



The Templar Quarterly

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Applied Christianity will purify politics, destroy monopolies, wipe out class privileges, and establish the Brotherhood of Man. Friends of Social Reform are invited to co-operate in extending the usefulness of this magazine.

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"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.—Eph. 6: 12.

NOVEMBER, 1896.

ELOCUTION CONTEST MOVEMENT.

To the late W. Jennings Demorest, of New York city, is due the honor of setting in motion the Prohibition Elocution Contest Movement, by his generous donation of Silver and Gold medals for competition. A few contests were held in Canada for Demorest medals, and a number of Canadians were impressed with the charm and power of the Movement for teaching Prohibition truth. In Hamilton a full series of Silver Medal contests, culminating in a Gold Medal Contest, was carried out under the auspices of the Royal Templars and the W. C. T. U. The editor of "The Templar" was among those who fell in love with the Movement and saw great possibilities in it. After Mr. Demorest's death he felt that the good work should not be permitted to cease, and with the substantial encouragement of a number of local friends he introduced and established "The Templar" Medal Contest Movement.

The announcement of this undertaking through the columns of "The Templar," the preparation of Canadian Medals, and the publication of elocution selections suited to Canadian conditions, gave a splendid impetus to the Movement in Canada, and it sprang into immediate popularity. Series of contests were started in all parts of the Dominion and splendid results were achieved during the winter of 1895-6. This autumn of 1896 brought multiplied demands, and the promo-

ters of the Movement found it necessary to increase the number of selections permitted in competition, and to appeal for greater generosity on the part of the friends of the Movement to provide for the expenses of supplying literature and medals.

"Juniors and Seniors."

The contests were at first confined to young people, and twenty-five was fixed as the maximum age, but the Movement was such a phenomenal success among the young people that a demand arose for extending it to older contestants. The experiment was made of an "Old Folks'" medal contest by Wentworth Council, of Hamilton, under the direction of District Councillor Fisher, of the Royal Templars, and the result was so satisfactory that it was decided to establish contests and offer medals for competition to persons over twenty-five, thus making two classes, those under twenty-five, to be known as "Juniors," and those over 25 as "Seniors." Juniors are not permitted to compete with seniors in either Silver or Gold Medal contests, and each contest, and each series of contests, must be confined to either Juniors or Seniors. In the first Senior contest, Mrs. James Parsons Smith, wife of the well-known Royal Templar



MRS. J. PARSONS SMITH,
First Senior Silver Medalist.

evangelist, won the Silver Medal, on the recitation, "A Prohibitionist's View of the Labor Problem," by W. W. Buchanan. This contest made such a profound impression that in the second contest such eminent leaders as G. H. Lees, provincial head of the Royal Templars, and J. H. Land, national secretary of the same Order, entered the lists, and the medal was won by Mr. J. C. Harris, District Secretary of Hamilton Royal Templars, on the recitation, "The Farmer and His Gun," by Talle Morgan.

Aims of the Movement.

The aims of the movement are:
1st. To teach Prohibition doctrines.
2nd. To win the vigor of the young, for practical Prohibition work.
3rd. To promote co-operation among Temperance societies.

Many persons who will not take the trouble to read will listen to addresses or recitations. There is a subtle power in the human voice for pressing



home conviction and melting to action. Great orators and debaters are not easily secured, and cost more for fees and travelling expenses than many communities can afford. But the choicest gems from the speeches of the brightest and greatest can be put in the mouths of attractive and effective reciters. Not one, but six or eight of the most eminent men may thus be heard at one single meeting. The charm and spirit of the competition intensifies the interest, and attracts large numbers to the contest, and under such conditions the selections are often given with greater execution than in their original delivery. In any case the arguments, illustrations and doctrine lose none of their point or weight. In any community where a public meeting can be held, a contest can be organized with little or no expense, and home talent may be made to do first-class service for the cause.

The Movement is a particularly happy one in its second aim, that of capturing the vigor and devotion of young people for practical Prohibition work. In many temperance organizations and young people's societies it is a serious problem to keep up the standard of entertainments, and to so direct the arrangement of programs to avoid a lapse to light and frivolous numbers. The Elocution Contest Movement is a delightful solution. The young people enter with spirit into the pleasant rivalry for the medal, and to do so must memorize, from the collection of Prohibition recitations selected for the purpose. Not alone in the contest does the reciter contribute to the educational work of the reform; but the selection once mastered is pretty certain to be presented again and again, at other concerts and entertainments, extending and increasing the force and utility of the teaching. The Movement also has a tendency to develop speakers and debaters, for the battle of the reform.

The third aim, that of promoting co-operation among societies favorable to Prohibition, is a very important one. According to the rules, medals are only given to societies which will promise to