

matter how simple or perplexing, are cheerfully answered as soon as possible.

#### RESULTS.

See how the work has grown and the contributions increased:

1896-97	\$5,126
1897-98	9,427
1898-99	14,520
1899-1900	18,313
1900-01	21,172
1901-02	24,568

So that the Epworth Leagues of Canada have increased their givings from \$5,126 in 1896-97 to \$24,568 in 1901-02, through the Forward Movement for Missions. There are now fully forty missionaries supported by our Epworth Leagues on the foreign field.

#### POINTS FOR THE PRESIDENT.

Take this night for the study of the Forward Movement for Missions. If your League has not yet begun the work, start at once, if possible. The Lord's work should be done in the best possible way, and the plans in connection with this movement are excellent, experience and results have proven them so.

#### JUNE 5.—"CHRIST'S PLACE AND POWER IN NATURE"

Mat. 8: 23-27; John 1: 1-5; Col. 1: 15-17.

Christ is the embodiment of the Christian religion. Nay, more, he is the embodiment of all power. With what ease he calms the storm, controls the winds, heals the sick, raises the dead! It is no trouble to him. At his disposal are all the forces of nature. The world which he created is subject unto him, but yet with the gentleness of mother-love, he visits the penitent heart, and brings him to his true manhood. This narrative in Matthew shows his place and power in nature!

#### ASLEEP IN THE STORM.

Christ's calm slumber is contrasted with the hurly-burly of the tempest and the fear of the crew. It was the sleep of physical exhaustion after a hard day's work. It is a sign of his true manhood, of his toil up to the very edge of his strength. It is also a sign of his calm conscience and pure heart. Jonah slept through the storm because his conscience was stupefied; but Christ as a tired child laying his head on his mother's lap. That sleep may have a symbolical meaning for us. Though Christ is present, the storm comes, and he is sleeping through it, he delays his help that he may try our faith and quicken our prayers. He sleeps, but he never oversleeps, and there are no too-lates with him.

#### THE CRY OF FEAR.

The broken abruptness of their appeal reveals the urgency of the case in the experienced eyes of these fishermen. "Save us," is the language of faith; "we perish," is that of fear. That strange blinding of opposites is often repeated by us. A faith which does not wholly suppress fear may still be most real; and the highest faith has over the consciousness that unless Christ help, and that speedily, we perish.

#### THE GENTLE REMONSTRANCE.

There is something very majestic in the tranquility of our Lord's awakening, continues McLaren, and, if we follow Matthew's order, in his addressing himself, first to the disciples' weakness and letting the storm rage on. It can do no harm, and, for the present, may blow as it listeth, while he gives the trembling

disciples a lesson. Observe how lovingly our Lord meets an imperfect faith. He has no rebuke for their rude awakening. He does not find fault with them for being "fearful," but for being "so fearful," as to let their fear cover their faith just as the waves were doing the boat. He shows them and us the reason for overwhelming fear as being the deficiency in our faith. And he casts all into the form of a question, thus softening rebuke, and calming their terrors by the appeal of their common sense. Fear is irrational if we can exercise faith.

#### CALMING THE STORM.

Christ yields to the cry of an imperfect faith, and so strengthens it. He does not quench the dimly burning wick, but tends it, and feeds it with oil—by his inward gifts and by his answers to prayer—till it burns up clear and smokeless, a faith without fear. As he lays asleep he showed the weakness of manhood; but he awoke to manifest the power of infinity. So it is always in our life, where, side by side with the signs of humiliation and participation in man's weakness, we ever have tokens of his divinity breaking through the veil. All this is a symbol of our individual lives, as well as of the history of the church.

#### CHRIST IN CREATION.

We are not wont to think and speak of Christ's first advent, meaning thereby his appearing as the incarnate Son, and of his second advent in reference to his coming again to "make all things new." But it must never be forgotten that there was what might be called the original and prior advent of the divine Word in creation. "All things were made by him;" "By him God made the worlds." Heb. 1: 2; "In him were all things created," Col. 1: 16.

He is the centre into which the creative energy is poured in all its fulness by the eternal Father. "There is but one God, the Father, in whom are all things." But Christ is the expression of the divine thought, and thus of the divine wisdom. He is the Son in full accord with the divine will; and as the manifestation of that will, working by love, "He made the worlds." Thus "there is to us one Lord Jesus Christ by whom are all things, and we by him, 1 Cor. 8: 6. All created things, therefore, exist in and through him. "But he himself draws everything from the Father, and renews everything to the Father." Thus has been manifested to created intelligences the glory of God. We see and know and adore his power and wisdom and love, his essential glory, in those works which are his works done by and through the eternal Son, in whom his divine fullness dwells.

#### POINTS FOR THE PRESIDENT.

First, study the narrative—the dramatic narrative—and get the situation before the members of the League. Then follow with the principles involved as to "Christ's place and power in nature." The foregoing article has five distinct paragraphs on this plan. You may interest five members of your League by giving them a paragraph to develop for this thing. Impress the great lesson that Christ is Lord of Nature.

#### JUNE 12.—"THE NATURE, NEED AND POWER OF FAITH"

Mark 5: 21-43.

We should be thankful that our Saviour explains faith to his followers, not in the abstract, but in the concrete. He does not give us a metaphysical exposition of the doctrine, but a practical illustration from actual life.

#### SALVATION THROUGH CHRIST.

In our topic Scripture we have the description of a woman who had been an invalid for twelve years. She had sought the best medical advice, done her utmost to obtain a cure, had spent all that she had in her endeavor to find relief. But it had done no good. Here is the lesson, salvation is through Christ, not in human endeavors. Men try to heal themselves of their sins by their own devices. They go to human advisers in their sense of need. One tells the sin-sick man, as Burns was told, to drive away his melancholy by gay company; another sneers at the idea of sin; another tells him to read some interesting books, and he will soon get over it. Others hope by a pretty good sort of life, as they say, to come out right. Now in opposition to all this, nothing is more plainly taught in Scripture than that salvation must be through Christ.

#### SALVATION THROUGH EFFORT.

There is danger of swinging from the error just considered to the opposite extreme and doing nothing. Some men persist in waiting for religious influences instead of coming to Christ without delay. It was not so with this woman. She kept saying, "If I touch but his garments, I shall be made whole." She showed determination and perseverance. No one will fail to-day who comes to Christ in such a spirit. "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." God gives us something to do in obtaining salvation. We must at least reach out our hand for it and accept it. We must show such a desire for it as to seek it. God does not treat men as puppets, to move only as he pulls the strings. He wants God-like men, men to be holy as he is holy, and this can be only as each man in the sovereignty of his own free-will decides for himself, whether or not he will accept of the salvation which God could not, as man is made, force salvation on us against our will. Salvation would be impossible without an acceptance on our part. It would not be salvation, but punishment, to be forced into heaven if we did not wish it or enjoy it.

#### SALVATION THROUGH FAITH.

Salvation is through faith in Christ and not by mere contact with him. Many are at church from Sunday to Sunday listening to the truths taught by the Saviour, without any personal interest in them or purpose to apply them. They cannot receive salvation in such a frame of mind. They must put forth the hand and touch him. Contact is not enough. There was a spring in California where many came and drank. All admired its clear water and sought it to turn to stop their thirst. But one who knelt there with the rest saw what the others did not, recognized a vein of glittering gold lying beneath the water, put in his hand, and made his fortune. The difference between the multitudes in Christian lands, who do not accept Christ and those who do, is similar. The one fails to take Christ to himself, though perhaps gathering around him in admiration. The others see his infinite worth and eagerly appropriate the treasure offered them.

#### SALVATION NOT BY WORKS.

Salvation is by simple faith and not by elaborate works. We trust Jesus. The mode of expressing our trust is of little significance. There was a certain Young People's Society which had a warm discussion as to whether in their meetings the voting should be done by word of mouth or by a show of hands. It was a question of absolute insignificance. The things of importance were, that they should have a definite mind on the sub-