missionary work in every part of the world, and the pledge is that the members of the Union agree, so far as possible, to pray *daily* for one another and for the coming of the Kingdom of God. Special objects are designated for each day of the week. It is a grand idea.

Centennial Thoughts.

THE nation has been rejoicing over a hundred years of national life and the wonderful progress seen on every hand. It has been a century of invention. Not a year has passed without adding something that we have cause to think an indispensable utensil in our modern civilization. In the political jubilee it is well to remember the Christian's ground for rejoicing.

With the growth of the nation, even outstripping it, has gone on the growth of the church. We see so clearly in the men their electrical search-light of modern criticism, the *defects* of our Christian work, that we are apt to think of the past as better than the present.

Yet stop and think for a moment. Take any one of the great questions of the day. Temperance. The *first* temperance society in America was

formed in 1789 by some farmers in Connecticut. Now the various organizations number millions among their members, and we have a political party of no mean strength doing valiant battle against the vice of drink. To be drunk was then no disgrace, even for a minister of the gospel. To-day it debars a man from any polite circle. The Sabbath. We are so wont to look upon the Puritan Sabbath as the ideal holy day that we forget how small a number of the people at that time paid any attention to it or observed it in the slightest degree. The proportion of Sabbath keepers in the whole population of the country has changed wonderfully for the better, and that notwithstanding the great influx of foreigners. Church work. This is the age of missions, foreign, home and city. On every hand the church is organizing as never before for a great attack upon the combined forces of heathenism, infidelity and corrupt Christianity.

Social reform. At no time have there been so many well-directed efforts to elevate mankind. Slavery has received the ban of popular as well as church disapproval. Labor laws have been changed, children are protected. Even dumb animals have found those who would assert their rights to kindly treatment and care.

Prisons have been entered and lightened with Christian influence. Fallen men and women are reached out after and receive not repulsion, but help toward a better life. The Scarlet Letter has given place to the midnight missions, and many a home where there was little but despair has become the abode of joy and peace.

It is well to look the facts of sin in the face, but it is well also to recognize the mercies that have crowned this century of our growth as a people.