

visited by committees of all the churches, and sixty thousand invitations were distributed before the first meeting was held. We cannot conceive the possibility of the Chautauqua movement originating among our Methodist fathers three generations ago. The Oxford League, with its articulated intellectualism and benevolent work, is another symptom of our times; nor can we conceive of its existence in the days when Jacob Gruber and Benjamin Abbott went up and down the land like angels of the Apocalypse and scores were slain by the power of God under single sermons. Every age has its own work and must do it in its own way. And we have little occasion for tears because forms and methods, the incidents of the spiritual life, change or pass away, so long as the Church is advancing toward "the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God."

What, then, is the organization of the average Methodist church to-day? This may be learned from our services. Our Sabbath services of worship are generally effective, and our preaching may compare with the best in the land. Our Sunday-schools may also be commended, though there is great room for improvement. Our class-meetings are, for the most part, a feeble survival of a once mighty institution, while the prayer-meeting still brings comfort and benediction to the elect minority who, week after week, wonder why the others never come. The energies of the local church begin and end with itself, and these energies are directed almost exclusively to spiritual ends. But should not every church be a centre of philanthropy to the community? Should it not be a centre of intellectual inspiration to its own congregation and to those without? Should it not be organized for missionary work in the neighbourhood? If there are Dorcases among our members there must be widows and orphans on the church-rolls, for whom efficient work may be done. The duties of the Church may be gathered from the life of her Lord, for she is more than his witness—she stands to the world in "Christ's stead." Nay, she is He—His body. He went about doing good. Jesus was a superlative humanitarian, and the Church of the future will be that Church which most completely manifests His spirit and continues His work.

"Her litanies sweet offices of love and gratitude,
Her sacramental liturgies the joy of doing good."

There is work, then, for our legislators in the organization of the local church. And this organization should put work and responsibility more upon the people and less upon the minister, whose stay is limited.

I. Every church should be organized, perhaps some society established, for the Christian nurture of every infant born into the parish. At certain fixed ages these children should have public recognition before the Church, such as the presentation of a Bible on Children's Day, when they are five or seven years old. Our present system does not go far enough, and is too dependent on the pastor.

II. Every church should be organized for perpetual home mission work. Why not a board of deaconesses in every church to do the work for which Paul commended the women at Philippi?

III. Every church should be organized to represent Jesus in pure philanthropy, such as caring for the sick and the orphan and the poor, and this