

BOOK NUMBER

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No. 11

THE OPEN DOOR

READING is the chief instrument of culture in reach of the many. Extended or culture-giving travel is not possible for the majorities, but must remain in possession of the minorities. Nor is contact with the makers of history the opportunity of many.

But by books we come to be the intimates of the great spirits of the world. We know through books persons we have not met, nor seen, nor heard, as we do not know our neighbors and friends. The doings of statesmen and diplomats are the property of the world, and their careers are photographed before our eyes. "A good book," to use the old but deathless phrase of Milton, "is the precious life-blood of a master spirit." In other words, the author has pressed from his veins the express wine of his life. All the vigor which made him the man he was, he poured out as a libation at our feet, or emptied into our cup.

Reading, then, is the open door into the great life of the world. Through it we know the history of forgotten centuries, and become the intimates of immortal spirits. It is the pre-eminent instrument of culture, and because of this unique pre-eminence and worth, is an important subject of consideration. Bacon has told us that "Reading makes a full man." It cultivates, gives stores of knowledge, supplies background to figure, puts a man with his back against the centuries and his face fronting all the future."—*Dr. William A. Quayle.*

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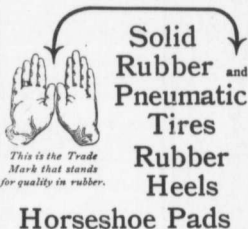
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Canadian Epworth Era

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Brains and Energy Count.—The United States Commissioner of Labor remarked some time ago that "the men who achieve the highest success are those not particularly favored by influential friends, but who have carefully qualified themselves in the technical knowledge of their chosen vocation." That is the testimony of all who have had any practical experience of business life. Money, position, influence,—these are as nothing compared with brains, energy and perseverance.

✻

An Appropriate Appointment.—"Whom shall I make Lord Treasurer of France?" asked Louis XIV. of one of his councillors. "The Librarian of Rheims, your majesty." "Why him?" "He has been all his life in the library and has extracted nothing from it; he would, no doubt, take as little from your treasury." There are many like this man who spend their whole lives in the midst of fine opportunities for mental improvement, and yet get nothing from them. Their example is a wholesome warning to young people.

✻

No Past.—"There is no pest so long as books shall live," exclaimed Lord Lytton. "I go into my library, and like some great panoramas, all history unrolls before me. I breathe the morning air of the world while the scent of Eden's roses yet linger in it. I see the pyramids building. I see the sphinx when she first began to ask her eternal question. I sit as in a theatre; the stage is time as play is the play of the world. What a spectacle it is! What kingly pomp! What processions pass by! What cities burn to heaven! What crowds of captives are dragged at the wheels of conquerors! I call myself a solitary, but sometimes I think I misapply the term. No man sees more company than I do."

✻

The Care of Books.—Never ill-use a book. If it is worth owning it deserves careful handling. To abuse a book is evidence of the reader's thoughtlessness or cruelty of spirit. Children should be taught to handle books carefully, and with loving appreciation to preserve them. Yet too many are utterly indifferent or maliciously destructive in their use of books. A glance into many of our Sunday School rooms is enough to prove this. Hymnals on the floor, or untidily thrown into a heap, dog-eared, torn, or defaced Bibles, mutilated copies from the so-called library, and other signs of a destructive habit, are all too common in many places. The proper handling of books and the careful preservation of them, should be insisted on by both superintendent and teachers in all our schools.

Not only is the ill-use of a book wasteful of good property, but it develops a habit of destructiveness that may work much of ruin in later years. Treat books as you would your friends—with a kindly heart and tender affectionate touch.

✻

A Non-Conductor.—Rev. F. W. Macdonald in his delightful little volume, "In a nook with a book," in speaking of his early experiences as a boy, says "We had no book-cases with glass doors. These I have never been able to endure. The locking up of books in cupboards is poor spirited business. It is resented by the books themselves if I know anything of their nature. The glass front through which they must look out must alternately chill and irritate them. Glass is a non-conductor, and effectually breaks the current of genial intercourse."

✻

A Chinese Motto.—The Chinese have a saying: "If you have two loaves of bread,

Now is the time to begin the campaign for new subscribers to this paper. Let it be generally known that the "Era" will be sent to new subscribers from now until the end of 1908 for 50 cents. An "Epworth Era Evening" in every League, followed by a vigorous canvass, would undoubtedly increase our circulation. Try it and report results.

sell one and buy a lily." It is not the body alone that needs to be fed. Mind, heart, and soul grow hungry, and many a time they are famishing when the larder is full. There are homes where the lilies are entirely crowded out by the loaves; where there is no room for beauty or enjoyment, or even for love, to grow, because of the mad scramble after wealth. Fewer loaves and more lilies—less of the rush after material good, and more time for the gracious and beautiful things God has placed within reach of us all—would make happier and nobler lives.

✻

A Surprising Discovery.—The Brockville Times says that a writer in a specimen "popular" United States magazine has made the surprising discovery that Charles Dickens took Lord Stratheona as an original for one of the Cheeryble Brothers, in Nicholas Nickleby. This is truly a wonderful discovery, inasmuch as Donald A. Smith was an obscure Hudson's Bay Company clerk when Dickens por-

trayed his characters. Furthermore, the Cheeryble Brothers were taken from English characters. But it all goes to show how fearfully and wonderfully made are the magazines upon which Canadians have been mainly nurtured for so long.

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Follow it Up.—If you become interested in something of which you know but little, and your reading about it gives rise to a desire to know more of it, follow it up while it is fresh in your mind. Do not postpone investigation and study until you have more time. Probably you will never have a better or a more convenient hour than the one then present. If you put your search off to some indefinite future time, your interest in the subject may cease, and you drop it altogether. Any subject worth knowing about is worthy of instant attention, and if you look into it when fresh in your mind, it will grow in value and use to you. The pursuit of knowledge is not a vain and hopeless following after a receding phantom, but the steady following up step by step, and little by little, of the living and growing store of wisdom that increases our capacity for both knowing and doing.

✻

The Ally of the Church.—The pastoral letter sent out by the Newfoundland Methodist Conference to all its congregations, contains the following suggestive words: "Education is a potent and honored ally of the Church. The Scriptural injunction reads: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy mind." And intellectual culture is necessary to a full compliance with that demand. We are especially ambitious that the young people of Methodism should be "polished after the similitude of the palace." Literature has been termed the greatest of the fine arts and certainly its importance cannot be overestimated in relation to the art of righteous living. The kind of books we read is a mighty factor in determining the kind of life we lead. The true university is a collection of good books and in these days of cheap and numerous publications, such a university is substantially within the reach of all. It is not necessary that we exhort the young of the congregations to give attention to reading. They are already doing that. But there is serious reason why we should urge them to cultivate a taste for the best literature. Much of present day novel reading is wholly pernicious, and excessive indulgence even in good fiction tends to impair the mental and moral life. The Epworth League in its literary department aims to effect true Christian culture, and we recommend the yearly League Reading Course as a cheap and valuable addition to the family library."

The Christian's Duty to His Mind

MUCH, but not too much, is said to young Christians about the importance of keeping their hearts right, far less about their duty to their own minds.

A man in middle life, having a family dependent upon him, following an exhausting trade, and finding it impossible to secure another means of livelihood, can only hope to attain that degree of mental culture which he can get while being faithful to his business, the care of his family and his obligations to the Church. Increasing mental culture may modify his lot in life and may enlarge his opportunities of acquiring such culture; but, in order to improve his mind, he must not fail in his duty in the lot in which Providence has placed him. Impaired health also may prevent one from making definite efforts. But every Christian sufficiently enlightened to perceive the possibility of mental culture, is bound to seek it to the full extent compatible with his providential lot.

Both John and Charles Wesley went upon this principle. Charles taught the people the essence of the relation of the whole man to God in these words:

Take my soul and body's powers;
Take my memory, mind and will;
All my goods, and all my hours;
All I know, and all I feel;
All I think, or speak, or do;
Take my heart, but make it new.

No one is a Christian who does not to the best of his ability and consciousness consecrate himself to Christ. But he who attempts to do this cannot be indifferent to the quality of any part of the gift; for love invariably presents the best attainable. If one pays no attention to the culture of his mind, after a little while its powers diminish. Animal spirits soon decline—especially when uniform labor consumes the daily supply of physical energy and when one has come to recognize his lot in life as fixed. So it often comes to pass that he who at twenty years of age consecrated himself, "his memory, mind and will," to God, had a prompt, precise and retentive memory, sound understanding and a strong power of will, has become at forty-five spiritless and indifferent except in the narrow groove of his occupation; has less mental vigor than when he left the desk of the school boy for the bench of the mechanic, the counter of the merchant, the fields of the farmer, or even for some profession.

When a person is truly converted there is always a blending of aspiration for mental culture with the intense desire for purity of heart. This accounts for the great thrill which stirs the soul of many a humble laborer and many a previously indifferent or dissipated young man, wishing to give all to Christ who had saved him, when there springs up a thirst for knowledge. It is a desire to enlarge his powers that he may know more of God and learn the best methods of working for Him. In the midst of his mighty efforts for the conversion of souls, John Wesley turned aside to write and print grammars of many languages, books of science, history, travel, and treatises on self-culture in every form. He was as busy about this as he was about hymns, sermons, biographies of good people and tracts on doctrine.

Mental culture is one of the best means of grace. It excludes evil thoughts; it establishes new associations, directly opposing evil suggestions at their very source. There is nothing that elevates a Christian so much as the great thoughts that are normal to a religious experience.

Two men born in humble circumstances were spending their days in cutting down trees in forests remote from civilization. One thought of nothing but what he should eat, what he should drink, what he should wear, and how he would spend the little he earned. He chopped away faithfully all his days. Yet naturally he had a good mind.

The other, while chopping, studied the *trees*, learned the value of each kind of wood and the uses to which it was put, saved his money and bought acres upon acres containing wood suited for shipbuilding. The subject of transportation was forced upon him; he comprehended it; erected saw-mills and made himself a master of everything that had to do with wood, and finally became a shipbuilder, his vessels plowing every sea. It was not his strong arm or his faithful work exclusively, but the thoughts which he cherished while he worked, that ennobled him.

The more a man knows and the clearer his mind is, the greater the influence he exerts in the cause of Christ. We admit that the most ignorant man who is truly converted can win more souls to Christ than the wisest man on the earth who is without a religious experience. But when the two are united the greatest influence possible to him is within the reach of the man who has a warm heart, a clear head, an intelligent conscience, and an abundance of knowledge.

At the present time the facilities for acquiring mental culture transcend previous opportunities. Young men called to the ministry should avail themselves of these to secure a thorough preparation. Christian young men who have chosen the legal, medical or educational profession, or the practice of engineering in its different forms should determine to be the best in their kind, never forgetting that the mind and heart must be cultivated together.

The young mechanic or farmer who desires a more complete mental outfit than his parents or employers have given him, and who has saved a little money, by working at his trade or upon farms in the summer vacations, may easily earn sufficient to carry him two or three years in a seminary. And by the end of the second year he may find a school to teach.

The man who has prospered in his business, after he has reached middle life may, if he will, supply the defects of his early training. Such a man at the age of forty years, finding himself elevated by his business prosperity and wealth to a position in social life and before the public which he was unable to fill satisfactorily, sent a check for \$1,000 to a literary friend with the following order: "Select for me the works with which a man in my position should be familiar, and mark the order in which they should be read."

Three years afterward, by having devoted two or three hours per day to reading and reflection, he had come to be known as one of the most thoroughly informed men in the state capital where he resides.

Some ministers and Sunday School superintendents count it a part of their duty to stir up young people to train, strengthen and inform their minds, and they have often found the truth of the inimitable words of Addison: "What sculpture is to a block of marble, education is to a human soul. The philosopher, the saint or the hero, the wise, the good or the great man very often lies hid and concealed in a plebeian which a proper education might have disinterred and have brought to light."—*Christian Advocate*.

Who Hath a Book

Who hath a book	Who hath a book
Hath friends at hand;	May fight, or sing,
And gold and gear	Or ride, or rule,
At his command;	Or—anything!
And rich estate,	Or he may dwell
If he but look,	In humble hut,
Is held by him	Or palace, ere
Who hath a book.	The book be shut.

Who hath a book
Hath goodly fare,
And happiness
Beyond compare.
Or he may bow
'Neath sorrow's weight,
If but the book
Such things relate.

Who hath a book	Who hath a book
Hath but to read,	Should thank the Lord
And he may be	Because he may
A king, indeed.	A book afford.
His kingdom is	And in his prayer
His ingenkoo—	This clause is due:
All this is his	"Lord, bless the men
Who hath a book.	Who write books, too."

—W. D. Nesbit, in *Epworth Herald*.

Paul's Advice to Timothy

"Give Heed to Reading."

BY REV. J. F. KNIGHT, M.A.

IN this injunction Paul has given us a glimpse of the true purpose and value of reading.

The purpose of Timothy's reading course was not that it should be an equivalent for the personal instruction he might have received from Paul if he had been present, but that in his teacher's enforced absence, in spite of unfortunate circumstances, he as pupil might be "furnished completely unto every good work," in his efforts at saving the world.

The literature at Timothy's disposal was limited. The Alexandrian and Babylonian libraries were not then accessible. Nevertheless, with what he had he must work out the salvation of his cause, lacking personal instruction.

In this new Empire, we Canadians, like Timothy, are most of us prevented from enjoying a long course of personal instruction such as a university might furnish. Like him we are allotted our portion in the task of saving the world. But above and beyond him, for our reading, we have a literature almost infinite in compass and immeasurable in extent.

By the art of printing we have been made the heirs of the progress of all the ages. (This has been done for us by our predecessors and we do it for our followers.)

By the practice of reading we appropriate or enjoy our princely inheritance. (This we must do for ourselves, or our inheritance is lost forever.)

He who has not diligently applied himself to reading may be likened to the idiotic son of a millionaire—"he does not know what he has missed," nor what he might have been, but his blisful ignorance is a poor equivalent for the inheritance he should have enjoyed.

In the treasure-house of history God has stored not only the records of the past but His purposes for the future. Here "He treasures up His bright designs and works His sovereign will," and our key to this treasure-house is reading. By acquaintance with God's plans we gradually begin to feel "at home" in the world. We begin consciously and willingly to enjoy the inheritance which is ours by birth; and in this inheritance in the most real sense we are "heirs of God." God's plans for the world, including us, become our plans for the world in and around us. We thus avoid the "helplessness of fate," the "death of hopelessness" and crash of life-long disappointments, and in part answer our own prayer, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." Surely in the realm of history, with all its Divine blessings, we should "give heed to reading."

Reading is the tutor and personal guide of the reproductive imagination, that power by which God designed we should recreate the universe after him. Travelling serves to correct the imagination after reading, but travelling, with all its advantages, can never do the work of reading. The traveller who is not a reader often looks with "brute unconscious gaze" on those very scenes with which a good reader's imagination has made him perfectly familiar without travelling. No amount of travelling—even living abroad, with all its advantages—can take the place of reading.

For illustration. Seated one sunny afternoon with a friend and great reader and two American people, not readers, in the Roman Forum, upon a prostrate marble column, I closed my eyes, if haply God would visit me with a historic vision. Soon from the broken rostrum arose the shade of Horace. With laughing eye and ready step he was hurrying with a newly composed ode to a friend. Next appeared Cicero on the stage, face drawn with nervous strain, hand upraised to heaven, as with burning eloquence he pleaded for the restoration of the banished Ligarius. In another instant an election was in progress. Thousands of interested citizens thronged that ancient meeting-place. Candidates arrayed in glistening robes, fit type for the Divine vision on Patmos, hurry hither and thither soliciting the support of friends. Thousands eagerly jostle for advantage ground. The great heart of a past civilization, so long cold and still, throbs with the life and joy and hope of ages past, the valley of dry bones is clothed with life and light and immortality—when suddenly a heavy hand on my shoulder startled me, and a hard Welsh accent asked, "Why don't they clear away this rubbish?" "Yes," said I, "and plant potatoes—this place would grow fine potatoes." He knew potatoes, but he had no fine historic memories to link with the Roman Forum. He had read

nothing, and though born to the wealth of all the ages, those treasures were "hid from his eyes." In the midst of this historic wealth he was a pauper, at the banquet of memory he starved.

With the imagination properly trained by reading, the whole universe is ours in the highest and truest sense.

Those with a finely tempered nature and sensitive imagination can reconstruct Beethoven's Symphony from an imperfect rendering of an infinitely inferior composition.

By even an ordinary mental exercise we may visit with Dr. Ellison the Vatican Palace and feel the heart "throb hard" while he describes the purpose of Angelo's "Last Judgment" or Raphael's "Transfiguration." The colors take their place with proper intensity without the help of sight.

We may climb the mountains with Ruskin and visit "these great cathedrals of the earth, with gates of rock, pavements of cloud, choirs of stream and stone, altars of snow and vaults of purple traversed by continental stars."

We may sail any sea in any ship from a Phœnician trader to a British submarine. We may explore the ocean depths with the pearl fishers, or leave our earthly planet and dart from star to star with Kepler, while in rapture he exclaims, "I am thinking thy thoughts after thee, O God." All these pleasures are ours through reading, and a very ordinary imagination, which, if left untrained, is the source of all brutal superstition. Which will you prefer?

But in the multiplicity of books, which books should I read? Let your purpose in life guide your reading. If you will be an astronomer read mathematics. If you want to grow corn and swine read a farmers' journal. If you want to love the very dust you tread upon, read some chemistry of the soil. If you only want to be a cook read a "cook book." But if you want to enjoy your reading without going farther afield, it is almost all yours without translating. For Scotland—Burns has sanctified the home, and every simple pleasure of the cottage. Scott has sanctified the hills and heather. Carlyle has cleared the moral life of its misleadings. For England, Wordsworth, Tennyson and Browning have done equally well, and for beauty and strength combined this trinity stands unsurpassed in all the ages. United States and Canada have done their share. It seems a modest hope that the busiest person should read at least the Bible, one great poet and the Epworth League Reading Course every year.

For this year every Leaguer has three options in the choice of a course. For \$1.50 you may have any three of seven books in the course. You may watch the world develop with the eyes of "Famous English Statesmen." You may sail the seas with "The Old Voyagers," and you may go on a life's evangelistic tour with the great James Evans, to the Indians of the western wilds; a life-long inspiration to all who can feel.

Let us remember that he who reads well lives much more in a lifetime than he who does not, and the reader is never alone. Literature to him is the "judgment trumpet" with which he assembles the great and good of all the ages.

To this call arise Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, and struggle afresh with the problems of "the true, the beautiful and the good." To this call descends the ascended Saviour, often too far removed from the round of daily duties. Again He comes to the habitations of men and calls at our home on His way to that home in Bethany, a Saviour, Brother, Friend.

To this call of reading troth forth all the statesmen, philosophers, inventors and poets of the past, and make themselves at home with the humblest. What a magic power our literature bestows! God's greatest gift to the English people is their literature. In the words of Macaulay, "the brightest, the purest, the most durable of all the glories of our country; to that literature, so rich in precious truth and precious fiction; to that literature which boasts of the prince of all poets and of the prince of all dramatists, and of the prince of all philosophers; to that literature which has exercised an influence wider than that of our commerce, and mightier than that of our arms," we owe our greatest advancement. Surely "the wise among them that know," in estimating the value of reading, must exclaim with Paul, "All things are yours and you are Christ's and Christ is God's."

David Mills, Ont.

The Making of the Bible

BY CHARLES TRACY CLARK.

FOUR hundred and fifty years ago the first book that was ever printed with type was completed, and this book was a Bible. Many times the accomplishment of a great endeavor has been marked by the turning of the mind of the worker towards the Word of God. When Morse, the inventor of the telegraph, completed that wonderful achievement, the first message that was sent over the wire was his telegram, "Behold what wonders God has wrought." So when the discovery of type-making and printing was made, almost the first thought that came into the minds of the first printers was that the Bible might be printed in type and that the man, not the few, might have copies of the Message.

The first man who undertook the putting the books of the Bible into print was John Gensfleisch, or Gutenberg, a German who was born in 1439. Gutenberg, however, did not complete his first book. The first Bible was made by Peter Schoeffer, and it was called "The Bible of Schoeffer." To Gutenberg must be given much of the honor.

Gutenberg as a boy was interested in printing. All type at that time was carved out of wood. The process was long and unsatisfactory. Letters were easily broken. Gutenberg began a search for type that would be less fragile than wood and less costly. He wanted a press that would not break the wooden forms. He wanted to print on both sides of the paper. All the money that he could raise was put into the project. He worked night and day until his resources were exhausted. The wages that he had to pay to the carvers of the wooden letters left him heavily in debt.

After his money was gone Gutenberg went to Mayence, where he was acquainted. A man who had much money became interested in the undertaking and advanced Gutenberg 1100 florins, about \$550, for his work. The man's name was Fust. Gutenberg agreed that Fust was to have the first profits, that he was to have more from an equal share of the proceeds, and finally that he (Gutenberg) was indebted to Fust for the loan and would repay it if the undertaking should fall through.

Gutenberg failed again. He had not been able to get the letters carved to his satisfaction. His presses failed to do their work properly. Fust refused to put more money into the work. During the last weeks of his trials Gutenberg hired a carver who gave the name of Peter Schoeffer who took up the experimental work. He was a natural mechanic. He tampered with the presses and they gave promise of working. He was a skillful workman with the knife, and the letters were all that could be expected. He made dies, after Gutenberg's pattern, and metal type was the result.

Fust again took an interest in the work. He offered more money for the labor. Schoeffer worked with all his might and was made a third partner in the business. Fust invited him to his house, and the marriage of Schoeffer to Fust's granddaughter was a consequence. While they were still working on the Bible they printed at much profit to themselves "The Leaves of Indulgence," which gave them funds for further work on the Bible.

Then came Gutenberg's downfall. Fust and Schoeffer had learned all Gutenberg's secrets and plans. They agreed that Gutenberg was a useless member in the firm. Fust accomplished his removal by dunning him for the 1100 florins that he had loaned in the first months of the work. Gutenberg was unable to pay at that time. He asked that Fust take his money from the profits that were coming in from the printing of the "Leaves" and from the expected returns from the sale of the Bible. Fust refused and repeated his demands.

The result was that Gutenberg withdrew from the company and went into a country town near his birthplace. He secretly set up an office there, and although greatly handicapped by the lack of type, tools and presses, he did finally publish a Bible a short time after the Bible published by Schoeffer and Fust appeared in the last part of 1455 or early in 1456. But it was inferior to Schoeffer's book.

There are no records of the copies of the Bible that were printed at that time, but it is known that there were many. They are so rare at this time, however, that they are sold for

high prices. In 1873 one of the Schoeffer Bibles, which was printed on vellum, was sold for 3,400 pounds (\$17,000).

It was seventy-one years after the German Bible was published that the first Bible printed in English appeared. Before this time all the books of the Bible were in the form of manuscripts. The cost of these writings was high. Only a few could afford them. One copyist made a reputation by copying the New Testament in four months. So the cost of the entire Bible would be equivalent to the wages of a man for more than a year, besides the expense of the paper and the ink.

William Tyndale, born in Gloucestershire, England, 1484, printed the first Bible in the English language. While the

The Love of Reading

The love of reading enables a man to exchange the weary hours which come to everyone for hours of delight.—*Montesquien.*

If the crowns of all the kingdoms of the Empire were laid down at my feet in exchange for my books and my love of reading, I would spurn them all.—*Fenelon.*

How contemptible is the lust of wealth when compared with the noble thirst for learning.—*Plutarch.*

My early and invincible love of reading I would not exchange for the treasures of India.—*Gibbon.*

When we are weary of the living we may repair to the dead, who have nothing of peevishness, pride or design in their conversation.—*Jeremy Collier.*

Bible was practically in the hands of the clergy alone before this time, some clergy objected in every way to its wide circulation among the masses of people. This attitude of those who would be expected to aid in the book's widest reading made it necessary for Tyndale to leave England, and in 1524 he went to Hamburg. A year later he went to Cologne, where he set up and printed the entire New Testament. He was preparing to continue the work and publish the old Testament as well, when two drunken printers revealed the work that he was doing. Tyndale was compelled to leave Cologne as rapidly as possible. Gathering his precious plates and such printed matter as he could carry he hurried to Worms, Germany, where he completed his task.

With many hundreds of the completed Bibles Tyndale sneaked back to England in 1526, and commenced at once to scatter the books far and wide. There was the widest demand for them. Finally the news came to the clergy and priesthood and immediately a persecution arose. The king was appealed to, and finally Tyndale was arrested and placed in prison. While there he was given his Bible and grammars with pen and ink and paper, and so he worked. This was done after his most earnest appeal had been made. In 1530 he was taken from the prison and executed, and afterwards his body was burned at the stake.

"May God open the eyes of the king of England," was his dying prayer.

It was granted within three years. At that time there was a change in the feelings of the king, and instead of persecutions, those who distributed the Bibles received commendation. Since that time the printing of the Bible has made wonderful strides.—*Service.*

Will the Old Book Stay?

BY REV. R. G. PEEVER, B.D.

THIS is a question that all may ask, and none may fear to seek an answer; for just as certainly as the foundation stones of the building of the British and Foreign Bible Society in London, England, speak out by hand and chisel the words, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away," so there is outstanding to-day from the literature and civilizations of the earth unmistakable evidence of the gain, progress and permanence of the truth of the Word of God.

Therefore we offer some brief reasons as an answer to the suggested question, "Will the Old Book Stay?"

1st. Because the Word of God is one of the grand imperial forces making for unity among the families of mankind, and that which tends toward unity naturally tends towards continuity and eternity in existence and effort. This is evident on the part of the Bible because of its wide translation and circulation as a universal Book of reading among men. Apart from it being a religious book, think of it being translated into four hundred and fifty languages and dialects of men, circulated last year to the extent of two hundred million copies, reaching a possible constituency of five hundred million readers. What can prevent its unifying and lasting effect? Let the race concentrate its mind upon any book continuously, and what can prevent that mind from being duly affected? So we have the imagery and truth, the ideal and spirit of this one book with its blessed and unique life captivating more and more the mind of the race, giving no evidence of senility as the generations go by.

2nd. This book will stay because as a literary work its poetry and its prose are of the purest and highest type, possessing a pre-eminence due to its literal supremacy. How few books live! The author of to-day is forgotten to-morrow. The average age of most books is from five to eight years, nevertheless the Word of God lives and grows and wins its way down the centuries by the very beauty, purity, strength and abounding fullness of its literature.

It is not amiss to note the testimony of writers in proof of the above statement. "This is the view of the great man who made the "New York Sun." "There are some books" said Mr. Dana, in his lectures on journalism "that are absolutely indispensable to the kind of education that we are contemplating, and to the profession we are considering; and of all those the most indispensable, the most useful, the one whose knowledge is most effective is the Bible. I am considering it now, not as a religious book, but as a manual of utility, of professional preparation and professional use as a journalist."

Charles Dudley Warner writes, "Wholly apart from its religious or ethical value, the Bible is the one book that no intelligent person who wishes to come into contact with the world of thought and share the ideas of the great minds of the Christian Era, can afford to be ignorant of. All modern literature and art are permeated with it.

In the realm of philosophy, Professor Bowen has said, "These books of the Bible contain a body of history, poetry and philosophy, the study of which has done more than any other single study to modify the course and happiness of thinking men of the earth, and to color and direct the whole course of modern civilization.

Cardinal Gibbons writes: "Apart from its inspired character, the Bible is a model of literal excellence. What classic author, ancient or modern, can excel Isaiah or St. John in sublimity of conception? The grandest creations of poetic genius pale before the psalmody of the royal prophet David. Milton and Dante have borrowed their noblest images from the pages of the sacred writings. The Bible is more than literature, but as literature it is the greatest and best book in our language." Sufficient is said in evidence of the fact that this book shall stay, because of the very merit and pre-eminence of its literature.

3rd. It will stay, because it is the great forerunner and ally of all missionary work, and the ready sword of the Christian missionary. Where and when the missionary cannot go, this book has gone, gone by the hearing ear, by the word of mouth, in the hand of the trader, in the satchel of the student, this book goes ahead and prepares the soil that is afterward the field from which the harvester gleans his sheaves. Thus it has gone, being sent of God as John of old, "To be a wit-

ness of the light that all men through Jesus might believe;" and as certainly as the command of Christ, "it makes disciples of all nations," cannot be retracted, neither shall the Word of God wane in its influence as the sword of the Spirit to the Christian missionary in home and foreign field.

4th. It will stay, because the whole hope of human progress is wrapped up in its principles of truth. Darwin said the Gospel changed the very features as well as the character of savages. Civilization without Christian faith, as we have it in the Word of God, is a failure. The Bible does not cramp nor narrow men's minds, rather it makes greatness possible where otherwise would be selfishness. It is becoming the final Court of Appeal in all moral matters affecting nations.

Daniel Webster said: "If we abide by the principles taught in the Bible, our country will go on prospering and to prosper; but if we and our posterity neglect its instructions and authority, no man can tell how sudden a catastrophe may overwhelm us and bury our glory in profound obscurity." Surely, therefore, it is the sheet-anchor of the world's liberty, the rock and foundation of the world's progress and prosperity.

Lastly. It will stay, because our Eternal Hope and realization of final salvation rests upon it and it alone.

Its authenticity, its veracity, its promised salvation are matters of eternal moment to our hearts.

Are the Scriptures true, or are they false? Does God mock us? Nay! nay! It has proven the wide world over to be in itself the hope, comfort and salvation through Christ Jesus to the children of men. For, as Sir Walter Scott said in his dying moments to his son-in-law, "Lockhart, reach me that Book!" "What book, Sir Walter?" as he looked around the twenty thousand volumes of that spacious library at Abbotsford. The reply came then from the dying man, as it comes now to every aching, needy heart, "Lockhart, there is but one book, the Bible." So the old Book will stay, because it contains the only message of hope, comfort and salvation to the heart of man. We need not be afraid of its destiny. God has breathed into it the breath of His life. Our faith, our hopes, our tears, our heavenly triumph, are co-existent, and co-dependent with its everlasting truth.

Coaticook, Que.

The Value of Books

Books are the ever-burning lamps of accumulated wisdom.—*Carlis*.

A good book is the precious life-blood of a master spirit.—*Milton*.

A book that is worth reading is worth possessing.—*Washington Gladden*.

Books are a guide in youth, and an entertainment in age.—*Jeremy Collier*.

Men who have received the inspiration which comes from good books have become factors in the world's advancement.—*John Millar*.

Books are the windows through which the soul looks out. A home without books is like a room without windows.—*Beecher*.

No man has a right to bring up his children without surrounding them with books if he has the means to buy them. It is a wrong to his family.—*Beecher*.

Consider what you have in the smallest, well-chosen library. A company of the wisest and wit-tiest men that could be picked out of all countries in a thousand years have set in best order the results of their learning and wisdom.—*Emerson*.

A house ought no more to be without a library than without a dining room and a kitchen.—*Abbott*.

Books in the Home

BY JOHN MILLAR, B.A.

It is a sad sight to see a home without books. It shows a lack of culture in the family, and a serious defect in home training. When there are no books there is also an absence of the best agency to make up for the possible loss of school advantages. If the absence of a small library is due to poverty there is some excuse. When there is evidence of means, the lack of books is to be condemned. It too often happens that in the houses of well-to-do people there is little appreciation of good reading matter. Money is expended in dress, furniture and fine houses, but books are seldom purchased. It is one of the most incongruous sights to see an elegant house with fine furniture, paintings of the masters, valuable bric-a-brac, extravagant frescoes, expensive house-plants, and yet scarcely a standard work in the library. The sublimity of folly is reached when several massive volumes, with elegant illustrations, add to the costly array of furniture in the drawing-room of a family that possesses no taste for literature and no appreciation of the proper value of books. Indeed, such a condition has its amusing aspects, when books have been secured, but without any regard to their intrinsic merit. The binding of the books, which is sure to be costly, indicates that display and not real worth determines the choice.

The need of home libraries is felt more in the country than in the city. In rural districts, the opportunities for self-improvement are generally very limited. The young people seldom have access to public libraries and good lectures are rare. The taste for reading may not have been developed, owing to the short period of school life. If deprived of good books there is little chance of getting any intellectual food. The mental faculties are dwarfed, and farm life is wrongly assumed to afford no means of helping those who long for an education. Indeed, it is no wonder that so many foolishly abandon the effort to gain knowledge. A new suit of clothes, a handsome set of china, or a fine bicycle, is sought, but there is no thought of spending a few dollars in what would have much to do in the development of the intellect. One weekly paper is perhaps, considered enough literature for the whole family. A standard magazine would be an extravagance. The children have little chance of knowing what is going on in the world, or of getting information about the duties of citizenship. Even an agricultural journal is not provided, and it is apparently assumed that the tiller of the soil has no need of scientific knowledge regarding farming operations.

Children are not sufficiently impressed with the fact that good management is more valuable to the farmer than hard physical labor. It should be felt that it is the man of properly exercised brains that will hold his own in the country as well as in the town. The bad times which come frequently to the farmer render it imperative to have agriculture carried on in the future in accordance with the most approved methods. The farmer should be an observer, a reader, a thinker. After twenty years' experience his time should be worth far more than that of his hired man. The farmer who does not grow intellectually is without excuse.

Children should be trained to value their books, and to form little libraries for themselves. A book worth reading is worth preserving. The school books should be retained, and should become precious reminders of youthful days. The books one adds to his library from year to year may mark his intellectual and moral growth. The volumes purchased should be those that are intended to be used at the time. If passages are marked when read the books will be all the more serviceable to him who has thus made use of them. A public library can never meet the needs that are supplied by a private one. A certain class of reference books may doubtless be left to public libraries, but there is great advantage in having in the home such works as may readily be taken up when an opportunity is presented. For the ordinary citizen a great many books are not required. In the library of fifty or a hundred well-chosen volumes infinite riches may be found. Almost any boy or girl who tries may have, in a few years, a fair library. Only the best books should be selected, and one who reads judiciously can master several in a year.

To purchase a great many books is unnecessary. Not more than a thousand really first-class books are to be found in the

English language, and of these the greatest will not exceed one hundred. If teachers and parents will help children in selecting books, a taste for literature will be created and the nucleus of a private library formed, before school life is over. Care must be taken to prevent the taste for ephemeral novelties, however brilliant, from displacing the half-formed taste for literature of standard reputation.

The care of the home library should chiefly consist of keeping the books neat and accessible. Books that are locked up or kept in unfrequented rooms are deprived of half their usefulness. It is a good thing to find a book almost worn out with

Influence of Books

"The Voyages of Captain Cook" led William Carey to become a missionary.

"Shakespeare and the Bible," said Rev. John Sharp, "made me Archbishop of York."

Cotton Mather's "Essay to do Good" influenced the whole of Franklin's life.

Henry Ward Beecher said no man could read Ruskin's works and be the same again.

"The Life of Washington," which Lincoln borrowed from a neighbor in the wilderness and devoured by the light of the cabin fire, inspired his entire career.

The entire career of Tyndall was affected by Emerson's book on Nature.

Many a boy has gone to sea and become a rover under the influence of such books as Marryat's novels.

Multitudes of lads have been led into lives of crime by reading cheap sensational, but vicious books.

"It is nearly an axiom," says Bishop Potter, "that people will not be better than the books they read."

use if it has received proper treatment. It is better to have a book convenient for every day use, than to have it preserved like a stuffed bird in a glass case. Open shelves are better than glass-doored book-cases, and for a private library the original binding of a book is better than a brown paper cover. Plain substantial bindings are better than costly editions. The latter may be left for men who have lots of money, but not, perhaps, the highest appreciation of the intrinsic value of a book. One's books should be treated as companions, and proper care of them is expected. It is not necessary to spend much time in arranging one's private library. At the same time a knowledge of where the different volumes are to be found is advantageous. Books should not be placed in a crowded manner on the shelves, nor should they be piled flat-ways upon the top of those standing upright in the case. The advice given long ago by Richard De Bury is valuable, "Never to approach a volume with uncleanly hands."

Books are easily soiled, and if defaced their attractiveness is diminished. They should be frequently dusted and protected from dampness or impure air. They should become more precious as time goes on, and many happy memories should be called up by referring to their pages. By frequent intercourse with the sayings of a great author he should be esteemed all the more. To part with one's books should be like parting with one's friends. They should become some of the most valued treasures of the household, and should be bequeathed as precious legacies to the next generation.

Reading Circles

BY THE EDITOR.

A Reading Circle is a company of people who undertake to read the same books at the same time, and to meet occasionally for the discussion of what they have read. The benefits of such an arrangement are manifest. In the first place the evils of desultory reading are avoided. Most people browse a little here and there in the fields of literature, but few undertake anything like a systematic course; what they get out of their reading is largely a matter of chance. When one joins a Reading Circle, however, there is a definite purpose in view, and the members commit themselves to a definite work. One inspires and encourages the other, and there are always interesting topics for conversation. What is the reason why there are so many people who cannot talk about anything but the weather, or some other hackneyed subject? Simply because they do not read and they do not think. No wonder their minds are blank.

These Circles are particularly suited for young persons who have not had the advantage of a high school or college education, but are, nevertheless, anxious to improve their minds. The long winter evenings afford opportunities for mental culture that are too valuable to let slip. When these are used diligently it is wonderful what can be accomplished.

The pioneer in this movement was the Chautauqua Library and Scientific Circle which aimed at interesting the common people in history, science, and general literature. It required about ten hours reading per week for ten months, and included a system of correspondence instruction. Certificates and Diplomas were granted to those who completed the course.

Arrows

Wear the old coat and buy the new book.—
Austin Phelps.

A man's mind is known by the company it keeps.—*James Russel Lowell.*

No morsel is more delicious than a ripe book, a book whose flavor is as refreshing at the thousandth tasting as at the first.—*A. Bronson Alcott.*

A book is good company. It is full of conversation without loquacity.—*Henry Ward Beecher.*

When a new book comes out, I read an old one.—*Rogers.*

There was a time when the world acted upon books, now books act upon the world.—*Joubert.*

My library was dukedom large enough.—*Shakespeare.*

O, but books are such safe company! They keep your secrets well. They never boast that they made your eyes glisten or your heart throb.—
Wm. Parton.

In science read, by preference, the newest works; in literature, the oldest.—*Balfour Lytton.*

In a little country village, a few years ago, I found an old lady of 65, who for seven years had been taking up the Chautauqua Course, all alone, and she had her diploma, in a neat frame, hanging on the wall, of which she was mightily proud. This shows what can be accomplished by a determined effort.

The Epworth League Reading Course is not quite as ambitious an undertaking as that of Chautauqua, and is somewhat simpler. It aims at helping Christian young people in the cultivation of reading habits, and is generally associated in

some way with a Young People's Society. The books selected are not heavy works but are well written and contain considerable information. Attention is given to history, science, poetry, citizenship, etc., and one volume is chosen each year bearing on character building, and the culture of the spiritual life. The object is to make better Christians of our young people.

Since the Epworth League Reading Course was started in Canada, no less than 52,000 good books have been circulated in various parts of the country, and many persons have been stimulated to form reading habits.

It is quite customary for Epworth League Reading Circles to meet in the homes of the members, and an effort is made to give a social aspect to the gatherings. The chairs are gathered together in a semi-circle, in the parlor, and a pleasant cosy time is enjoyed. Generally a leader is appointed, and the exercises are conducted in question and answer style, with free-and-easy discussions. It is always well to meet with punctuality, and to allow no gossip to interfere with the objects of the meeting. Discussions on matters foreign to the aims of the Circle should not be permitted. One hour and a half will be long enough for any one session.

Let it be understood that it is not necessary to secure a large number of persons in order to have a Reading Circle. Half a dozen, or even less, can have a very profitable and pleasant time together. When it is not considered practicable to have a "Circle," some means should be adopted to give the whole League the advantage of the course. This can be done by taking up the books at the literary evenings.

The testimony of pastors to the value of the Reading Circle is almost unanimous in its favor. One minister said: "The Reading Course opened up a new world to my young people." Another declared that the Reading Circle had practically settled the vexed question of amusement, on his circuit, by the law of substitution. One pastor's experience was a little amusing. He said: "I went into my Reading Circle the other evening and said to the young people, 'You may ask me all the questions you like.' I had given them similar opportunities before but they had scarcely ever been very inquisitive. But they had been reading those books, and began to rain questions on me. I had to go home and brush up."

This was probably just as good for the preacher as for the young people. Anything that stirs sluggish minds, and awakens dormant intellects, should be encouraged.

Let us have a larger number of Reading Circles among our young people this year than ever before.

Books That Live

A GOOD book is a living power. It has no voice, but it makes its appeal; it has no vote, but it may change dynasties; it offers no gifts, and yet it buys the love and determines the choices of multitudes. It seems unkind and unfeeling to call any good book inanimate, and to describe a library as a lifeless thing. In all libraries, to be sure, there sleep the forms of numberless tomes whose influence and almost memory has perished from the earth, but in all libraries, on the other hand, there lie and well-nigh live numbers of fresh and inspiring volumes that are moments and makeweights in the thought and life of the day. There are books that never were dead because they were never born; there are others that once, yet only for a period, enjoyed a kind of currency which men have called existence; and there are others still—the *dei majores* of literature—that can never die, because the spirit in them is the breath of the immortals. A book is not inanimate simply because it is manufactured out of parchment or paper, neither does any book live unless the Almighty—or one of His inspired prophetic spokesmen—has breathed into its pulsing pages the breath of creating truth. Try the books, as you do the spirits, whether they be of God. If any book be of men, it will come to naught; but if it be of God, human logic cannot overthrow it nor any man's logic smother out its life. For such a tome there is no tomb.

The Autocrat of the Book-Shelves

ALMOST nine centuries ago a lonely monk, known afterward as the Archbishop of Poitiers, wrote down in a monastery the following words, which have lost none of their eloquence or truth through lapse of time. Could there be a more exquisite tribute to the fellowship of books?

"Our house is empty, save only myself and the rats and mice, who nibble in solitary hunger. There is no voice in the hall, no tread on the stairs. The clock has stopped, . . . the pump creaks no more.

"But I sit here with no company but books, dipping into dainty honeycombs of literature. All minds in the world's history find their focus in a library. This is the pinnacle of the temple from which we may see all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them.

"I keep Egypt and the Holy Land in the closet next of the window. On the side of them are Athens and the empire of Rome. Never was such an army mustered as I have here.

"I can put my haughtiest subjects up or down as it pleases me. I call 'Plato,' and he answers 'Here'—a noble and sturdy soldier. 'Aristotle,' 'Here'—a host in himself. 'Demosthenes,' 'Cicero,' 'Caesar,' 'Tacitus,' 'Pliny'—'Here,' they answer, and smile at me in the immortality of youth.

"Modest all, they never speak unless spoken to. Bountiful all, they never refuse to answer. And they are all at peace together. My architects are building night and day without sound of hammer; my painters designing, my poets singing, my philosophers discoursing, my historians and theologians weaving their tapestries, my generals marching about without noise or blood.

"I hold all Egypt in fee simple. I build not a city, but empires at a word. I can say as much of all the Orient as he who was sent to grass did of Babylon. . . .

"All the world is around me, all that ever stirred human hearts or fired the imagination is harmlessly here. My library shelves are the avenues of time. Ages have wrought, generations grown, and all their blossoms are cast down here. It is the garden of immortal fruits, without dog or dragon."

Some Tests of a Good Book

The first test of a good book is its power of compelling attention. This it may do either from intrinsic worth of matter or from sheer beauty of style. A book which, when you open it casually, carries you along with it to the end, has at least one of the notes of enduring literature.

But this is not the final test. A necessary supplement is the book's power of compelling a re-reading. These are books of the mood; at the particular moment of your first reading, the theme or style of the book chimed in with your feeling which, more than the book itself, carried you to the end. The normal boy, in general, prefer a game of ball; but he has moods when a toy bear alone can satisfy him. The mood of the toy bear is brief; the ball mood is perennial. In the normal mood does the book compel a re-reading? If so, it has an added, and more certain note of immortality.

Once more, the test of a good book is its power to enrich and ennoble life. In bringing together the books which one would like to make up his "library," this is perhaps the readiest and best test of all. There is small profit in reading for reading's sake. Literature is meant for a channel of grace. The book which appeals to the best in you, which breeds hope

and begets faith and nourishes love—which in the hour of weariness brings rest, in the hour of darkness, light, in the hour of despondency, new courage; which furthers self-control, subdues passion, and inspires to purity. That book, whatever its effects, is a "best book" for you, and one for which you should give eternal thanks and blessing.—*Epworth Herald.*

Some "Cooperisms"

At this time of revival of interest in the works of James Fenimore Cooper, it is amusing to read a few early hits at some of his literary devices, given by the keen but kindly pen of Mark Twain. The adventure which holds the young reader fascinated as he tracks the hero of the romance through the forest is declared to be not always practicable, nor even possible, however dear it may be to the boyish soul. Says Mr. Clemens:

In his little box of stage properties Cooper kept six or eight cunning devices, artifices for the savage and woodsmen to deceive and circumvent each other with. He was never so happy as when working these innocent things and seeing them go.

A favorite one was making a moccasin person tread in the tracks of a moccasin enemy, and thus hide his own trail. Cooper wore out barrels and barrels of moccasins in working that trick.

Another stage property he pulled out of the box pretty often was the broken twig. He prized his broken twig above all his other effects and worked it the hardest. It is a restful chapter in any book when somebody doesn't step on a broken twig and alarm all the reds and whites for two hundred yards around. Every time Cooper puts a person in peril, and absolute silence is worth four dollars a minute, some one is sure to step on a broken twig. There may be a hundred other things to step on, but that wouldn't satisfy Cooper. The man must turn out and find a broken twig, and if he can't do it, go and borrow one. In fact, the "Leather Stocking Series" might be called the "Broken Twig Series."

Cooper has no knowledge of nature's way of doing things.

For instance, an Indian expert lost the trail of a person tracking through the woods. He was not stumped for long. He turns a running stream aside, and in the soft mud of the old bed there are the person's moccasin tracks. The current did not wash them away, as it would have done in other cases.

Books and Their Lovers

A genuine lover of books can seldom resist their fascination. Walking along the street and passing a stall heaped with old, worn, second-hand volumes, eye and hand are tempted, the wayfarer's progress is arrested, the loitering step ceases, and presently the brightening countenance shows delight at a discovery. It is, perhaps, a very old edition of some long-lost favorite, or it is a book of the hour marked down in price, or it is an odd volume of a much prized author, of whose works one likes several copies; whatever the cause, the result is the same. The book allures and the book lover buys it.

A Curious "Exercise"

It is said of Macaulay that "the only exercise in which he can be said to have excelled" was that of threading crowded streets with his eyes fixed upon a book. He might often be seen in such thoroughfares as Oxford Street and Cheapside walking as fast as other people walked, and reading a great deal faster than anybody else could read.

The Choice of Books

It does not matter how many, but how good, books you have.—*Seneca.*

Books that are books are all you want, and there are but half-a-dozen in any thousand.—*Thoreau.*

Of bad books you can never read too little; of the good, never too much.—*Schopenhauer.*

I have often been astonished how little care people devote to the selection of what they read. Many people read almost by hazard.—*Lord Abettery.*

The choice of books would be greatly aided if the reader, in taking up a volume, would ask himself just why he is going to read it, and of what service it is to be to him.—*Richardson.*

"Every book," says Frederic Harrison, "that we take up without a purpose is an opportunity lost of taking up a book with a purpose."



About Noted Authors



A Great Reader

Before writing "Romola," George Eliot read an immense number of books. She herself says: "I began it a young woman, I finished it an old woman." No wonder it was to her the dearest of all her literary children. "There is no book of mine," she wrote, "about which I more thoroughly feel that every sentence was written with my best blood."

One of the Immortals

Rev. F. W. Macdonald thinks that the only name worthy to be set by the side of Alfred Tennyson is that of the unsurpassable William Shakespeare. He says: "To-day Tennyson is a classic, his rank determined, his sphere assigned, his honors beyond challenge. He has joined the company to which Wordsworth, Keats and Shelley belong. He is one of the immortals."

Climbed the Shelves

Young Samuel Johnson read in his father's shop from the beginning. Whatever he learned at grammar school, he learned a great deal more at home. His father, like many of the old booksellers, had an excellent stock of the best literature, and Samuel was always climbing the shelves to take down books. He said that the period of study was from the age of twelve to eighteen.

Never at Leisure

Johnson said of John Wesley: "His conversation is good but he is never at leisure. He is always obliged to go at a certain hour. This is very disagreeable to a man who loves to fold his legs and have out his talk as I do." But Wesley is at leisure now, and instead of a hurried greeting, or a distant view, you can have your talk out with him. His journal will be found very entertaining.

A Nook and a Book

The most ancient surviving portrait of Thomas à Kempis, a writer of many books, shows him in his cell with a book in his hand, and at his feet an open volume bearing an inscription written partly in Latin, partly in Dutch, to this effect: "In all things have I sought rest, but nowhere have I found it save in a nook with a book." This was a favorite saying of his. All his days he loved a book and a quiet corner.

An Industrious Reader

"When a boy," said Horace Greeley, "I would go reading to the wood-pile, reading to the neighbors." My father was poor and needed my services during the day, but it was a mighty struggle for him to get me to bed at night. I would take a pine knot, put it on the back log, pile my books around me and lie down and read all through the long winter evenings, silent, motionless, and dead to all the world around me, alive only to the world to which I was transported by my books."

Fooled a Critic

What can be more mirth-provoking than the native simplicity with which a pompous critic, who prides himself on his lynx-eyed acuteness, will sometimes walk into a trap which has been set for him? When Alexander Pope was translating Homer, he read, by request, several books of the "Iliad" to Lord Halifax—who he characterizes as a literary coxcomb—at his house. During the reading his Lordship several times stopped the poet, and suggested that certain passages might be improved. Perplexed and irritated by the advice, the poet withdrew with Garth, who laughed heartily at the incident, and told him to leave the verses just as they were—to call on Halifax a month later, thank him for his criticisms and then read again the verses to him unaltered. Pope followed this advice, saying to Halifax that he hoped his Lordship would now find his objections removed—upon which Halifax,

delighted, cried out: "Ay, now they are perfectly right; nothing can be better."—*William Matheus.*

An Absorbed Historian

There is a story told of the German historian, Neander, to the effect that one day, at the dinner hour, he failed to respond to the customary summons; and though the house was searched, and messengers sent out through the town, no trace of him was to be found. At last, as the afternoon light was fading, his sister re-entered his room in the hope that he might have come in unnoticed, and chancing to look up, discovered the professor perched upon a book-case absorbed in the contents of an ancient volume, where he had sat, oblivious of time and hunger, since some hour in the morning.

Industry in Reading

Every one has some opportunity for self-improvement. Eilhu Burritt learned a dozen languages at the forge, John Wesley read on horseback, Longfellow translated Dante's "Divine Comedy" by working at it in the morning while his coffee was boiling, Beecher said he read Frode's "History of England" in the intervals of dinner, Lincoln found time to read while keeping a store, and Gladstone in the busiest periods of his eventful life was an inveterate reader of the best books in several departments of literature. If people do not read it is not for want of time. It is often due to wasteful habits.

"No Great Thing"

A Southern woman tells about dining in Boston once, when next to her sat a homely little old gentleman, who wanted to know how she passed the time in the country with her old father. "Well, we read." "What do you read?" "Chiefly 'The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table.'" "Don't you get tired of it?" "Oh, no. When we get to the end, we simply turn back to the beginning." The old gentleman chuckled, and made a remark implying that the "Autocrat" was no great thing among books, and the lady was rather surprised at his disparaging air. After dinner she demanded of her hostess the name of the unappreciative old gentleman and was told that it was Dr. Holmes.

A Memorable Interview

Henry C. Robinson, a witty lawyer, who used to live in Hartford, Conn., told the following anecdote one evening when he was introducing an English author to a Hartford audience.

"The most famous Englishman whom I ever saw was Charles Dickens, who lectured here in Hartford when I was a young boy.

"I had read some of the stories of this great writer and I was most anxious to catch a glimpse of the man himself. So on the afternoon when he was expected to arrive I walked up and down the street in front of the hotel where I knew he was to stay.

"The hotel was built close to the sidewalk and the long windows of the parlor were so low that the passerby could easily see into the room.

"I soon realized that a gentleman was sitting within reading a paper. I stepped close up under the window and pressed my face against the glass, eager to get a good look at the stranger. Yes, it was he! It really was! I had seen his picture often and couldn't be mistaken. I stared and stared, anxious to impress every feature upon my memory. After a few moments he turned and saw me there, the little eager Yankee boy, gazing up at his face; and then the famous man, laying aside his paper, actually spoke, so that I really heard the voice of the great Charles Dickens himself and he was really talking to me!"

Here Mr. Robinson paused impressively and some one on the platform inquired, "What did he say, Mr. Robinson?"

"He said," replied Mr. Robinson, in subdued tones, "Go away, little boy; go away!"

The Quiet Hour

The Bible Pre-Eminent

Certainly the Bible is pre-eminent, and as it ever has been so, it is now the one supreme book of all the literature of this world. It ought to be read a hundred times more than it is, and especially ministers of the gospel ought to read it more than they do, and they would do well to commit to memory many of its choice and all-important passages. Many a dull sermon would be greatly helped by an infusion of the Bible. Too much cannot be said in praise of this blessed, heaven-given Book. But still this reading of the Bible ought rather to stimulate and encourage the reading of the best and most vital books, both of the past and the present. No good excuse for not doing this can be given. There will be time enough for it, provided no time is wasted in frivolous pursuits, in dawdling, in literary loafing, in drowsy dreaming, in pampering to imbecile literary inclinations.

Only Twelve Hours

A good story is told of a great man in India who was so careful in the education and training of his son that he engaged an old servant to be constantly in the presence of the boy for this purpose—that whenever he was keenly enjoying some pleasure, the old man might say, "The day hath but twelve hours," and whenever the lad was sick or in trouble, he might repeat the comforting message, "The night is but twelve hours long." A strange and yet admirable idea. The first message would rouse the youth to make the most of time and opportunity, the second would console and cheer him and show him that the night of suffering would soon end. Would not that first motto be a good one to hang up before our desks? The day hath but twelve hours. Then why waste any of them? Twelve hours will be enough to accomplish all that needs to be done, if they are well used and carefully planned out.

The I. B. R. A.

BY DR. FRANK B. PRICE.

About the year 1881 there came to Rev. Dr. Duncan, in the United States, a vision of homes in which the Bible was a neglected book. He conceived the idea of a Home Department for the Sunday School which should encourage the people who did not attend Sunday School to study at home the same lessons that were used in the Sunday School, that is, the International Sunday School lessons. At exactly the same time the same problem was before the Sunday School Union of England, which has control of Sunday Schools in Great Britain and Ireland, viz., what can be done to improve the spiritual condition of the people in and out of the Sunday School? A special committee was appointed to find a solution. It recommended that the people be asked to pledge themselves to read daily a portion of Scripture bearing on the International Sunday School lesson. Thus began the organization known as the International Bible Reading Association (I. B. R. A.). The idea originated with Mr. Chas. Waters a bank manager in London, and Mr. Waters is still at the head of this vast organization which has girdled the globe, counting its million members in seventy countries, speaking over thirty languages and embracing over fifty religious denominations. The daily readings of the I. B. R. A. are the daily readings published in nearly all the Sunday School periodicals. The American idea of the Home Department has been largely adopted in Canada, owing no doubt to the union of the S. S. forces in Canada and the United States and the free exchange of S. S. literature. But the Home Department has adopted the daily readings of the I. B. R. A. The chief difference between the two organizations is that the Home Department asks its members to study the Sunday lesson for a half hour each week, preferably on Sunday, while the I. B. R. A. asks that a portion of Scripture bearing on the Sunday lesson shall be read each day, the Sunday lesson being one of the daily readings. Surely the blessing of Heaven has been upon the I. B. R. A., for wherever it takes root it seems to thrive. It has 13,000 secretaries, none of

whom are salaried. It is equally at home in the Y.M.C.A., the Young Women's Guild, the Epworth League or other young people's societies, or the Sunday School, or may exist independently of another organization. It has at its head the general secretary, Mr. Waters, with a committee of the S. S. Union. Next in order are the District Secretaries, each having the oversight of a large area of country. And next come the Branch Secretaries, each having a list of members to visit quarterly and supply with literature. Membership costs five cents a year, being renewed January 1 of each year. Supplies are all free. These include an illuminated card with list of S. S. lessons and readings for the year, a leaflet for each month containing the titles, the golden texts, the lessons, the daily readings and a short comment on each day's readings, and also a quarterly circular letter which keeps the members in touch with each other and with the work. Literature, supplying information to workers or members, and application forms, are all furnished free. For particulars or supplies apply to FRANK D. PRICE, 351 Sherbourne St., Toronto, District Secretary for Ontario.

The Study of the Bible

The importance of studying the Bible grows more and more necessary the further out into the way of life we travel. We need to read it through consecutively, in order to get a correct knowledge of its teachings. There are eleven hundred and eighty-nine chapters in the Bible. To read two of these each week-day and eleven on Sunday will take us through the entire Bible in one year. Who of us can not do this much reading? In addition to this consecutive and daily reading of the Scriptures, we ought to make it a point to memorize choice passages from the Psalms, the Proverbs and from the precious Gospels. We have scores of spare moments each day in which this can be done. But one of the best methods of studying the Bible is to take it up in each book, and with the use of a concordance, a Bible dictionary and a commentary, we will get its inner meaning, and become wise unto salvation. Then, occasionally, we need to take a special subject and by these same helps find out all that the Scriptures teach concerning it. This is exceedingly profitable. Let Christ be the first subject, and when you have found out all that the Bible says about Him, you will have gone practically through the entire book from Genesis to Revelation. For He occupies, in one way and another, the largest part of the Scriptures. We need not fear that we will exhaust the substance of the Bible. It is infinite in the compass of its meaning. The oftener we go through it, the greater the wealth of ethical knowledge and spiritual wisdom we will obtain. There is no limit to the substance of its contents.—*Michigan Christian Advocate.*

Good, But Useless

"Good reading for boys? Well, no, not particularly," answered the young professor who had been asked for his opinion of a certain book. "It is too much like dog biscuit." There was a moment of unenlightened silence, and then some one asked—

"What is dog biscuit?"

"Oh, it's a patent food, highly advertised, but it's made up of almost everything that a dog doesn't like," explained the professor. "Might be good for him if he'd eat it, but he won't."

The young professor was out of the door in a minute, and whistling to his own dog. He was bright, breezy, and young enough to suggest that he still held an intimate acquaintance with boy nature, and the eminently proper but dry biography which had been under discussion was thoughtfully laid aside. Whatever might be said in favor of its facts and its lessons, it was valueless as a boy's book if the boy wouldn't read it. There are many good people—teachers, writers, parents, philanthropists—who forget that the great requisite in dealing with humanity is to know human nature. We must find people where they stand, and reach them as they are, if we are ever to reach them at all. Not what we think is good for them, but what they will receive is the limit of our helpfulness. The great teacher did not offer us his lessons from heaven; he came to the level of our lives, our needs, and took upon him our nature to bring his truth to us.—*East and West.*

The Ethics of Reading

Christian principle should govern one's reading as well as all the rest of one's actions. It is no better to read a bad book than to speak to a bad man—for the sake of the badness either in it or in him. It is not enough, furthermore, in accordance with the Christian rule of reading, simply to abstain from perusing pernicious books. It is a duty, also, to read books positively inspiring and uplifting. The ethics of reading includes "Do's!" as well as "Don'ts!"

There are books which no man can afford to leave unread. Chief among these indispensable books is the Bible. There are at least a dozen grand English classics, each of which contains a whole library within itself. Then there are easily a hundred volumes—though not always the same hundred—whose study is essential to this or that man, according to his particular mission in life. Possibly there is a somewhat lower hierarchy of the "four hundred" among the books that it is well to read, though not indispensable. Then follows a small host of clamant volumes, each of which would sell, for a greater or lesser price, to the wide-awake man its wares of information, amusement or mental or manual training. Among these many publications choice must be made—for not the tenth of them can be read in any case—and the choice should be careful, conscientious, Christian.—*Zion's Herald*.

The Book of Life

We once heard D. L. Moody say that he had made it a rule of his daily life to read no book that did not in some way add to his interest in the Bible. This is a wise and safe position. Too many books lessen rather than increase one's love for the Book of Books. Whatever detracts from our appreciation of God's Word, or so engrosses our thought and attention that we have little time and less inclination to read it, is injurious. One of the most serious faults that may be found with the reading habits of the majority of our young people is that they become so pre-occupied in the transient periodical with its superficial and often untrue representation of life, that they neglect the Book of Life, or fail utterly to appreciate and enjoy its sublime and inspiring pages. If one's reading does not "add to his interest in the Bible" it is not the best reading. Whatever else we may not read, we must read that Supreme Book. It is vital to all goodness, strength or fruitfulness in individual character or national life.

The Leisure Minutes

"Set a high price," says a wise man, "upon your leisure moments." What value is too high for the hours that an ambitious, capable boy or girl can call his or her own, and use as stepping-stones to achievement? How high a figure Lincoln's leisure minutes as a lad were worth to his country, as he studied and read and thought! How valuable were the times that young Edison could call his own, and spent in working his inventions! If our leisure hours now are worth nothing it is a bad omen for our future years of manhood and womanhood.

The Ever-living Spring

At a certain spot on the coast of Maine there is a fresh-water spring under high-water mark. Twice a day the tide rushes in and covers up the spring, and twice a day the spring gushes forth again, washing itself free of the sand and the brine. The Bible is such a spring. When the tide of worldliness rushes in and threatens to drown out our spiritual life, the new life will rise up again fresh and pure and sweet if fed from the well-springs of the Word of God.

A Safeguard

Reading is a safeguard against moral mischief, because it occupies the mind. The majority of the youths and maidens who walk our streets, at first aimlessly, with no definite object at all, afterwards bent on mischief, are, as a rule, those who do not read, whose idle brain the devil fills with mischief. Teachers, parents, ministers, should make it one of their duties to inculcate a love of reading, and to instruct in the choice of books.

Satan's Opportunity

The idle Christian invites danger. A gentleman going down the street the other day stopped and looked for a moment at an empty house; then, stepping into the corner shop, asked: "Can you tell me what that house is let for?" "Why, I didn't know it was to be let," was the reply. "Well maybe it isn't," said the first speaker; "but when a house is empty one always takes it for granted that it is to let."

There was something in this remark to moralize over. It is not only empty houses, but empty lives, that wear in themselves the announcement that they are to let. The busy life is the surest safeguard against intruders. Satan, of all others, never waits to be invited into the unoccupied heart.

Tributary to Life

Make books tributary to life. A good book is an opportunity, an angel on the way of life. It is to be wrestled with until it surrenders the blessing bound up in it. Until this has been accomplished that particular book has not been read to profit. Of all enduring literature it may be said, as Wordsworth said of poetry, that its true mission is to console the afflicted, to add sunshine to daylight by making the happy happier, to teach the young and gracious of every age to see, to think, and feel, and therefore to become more actively and sincerely virtuous. But no book can work such effect in one until it has become part of one's life. Let reading then be to this end, that we may have life and have it more abundantly. For this is the high mission of books.

Know Our Own Church

It reflects seriously either upon one's own church or upon the character of our attachment to that church, if we show no interest in the literature disseminated through the medium of and under the auspices of the church to which we belong. It is a serious fault for a parent to interest himself more in another family than his own, and it is equally blameworthy when we are associated with a church in whose institutions and enterprises we show no interest. Let us aim at intelligence on as many subjects as possible, especially in relation to our religious faith and our own church.

How to Read

The art of reading is to skip judiciously.—*Hammerton*.

Much reading is like much eating—wholly use less without digestion.

Definite reading is profitable, miscellaneous reading is pleasant.—*Seneca*.

Learn to be discriminative in your reading; to read faithfully, and with your best attention, all kinds of things which you have a real interest in.—*Carlyle*.

To read a few pages here, and a few pages there, without thought or aim, is a great waste of time.—*Millar*.

"We err by reading too much, and out of proportion to what we think. I should be wiser, I am persuaded, if I had read half as much."—*Elizabeth Barrett Browning*.

So much as I read I made my own. When a half-hour, or an hour at most had elapsed, I closed my books and thought on what I had read. If there was anything peculiarly interesting or striking in the passage, I endeavored to recall it up to my memory, and commonly could effect my object."—*David Webster*.

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Editorial

This Number

This number of our paper is devoted almost entirely to the subject of books and reading. We make no apology for devoting so much attention to this topic, as we believe it is of the highest importance that our young people should acquire a taste for good literature. Books have much to do, not only with the pleasure of life, but with the moulding of character.

We hope that many of our readers will consider this number of THE ERA worth preserving. It will be valuable when books are considered in the Epworth League topic.

Dusted the Books

Not long ago we asked for a couple of books of travel at the Toronto City Library. It took the attendant some time to find them, and then, before handing them over, she carefully wiped off a thick layer of dust. There was every evidence that these volumes had not been out of the library for many years, and yet they were wonderfully interesting, and full of valuable information presented in an attractive way. Whoever saw a library clerk dust a novel? There is no necessity for it, as works of fiction are kept so constantly on the move. They do not remain long enough on the shelves to gather much dust. What a pity it is that the reading done by the masses to-day is so largely confined to fiction! Some of it, of course, is good and worth reading, but much is light, frivolous, sensational or silly. The Epworth League should seek in every legitimate way to develop among the members a love for books of history, travel, science, poetry. Do not allow the splendid volumes on these themes that are in your public library to be covered with dust and cobwebs through disuse.

What Shall I Read?

The main question with intelligent young people to-day is not "Shall I read?" but "What shall I read?" The habit of reading is upon the vast majority of our youth. But the very multiplicity of books and the almost innumerable host of periodicals makes it difficult to select. The danger is that our youth shall form the habit of reading without thoughtful selection. There is not time enough at one's disposal to read more than a very small proportion of what is printed. Hence the supreme importance of selecting the best. But what is "the best?" Anything that lowers in any degree the standard of right living, anything that gives unreal views of life, anything that unfits one for duty, is not "the best." We never lay a book down in exactly the same state of mind

that we take it up. It has in some degree either ennobled or degraded, helped or injured us. For this reason alone we should seek to know what kind of a book it is before we commence to read it. Not to read many books, but to master a few good ones, is a safe resolve for our young men and women.

Death of Dr. Potts

Our Sunday Schools and Epworth Leagues have lost a good friend in the death of Rev. John Potts, D.D. His unusual abilities as a speaker were always at the service of our great Conventions, and on many a notable occasion he has thrilled immense audiences as he advocated the claims of the youth of the church. He was an ideal orator for mass meetings, as his clear resonant voice reached to the farthest man in the crowd, and he always said something worth listening to. We shall never forget the enthusiasm his address created at the second International Convention of the Epworth League, held at Chattanooga. As Chairman of the International Sunday School Lesson Committee he exercised a great influence which greatly helped Sunday School work throughout the world.

Skipping

The "art of skipping," when reading, has been much commended and recommended by many. But young people will do well if they do not cultivate it too soon.

To read thoroughly is the first great lesson to learn. If a book is worth reading it should be well read. Older and experienced scholars may be able to sift a page quickly and centre their attention on a paragraph that contains the core of the chapter; but young readers must wait before they can do this. How much of the last book that you read do you remember? We forget quickly because we do not read thoughtfully. Shallow thinking means weak living. Not what one eats, but the thoroughness of his digestion, makes food a blessing.

So with reading. Assimilate what you read, and if it is not worth assimilating do not read it. The principles which the author has introduced into his characters must be worthy of incorporation into your mind and character. If they are not, the book is not worth even a hasty perusal. Read good books only, read thoughtfully, and do not be in haste to reach the end.

An Important Department

It is a little amusing, at conventions, to hear the contentions of those who read papers on the different features of Epworth League work as to which is the most important. The lady whose topic is the "weekly prayer-meeting" is positive in her statement that the Christian Endeavor Department, with its provision for spiritual culture, is the very heart of the League, and should receive most attention, while her sister, who follows, seems to think that the League exists solely for the purpose of carrying on missionary work. Another is of the opinion that there can be nothing more valuable than the operations of the visiting and relief, and floral committees. The one who deals with the Social Department is confident in the assertion that nothing can take the place of a warm, social atmosphere in the society, and the exhibition of a friendly spirit in seeking to reach the non-member. And so it goes.

It is quite right that each of these should regard the department advocated as if paramount importance, as a good paper or address is more likely to be produced if that conviction is strong.

Some of the delegates at a recent convention, however, opened their eyes a little when a young lady claimed that the

Literary Department was the most important part of our organization. She went on to make out a fairly good case by showing that the spiritual activities and missionary operations of the League could go on, under established church auspices, even if the Epworth League should be abolished altogether; perhaps not so efficiently, but they would not be entirely neglected. If, however, we should lose the Epworth League there would be absolutely no provision for the intellectual culture of our young people. Looking at it in this way, the Literary Department has a most important work to do, and should be maintained with the fullest possible efficiency. It is usually the one thing that is most likely to be neglected.

Talk it Over

It is a good plan for young readers to talk over what they read with someone else. Nothing will help one remember better than repeating what has been learned. Not necessarily reciting it, but restating it in your own words. It is not easy to tell the contents of a chapter or even of a page, but the cultivation of that ability is a splendid aid to expression and language. Facility to converse well about books ought to be cultivated by our young people. No better way can be found for this than to tell over to another the leading thoughts of your author. Receive the impression of the book and then make expression of it to some other person. Try it and you will be surprised at how little you have really made your own in your reading, and how limited your vocabulary is. Both your stock of knowledge and of words will increase by the practice of restatement recommended.

It is a sad thing that in so many homes there is little reading matter of any permanent value. There may be the current newspapers with their horrid comic supplements, or the popular magazines with their silly stories, but of really good books there is an awful dearth. Often there is not a book case in the whole house. What a pity!

BIOGRAPHY should form an important part of the reading of young people. They will be much more powerfully impressed by the life story of some good man or woman than by abstract principles or by sermons and lectures. It is impossible to overestimate the value of reading the biography of such men as Cromwell, John Howard, Gladstone, Shaftesbury, Lincoln. Books like these cast a flood of light on the path of life.

The *Epworth Herald* deprecates the ignorance of the bible displayed by the average college student, and quotes the opinion of a professor of an Eastern College that "if all the undergraduates in America could be placed in one room and tested by common examination on supposedly familiar stories of the Old Testament, the result would be a magnificent contribution to American humor." There is large room for both the Sunday-School and the home to do better work.

How particular the health authorities of our towns and cities are in regard to food and drink! Let a butcher expose for sale tainted meat and how quickly he is stopped. When the water supply becomes contaminated, instantly the warning is sent out: "Boil the Water." But unfortunately the same vigilance is not exercised in regard to the mental food that is supplied to the people, as a glance at some of the third class news stores will show. If it is true that no one can read a bad book without his character being marred there ought to be the greatest possible care to suppress all that is likely to influence in the wrong direction.

PREACHERS no longer carry books with them to sell to the people, as book-stores are numerous and convenient, but every minister owes it to his congregation to lead them to see the intimate relation there is between their reading and religion. The pastor can often do a very valuable service for his people, by calling attention in the prayer meeting, or incidentally in the sermon, or when making pastoral calls, to some elevating and informing book of which he knows.

THIS is the age of public libraries, and doubtless they are a blessing, but ought we not to hear more about the advantages of the private library? The book you own is a thousand times as valuable as the book you borrow from the library. You can mark it, and that is one of the best ways of getting acquainted with a book. You can read it whenever the mood seizes you, and you do not need to hurry through it before the two weeks are out in order to escape a fine. You adopt it as a life long friend, while the other is but a passing acquaintance

Nobody should feel under obligation to read any book simply because it is talked about and has become popular. Professor Henry Drummond once had the courage to confess that he could not read Carlyle, and Rev. George Jackson says: "If I were to reveal all my own shortcomings to some literary confessor, I should be compelled to admit that Dickens bores me. It is a frightful admission to make, and the fault of course is wholly mine. But after all, the field of literature—the best literature—is very wide, and there is enough not only to satisfy the hunger, but also to please the taste of all."

Not the number of the books on our shelves, but their character, determines the value of our library. Every book added to our present stock should be selected with great care. It does not follow that because a book is "new" it is therefore desirable. Thousands of books have had a very extensive popularity that have not stood the test of time. The best books are not necessarily those written in the Twentieth Century. Some of the "ancients" will never be antiquated. Some of the "moderns" were never anything else. The unwholesome craving for "the latest book" has grown into a craze, and to gratify it there has been the multiplication of innumerable volumes that are both a damage and a disgrace. Any book that has its chief charm in its boasted "newness" may well be left unread. In a year or two the probability is that it will be buried in oblivion. Do not be in a hurry to read "the very latest thing out." Let it wait.

YOUNG people should seriously consider the cost of a book before they obtain or read it. The price of a book in cash is but the least item in the cost. "What is the store cost in dollars or cents?" is the starting-point only. Many books are worth less than their commercial price. Many are worth incalculably more. "What will it cost me in time, or thought, or impression, in indelible writing on my soul-building, in my power to be better myself, in my influence to help others to better life?" are some questions of cost, but infrequently asked. There are books that are popular which waste time, enervate the powers of clear thinking, dissipate noble purpose, and in the truest inventory of values are altogether too costly for our young people to read. Not the first cash outlay is the true criterion of the cost of a book, therefore, but its demand on our most valuable treasures, time, thought, character, and influence. It costs too much to read a poor book at any price.

The Printing Press

Printing is believed to be the great discovery of John Gutenberg about 1450, although the use of movable type was said to date in China from the middle of the eleventh century.

The first book printed in England was, "Ye booke of yee chess."

The new art spread with great rapidity. By 1500 there were over a thousand printers in the different countries of Europe, and more than 22,000 editions of books had been printed, including nearly a hundred editions of the Latin Bible.

Early printing was done on hand presses and was slow, laborious work. There were at first no title pages and no numbering of the leaves.

The first printing press in the United States began its civilizing work in Cambridge, Mass., in Harvard University.

The early printers were often learned men who devoted themselves to their work with an almost religious zeal.

The first English printer, William Caxton, set up a press in London, not far from Westminster Abbey, about 1477. When over fifty years of age he learned to be a printer in the Netherlands, and came home to England to introduce the new art.

In the city of Antwerp there is a museum of printing, where one sees the books issued by the printers of the Plantin family, the old hand presses, and the moulds and pots in which the early type was cast.

Perhaps no printer ever had greater difficulties to contend with than James Evans, when he constructed his own rude printing press 300 miles from civilization, to print the syllabic characters. Mr. Forster, the artist, has done well to show the printing press in the splendid portrait which he has recently painted of the "Apostle of the North."

In every issue of this paper there are 220,000 pieces of type. It is scarcely to be wondered at that one of them gets out of its right place occasionally.

Literary Lines

A celebrated man used to say, "The best test of a piece of good literature is the number of times you can read it over without wearying of it."

Company may be forced upon us for some time, but our books are our own choice.

There is no need of possessing or reading literature that does not awaken interest. To read with good results we must select by our tastes such books as interest us while reading them.

Good books are the progeny of sound-thinking minds, and the ages live in them. We should read only the very best that man has thought and written.

Who can forget the impression made on his mind by the reading of "Plutarch's Lives," a book of the largest information and of the most stimulating qualities?

Mark Twain, his mind on some present-day fads in pseudo-religion, is not a humorist when he says: "The absurdity the human race can't swallow hasn't been invented yet."

Dr. Lorimer says that "as an educator of the taste, Carlyle will always prove invaluable. Macaulay and Ruskin outrank him in all that pertains to the grace of composition, but in the cultivation of the taste for all that is genuine, sincere, and thoroughly honest in the realm of letters, he is, in my opinion, unmatched."

Dr. Lyman Abbott says, "The home ought to be no more without a library than without a dining-room and kitchen. Every man ought to provide for the brain as well as the stomach."

There are so many good books accessible and that are known to be good that any person, old or young, who reads a doubtful or condemned book out of mere curiosity offers a premium for harm. The number who thus sin against themselves prove that there is something worse than weakness in human nature on its underside.

The Methodist Times declares that the two most popular Methodist writers are Mark Guy Pearse, and W. E. Fitchett, author of "Wesley and His Century" and "Ithuriel's Spear."

James Russell Lowell once counselled his nephew, "A man is valuable in our day for what he knows, and his company will always be desired by others in exact proportion to the amount of intelligence and instruction he brings."

Novels and Novel Reading

Fiction, like food, should be let alone unless plain, fresh, clean, and neatly served.

A book-reviewer writing in one of the dailies gives a list of twelve widely advertised novels which have recently appeared. He deals with them in detail, and reaches the conclusion that ten of them are positively worthless, and the other two of doubtful value.

Captain Jack Crawford, the famous western scout, once said: "If I had my way I would imprison for life all writers and publishers of the yellow-backed lies that ruin many young men, and bring them west to fight Indians."

It may be said that we get something out of trashy novels, but a man who gets five cents when he might have had a dollar has really lost seriously.

A German boy was reading a lurid novel. Right in the midst of it he said to himself: "Now, this will never do. I get too much excited over it; I can't study so well after it. So here goes!" and he flung the book into the river. He was Fichte, the great German philosopher.

Some people acquire such a love for fiction reading that it becomes a real disease. They swallow novel after novel as a rum-drinker swallows spirits. They live on such stimulants. They are passive recipients of this mental food, and the more they read the weaker grow their minds. The result is intellectual imbecility.

There is great need to use discrimination in the time given to works of fiction. There is doubtless much time wasted on novel reading.

The ordinary society novel is to be avoided on the same ground that you decline to buy a fine-looking garment when you have reason to believe that its wool is shoddy or its silk cotton.

If your friend who reads all the new novels is patronizingly surprised that you have not seen the latest, inquire how long since he has read some of the standard novels that were written years ago and have stood the test of time.

Fiction is but the dessert of literature; to too many it is the first course, and they partake so greedily that they have no room for the substantials.

A certain writer says: "Take a little fiction now and then for thy appetite's sake, but wrest not this kindly injunction to soul a use as many wrest Paul's advice to Timothy."

A minister who bitterly denounced novels confessed that he had never read one. Being criticized for this, he determined to look into the novels of Sir Walter Scott. For weeks he secluded himself, neglected his work, repeated old sermons on Sunday, and almost forgot to take his meals. At the end of his experiment he astonished his congregation by telling them, from the pulpit, that he had found novels as pernicious as he had always supposed they were; that for three months he had done nothing but read them; and that they had so fascinated and interested him that he had been unable to write his discourses or congratulate himself to his religious duties. His people smiled and were not convinced; for his method had been transparently and amusingly irrational.

Interesting Facts About Books

Among the Greeks, 1000 B.C., books were written upon papyrus in rolls of from six inches to as many feet, and were copied by professional scribes.

The Chinese, who have a literature dating back 3,500 years, for many years made their books of bamboo tablets.

The Imperial library of China two thousand years ago contained 11,332 volumes.

The famous Alexandrian library, founded about 300 B.C., contained 700,000 volumes.

The largest libraries in the world today are the Bibliothéque, of Paris, containing three million volumes, and the British Museum, with its two million volumes. The Imperial Library at St. Petersburg has a million and a half.

The total number of books published in the world, annually, approximates 800,000. The total number of books in the world today is estimated at 4,000,000,000.

Books are the great fact of modern civilization. If we were to send to the next planetary neighbor our most representative thing, it would probably be a book.

You need not be rich to be wise. The price of one suit of clothes or of one Sunday dress will purchase a wonderful library of the world's masterpieces.

The oldest library of which we have any memorial had inscribed over its gateway the words: "Medicine for the mind."

Lord Bacon summed up the value of various kinds of books in this way: "Historians make men wise; poets witty; mathematicians, subtle; natural science, deep; moral philosophy, grave; logic and rhetoric, able to debate.

As an example of the costliness of early books, the King of Northumberland in 690 A.D. gave for a history of the world 800 acres of land, and a Countess of Anjou, date not stated, once gave 200 sheep and a large parcel of furs for a volume of homilies, and 120 crowns for a single book of *Livy*. In 1720 a Latin Bible was valued at \$150.

All round my room my silent servants wait—
My friends in every season, bright and dim,
Angels and Seraphim,
Come down and murmur to me, sweet and low,
And spirits of the skies all come and go
Early and late.

Books that are highest in character are lowest in price. As the fairest things in nature—the stars, the fields, the sea—are

the most familiar, and as the most indispensable kinds of food are the most abundant, so it has been ordered that the noblest works of human genius shall be the easiest to procure.

De Quincy declared it to be one of the misfortunes of life that one must read thousands of books only to discover that one need not have read them. This painful experience recalls the story of the Oriental magnate whose library was so vast as to require a thousand dromedaries to transport it. With judicious elimination of the useless and the trashy it was reduced to the carrying power of some thirty beasts of burden.

Dr. Livingstone said: "Those who never carried a book through the press have no idea of the toll it involves; the process has increased my respect for authors a thousandfold. I think I would rather cross the African continent again than undertake to write another book."

Gibbon spent twenty years upon his "Decline and Fall." Adam Clarke was engaged twenty-six years on his Commentary. Carlyle spent fifteen years on his "Frederick the Great."

Hints on Reading

Master the book you select. One may nap over a magazine or paper, but it is almost a sin to sleep over a book. Of what use is it to read and then to be able to tell nothing about it?

If you cannot develop any interest in a book, better lay it aside than to push through it ungraciously as it has to be read. Hasty, ungrudging reading does little good, and often causes damage.

Ask the question, "Why does this book command readers?" Work out an answer. Mentally review a page after it is read and see if it is in mind storage.

Talk it up with some one. This is the advantage of a Reading Circle, as several persons are reading the same books at the same time, and there are opportunities for very pleasant conversations.

Reading should be by subjects. One subject at a time is to be preferred. It is not a good practice for the general reader to take a few pages from history to-day, science to-morrow, and literature the next day.

Read with results. These will come only as pains are taken to digest the mental food. The mere act of reading will not be followed by lasting good any more than the mere act of eating. The voracious reader who races at express speed through whatever comes along, each volume wiping out the impression produced by its predecessor, is not a model for imitation.

Literary Smiles

A well-known Washington architect who has just returned from Boston is chortling over a good joke on that correct and literary city. He says that in the reading-room of one of the most exclusive clubs in the Hub there is a sign that reads, "Only low conversation permitted here."

The other day a lady walked into a bookstore in Montreal and asked one of the girls in charge: "Have you 'Pickwick Papers'?" "Well," replied the assistant, who had only been a few days at her work, "I really don't know, ma'am. We have the Eaton-Hurlbut papers and the Marcus Ward papers; but I don't think we have the Pickwick papers!"

A negro was discovered carrying a very large number of books, which brought forth the inquiry: "Going to school?" "Yes, sar." "Do you study all those books?" "No, sar; dey's my brudder's. Ise a ignorant kind of nigger 'side him boss. Yer just oughter see dat figger figgerin'." He has gone an' ciphered clean through addition, partition, subtraction, distraction, abomination, justification, creation, amputation, and adaptation."

He was a canny Scot who had a supreme regard for the Sabbath, and was jealous for its honor. Seeing a neighbor reading the Pilgrim's Progress on a week evening, he exclaimed with pained surprise in every word: "Losh me, neebor, aw ye no feuded ta be readin' sic a furd book as that, an' this no the Sabbath day?"

The story is told of how a little girl had been listening intently to her mother reading "Uncle Tom's Cabin" aloud, and finally, when the story was finished, the child raised her blue eyes questioningly and said: "Why is it, mother, that the book never mentions Topsy's last name?" "My child," replied the mother, "I guess she had no other name." "Oh, yes, she had, and I know it," returned the little girl. "Well, what was it?" "Why, 'Turry'—'Topsy Turry.'"

Pasted on the window of the book publisher's store was the sign, "Porter wanted," and in the window itself on a pile of books the placard, "Dickens' Works All This Week for \$4." The able-looking Irishman read the first sign and then the placard. He scratched his head and blurted out: "Dickens may take the job! Dickens can wur'k all the week fer five dollars if he wants to, but I'm a union man, I'll not touch it. Ye'd better kape Dickens."

The following incident is said to have occurred in the book department of a certain Toronto department store. A lady who had managed to get next to the counter asked for a boy's book on animals; and the young lady sold her "The Jungle," by Upton Sinclair.

A young lady entered a Toronto retail bookstore a short time since and inquired from the gentlemanly clerk (a married man, by the way) if they had a book suitable for an old gentleman who had been married fifty years. Without a moment's hesitation, the clerk reached for a copy of Parkman's "A Half Century of Conflict."

Lady (at bookstore)—"I want to get a good novel to read on the train—something rather pathetic." Salesman—"Let me see how you would 'The Last Days of Pompeii' do?" Lady—"Pompeii? Never heard of him. What did he die of?" Salesman—"I'm not quite sure, ma'am. Some kind of an eruption, I've heard."

Mission Study Text Book

The Gift of China. Text-book for the Forward Movement Study Course. By Arthur H. Smith, Young People's Missionary Movement, New York. Price, 50 cents. On sale by Dr. F. C. Stephenson, Wesley Buildings, Toronto.

Dr. Smith is the author of "Chinese Characteristics," that most fascinating book on China, and he is well qualified by a long residence in that country to write about the people and the land. This little volume is full of valuable information concerning China, and contains an excellent map and some good illustrations. It is intended especially as a text-book for mission study classes, for which it is admirably suited, and each chapter is followed by a series of questions which cannot fail to be helpful to leaders of such classes.

New Books

This Mystical Life of Ours. A book of suggestive thoughts for each week through the year. From the complete works of Ralph Waldo Trine. T. Y. Crowell & Co., Publishers, New York, Price, \$1.00; postage, 10 cents extra.

New books from Mr. Trine's pen are always welcome, for his messages are of the sort which for the twentieth century needs. In answer to a general demand, he has devoted the present volume to collations from all his writings, arranging them by topics for every week in the year. This does not mean a series of brief paragraphs giving merely a glimpse of their subjects; but each is carefully considered and extends through several pages.

"Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven," and other Stories from Life. By Richard L. Metcalfe. Price, \$1.00. Wm. B. Metcalfe, Agent, Lincoln, Ne. braska.

The picture of a very sweet child on the cover of this book gives the key to its contents. It is a series of sketches in which children figure largely. It has had a good sale, and is very highly spoken of by a number of eminent persons. Mr. W. J. Bryan says: "To those who have read these stories, they need no praise; to those who have not read them, I commend them as soothing, strengthening and inspiring. They are really heart talks and explain the secret of Mr. Metcalfe's success as a journalist. He knows human nature and is universal in his sympathies."

Heroes and Heroisms in Common Life. By Dr. N. McGie Waters, Author of "A Young Man's Religion." 350 pages, 12mo, price \$1.25. T. Y. Crowell & Co., New York.

Amid the rush and worry of modern city life it is refreshing to turn aside, from time to time, and make pilgrimages back to nature—to study the "common" things and the by-paths that are too often neglected in the larger issues. Some such little journeys are the purpose of Dr. Waters in his present volume. First he takes us to "The Abandoned Farm." Autumn is the chosen season, for he says, "this is the best time to go to the country."

Other papers no less excellent in their own way tell us of "The Old Minister," "A Garden of Old-Fashioned Flowers," "The Unfinished House," and similar quietly charming things. It is a book to read slowly and enjoy.

In a Nook with a Book. By F. W. Macdonald. Published by Messrs. Jennings & Graham, Cincinnati.

This is a dainty little volume in which the author, who is one of the most prominent Wesleyan preachers in England, discusses the general subject of reading in a fresh and original way. He first tells about the books that delighted him in boyhood, and then goes on to talk of the authors who were his favorites in later life. The introduction of this personal element adds to the charm of the volume.

In speaking of his early experience he says: "I am, on the whole, thankful that my early reading was not too closely directed, even by the wisest and best of parents. There was little danger in our home of my coming across anything in the shape of a book that could do me harm, and for the rest my instinct and appetite were allowed to have their way." This is perhaps the best policy for parents to adopt: Keep a good supply of healthy books in the house, and let the children's tastes direct them very largely. What they get outside of the home, however, cannot be too closely watched.

New Missionaries for China

The Contingent for West China, 1907

Here are the men who are going out to "hustle the east" this year as missionaries of the Canadian Methodist Church and appointees to West China. Good men and strong, full of youthful energy and Christ-given enthusiasm, they go to swell the ranks of the workers in the most needy and most promising field of Christian endeavor that the world presents to-day. The great empire of China lies open to the Gospel of Jesus Christ as never before. Not only are the common people hearing its message gladly, but the literati, once the bitterest and most relentless enemies of the Cross, are eager to send their sons to sit at the feet of the missionary and study western learning in an atmosphere surcharged with warm Christian influence. The churches must enter this marvellously opened door. How many more young men will volunteer?

Rev. James R. and Mrs. Earle, supported by three laymen.

Mr. Earle is a member of the Alberta Conference, and will be supported by three laymen, Mr. Thos. Ryan, of Winnipeg,



REV. J. R. EARLE, B.A., CHINA.

Man.; Mr. A. E. Smith, of Reston, Man., and Mr. E. Michener, of Red Deer, Alta. This is a new step in the Forward Movement. Missionaries have been assigned to families and to churches, to districts and to conferences, and to Sunday-schools to be supported, but this is the first time that laymen, separated by long distances—in fact, living in three separate Conferences—have, as it were, formed a joint-stock company to support a foreign missionary. We are sure that the missionary and those who support him will alike rejoice in co-operating in extending the Kingdom of God.

Rev. R. S. and Mrs. Longley, supported by the Sunday-schools of the Nova Scotia Conference.

Mr. Longley is also a member of the Alberta Conference. Mr. and Mrs. Longley are to be supported by the Sunday-schools of the Nova Scotia Conference. Mr. Longley has attended the Sunday-school Summer School held at Berwick, Nova Scotia, and has visited a number of the Sunday-schools in the Conference. He has been heartily received, and rejoices in the privilege of going forth to be support-

ed not only by the money, but by the prayers and fellowship of the Sunday-schools of the Nova Scotia Conference. This is the first time that Sunday-schools have united to support a missionary. Numbers of letters received from Nova Scotia give evidence of enthusiasm and rejoicing on the part of the Sunday-



REV. R. S. LONGLEY, B.A., B.D., CHINA.

schools in their great privilege. Mrs. Earle and Mrs. Longley are sisters. Their parents live in Winnipeg. It is a beautiful offering—two sisters from one home. As a rule, one sister or daughter from a home is the greatest offering that can be made to foreign missions. It is seldom that two go at the same time to the same field.

Dr. and Mrs. Wallace Crawford, supported by the First Methodist Sunday-school, London, Ont.

Dr. Crawford was born and brought up in London, Ont. He and Mrs. Crawford were teachers in the Sunday-school of the First Methodist Church, London. This Sunday-school has a resolution on its books, stating that the members of the school will support any member of the school who will volunteer to go out as a missionary. Dr. and Mrs. Crawford are the first to answer to the call. Is this not



WALLACE CRAWFORD, M.D., C.M., CHINA

a sign of a new movement? Is it not reasonable and right that those who stay at home and enjoy all the privileges of Christian society, should support those of their number who leave the comforts and fellowship of our home land to take the Gospel to those who have not heard it?

Dr. and Mrs. Ashley W. Lindsay, supported by the Methodist Church, Quebec City.

Dr. Lindsay is the son of one of the officials of the Quebec Methodist Church. From his earliest childhood he has been associated with the Quebec Sunday-school and Young People's Society. He is much beloved by the whole congregation, which



A. W. LINDSAY, D.D.S., L.D.S., CHINA.

is gladly undertaking to support him. So far as we can find out, Dr. Lindsay is the first dental missionary to be sent to the foreign field. Medical doctors and surgeons have been sent as missionaries, some of whom have been graduates in dentistry, but as a dental surgeon missionary, Dr. Lindsay, we believe, is the only one who has been sent. Mrs. Lindsay is the daughter of the Rev. Melvin Taylor, ex-President of the Montreal Conference, and Secretary of the Emigration Department of the Methodist Church.

Dr. W. J. and Mrs. Sheridan, supported by the Epworth Leagues of Newfoundland.

W. J. Sheridan, M.D., is a graduate of the School of Medicine of the University of Toronto. He was born near Oakville. He has been a leading Sunday-school and Epworth League worker. For some time he was a High school teacher. After graduating in medicine he was appointed house surgeon in Grace Hospital, Toronto, during which time he took post-graduate work. The Doctor and his wife will be supported by the Newfoundland Conference Epworth League. This Conference has been waiting for over two years for a missionary. We congratulate both the



W. J. SHERIDAN, M.D., C.M., CHINA.

Newfoundlanders and Dr. Sheridan on their happy relation and co-operation in the great work which they are undertaking.

Rev. George Sparling and Wife, supported by the Bowmanville and Whitby District Epworth Leagues.

There is great rejoicing on the part of the Epworth Leaguers over having the privilege of supporting Mr. and Mrs. Sparling as their representatives. During their visit to the district Mr. and Mrs. Sparling were much encouraged by the



REV. GEO. W. SPARLING, B.A., B.D.,
CHINA.

enthusiastic support afforded. Mr. Sparling was a member of the Alberta Conference, a graduate in Arts of Victoria University, and a graduate in Theology of Wesley College, Winnipeg, and Mrs. Sparling is a graduate in Arts of Victoria University.

Mr. and Mrs. S. Percy Westaway, supported by the Sunday-school and Epworth League of Dundas Centre Church, London.

At the meeting of the Board of Missions held in Toronto in October, Mr. S. Percy Westaway was appointed to West China, in response to a request from the Mission Council for a missionary to help with the press work. As Mr. Westaway is a practical printer, lithographer and designer, his services will permit the management of the press work to add departments which the growing work in West China demands. Mr. and Mrs. Westaway are both Epworth Leaguers of London, Ont. Mrs. Westaway had been one of the leading workers in Empress Avenue Church,



MR. PERCY WESTAWAY.

Sunday-school and League. Mr. Westaway was a member of the First Methodist Church, the leader of the London Evangelistic Band, and a District Epworth League officer. Dundas Centre Sunday-school and Epworth League had \$1,000 ready, and what is better, a well-organized Missionary Union, prepared to send out and support Mr. and Mrs. Westaway. Well done, London, to have given four missionaries of this contingent, and well done, First Church, to have given three of the four!

The Blessed Ministry of Childhood. By T. Batcliffe Barnett. Price, 30 cents. Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier, Edinburgh, and London.

This little book, as its title intimates, is about the simplest and most mysterious of God's creatures—a little child. The author shows that children can teach us many things, which we could not learn in any other way so well. It is a suggestive work.

The Way of Life. Illustrations of the Book of Proverbs for the young. By Rev. James Jeffrey, D.D. Published by Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier, Edinburgh and London. Price, \$1.00.

Very practical chapters for boys and girls on lessons gleaned from the Book of Proverbs. Such subjects as "Right thoughts," "Kindness to animals," "Idleness," "The value of a good name," "The glory of youth," are dealt with in an interesting way.

The Young Converts' Problems and their Solution. By A. C. Dixon, D.D. American Tract Society, New York. Price, 50 cents.

The subject of this little book is to help young Christians, dealing with such subjects as "The Holy Spirit," "The Church," "The Bible," "Prayer," "Temptation," "Money," "Amusements," "The Ideal Christian." There is much valuable counsel for young people who desire to serve Christ.

Five-Minute Object Sermons. Through eye-gate and down into the city of child-soul. By Sylvanus Stall, D.D. The Vir Publishing Co., Philadelphia. Price, \$1.00.

A series of addresses to children, illustrated by the use of objects such as lanterns, candles, water, bread, coal, wood, and other familiar things. They are intended for pastors, teachers, and all who are interested in the religious education of children. The sermons are pithy and interesting.

The Personal Ministry of the Son of Man. Studies in the Saviour's application of His own teaching. By James Jeffrey, D.D. Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier, Edinburgh and London. Price, \$1.00.

The aim of this book is to illustrate our Saviour's personal dealing with the various individuals with whom He was brought into contact. Some of the topics are, "Jesus and the Samaritan," "Jesus and the Lawyer," "Jesus and the Rich Young Ruler," "Jesus and the Publican," etc. It is a suggestive and helpful book.

Comradeship and Character. Talks to young men. By Rev. Thomas G. Selby, and others. No. 1, price, \$1.00. Messrs. Jennings & Graham, Publishers, Cincinnati.

A series of discourses, by noted preachers, specially addressed to young people. A number of the subjects discussed are: "True Manliness," "The Rejoicings of Youth," "True Riches," "Temptation," "Joy and Consecration," "Early Besetments," "A Strong Man." They are excellent sermons, well worth reading by young men and others.

Christ's Secret of Happiness. By Lyman Abbott. 32 pages. 1mo. Cloth, gilt top, 75 cents net; white and gold, \$1.00 net. Postage, 2 cents additional. Messrs. T. Y. Crowell & Co., Publishers, New York.

This subject is divided into eleven short, pithy chapters, under such suggestive titles as: "Three Kinds of Happiness," "Getting is Not Always Gaining," "The Spring of Perpetual Youth," and "The Blessedness of Battle."

"There are three kinds of happiness," says Dr. Abbott; "pleasure, joy, and blessedness. Pleasure is the happiness of the senses; joy, of the social nature; and blessedness, of the spiritual nature. Pleasure we share with the animals; joy with one another; blessedness, with God. These three types of happiness are not inconsistent. One may have them all.

The essays are strong, and written in a very pleasing style.

Two-Minute Sermons. Short discussions of long themes. By Anson H. Wells, Price, 75 cents. The American Tract Society, New York.

These are short essays on important subjects, none of them exceeding two pages in length, and written in Mr. Wells' familiar, interesting style. The following are some of the topics: "The Father's Care," "Who Lives in Your House?" "How to Get a Fresh Start," "Bringing others to Christ," "Prodigals—and Fathers," "Faultfinding and Fault-finding," "Leaning on the Lord," "Confessing Christ."

It is a fine book to pick up when one only has a moment or two to spare.

The Church and the Social Problem. A Study in Applied Christianity. By Samuel Plantz, D.D. Published by Messrs. Jennings & Graham, Cincinnati. Price, \$1.25.

As stated in the preface, "this volume is written with the conviction that the Christian church of the twentieth century faces a crisis of the utmost importance, and that it can only meet the needs of the age by adopting methods of work to the peculiar conditions of our times." The book deals with "The Importance and development of the social problem," "The church as affected by the social programme," "The church and Socialism," "The social mission of the church," "The proper attitude of the church in the social crisis," etc. Dr. Plantz is well qualified to deal with these great problems, and his book is an able and suggestive contribution to a most important subject.

The Marks of a Man; or, The Essentials of Christian Character. By Robert E. Spear, J.A. Price, \$1.00 net. Published by Messrs. Jennings & Graham, Cincinnati.

This book presents the eleventh annual (1906-7) course of lectures delivered at the Ohio Wesleyan University on the Merrick Foundation. The series in general falls within the field of experimental and practical religion. The lectures presented are five in number: I. Truth: No Lie in Character Ever Justifiable. II. Purity: A Plea for Ignorance. III. Service: The Living Use of Life. IV. Freedom: The Necessity of a Margin. V. Progress and Patience: The Value of a Sense of Failure.

They are intensely practical and direct, and cannot fail to be a mighty impulse to higher living. They take up an analysis of the qualities of Christian character and the relationship between character and Creed.

The New Crusade. Occasional Sermons and Addresses. By Rev. Charles E. Jefferson, Pastor of Broadway Tabernacle, New York. Price, \$1.50. Thos. Y. Crowell & Co., New York.

Dr. Jefferson occupies one of the most prominent pulpits of New York, and is recognized as one of the great preachers of the Metropolis, his discourses read wonderfully well. His thought is keen and suggestive, while the language is exceedingly beautiful. This volume comprises some thirteen of the most noteworthy of the addresses delivered by Dr. Jefferson during the past six years.

His tenor is shown in the opening paper, "The New Crusade," a trumpet call for volunteers in the present-day march of conquest on the part of the church. Following this comes a discussion of "Religion as a Form of Power," and addresses on "Liberty, Its Dangers and Duties," "The Man in the Sun," "The Puritan Vision of God," "Consecrated Personality," "The Angel in the Sun," and others equally strong. The final chapters sound a typical closing note to the opening theme, being entitled "Christian Unity," and "International Peace."

The Epworth League Reading Course

What the Pastors Say About It

Here are a few testimonies from pastors who have had experience of the Reading Course, and commend it heartily, Read what they say:

A Very Great Help

We have found the Reading Course a very great help indeed in providing pleasant and profitable means of spending winter evenings.—Rev. G. H. Porter, S.T.D., West Shefford, Que.

Heartily Commends Course

I have found the Epworth League Reading Circle, on different circuits, to be most helpful, socially, intellectually, and spiritually. I heartily commend the Course.—Rev. J. R. Isaac, Currie's Crossing.

Enjoyable and Profitable

Our Reading Circle at Thordale was small in number, but the attendance was regular, and all found the exercises enjoyable and profitable.—Rev. D. Rogers.

Helped by the Books

We placed the books of the E. L. Reading Course into the hands of several of our Leaguers, who were requested to read them in their homes, and discuss the contents at some of the regular meetings of the League. All who read the books expressed themselves as being helped by them. The Course was found to be interesting and profitable.—Rev. I. Snell, Prince Albert.

Helps to Break Monotony

I am very much in sympathy with the Reading Course for our Leaguers, and I find that it may be used to break the monotony of the services. We use the Course at our regular meetings. Every Monday morning we have a five minute paper on each book, and a short reading from the Course, in addition to the topic.—Rev. Thomas Pickering, Bruce Mines.

Book 21 Sets

The Delhi Epworth League took 21 sets of last year's Reading Course. The members much enjoyed the books. The idea of a reading course for the young people of the church is a splendid one.—Rev. C. R. Morrow, Delhi.

Looked Forward to

No department of our League work at North Bay was more enjoyable or more successful than the Reading Circle. About a dozen of the Leaguers took an active interest in it, and meetings were held fortnightly. Circle night was always looked forward to with pleasurable anticipation. I frequently attended the meetings and was always pleased and profited.—Rev. J. Wallace Stewart.

Stimulates the Reading Habit

I am most heartily in favor of the Reading Circle as a profitable and pleasant means of spending winter evenings in League work. While it stimulates the reading habit it also creates the nucleus of a cheap, but helpful library.—Rev. R. D. Hamilton, Petrolia.

Not Relegated to Background

We have had a Reading Circle at Kewatin, which we found very helpful, and a

deep interest is taken in it. The Literary Department is not relegated to the background with us. Our Literary Vice-President is always inventing new ideas, and gathering from different sources. We need variety to keep up interest and attendance. We must have something to do or the League will go back.—Rev. J. Wesley Runions.

Four Successive Years

The most striking proof of the popularity of the Reading Circle at Honeywood is the fact of its existence for four successive years. There was no difficulty in talking the young people into it each fall, after its first season. The selection of books has been very generally acceptable. Some of them were very popular. This is the third circuit where I have had a Reading Circle, and I purpose using my influence to introduce the Course wherever I go.—Rev. A. J. G. Carscadden.

An Enthusiastic Supporter

I organized a League during my first year at Gagetown, N.B., and we almost immediately started a Reading Circle. We have taken ten sets of the books each year, and we have a good time every Tuesday evening, meeting at the homes of members.

I cannot understand why Epworth Leagues cannot have a Reading Circle. Wherever I have had the opportunity I have had one of some kind. Count me as an enthusiast in support of the Epworth League Reading Circle.—Rev. W. J. Kirby.

Very Helpful and Enjoyable

It was extremely difficult for us to devote an evening exclusively to the interest of our Circle on account of its members being scattered over a large area, so we decided to start our League service a half hour earlier and take up a chapter from the Reading Course at the close of the regular League service. As a result all our Leaguers remained, and we found the study of the prescribed books very helpful and enjoyable. We cannot study such books too much.—Rev. C. L. Poole, Burgessville.

Undoubted Success

The Reading Circle under the auspices of the Epworth League of the Askin street church, London, was an undoubted success. It commenced early in the fall of 1906, with some half dozen or so interested members, and with able leadership. The interest and attendance of the meetings decidedly increased. At the close of the season the Reading Circle took charge of the League one evening and by various essays gave to the League some of the benefit derived from the study.

Incentive to Further Studies

I think a Reading Circle is a pleasant and profitable means of spending winter evenings, because (1) Of its literary outlook; (2) Of its social worth; (3) Its moral uplift; (4) Its spiritual insight. I have found the Circle an incentive to further studies along the same line, particularly in Methodist biography, of which our people generally are so lamentably ignorant. The Circle created a zest for these forgotten studies. In all personal cases I have found the members of the Circle not only more intelligent but more

spiritual.—Rev. Dr. W. A. Strongman, Simcoe.

Not Complete

Our Reading Circle was interfered with last winter by local matters, but nevertheless it was a most profitable department of League work. Personally I feel that a League is not complete without a Circle. With a little work it can be successfully operated not only in cities and towns but in country places.—Rev. A. W. Shepperson, Teeterville.

Does Splendid Work

I think the Reading Circle does splendid work wherever formed. It seems to me that the best plan is for three young people to buy and own the books, one for each one to form the nucleus for a small Reading Circle. Let them be responsible for one corner of the community, asking as many as possible to join them. Some of the best readers can take turns at reading while the rest listen, and ask questions. Other similar circles could be formed in other corners until the whole ground is covered.—Rev. J. F. Sutcliffe, Grand Bend.

Quite Encouraging

Last year I secured a set of the books early in the season and brought them to the attention of my own young people at once. While the Reading Circle was a limited one, we managed to review the three books in the presence of all the League members. The result has been quite encouraging, and we shall look forward with greater interest to another privilege of the kind.—Rev. S. J. Allin, Parkhill.

Wings to Thought

A Reading Circle properly conducted is a most helpful and inspirational activity. Difficult, indeed, it is to find a richer evening than one spent in a really live E. L. Reading Circle. Of course it means work, and work means gladness and development.

An indolent Leaguer is poor material in a Reading Circle—indeed he is anywhere else. Lots of room though for bright hungry minds that seek after truth. And truth in no true sense is illusive. It is open and frank and willing to be found. It allures like the dawn of day. And the alert seek and find.

A live spiritual League will have a Reading Circle. It is the natural outgrowth of its energies, and what is natural is proper. Fellowship with God is a wonderful incentive to seek after knowledge and wisdom. It gives wings to thought.

Leadership is an important element, and yet the most capable leadership will measurably fall unless every member pile in and fit in. No progressive member can be content with reading only the text assigned for study. Collateral reading is valuable. Get something new, perhaps something the author missed. No writer ever gets all of everything. Go far ahead and return laden with treasure. The one who gets interested is the one who makes it interesting to everybody else. See? Well, try it.

(The writer of the above excellent letter is unknown to the Editor.)

Cannot Fail

The systematic study of the books provided for the E. L. Reading Course is one of the best methods of developing interest in the Literary Department; in fact, a well-conducted Reading Circle cannot fail to greatly improve the mental condition of the League in general.

Advantages of the Literary Department

BY REV. R. C. McCONNELL, B.A.

To win the young people to Christ and Christ-like living might be put as the aim of the Epworth League. It will seek to make its influence both as intensive and extensive as it can—make the most possible of its members and reach as many as possible outside. Both these must be kept in mind. In order to the second it must see to the first. It will use whatever proper means it can to bring about the desired results.

The literary department is with us as a means. It has not an aim of its own separate from the other departments. It exists not for itself but for the general aim. If a means, what does it accomplish, what advantages are connected with it?

1. It is helpful to the members themselves.

1. It will give a desire for good literature.

It will lead to more time being given to reading and studying. Thus young people are given topics for conversation on a higher plane than gossip and chit-chat. They are also drawn away from "yellow" journals and "yellow" novels, which form so large a part of the reading of our young people to their manifest intellectual and moral injury. There is in many a passion for reading. This is directed into a proper channel.

2. It will lead out of ourselves and our little world to a broader life. Even at this age there is too much self-centred living and community-centred interest. So many Christians see but a short distance beyond themselves and their immediate neighbors. Their vision ought to be as broad as the world, even as the universe of which our world forms so small a part.

3. It will create an ambition to do something in the way of literary production, if nothing more than essay writing. This, if on subjects related to the League, will be beneficial in other than a literary way.

4. Debating, which is allowable when on proper topics, will add to the stock of knowledge, cultivate the mental powers, and develop ability to speak in public. Who can say these results are not desirable to every person for his own highest interests and those of others? Knowledge and mental strength increase the joy of the Christian and add to his influence. "Knowledge is power." The time is past if it ever was present, when the Christian who hopes to do much good among his fellows can afford to be careless of his intellectual equipment. Of course the indwelling Spirit is the first requisite, but surely, other things being equal, the Spirit can use to greater effect the person He finds with mental powers cultivated and a mind stored with knowledge.

5. A greater knowledge of the Bible may be gained. A literary study of the books of the Bible would be an excellent work for the Literary Department. How much misunderstanding, how much misinterpretation of God's Word due to a lack of knowledge of the historical setting of its different parts? Will are some of the theories held simply because there has been no thought of getting back to the standpoint of the writer, no acquaintance with the circumstances under which the words were spoken or written.

6. Much benefit might be derived from a study of the history of the church and its doctrines. Knowledge of the history of the church gives us greater love for it,

greater confidence in the God of the church. Inspiration comes to us from the many worthy examples of devoted Christian living and service which we come in contact with all down along its course.

These advantages are not injurious but may be helpful to growth in grace.

II. The meetings of the Literary Department may draw in some whom purely religious meetings might not attract. Once they become interested in these like-likelihood is that they sooner or later will be found in the others as well.

Undoubtedly this department can be of great benefit to all and a means toward the great aim not unworthy of being connected with the Christian Endeavor, Missionary, and other departments. However, it needs to be under wise guidance and control. Like many other things which are good when used properly, it may be run in such a way as to lose its effectiveness and even destroy the League. Nothing should have a place in the programme of its studies that does not in some way bear upon the aim of the Epworth League as a whole. Subjects have been mentioned by leaders that do not seem to have any such bearing. For example, "A Canadian Evening" including "The Resources of Canada," "Our Canal System," "Canadian Cities," general history, the general study of our own land or other lands, the study of poets, are outside the purpose of this department unless there is some bearing on religion or the church's work. This is not a mere literary society, and there is no necessity whatever to go outside what has a direct connection with church work for topic or lines of study. Keep the great end in view, and whatever does not tend towards the realization of that end, let it be eliminated. When thus carefully conducted the Literary Department is worthy of being more generally used than it is. Franklin Centre, Que.

How to Read the Epworth League Reading Course

BY REV. ISAAC SNELL.

In the first place there is not much use merely reading the books. To search for, and meditate upon a few of the truths contained in a page or two of the book is of infinitely more value than reading superficially the whole course. It is well for the Leaguer to remember that to truly make progress in this study, he must make haste slowly. They are excellently adapted to provide the mind with devotional, historical and scientific truth. Lessons like pearls are often hidden and time must be spent in finding them.

George Muller used to say that he first asked and settled this question concerning any proposed measure—Is this the Lord's work? Then, is it my work? Then, is it the Lord's way? And last, not least, is it the Lord's time? Let every Leaguer ask the same questions regarding the study of the Epworth League Reading Course—Is this the Lord's work? Is it my work? Is it the Lord's way? And am I giving the time that He would have me give to the study?

Secondly, read the books with an honest heart, come to them with an unprejudiced mind. Then in an honest and good heart having learned the truth, keep it and bring forth fruit with patience.

The honest reader will let go the chaff and retain the good grain. There are four different kinds of students: Those like a sponge who absorb good and bad together, letting them escape immediately; those like a sand glass that allow the truth to enter by one ear and out the other; those like a strainer letting go the good and retaining the bad; those like a sieve letting go the chaff and retaining the good grain. Fellow Leaguers, as honest students let us cultivate the habit holding fast the truth.

Thirdly, read the course diligently, not spasmodically. Little ever has or ever shall be accomplished by spasmodic effort. It is in this way only you can prepare to lead the Reading Circle, and the Circle would be more benefited by your effort if each member would also read the whole Course.

Fourthly, study the Course devoutly. There is no distinction between the sacred and the secular, although there is between the sacred and the sinful. I believe that the reading of these books is a sacred task. Side by side with prayer, praise and self-denial should be the culture of the mind in order to develop a sturdy Christian.

Let me in conclusion give briefly a few advantages received by you to repay you for your study. First, it will reveal to you truth, and truth is a mirror by which you may see yourself. To know what kind of person you are is the first step toward knowing what kind of a life you ought to live. Secondly, in order to maintain a fire fuel must be supplied. Likewise the mind, if it is to maintain life and activity, must be fed with truth. Thirdly, the truth thus assimilated is as seed from which will grow a refined, enlightened and consecrated character. Fourth, you will be better equipped to answer opponents in matters regarding religion and the doctrines of the Methodist Church. You will have a better sword with which to fight, for while men may stand at different levels, life is a battlefield. Life is neither all wilderness nor all paradise, its scenes are chequered, and the better equipped the Leaguer is mentally, morally and spiritually, the better he will be prepared to solve the problems and gain the victories of life.

Worth While to Advertise

Mr. William Shaw in "Union Work" says:—

If it is worth while to hold a convention, it is worth while to advertise it thoroughly.

Some committees spend a hundred dollars on speakers' expenses and five dollars on advertising, with the result that the speakers are on hand, but the delegates are minus.

Some committees have a beautiful and expensively printed programme ready for the delegates who are not there, and all because it would have cost a few dollars more to send a poster, or a few more circulars, or a small postcard notice.

Some committees are absolutely ignorant of the fact that there are newspapers published in many of the towns and cities from which the delegates are expected to come, and that these newspapers want the news. Why not give it to them?

Some committees haven't gumption enough to get out the local constituency and interest them in the convention.

From the Field

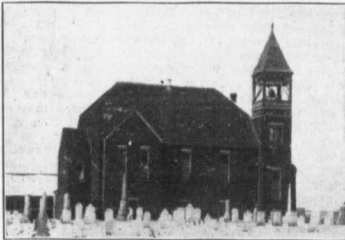
Toronto League Rally

It was a wet night, but it takes more than a little rain to dampen the enthusiasm of Toronto Epworth Leaguers who turned out well to the annual rally in the Metropolitan church on Monday evening, October 7th. It was a splendid meeting, which could not fail to be an inspiration to the workers.

The roll call showed that most of the Leagues were represented, some of the distant ones by a very good attendance.

The addresses were given by Rev. S. T. Bartlett and Rev. R. Emberson, and were very interesting.

Mr. Bartlett said he wished those who talked about the League being dead could be present and see the magnificent rally, and he thought also the people who declare that there are no young men in the League, would change their minds if they could look over the crowds of young people. The attendance of young men was certainly very gratifying. One block of seats in the gallery contained 108 persons, of whom 50 were young men. Other parts of the church presented very much the same appearance. The new president,



MOUNT ZION CHURCH

Mr. J. Leslie Rook, is a graduate of Parliament street Epworth League, like his predecessor, Mr. Plewman. He is well qualified for this position.

A Pleasant Evening

The Belleville Intelligencer says: The universal opinion at 10.30 on Monday evening of well on to eight hundred people was that the Epworth League in their Sunday-school rooms had given the congregation of Bridge Street Church one of the pleasantest evenings of their lives, and while no formal vote of thanks was passed, the faces of the audience expressed their gratitude for the invitation and their joy at having accepted it.

A fine programme of songs, readings and addresses was given. Mr. George F. Stewart, the President of the League, was the chairman. Each of the speakers paid him high compliments for his devotion to the League and for its success; and further, grateful little Marjorie Vermilyea presented him with a bouquet.

To show the older members of the congregation that the younger ones did not forget them, it was resolved to send Mrs. John Brenton and Mrs. Horace Yeomans, the oldest members of the congregation, bouquets of flowers.

A brief address from the pastor and refreshments were the concluding items of the happy evening.

A Pastor's Surprise Party

The Epworth League of Bridge Street Epworth League recently sent out the following letter to its members:

It is proposed to give our pastor a "welcome home" surprise party, on Thursday evening, in the form of a full attendance of the congregation at the prayer service on that evening. You are earnestly requested to co-operate by coming yourself, and bringing as many others with you as possible. In no other way could we give our loved pastor so much help and pleasure as he resumes his work after his vacation. Let us fill the Sunday-school rooms on this occasion.

You are requested to be present at 7.45 o'clock—before Mr. Wilson's arrival. There will be a song service from 7.45 to 8 o'clock, led by the choir.

"Welcome to Mount Zion"

The Annual Epworth League Convention of the Simcoe District was held in the Mount Zion Methodist Church, on the Townsend Circuit, in Hamilton Conference. It was one of the best in its history. The president, Rev.

George A. Cropp, and Rev. J. Melvin Smith, secretary-treasurer, with hon. president (chairman of the District), Rev. J. J. Liddy, rallied the forces, and started out to reach this end, and it came. On the first evening, September 17, Rev. A. C. Crews, of Toronto, gave an excellent address, which was just what was needed for the benefit of the convention, the Leagues represented and the home church. It was practical, and came from one whose heart is in the work. It certainly

reached heads, note-books and hearts. There were received six new subscribers for The Epworth Era and sixteen for "Practical Plans," Dr. Crews' new book, at the close of the service.

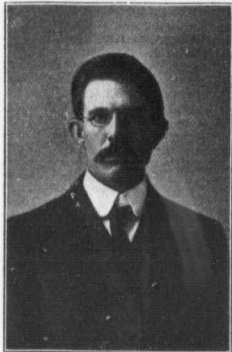
The roll-call showed a good representation from the Leagues. One excellent feature of the programme was the "Five-Minute-Talks" by League representatives on "Experiences in League Work." It was so well represented that the time was more than taken up, and the "Talks" were good beyond all expectation. It was just the thing to draw out the thoughts and ideas of the Leaguers.

Rev. J. H. McArthur, of Lynedoch, gave a very helpful Bible study from Luke x, 25-37, on "How Jesus Teaches the Way of Life to a Shifty Lawyer." Rev. H. J. Harwell, Jarvis, gave us something good on Christian Stewardship. Rev. W. H. Garbham, B.A., B.D., of Port Rowan, gave an address on "The Relation of the Epworth League to Missions." This was also appropriate and helpful.

The Wednesday evening service opened with a rousing, soul-stirring song service conducted by the pastor. The speaker for the evening was Rev. W. W. Prudham, our missionary to Japan. Not only were we pleased to see Bro. Prudham, but we were delighted with his address.

The ladies and friends of the Mount Zion Church furnished lunch in the basement of the church on Tuesday evening and on Wednesday noon and evening for

the delegates and visitors. This was a great convenience for those who lived at a distance from the church. It was very evident that everything pointed with emphasis to the motto, "Welcome to Mount Zion," made by the pastor, in heavy



REV. GEO. A. CROPP

shaded letters, and hung in the arch behind the pulpit.

The following officers were elected or re-elected: Hon. President—Rev. J. J. Liddy, M.A., Simcoe.

President—Rev. George A. Cropp, Washington Centre.

1st Vice—Miss Winifred Beam, Cheap-side.

2nd Vice—Miss Clara Edmunds, Simcoe.

3rd Vice—Miss Edith Hind, Hagersville.

4th Vice—Miss Ola Padden, Waterford.

5th Vice—Miss Ethel Pierce, Port Rowan.

Secretary-Treasurer—Rev. J. Melvin Smith, Tyrrel.

Representative of District on Conference Executive—Rev. J. J. Liddy, Simcoe.

This convention was a great blessing to the Leagues of the district. Our president is the right man in the right place, and has a faculty of bringing things to pass.



REV. J. MELVIN SMITH

If the district officers and the Leagues will follow in this campaign we will make this the best year for Christ and the work on the district. Who will follow? Let every one say amen with a push.

Yours for victory without a halt,

J. Melvin Smith, Secretary.

District Sunday-school Work

Many of the District Sunday-school secretaries are doing splendid work, and demonstrating the wisdom of the legislation which provided for their appointment.

None are more active than Rev. F. W. Langford of the Stratford District. He has arranged for holding four Sunday-school Institutes, dividing the district into four parts for this purpose, the gatherings to be held at Listowel, Mitchell, St. Mary's and Stratford. Each Institute is expected to reach and influence eight or nine schools. Sessions will be held afternoon and evening under the direction of the Sunday-school Secretary. Mr. Langford is urging the teachers on his district to give some attention to teacher-training. Something of this kind on every district would doubtless be a great stimulus to our Sunday-school work.

Just a Line or Two

The Bay of Quinte Conference Convention will be held in Lindsay, January 21st to 23rd, 1908.

St. Thomas District Epworth League intends to ask for another missionary, and propose to pay him in full too.

Several of the members of the Thornbury League visit the sick, sing and have prayer with them. Their visits are much appreciated.

The Bowmanville League recently held a social evening and entertained the educational interests of the town. An interesting time was enjoyed.

The League of Euclid Avenue church, Toronto, had a grand rally on October 19, when messages were read from past presidents and other friends.

The Bowmanville District League presented their missionary, Rev. G. W. Sparling, with a \$60 typewriter and five dollars' worth of supplies.

Rev. H. Hull, Sunday-school Secretary of Winnipeg District, has already visited 9 circuits in the interest of Sunday-school work. "Bigger and better than ever" is the motto of the District.

The League of St. Paul's church, Toronto, publishes a very attractive topic list running from September to May. It provides for several debates in addition to missionary and temperance evenings.

After the Fall Fair in Fredericton, N.B., the Epworth League held a meeting, the topic of which was, "What was the most interesting feature of the Exhibition." Everyone was expected to take part.

The Epworth League at Kenora is prospering and beginning the season well. The newly planned church parlor was so well fitted at a recent meeting that arrangements had to be made for more seats.

Wesley League, of Winnipeg, has been holding a twenty-minute praise and prayer service after the Sunday evening preaching in addition to their weekly meeting. A series of picnics were held during the summer.

One League reports that it got into a rut so deep that it nearly went out of sight. That was serious, wasn't it? Keep your eyes open for new ways of doing things, and try in every way to keep the wheels out of that dreadful "rut."

A very successful Circuit Rally was held at Burford on September 16. The four Leagues on the circuit turned out in fine numbers for afternoon and evening sessions. Rev. Dr. Crews conducted a

"Round-Table Conference," and delivered an address. The Leagues on the circuit seem to be alive.

The Bowmanville League recently had a "Flower Day" and very kindly sent up a box of flowers on Monday morning to be divided among the offices of Wesley Building, Toronto. Of course, The Era bought its share. It was a kind and thoughtful act that was much appreciated. Boxes of flowers were also sent to the Deaconess Home.

Brockville District

The Secretary of the Brockville District League sends the following interesting report of the recent Convention:

For some two or three years our Sunday-school work has been rather disorganized, but, owing to the Conference having appointed Rev. Geo. Stafford as Sunday-school Secretary, we again united forces and our Convention was a union of Epworth League and Sunday-school, which we found very helpful to all. Our programme was exceptionally good.

We had more delegates than there had been for several years, and a number of young people from Brockville and vicinity drove out for the evening session.

Reports from various Leagues showed that all were alive and working. In Brockville an increase is noted perhaps more than any place else, partly on account of the work which was done here last fall by Messrs. Crossley and Hunter.

Mr. Bartlett's addresses were very

We regret that a mistake occurred in our last number in attaching the name of Rev. S. T. Bartlett to the report of the Berwick Summer School. The report was written by Rev. F. E. Barrett. The similarity of names caused the blunder.

helpful, and many wished as they were leaving the church last evening that all their League could have been present and get the inspiration we got.

Dr. Lillie was absent, and his paper was ably handled by Rev. J. H. Philip, and Dr. S. C. McLean led the discussion. Mr. Pomeroy, who is one of our younger ministers, ably dealt with the subject of "How to have a successful League." Mr. Clifford's report of the World's Sunday School Convention left nothing to be desired.

The rally of the Juniors was something those who were privileged to attend the Convention will not soon forget. Mr. Stafford had arranged that the school children be brought in about 3.30 and the number of bright faces ranged in the front of the church organ gave a great inspiration to the meeting.

During the evening Rev. S. Sellery gave a splendid address on "Individual Work for Individuals," and Rev. S. T. Bartlett gave the closing address.

The officers elect are:—

President—Dr. S. C. McLean, Spencerville.

1st Vice—Rev. Wm. Wells, Mallorytown.

2nd Vice—Miss B. E. Adams, Brockville.

3rd Vice—Rev. Wm. Henderson, Brockville.

4th Vice—Rev. I. Nelson Maynard.

5th Vice—Miss H. V. McLean, Brockville.

Rec. Secretary and Treasurer—Mr. R. P. Stafford, L'yn.

Cor. Secretary—Miss Dora Cline, Athens.

Rep. District Ex.—Rev. J. B. Hicks, Spencerville.
Sunday-school Secretary—Rev. Geo. Stafford, L'yn.

Travelled on a Hand-car

Rev. J. A. Doyle, Western Associate Secretary, reports a good campaign on the Prince Albert District, which ended at Tisdale on Sunday evening, September 8. The district meeting was held at Melfort on the following day, twenty-six miles away, but the roads were so bad that he could not organize a six mile circuit, and no trains were running, as there was a wreck on the track. Most men would have concluded, in the circumstances, that Providence did not intend them to be at this district meeting; but not so Bro. Doyle. He and Bro. Baillie secured a trackman's hand-car and "pumped" their way over the twenty-six miles of track. The blisters remained on his hands for some time. This is the kind of Secretary needed for western work, and the western Leagues and Sunday-schools will doubtless support him right royally.

Mr. Doyle is pressing the preachers everywhere to organize six Sunday-schools. He spent part of September and most of October in British Columbia attending conventions and rallies.

Brampton District

The annual convention of the Brampton District Epworth Leagues was held in the Methodist church, Weston, on Monday, September 30. Papers were read by Rev. Herbert Lee, of Huttonville, on "The Junior League as a Training-school," and by Rev. G. Sidney Smith, of Cooksville, on "The Epworth League as an Evangelistic Force." Addresses were delivered by Rev. W. W. Prudham, lately returned from Japan, and by Rev. Kenneth Beaton, of Toronto. The Leagues this year raised \$792 for missions, the largest amount ever raised in one year. The ladies of Weston gave a supper to the delegates, when a very enjoyable time was spent by all present. The officers for the coming year are as follows:

"Hon. President—Rev. J. C. Speer, D.D., Brampton.

President—Miss Emma Black, Bolton.

1st Vice—Mr. F. A. Hutton, Brampton.

2nd Vice—Miss M. Pallas, Brampton.

3rd Vice—Miss M. Walker, Gramamsville.

4th Vice—Mr. I. Davidson, Meadowdale.

5th Vice—Mrs. G. M. Kitching, Woodbridge.

Secretary—Miss A. Hamilton, Brampton.

Treasurer—Mr. S. Deeves, Brampton.

Representative on Conference Executive—Rev. Herbert Lee, Huttonville.

Orangeville District

Orangeville District Convention was held at Orangeville on September 19. Reports from Leagues were good, showing advancement. Rev. B. R. Strangways spoke on "What is Lacking in the League?" Rev. Chas. Belfry discussed "The Leaguer and his Bible"; Rev. K. J. Beaton talked on "The Mission Study Class," and conducted a Round-Table Conference. At the evening service Dr. Speer, president of the Conference, gave an interesting address, and a consecration service was conducted by Rev. Mr. Adams. The following officers were appointed for 1907-08:

President—Mr. E. Button, Shelburne.

1st Vice—Mr. Steele, Churchill.

2nd Vice—Miss B. Lathwell, Orangeville.

3rd Vice—Miss J. Johnston, Laurel.

4th Vice—Miss Webster, Horning's Mills.

5th Vice—Miss M. Crozier, Orangeville.

Secretary—Miss Ethel Price, Shelburne.

Treasurer—Mrs. W. Walker, Bowling Green.
Representative to Toronto Conference—D. A. McBride.

After the convention on Thursday night, lunch, consisting of cake, coffee, bread, etc., was served to the delegates by the Orangeville Epworth League, under the supervision of Miss M. Savage, of the Social Department.

Mount Forest District

An autumn School and Convention for the study of the Bible and questions was held in the Methodist church at Mount Forest, September 25-6-7.

Prof. McLaughlin conducted most helpful studies on the missionary journeys and epistles of St. Paul.

The address on Sunday-school work by Rev. H. W. Crews, M.A., of Guelph, was full of most helpful suggestions.

Rev. R. Emberson spoke interestingly on Japan.

Round Table Conferences were conducted by Rev. Geo. King and Rev. D. W. Snider. Rev. Dr. Speer gave two fine addresses. Sunday-school Normal work was discussed by Rev. Jabez Dyke.

The following officers were elected:—

President—Rev. W. S. Daniels, Grand Valley.
1st Vice—Miss Farrell, Kenilworth.
2nd Vice—Miss M. McLaughlin, Arthur.
3rd Vice—Rev. G. King, H.A., Holstein.
4th Vice—Miss A. Walters, Kenilworth.
5th Vice—Rev. Wray R. Smith, Arthur.
Secretary—Miss I. Kerr, Mount Forest.
Treasurer—Mr. E. F. Lambert, Mount Forest.
Conference Representative—Rev. Mr. Bull, Monticello.

Sault Ste. Marie District

The Annual Epworth League Convention and Summer School of Sault Ste. Marie District was held at Richard's Landing.

Many of those interested in Epworth League work from all over the district camped near the village, while many more took advantage of the splendid accommodation provided for them in the village. About thirty delegates were present.

The president, Rev. W. H. Thompson, of Steeton, and his able staff of officers spared no trouble in planning and arranging for a successful school. Besides the ministers of the district, we had with us the Revs. A. P. Quirnbach, Dr. Adams, and Dr. Speers.

The terrible needs of China, and the wonderful opportunities offered the Christian church for missionary effort were strikingly set forth by Dr. Adams and Mr. Quirnbach. Dr. Speers conducted the Bible study classes. His patriotic lectures on Wednesday evening was received with great pleasure and interest by a large audience.

The following officers were elected for the ensuing year:

Hon. President—Rev. E. I. Hart, Sault Ste. Marie.
President—Rev. E. Crockett, Richard's Landing.
1st Vice—Miss M. Jackson, Gore Bay.
2nd Vice—Mr. Joel Hutchinson, Steeltown.
3rd Vice—Rev. E. Baker, Little Current.
4th Vice—Miss R. Grigg, Bruce Mines.
5th Vice—Mrs. A. N. St. John, Thessalon.
Secretary—Treasurer—Mr. F. K. Allen, Sault Ste. Marie.

Conference Representative—Rev. H. S. Warren, Echo Bay.

It was the unanimous wish of the convention that the Missionary Board be requested to grant us the privilege of supporting Rev. A. A. Wall in his work among the lumbermen and miners of our

district as our missionary representative, and at the request of the convention explained his work more fully to it.

Ottawa District

The twelfth annual convention of the Ottawa District Epworth League was held in Dominion Church, Ottawa, on September 26 and 27, jointly with the Ottawa Methodist Sunday-school Association.

One afternoon and two evening sessions were held.

On Thursday evening (26th) Rev. S. T. Bartlett, Associate Secretary of Epworth League and Sunday-school work in Eastern Canada, addressed the convention on "The Sunday-school as an Evangelistic Force." He also conducted a "Question Drawer" and "Round-Table Conference" on Sunday-school work. This proved decidedly interesting and helpful to the workers present.

On Friday afternoon Mrs. A. F. Leggett read a very earnest and helpful paper on "How Shall our Pupils be Prepared for and Admitted to Church Membership."

Mr. E. Parr gave a paper on "How Can we more effectively Attract our Young People to the Sunday Morning Service?" which brought out some interesting points of view. After the usual discussion on these papers Rev. Mr. Bartlett conducted a "Question Drawer" and "Round-Table Conference" on Epworth League work, which was full of interest to the Leaguers.

On Friday evening Rev. Dr. Jas. Henderson spoke to an attentive audience on "How to Make Missions Interesting to Young People," and Rev. Mr. Bartlett followed with an interesting address on "Epworth League Ideals." Both addresses were powerful and enthusiastic.

The following officers were elected for the ensuing year:

Hon. President—Rev. J. T. Pitcher, chairman of district.
President—R. S. Glass, B.A.
1st Vice—Ernest Parr.
2nd Vice—Miss Muriel Odell.
3rd Vice—Mrs. (Rev.) I. Norman.
4th Vice—Miss R. Breadyer.
5th Vice—Miss J. Cowan.
Secretary—N. W. McKnight.
Treasurer—J. H. Wilson, B.A.
Representative to Conference League Executive—Rev. Geo. I. Campbell.

Kingston District

The Kingston District Convention of Epworth Leagues and Sunday-schools was held in Sydenham, September 16 and 17. It was well attended, every one seeming interested in the attractive and profitable programme given. On Monday evening, the 16th, Rev. Mr. Sparling, chairman of the district, presided over the meeting. Rev. Mr. Timberlake, of Gananogue, in the absence of Miss Brown, of Kingston, gave a rich address on "Epworth League Ideals," which subject was afterwards thoroughly discussed.

In the absence of Dr. Stephenson (through illness), Rev. Mr. Stillman, a returned missionary from British Columbia, gave a very interesting talk on the work in British Columbia, and made an urgent appeal for more workers out there. Tuesday morning the financial district meeting. The afternoon session was opened with a round-table conference, conducted by Rev. S. T. Bartlett.

Miss Alice Chown, H.A., Kingston, then gave a very thoughtful paper on "The Promotion of Bible Study." The discussion on this paper was led by Rev. Mr. Burke, of Kingston.

In the evening Rev. A. C. Sykes spoke on "Does the Sunday-school Pay?" also Rev. S. T. Bartlett on "How to Hold the Boys and Girls in our Schools." Both of these addresses were very practical and profitable, and brought the convention to

a close, every one feeling that they could attend their services for the coming year with many fresh ideas and new thoughts to help them in their work. Good music was provided all through by a local choir, aided by Miss Marshall, of Kingston; Miss Boyce, of Murrayale; and a male quartette from the home town.

The following are the newly-elected officers:

Hon. President—The chairman of the district.

President—Rev. J. Pinel, B.D., Sydenham.

1st Vice—Miss A. B. Brown, B.A., Kingston.

2nd Vice—Miss Mabel Carpenter, Gananogue.

3rd Vice—Mr. Kenneth Ross, Kingston.

4th Vice—Miss Nellie Guess, Cataragui.

5th Vice—Miss Luella Knapp, Kingston.

Secretary—Miss Susie Shorey, Sydenham.

Treasurer—Miss Maud Playfair, Kingston.

District Representative to the Conference Executive—Rev. Reuben Calvert, B.D., Cushendale.

Sarnia District

A very fine S. S. and E. L. Convention of the Sarnia District was held at Wyomington, September 19 and 20. There was a good attendance and well sustained interest. Rev. Dr. Crews, General Secretary, conducted a Round Table Conference and delivered an address. Others who took part were Revs. J. H. Oliver, Dr. Medd, A. Thomas, E. Edwards, John Morrison, W. A. Walden, Messrs. R. Lawrence, J. McPhedran, A. Sinclair, and Miss Virgo.

A vigorous discussion took place on the obligation of our church to sustain the Sunday-school Aid and Extension Fund in order that Sunday-school work might be carried on more energetically, especially in view of the tide of immigration.

The following officers were elected:
President—Rev. E. W. Edwards, Thedford.

1st Vice—Miss M. Bond, Alvinston.

2nd Vice—Rev. A. Thomas, Bridgen.

3rd Vice—Miss L. Trueman, Courtwright.

4th Vice—Miss A. Hayne, Sarnia.

5th Vice—Miss E. Henry, Sombra.

Secretary—Mr. R. Lawrence, Sarnia.

Treasurer—Mr. L. Richards, Sarnia.

Conference Representative—Rev. A. McKibbin, Wyoming.

Ex-President—Rev. C. C. Kaine, Courtwright.

Collingwood District

Collingwood District Convention was a great success. One who was there says, "We had a glorious time." The following officers were elected:

President—Rev. James Phimister, Singhampton.

1st Vice—Hartley Conn, Heathcote.

2nd Vice—Miss Tena Mathers, Creemore.

3rd Vice—Miss Ara Ward, Collingwood.

4th Vice—Miss M. Moore, Thornbury.

5th Vice—Mr. O. Zimmerman, Collingwood.

Secretary—E. H. Carnahan, Meaford.

Treasurer—Charles W. Cooper, Stayner.

Conference Representative—Rev. A. P. Stanley, Maxwell.

A young Leaguer writes concerning his League: "I think we have got into a rut, and need some suggestions to help us get out." Our advice to our young friend is to get the new book, "Practical Plans," and adopt what methods seem to be suitable, pushing them with energy and perseverance. The enthusiasm of the officers counts for much in keeping a League up to concert pitch of efficiency.

Among the New Books

White Fire. By John Oenham. With 16 illustrations. American Tract Society, New York. Price, \$1.25.

"The white fire of a great enthusiasm is the greatest force in the world." This is the motto which this book has on its title page, and which is illustrated in its pages. It tells of a young man who is moved by a great enthusiasm to go to the cannibal islands to carry the Gospel. There is plenty of adventure in the story as the hero is a fighter who defends his flock against the slave raiders with Maxims and Winchester. Altogether it is rather an interesting book.

Christianity and the Progress of Man. As it is illustrated by modern missions. By W. Douglas MacKenzie, M.A. Published by Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrer, Edinburgh and London. Price, 3s. 6d.

A very fine missionary book dealing with the adaptation of Christianity to the world's needs, and showing what has been accomplished by its introduction. Some of the chapter headings are: "The Universalism of Christianity," "The Missionary as a Pioneer," "The Missionary as a Translator," "The Missionary and Education," "The Missionary and Civilization," "The Missionary and Other Religions."

The book is written in an optimistic spirit and is full of valuable information.

The Trampled Cross. By Joseph Hoeking. Published by Copp, Clark & Co., Toronto. Price, \$1.25.

A rather remarkable story of a young man who, while travelling among the Mohammedans, was taken prisoner, and in order to save his life accepted the religion of Mohammed. He was taken upon a Christian emblem in token of his utter renunciation of Christianity. Upon returning to England, he found that he was not welcomed by his old associates, who had heard of his strange conduct. Becoming acquainted with a godly minister, doing mission work in London, he was led, by the example and influence of the minister, to become a Christian. Of course there is a love story woven into the tale.

Stories from Morris. By Malahan Edgar. Fully illustrated, new and attractive binding. Price, 60 cents. Messrs. T. Y. Crowell & Co., Publishers, New York.

A series of stories from "The Earthly Paradise," which is the most important of the works of William Morris, the celebrated artist and author. This great work was the outcome of his admiration for Chaucer, and his desire to write a collection of stories in verse, drawn from various sources, and to be read by the Canterbury Tales. In an original setting, Morris planned that his stories should be told by a company of sea-farers from Norway, and certain Greeks. This book is a selection from these tales, told in prose. Many of them are very charming stories, far superior to the fiction that fills our modern magazines.

For the Best Things. By J. R. Miller. Author of "Silent Times." 300 pages, 10mo. Plain edges, 40 cents net; cloth, 50 cents net. Postage, 3 cents extra. T. Y. Crowell & Co., New York.

"He who is satisfied with himself and with his attainments is not living worthily. A wholesome life ever sees better things yet to be reached. Being good is not enough; striving to do better is not the loftiest aim. Nothing less than the best should ever satisfy an immortal being."

These words, prefixed to Dr. Miller's latest volume, indicate the temper in which it has been written. It is a trumpet

call for striving "for the best things," an appeal to the highest impulse in the human heart. There are twenty separate chapters, each with its own special subject, yet this is the thought which dominates them all.

The Idyls and the Ages. A valuation of Tennyson's "Idyls of the King." By John Francis Genung. Crowell & Co. 75 cents.

A dainty volume this, with a careful appreciation of Tennyson's epic, "The Idyls of the King." Professor Genung shows the place which Tennyson found in association with Browning during the Victorian age of English poetry. Quite rightly he insists that the various Idyls shall be treated as one whole, designed to set forth a moral criticism of society. The spiritual life which Browning shows in its psychological aspects is portrayed by Tennyson as essentially a social process. But one may demur to the author's absolute rejection of any allegorical significance in the epic. The poet himself gave adequate warrant for the view accorded to which Arthur represents the real work of the spirit incorporating the discordant, elemental passions, who are represented by the Knights of the Round Table. But with this criticism one can safely accord a most cordial endorsement of the essential theme as it is stated by Professor Genung. This is the epic of Love disciplined and ennobled by Duty. The work of the work in the poet's experience are gently suggested. But the dependence of the poetic form on the great scientific criticism of the traditional view of the spirit's origin has been to a large extent overlooked. It is doubtful, however, if in as small compass any single work gives such a luminous interpretation of the message of Tennyson.—Ernest Thomas.

The Weavers. A Tale of England and Egypt of Fifty Years Ago. By Sir Gilbert Parker, author of "The Heart of the World," etc. Illustrated by André Castaigne. Publishers, Copp, Clark & Co., Toronto. Price, \$1.50.

The great popularity of Sir Gilbert Parker's previous works leads one to expect something good when a new book from his pen is announced. Most readers will probably agree that "The Weavers" is the best thing Mr. Parker has yet written. The scenes are located principally in Egypt and England.

"It is not intended to be an historical novel," the author states, "nor are its characters meant to be identified with history of England or of Egypt, but all that is essential in the tale is based upon and drawn from the life of both countries."

The England and the Egypt of fifty years ago form the background of "The Weavers," the period when Egypt, in its early process of reconstruction, was still in a glow of barbaric splendor. On the one hand are the brilliant circles of London politics and fashionable society, and on the other the scheming, glittering court of the Oriental and the desolate, wide Sahara.

Sir Gilbert Parker is one of the most distinguished Canadians known in the world of literature. He is now forty-five years of age. Knighthood was conferred upon him by King Edward five years ago, and he is conspicuously associated with the Government as member of the House of Commons for the constituency of Gravesend. He works hard and system-

atically. A story once taken possession of him, he said, almost determines itself, length, style and solution. He has a faculty for making his title a sort of flashlight of the book.

Boys' Congress of Missions. By Emma Emille Kohler, Philadelphia. The Westminster Press.

Boys are naturally active, and delight in doing something. Can this instinct be utilized to interest them in the great work of missions? "The Boys' Congress of Missions" is an attempt to answer this in the affirmative. It is a boys' club which was formed in 1891 with a class of eleven boys from the State Street Mission in Chicago. They elected their own officers, and met once a month for the study of missions in its broad sense.

The three-fold purpose of the organization was:

1. To cultivate a broad brotherhood spirit, and to learn that the Gospel is intended for all the people of the earth.
2. To make the church a rendezvous for boys as well as for others.
3. To teach boys to give.

The distinctive feature of the club was to have representatives from all parts of the globe, and each boy, from the first, was called a "Stranger." He was made responsible for news—geographical, political, historical or religious—concerning his country when his name was called.

The book gives an account of the work they undertook. It is a revelation as to what can be done with and for boys.

The Religious Value of the Old Testament in the Light of Modern Scholarship. By Ambrose White Vernon. T. Y. Crowell & Co., Publishers, New York. Price, 60 cents.

The title and contents of this volume go far toward showing its purpose and value. It compares the earlier attitude toward the Old Testament with the present view of modern scholarship. The author is in sympathy with higher criticism, but still holds closely and enthusiastically to the value and inspiration of these scriptural writings as the first text-book of religion.

From Opium Fiend to Preacher. The story of Cheng Tsin Chieh. By Rev. A. F. Quimboch, for ten years a missionary in China. Price, 75 cents. Young People's Forward Movement for Missions, Dr. F. C. Stephenson, Secretary, Methodist Missions, Toronto.

This little book tells the marvellous story of the conversion and reclamation of a confirmed opium fiend. The book is well written, and beautifully gotten up, with some excellent illustrations. It is the kind of book to bring encouragement to missionary workers.

The Religious Significance of Home. By Rev. G. A. Johnston Ross, M.A. Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrer, Publishers, Edinburgh and London.

The author of this little booklet regards the home as the first and most educative of schools, the domestic group lying at the very roots of human society as the unit of progress. He endeavors to show what the Divine Ideal of the family is. It is a well-written and suggestive essay.

Lifting the Latch. An hour with the Twenty-third Psalm. By Elijah P. Brown. Price, 50 cents; post-charge, 6 cents. Jennings & Graham, Cincinnati.

Mr. Brown calls this "New Thoughts on an Old Theme," and this is evident after one has read the first chapter. He treats the beautiful Shepherd Psalm in his own original breezy way, and presents some very helpful thoughts.

The Haven and the Charter. New Thoughts on Elijah the Psalmist. By Elijah P. Brown, D.D. Published by Jennings & Graham, Cincinnati. Price, 50 cents net. Postage, 5c.

Mr. Brown was for some years editor of "The Ram's Horn," where he was a reputation as a neat and snappy writer. This book is in his well-known style, and abounds in plain, homely truths.

Devotional Service

NOV. 17.—WANTED: MEN FOR GIDEON'S BAND.

Judges 7, 9-7.

HOME READINGS.

- Mon., Nov. 11.—Servants of sin. Judges 6, 1-6.
 Tues., Nov. 12.—Promised deliverance. Judges 6, 7-10.
 Wed., Nov. 13.—The deliverer chosen. Judges 6, 11-24.
 Thurs., Nov. 14.—Gideon prepared. Judges 6, 25-32.
 Fri., Nov. 15.—A sign given. Judges 6, 33-40.
 Sat., Nov. 16.—A splendid victory. Judges 7, 8-25.

EXPOSITORY HINTS.

"The people are too many" (v. 2). The Lord was desirous of giving the victory to Israel as a free gift, and if they had a mighty army they might be inclined to boast themselves.

"Whosoever is fearful," etc. (v. 2). The man who is afraid is not likely to accomplish much. We can imagine that Gideon on the eve of battle is hoping that more hearts might be stirred up for the contest when the Lord intimates that he already has too many, and the fearful ones are eliminated.

"And there returned 22,000" (v. 3). What a trial of Gideon's faith was this! To see on the one hand the Midianites, "as grasshoppers for multitude," and his own army so sadly reduced. It must have driven him for consolation to God's own promise.

"Bring them down to the water" (v. 4). A man is known only when he is tried, and the test is often administered on some ordinary occasion when we little think of it. When Gideon led his army to the brook the men only thought of slaking their thirst, and did not realize that they were being subjected to a trial. It is often so in life. The best likeness of a man is taken when he is unaware of it.

"Every one that lappeth"—"he that boweth down" (v. 5). Some more luxurious in their nature went down upon their hands and knees and put their lips to the stream to take in a full supply; others, more dashing and impetuous in their disposition, and so anxious to get at the foe that they would not pause for a long drink, caught up a little water in their hands, and rushed forward.

"By the three hundred that lapped will I save you" (v. 7). The few may stand and do noble things in spite of the example of the many. Gideon's army was a band of enthusiasts. They barely had time to remember the keenness of their thirst, as they strained at the leash and pulled at the bridle, the restraint of delay between them and victory.

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS.

1. We are taught that success is God's cause does not depend upon numbers. Quality is of more importance than quantity. It is a subtle danger to count heads and to boast of numbers on the book.
2. God is worthy of our trust and confidence and hearty co-operation in selecting His agents and carrying on His work.
3. We must not conclude, however, that God's method is always to work through the few rather than the many. It is rather the God's plan to work through, not a

part, but through all His people whether few or many. He reduced Gideon's army simply in order that His power might be recognized in the victory.

4. As a qualification for Christian work there is nothing more important than faith in God. It tinges, it colors every word we speak, and everything we do. Read the eleventh chapter of Hebrews and see what mighty deeds faith incited men to undertake.

5. A battle of three hundred against a host would mean determined men, and the battle of the Lord needs determined men now. Strength of mind and determination of character are called for from every soldier of Christ.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS.

Who that has to lead a company of Christian men has not often been ready to wish that he could sound out Gideon's proclamation and bid the fearful ones take away the chilling encumbrance of their presence?

Terror shuts the door against the entrance of the grace that makes us conquerors, and so fulfills its own forebodings. Faith opens the door, and so fulfills its own confidences.

Cowardice, dressed up as cautious prudence, weakens the efficiency of every regiment of Christ's army.

The comparatively small handful, who press on with concentrated purpose, making God's call and His work first and all else, even their own needs, a secondary affair—to these will be the honor and the joy of victory.

Whoever belongs to God's army must want to. No one is pressed into that service.

God is testing us every hour, and according as we stand His scrutiny He sends us forward with His Gideons to emancipate the enslaved, or dismisses us ignominiously from His service.

It is the small matters in life, the comparatively slight occasions that reveal character. There is One watching us when we are most unconscious, drawing silent auguries of character, and forecasting destiny.

Look at the conduct of the multitude. See how they bow down to drink at the waters of the world! See how they give themselves up to its pleasures and pursuits, unmindful altogether of eternal interests.

Sometimes a man's resources of wealth, health, and other blessings are abridged. God knowing that there is no other way to abridge his pride.

QUOTATIONS.

When did God ever complain of having too few people to work with? I have heard Him say, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I." I have heard Him say, "One shall chase a thousand, and two shall put ten thousand to flight." But I have heard Him say, "You must get more men or I cannot do this work, you must increase your human force or the Divine energy will not be equal to the occasion." The work of the world has always been done by the few."—Joseph Parker, D.D.

"Whosoever is afraid." There are many of this class to-day. One is afraid that the service of Christ is too austere; it requires too many privations. He is unwilling to renounce a sin he loves. Another is afraid of being ridiculed or despised for entering decidedly upon a religious life. Another is "afraid" of be-

ing "religious overmuch." Tell me, is the soldier afraid of being too zealous when fighting in his country's cause? Some are afraid of sacrificing their earthly substance.—F. Elwin.

We have a striking evidence of the different estimate men make of danger and hard work at a distance and at hand. Many are brave at home but cowards in the field; they seem to answer God's call at first, but take the earliest opportunity of backing out of their engagements. Many persons, when you speak to them of some useful undertaking, seem quite to enjoy the prospect of engaging in it, and promise their services, but the actual sight of destitution, disease, ignorance, with which they must cope, quite frightens them, and they avail themselves of the first opening to escape.—Marcus Dods, D.D.

A large number of Gideon's compeers thought it highly desirable that the yoke of the invader should be cast off, but they were afraid to try to do it. They thought the difficulties more plain than they saw the good to be attained. Even some of those who volunteered at first went back after they had counted the cost. Just so! Every man who honestly assumes a responsibility and attempts a good work may be perfectly sure that ten people will say, "Well done! Go on!" for every one who will say, "I will help you, though I stand to lose by it."—Rev. R. J. Campbell.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

God wants His army to be not like a great big overgrown cabbage that has run to blades and has no heart in it, but He wants His army to be dense—not extensive, but intensive—sound at the heart, solid as a cannon ball.—Rev. John McNeil.

Those who lapped, that is, tossed the water into their mouths with their hands, as a dog does with his tongue, without interruption on the march, and with eyes turning to the enemy. This required strength and alertness, and the hunter or shepherd who is in the habit of drinking in this way, instead of kneeling down to drink, is never off his guard, not even when he drinks.

Tell the story of Cromwell's enlistment of his Ironsides upon the eve of the Civil War. Cromwell did as Gideon did. His large levies he winnowed and sifted again and again, turning away numbers of volunteers, and choosing those whom he kept, not so much because of their strength or experience as because "they had the fear of the Lord."

QUESTIONS.

- Are we really in earnest in God's work?
 Are we delaying God's work for our own comfort?
 Would God select us for a difficult enterprise?
 What moral enterprises of to-day need Gideons?
 In what ways could a Gideon's band help our community?

SUGGESTED PROGRAMME.

1. Hymn.
2. Prayer.
3. Scripture reading, Judges 7, 2-7.
4. Expository Hints (5 minutes) by the Leader.
5. Hymn.
6. Suggestive Thoughts (ten persons, one minute each). Let each person repeat one of the "Suggestive Thoughts" given here, with a thought of his or her own.
7. Quotations and Illustrations—as above.

8. Hymn.

9. Practical applications—Let four or five persons take part, each giving one practical lesson.

10. Questions—To be answered by members generally.

11. Brief prayers.

12. Hymn and Benediction.

NOV. 24.—MISSIONARY MEETING.

Topic: "Our Relations to Missions in Japan."

SUGGESTED PROGRAMME.

Hymn 322.

Prayer—That the present religious movements in Japan may result in hastening the evangelization of that country.

Scripture Lesson—John 17, 20-26.

Address—Christian movements in Japan. (1) The World's Students' Christian Federation. (2) Gen. Booth's visit. Analytical Index. (3) Japan branch of the International Sunday-school Association. (4) Methodist Union.

Hymn 304.

Address—The Uniting Churches. (1) Methodist Episcopal. (2) Methodist Episcopal, South. (3) Methodist Church, Canada.

Address—The Japan Orphanage.

Hymn 199.

Address—The relation of the Missions of the Church in Canada to the Church of Japan.

Benediction.

Helps for use in preparing the programme in Japan:

The Missionary Bulletin, June and September numbers, 1907, 25 cents; 75 cents per year.

The Report of the Commissioners to Japan, 1907. (A copy may be borrowed from your pastor.)

The Japan Orphanage: 24 page pamphlet, 5 cents.

Order from F. C. Stephenson, Methodist Mission Rooms, Toronto.

THE RELATION OF THE METHODIST MISSIONARIES TO THE JAPAN METHODIST CHURCH.

Three bodies of Methodists laboring in Japan have united to form the Methodist Church of Japan. The new church will have no official connection with any churches of the United States or Canada. It will make its own Discipline and administer the same through its own duly appointed officers without reference to the General Conferences of the three united bodies. As far as possible it will aim at the financial support of all the work carried by the native pastors and evangelists. It will have nothing to do with the payment of the salaries of missionaries or the financial support of any work carried on under their supervision.

The several Mission Boards of the United Churches must continue to supply the funds for the support of their own missionaries and the maintenance of the work under their control.

A missionary on furlough was recently asked, "Is it true that a certain Japanese church paid four hundred dollars (\$400.00) last year toward the salary of one of our Canadian missionaries?" The answer must be, "It is certainly not true." No missionary of our church has ever received a cent of money from the Japanese church toward the payment of his salary. The main purpose of missionary work in Japan is to plant the Gospel, organize the church, and teach its members to provide the financial support for the payment of

their own native pastors and the development of the work under their control.

THE ORPHANAGE WORK, JAPAN.

Why should we engage in such work as this?

In the first place it is greatly needed. Such institutions as this are comparatively rare. No doubt the Japanese themselves will in time make provision for the unfortunate children of the empire, but they have not gotten round to it yet, and will not for years to come. Here, then, is an opportunity for us to lend a helping hand where help is greatly needed.

In the second place such work furnishes us with an excellent opportunity to "let our light shine." This is a kind of preaching that will be effective. People sometimes in Japan, as elsewhere, complain that they cannot understand the preacher. But they cannot fail to understand a work like this.

In the third place, through such a work as this we can bring to bear an influence upon the character of the children such as we never could do through the ordinary methods of church and Sunday-school work. We can mould their characters just as parents do the characters of their own children in the home.

DEC. 1.—THE BEAUTY AND UTILITY OF GRATITUDE.

Ps. 111, 1-10.

(A THANKSGIVING CONSECRATION MEETING.)

HOME READINGS.

Mon., Nov. 25.—Thanksgiving is good.—

Ps. 92, 1-15.

Tues., Nov. 26.—In public worship. Ps.

25, 17-19.

Wed., Nov. 27.—In everything. 1 Thess.

5, 11-18.

Thurs., Nov. 28.—For Jesus Christ. 2 Cor.

10, 15.

Fri., Nov. 29.—For national blessings.

Ps. 136, 1-26.

Sat., Nov. 30.—For bodily good. 1 Tim.

4, 1-14.

EXPOSITORY HINTS.

"I will praise . . . with my whole heart" (v. 1). The best way to enforce an exhortation is to set an example, and the sweet singer does this, not in a halting, hesitant way, but heartily. He brought his whole heart to do the duty.

"In the assembly" (v. 1). For the congregation, whether it be large or small, there can be no engagement more fitting than praise. The true heart should sing hallelujah in any and every place. Why should we fear the presence of men?

"The works of the Lord are great" (v. 2). In design, in size, in number, in excellence, all the works of the Lord are great.

"Sought out" (v. 2). Those who love God delight in His handiwork; they perceive that there is more in them than appears upon the surface, and, therefore, they give their minds to understand them. The naturalist, the botanist, the astronomer are all seeking to know the works of God.

"His work is honorable and glorious" (v. 3). His one special work, the salvation of His people, is here mentioned as distinguished from His many other works. This reflects honor and glory upon Him.

"His wonderful works to be remembered" (v. 4). He meant them to remain in the recollection of His people. Deeds such as God has wrought are not to be admired for an hour and then forgotten.

They are meant to be perpetual signs and tokens for all generations.

"He hath given meat" (v. 5). Not only in the wilderness with manna, but everywhere else, by His providence, He hath supplied the necessities of His believing children. As for spiritual meat, they have been made to feed upon the finest of the wheat.

"The works of His hands are victory and judgment" (v. 7). Truth and justice are conspicuous in all that God does. Nothing like artifice or crooked policy can ever be seen in His acts.

"All His commandments are sure" (v. 7). All that He has appointed shall surely stand. He is no fickle despot, commanding one thing to-day, and another to-morrow, but His commands remain absolutely unaltered.

"They stand fast for ever and ever" (v. 8). The Lord is not swayed by transient motives. He always acts according to the glorious principles of truth.

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom" (v. 10). It is its first principle. True religion is at once the chief element of religion and its chief fruit.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS.

Have not blessings outnumbered by far the grievances of life? The days of sunshine are more numerous than those of storm.

Sad discontent must prey upon the heart if the contemplation of our mercies does not inspire our souls with some degree of cheerfulness.

Genuine thanksgiving is one of the sweetest, richest, and holiest of all Christian graces, and yet it is probably one of the rarest.

Many of our good things we attribute to our own skill or industry or good judgment; we take all the credit of them, and are inclined to leave God out of the account.

There should be perpetual rendering of thanks to God on every day of the year, whether it be cold or hot, stormy or clear, whether we be sick or well, whether our basket be full or empty. "In everything give thanks."

One of the best symptoms of a healthy and holy believer is that the soul is sending up the incense of praise to God every day.

When even the worst comes there is always more cause for praise than complaint.

The heart needs its feast as well as the body, and there can be no finer feast for the heart than a spirit of thankfulness.

QUOTATIONS.

Our thankfulness is never complete until it is religious. Our recognition of human help and generosity lacks its chief element unless we be devout, and see also the care of our heavenly Father.—Rev. Thomas Hammond.

There are few more beautiful sights than that of a man unfolding the map of his journeyings in the wilderness, and with a face that grows radiant, and a voice that grows musical, point out where the Red Sea was crossed, where the palm trees waved, where the manna fell, where the bitter was made sweet, and where the stream gushed forth from the rock.—T. Hammond.

It is good, once a year, like Joshua, to command the sun to stand still long enough to recount the victories of the year, personal, social and national, so that the heart may not become sordid in our

conceit and in our selfishness, but that in the great multitude of mercies we may recognize that hidden hand which is the source of all power.—Henry Ward Beecher.

How much there is to be thankful for! One blessing taken, how many are left. One sorrow entering a corner of the heart, how many blessings it has to crowd before it can find room. The true Christian is always a thankful Christian.

If gratitude is due from children to their earthly parents, how much more is the gratitude of the great family of man due to our Father in heaven!—Hosea Ballou.

He that preaches gratitude pleads the cause both of God and man; for without it we can neither be sociable nor religious.—Seneca.

Many a man feels his heart dilating over his roasted turkey at the family Thanksgiving feast, who is guilty of no little growling and grumbling under God's providences during the rest of the twelve-month. His gratitude is very much like the devotion of those who worship God on Sunday, and quite forget Him during the week; or like the spasmodic piety of some Christians who are fervent for the conversion of sinners during the "Week of Prayer," but seldom attend any prayer-meetings after the sacred week has passed. Periodical religion is about on a par with periodical honesty, or periodical temper.—Dr. Cuyler.

QUESTIONS.

What memory have we for our blessings?

How may we express our gratitude? Is every day a thanksgiving day for us?

Name some reasons why Canada should be grateful.

Why should the church be thankful?

HINTS FOR THE LEADER.

Prepare a programme similar to the one suggested for the last topic. Do not be satisfied with simply having a paper read by some member of the League, but aim at having as many as possible take part. Turn the meeting into a testimony service before closing, and ask everybody who has anything to be thankful for to tell about it. This ought to be a most inspiring meeting.

DEC. 3.—LESSONS FROM AN OLD LOVE STORY: THE BOOK OF RUTH

READ IN THE MEETING.

Ruth 2, 10-30.

HOME READINGS.

Mon., Dec. 2.—A mother's misfortune.

Ruth 1, 1-5.

Tues., Dec. 3.—A mother's sacrifice. Ruth 1, 6-13.

Wed., Dec. 4.—A daughter's selfishness.

Ruth 1, 14-22.

Thur., Dec. 5.—A daughter's toil. Ruth 2, 1-9.

Fri., Dec. 6.—Grandmother of David.

Ruth 4, 16-22.

Sat., Dec. 7.—An ancestor of Christ.

Matt. 1, 1-16.

FORWORD.

The Bible is full of fine love stories. The love of Jonathan for David and of David for Jonathan. The love of Paul for his people Israel. The love of Christ for all men, and so on. But neither in the Bible nor anywhere else that I know of is there another such story of love told as the love of Ruth for Naomi. It is as pure as gold and as strong as death.

Many waters cannot quench Ruth's love. And her confession is the most beautiful confession of love in all the world.

When Benjamin Franklin was United States Minister at the Court of France, on one occasion he was passing an evening with a company of literary ladies and gentlemen, and the conversation, turning on oriental life, he read to them the story of Ruth. Charmed with its beautiful simplicity, with enthusiastic expressions of delight they eagerly desired to know in what volume the exquisite pastoral was written. It was not a little to the surprise and chagrin of these French ladies and gentlemen to learn that it was a portion of Scripture that had elicited their admiration.

CHARACTERISTICS OF RUTH'S LOVE.

1. It was steadfast. Orpah goes "back to her people and her gods." She loves Naomi in a kind of way, but her affection was not of the enduring kind. She conducted herself with kindness and tenderness toward her mother-in-law, but her love could not stand the test to which it was subjected. Her resolution failed, and she went back. Not so with Ruth. Her devotion to Naomi was perhaps less impulsive, but more steadfast, and grew out of careful reflection. It was a deep, undying attachment. "She was steadfastly minded to go with her."

2. It was a self-denying love, which involved sacrifice. To start out with Naomi meant not pleasantness, but bitterness. As far as she could see there was nothing before her but loneliness, homelessness and perpetual widowhood. Yet she was ready for work, ready to beg, ready to die for the one she loved.

3. It was a courageous love. What a severe trial it must have been to Ruth's constancy when she saw her sister-in-law, who had probably been the friend of her early widowhood, turning back again to Moab and leaving her alone with Naomi! We are greatly influenced by sympathy and numbers. Notwithstanding all these influences she faces the future with courage and hopefulness.

WHAT RUTH CHOSE.

1. She chose the true God.—"Thy God shall be my God."

2. She chose the religious path.—"Where thou goest I will go."

3. She chose a religious habitation.—"Where thou lodgest, I will lodge."

4. She chose religious associations.—"Thy people shall be my people."

5. She chose the good woman's death and burial.—"Where thou diest, I will die."

Show how necessary it is for those who desire to be Christians to-day to follow the example of this young woman.

THE REWARD OF VIRTUE.

1. Boaz praises her fidelity (chap. 2, v. 11). "It hath been shewed unto me," etc. Ruth now begins to reap the abundant harvest which is growing for her in the Divine purposes of mercy, a harvest of which Boaz's fields were only a part. She had been faithful in that which appeared to be the least, and now she was to be rewarded in that which seemed to be much.

2. A Divine recompense (chap. 2, v. 12). "The Lord recompense thy work." Though she was a stranger in a strange land she was under the wings of Israel's God. "Under whose wings thou art come to trust" (v. 12). The wings of God are strong wings, broad wings, mighty to save.

THE CHOICE OF RUTH.

1. It was a humble choice. She had nothing to offer but herself. She does not propose to bring anything that can make her of any worth. She pleads only for permission to be to Naomi in her future life all that affection and fidelity can make her.

2. It was an affectionate choice. Her heart was with Naomi. It was just such a choice as our Saviour would have us all make when he says, "My son, give me thine heart."

3. Ruth's choice was an entire one. There was no hesitation about the decision she should make. There was no lingering desire to carry some of Moab with her. She made the transfer of herself freely and unreservedly. When the choice of the Saviour is thus entire, how completely it opens the way for future duty! How it settles all future discussions and difficulties with a single decision!

4. It was a determined choice. Lovely and gentle as she appears, there was great dignity and firmness in Ruth's stand. Jesus requires from His followers the same determined and unshrinking choice.

5. Ruth's decision was an instant choice. She asked for no time for consideration. Her mind was made up. Her decision was settled. Why should we ever hesitate a moment over our acceptance of a Saviour's offers!

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS.

An impulsive religion is not always of great value. It is better to be quiet and undemonstrative like Ruth, and to have the rest of the matter in us than to be impulsive and demonstrative like Orpah, and in the hour of trial to fall.

Those who are half-hearted in their consecration to God expose themselves to a legion of tempters. Lingering on the borderland, they keep within the arrow-marks of Satan.

When it becomes clearly seen that our heart is fixed, the world gives up in despair, and leaves off speaking unto us. If a man is seen to be decided in his stand for Christ, antagonists will leave him alone. So long as he is wavering they will bring all their batteries to bear upon him.

It is heart power and not any other force that is most impressive and most enduring, even in this unappreciative world.

Blessed are the humble Ruths who will glean in any field of duty; who if they cannot preach a sermon or write a book, or deliver an eloquent address, will cheerfully read to a blind grandfather, take a flower to a sick child, or a loaf of bread to a suffering family.—Dr. C. H. Payne.

QUESTIONS.

What lessons are there in this story for daughters?

What of our example and influence? Does our life include any self-sacrifice? Do I trust the leadings of God's providence? Is my life such as God can bless greatly?

HINTS FOR THE LEADER.

This is a fine character study, which ought to be very interesting. Do not be satisfied to have a little formal paper. It is a crying shame that so many Leagues continue this practice of reading papers when it is so easy to prepare an attractive programme. Get at least a dozen persons taking an active part in this meeting, and others answering questions, and joining in the discussions. Do not read a paper. Please do not do it.

The Book Shelf

Eternal Elements in the Christian Faith. By Rev. D. Butler, M.A. Published by Messrs. Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier, London and Edinburgh. Price, 75c.

This book is a study of the Christ of history and of Christ in the spiritual experience of His disciples. The first chapter deals with the religious basis of the revelation in man himself. The second with the revelation of the grace of God in Christ as all-sufficient for man's needs. The last four chapters deal with man's attitude toward Christ, and the ever-deepening experience of Christ within the consciousness of His disciples, as interpreted by faith, biography and history.

China in Legend and Story. By C. Campbell Brown, for ten years resident in China. Price, \$1.00. Messrs. Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier, Edinburgh and London.

There is such a strong demand in these times for stories that even our missionary literature is being served up in this form. This volume consists of a series of life sketches, the object being to show how Chinese people live and think, first when they are heathens, and afterwards when they are Christians. It is an attempt to give a real picture of the native mind and character, as seen to some extent from the inside. The seventeen stories cover a wide range, representing every class of the community from Mandarins to thieves and beggars.

Missions in the Sunday School. A manual of methods. By Martha B. Hayes, M. A. Gans'ian Edition. Young People's Forward Movement for Missions, Dr. F. C. Stephenson, Secretary, Wesley Buildings, Toronto. Price, 60 cents.

As special attention is now being paid to the subject of missions in the Sunday school, this is a most opportune book. It is full of practical suggestions that cannot fail to be of the greatest value to Sunday school workers. It deserves a wide circulation.

Freshwater Brotherhood. Report of the First Convention, held in Indianapolis, Ind., 13-15, 1906. The Freshwater Board of Publication, Philadelphia.

Those who are interested in Young Men's Clubs or Brotherhoods will find this report very interesting and suggestive. In addition to an account of the proceedings, it contains several fine addresses on such topics as: "The men of our church and their minister," "The men of our church and the labor interests," "The men of our church and the spiritual life," "The men of our church and Bible study."

The Duties of Man, and Other Essays. By Jos. Mazzini. "Everyman's Library." Price, 25 cents. J. M. Dent & Co., London, Eng.

Joseph Mazzini was the champion of Italian unity and independence, a man in whom there were many fine and noble qualities, who for years labored earnestly for Republicanism. His name will live among the roll of the world's great men. This book is a selection from his writings, the principal place being given to "The Duties of Man," which deals with "Duties to Humanity," "Duties to the Family," "Duties to Yourself," etc. While primarily addressed to the Italian workman there is much in these chapters that is appropriate to every place and to all time.

Books for Boys and Girls

Uganda's White Man of Work. A story of Alexander M. Mackay. By Sophie von Fels. Young People's Forward Movement for Missions, Wesley Buildings, Toronto. Price, 50 cents.

Here is a book which the average boy will delight in. It tells in the most interesting manner of the way Mackay of Uganda lived and worked among the people of Africa. It is a fine illustration of how interesting a missionary book may be made. Every Sunday-school library should have this volume.

Stories from Chaucer. By J. Walker McSpadden. Fully illustrated. Price, 60 cents. Messrs. T. Y. Crowell & Co., New York.

"The Canterbury Tales," as everybody knows, were written by Geoffrey Chaucer five hundred years ago. They were put into the mouths of a band of pilgrims on their way to Canterbury.

These stories are taken from this book, told in prose, and adapted for children and young people. They are entirely free from the coarseness that mars the original poems.

The Wonder Book. A picture Annual for boys and girls, 1905. Published by Ward, Lock & Co., London. Price, \$1.25.

This is the most beautiful book for children we have seen for a long time. It is a large volume of 250 pages, filled with interesting stories and sketches for juveniles. It is profusely illustrated, many of the pictures are full-page and printed in colors. It is a book which will fairly charm the little folks, being most suitable for youngsters up to about ten or twelve years of age. As a Christmas present it would be greatly appreciated.

Stories of Early England. By E. M. Wilmot Baston. Fully illustrated, new and attractive binding. Price, 60 cents. The T. Y. Crowell Co., Publishers, New York.

This book, which is intended for boys and girls, is a collection of tales of old England away back in the time of the barons. It includes the story of "Beowulf," which was the first great English epic, "Guy of Warwick," "Richard Lion-Heart," "Havelock the Dane," etc. These stories serve as a kind of continuous view of English and Celtic social life and manners up to the fifteenth century.

The Little Colonel, Paid by Honor. By Annie Fellows Johnston. Illustrated by L. C. Page & Co., Boston. Price, \$1.50.

There are few writers for juveniles who are so fascinating as Mrs. Annie Fellows Johnston. All her books are charming. This wholesome story for girls takes one away to Kentucky, where lives the heroine, "The Little Colonel," whose winsome ways appeal to the reader. While the story is intensely interesting, it teaches beautiful lessons of child life, portraying the sweet and true type of character that tends to the development of noble womanhood.

Little Water Folks. Stories of Lake and River. By Charles Copleland. 160 pages, 12mo, cloth 75 cents. Messrs. Y. Crowell & Co., New York.

A charming book for children about the inhabitants of lakes and rivers, their food, manner of life, etc.

The first chapter, "A Twenty-Dollar Coat," tells the life story of "Trojan," a tame otter who learned many tricks from both his wild and his human neighbors. Then comes a diverting description of the "People of Frog Hollow," "Little Musky's Story," "The Revenge of the Blue Horde," "The Weasel of the Waters," "The Tale of a Turtle," and other chapters of like interesting and instructive nature.

We can see how every wide-awake boy would at once seize upon a book like this with its friendly descriptions and chatty anecdotes of things he has always wanted to know about.

Everyman's Library

Much greater attention has been paid to the publication of inferior books in cheap form than to good literature. For years we have been accustomed to see all kinds of sensational novels served up in flaming colored covers and offered at a small price, while the good standard authors remained on the shelves marked \$1.00 and \$1.50 each. Recently a few of the publishers have been trying experiments. In offering for sale some of the best literature at very moderate prices, and meeting, we are glad to say, with a measure of success. Perhaps the most daring enterprise is the publication of "Everyman's Library," by Messrs. J. M. Dent & Co., of London, England, who are putting on the market some of the best books that have ever been written at the very low price of 25 cents per volume. They are not inferior productions either, but are well printed on good paper, and well bound. Such a movement ought to be encouraged, as the best way to overcome the influence of the bad in literature is the circulation of the good. Here is a partial list of books that can be obtained at our Methodist Book Room at 25 cents each:

Wesley's Journal.
Life of Queen Elizabeth.
Life of Nelson.
Andersen's Fairy Tales.
Hawthorne Cruso.
Robinson Crusoe.
Hawthorne's Wonder Book.

Tom Brown's School Days.
Kingsley's Heroes.
Grimm's Fairy Tales.
Marryat's Masterman Ready.
Cooper's Pioneer.
Cooper's Prairie.
Cooper's Deerslayer.
Cooper's The Pathfinder.
Dickens' Old Curiosity Shop.
Dickens' Barnaby Rudge.
Scott's Kenilworth, and most of Scott's other novels.
Hawthorne's Scarlet Letter.
Kingsley's Westward Ho.
Lytton's Harold.
Darwin's Voyage of the Beagle.
Palgrave's Golden Treasury.
The Arabian Nights.
Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress.
The Bible in Spain.
Shakespeare's Plays.
Cook's Voyages of Discovery.
Travels of Mungo Park.
Caryle's French Revolution.
Grote's History of Greece.
Macaulay's History of England, Vols. 1 to 5.
Motley's Dutch Republic.
Butler's Analogy.
There is absolutely no excuse for reading poor books when volumes like these can be secured for such a trifle.
A full list of "Everyman's Library" can be obtained at the Methodist Book Room.

The Junior Epworth Era

Edited by Rev. J. T. Bartlett, Associate General Secretary of Sunday Schools and Epworth Leagues, Sackville, N.B.

Weekly Topics

NOV. 17.—WHAT GOD THINKS OF THE WICKED. (The Wicked.) Nahum 1. 3.

"Wicked" means those who are guilty of wilful offences against the laws of God. Our Juniors should be shown that they need never be numbered among this class. Our Junior League is a place where wickedness is not so much exposed or condemned as prevented. To shun evil, to learn to do well, to take God's Word into the heart "that I might not sin against Thee," to form habits of goodness, purity, truth and love, are some of the vital principles of our work among the young. Not to persuade them to a life of obedience to God through fear of Divine wrath, but to "bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," is our chief business. Do not try, therefore, to present this topic from the standpoint of Divine judgment on sin, but from that of human decision not to become "wicked." The child may make this decision. God has made provision whereby it may be carried out in the child's own life. If the child is taught to live as God wills he should, the defiling influences of sin will never be felt or shown in the child's character. Thus the "anger" and "affection" of God on the "wicked" they shall never personally know. Teach the children that whatever these awful denunciations on "the wicked" mean, they, as happy and obedient members of God's family, need have no fear. We shall never truly win our children to God if we first frighten them about God. True affection, the outgrowth of the filial relationship that God's little ones hold towards their Heavenly Father, is the only spirit to which we can effectively appeal in our training of the young. Do not teach them in this way:—"God will be angry with me, and will punish me if I am wicked. Therefore I must try to be good." But rather lead them to say, "God is my Father. He loves me and longs to have me grow up pure and good. I love Him and do not want to be bad. Therefore I shall seek to do His will always and never become 'wicked' before Him." Any other teaching will give wrong ideas of God and holiness to the little child. Never let a boy get the idea that he must "sow his wild oats." It is a pernicious doctrine, wrong in principle, and untrue in fact; it caricatures God, dishonors His Word, and often destroys the boy. Don't send him out as "a wicked" boy, "to become more and more 'wicked';" but save him from being numbered among those of whom the text says that the Lord "will not at all acquit the wicked." Thus the condemnation of such as "are guilty of wilful offences against the laws of God," your boy will never know.

Nov. 24.—TO QUEBEC FROM AFRICA, CALLING AT NEWFOUNDLAND.

Suggested Programme.

Hymn 447.

Prayer—For our missionaries in Newfoundland and Quebec.

Reading of the Scriptures—Ps. 24.

First Guide—From Africa to Newfoundland.

News Agent will tell about Newfoundland.

Hymn 453.

Second Guide—From Newfoundland to Montreal.

Third Guide—Montreal and the French Missions.

News Agent will tell about Quebec.

Hymn 356.

For Use in Preparing for the Trip Meeting:

Problems in French Evangelization, 15 cents.

Preparing the Way, 25 cents.

(The two pamphlets will be sent for 30 cents.)

Methodist Missions in Canada and Newfoundland, 35 cents.

Trip Tickets, ½ cent each.

Order from F. C. Stephenson, Methodist Mission Rooms, Toronto.

DIRECTIONS FOR THE GUIDES.

FROM AFRICA TO CANADA.

It is with a certain feeling of regret that we say farewell to the Dark Continent. It has been the scene of such missionary marvels; it is a place of such great need, that we feel we should like to have stayed longer, and found out more about it all. But we must hasten on. In a few days more we shall see again the shores of Canada. What a long time it seems since we began our journey round the world. We discuss the places we have visited as we travel across the Atlantic. The weather is a good deal colder now than that to which we have been accus-

tomed lately, and every day takes us farther and farther north.

THE FOG OFF LABRADOR.

The captain tells us at last that tomorrow we shall see land. We go to bed quite excited, but in the morning we find that the vessel has stopped. What is the matter? Surely we are not in port. Some of the boys have been on deck, and while we are wondering they come back with an explanation. We are in a dense fog, and the captain does not dare to proceed. All day long, at regular intervals, we hear the dismal sound of the fog-horn. The fog is so thick that it is impossible to see any distance, and the air has a chill, penetrating dampness.

OUR MISSIONARY AT HAMILTON INLET, LABRADOR.

We are glad next day to find that the fog has lifted, and we can resume our journey. We are going to call at Hamilton Inlet, in Labrador, and see the missionary there. He is very pleased to welcome us, and show us about his parish. It seems very lonesome to us, and we wonder how he spends the long, cold winter, but he is very bright and cheerful, and talks very kindly of the fishing people, who constitute a majority of his congregation. But we realize that the isolation is great, and have an increased feeling of respect for these lonely men who are ministering to the spiritual needs of this scattered population.

NEWFOUNDLAND.

Down through the Strait of Belle Isle our steamer passes. On our left is New-

About Your Books

The question that comes to you is not "Shall I read?" but "What shall I read?" Books and magazines were never so numerous or so cheap as now, and it is a very easy matter for our Juniors to secure plenty of reading matter. But it is desirable that you read only profitable books. Much time is wasted by reading poor stuff, and life is too short for this. And the harm that results from reading bad books cannot quickly or easily be undone. So it is very important that you know what is best to read. No book that gives an unreal idea of life is a good book for you. The chief fault with many of the most popular books of to-day is in this point. They do not help the girls and boys to live the kind of life God wants them to live. Anything that makes light of a life, that seems to teach that it pays to do wrong in anything, is bad for you. You will learn that "tis only noble to be good," as you grow older, and it will save you from future regrets if you start out with that idea right from your childhood. Books that describe dishonesty as it does not matter so much what you do as long as you are not found out, are bad books. There are plenty of books that, after you have read them, make you feel that you ought to be a manly, truthful boy, or a happy, useful girl. Read them. Stories that are unnaturally exciting are not wholesome reading, but such as fill you

with a deep love of country, or home, or your fellows, and which, when you lay them down, make you feel like going out and doing something good in itself, and helpful to others, are good for you. The silly nonsense that fills the minds of so many young people with wrong ideas of living, are to be dreaded. Do not read too much. Much better to read one good book until you are sure you know it than to run quickly through a lot of books very indifferently. Read thoroughly. "Understanded thou what thou readest?" was asked long ago of one man by another. Mark it with you: If you have a good book, and do not at once see what the writer means, do not throw it down in despair. Stick to it, and you will come on step by step all right. Books are good for us only when they make us think. Hard thinking is a good thing for us all. "Light reading" is often "light" in more ways than one, and tends to darkness of both mind and morals. Keep your books carefully. A boy or girl who is careless in using books will likely be unkind to living creatures. Cherish your books as your friends, and they will cheer you all, that the very best reading is in the Bible. There are no such short stories as it contains, and the best of all books is God's Word. Read! Read good books! Read thoughtfully, and you will never want a friend.

foundland, Britain's oldest North American colony. Here, scattered along the coast are tiny fishing villages. The scenery, as we pass along, is very rugged and beautiful. Most of the communication between various parts of the island is maintained by water. The interior is not settled at all, and there is but one railway in the island. Our missionaries are working here too. More than that, the people of Newfoundland give most liberally to missions—more so than many of our Canadian people.

Now we are in St. John's harbor, and are charmed with its beauty. There is a deaconess on the wharf to welcome us. How glad we are to see her after our long journey. She is surprised to see "our crowd" as we come down the gangway, but she calls out cheerily, "Come on, girls and boys; I am going to take you up to the Methodist Orphanage." Up hills and down we go, and at last we stop at the only orphanage in Canadian Methodism, so the deaconess tells us. "What do the orphans do who don't live in Newfoundland?" one of the boys asks, but his question goes unanswered.

We learn a great deal about Newfoundland and its fisherfolk, and are sorry to say good-bye. The news agents will tell you something of the history of the great island. "All aboard!" shouts our guide, and the boat is whirling a warning flare for us to hurry, so good-bye, Newfoundland.

MONTREAL, QUEBEC.

Now we are in the mighty St. Lawrence. The river is so wide at first that we cannot see the banks on either hand, but as we proceed it becomes narrower, and we realize that we are in a river, and not on the ocean. Past the ancient city of Quebec we steam, and finally anchor amid other craft in the harbor at Montreal.

THE FRENCH METHODIST INSTITUTE.

"Three cheers for Canada!" some one calls, and they are given with a will. But there is Mr. Villard, waiting to conduct us to the French Methodist Institute in Westmount. He points out various places of interest as we pass through the streets, and we mentally compare Montreal with the other great cities we have seen on our trip.

But this large red brick building is the Institute. We are not surprised at Mr. Villard's pride, as he shows us from room to room. Everything is spotlessly clean, and in the best of order. The boys and the girls who go out from here have a splendid training, not only in school work, but in home-keeping as well. We enter some of the recitation rooms, and are struck with the bright, intelligent faces of the pupils, and with their aptness in the subjects they are studying.

On Mr. Villard's invitation, we stay to dinner in the Institute, and we are all interested to learn that the tables have been arranged and the cooking done by some of the older girls. We feel that we would like to be pupils ourselves, and the Principal tells us that only French-Canadians are admitted now, and even with this regulation, many applications have to be refused, owing to lack of accommodation.

SOME METHODIST MISSIONS IN QUEBEC.

While we are in Montreal we will visit some of the churches, and see what is being done here to reach the people. We find them very active, not only along the line of evangelistic work, but with schools, employment bureaus, etc. Here in the Province of Quebec we find the colporteur, who travels through the country selling the Word of God, and endeavoring to gain an entrance to the homes and hearts of the people.

In the town of Actonville is another prosperous mission of our church. Here the membership is large, and the people are true and loyal. The church services are well attended, and a new school has lately been built. We are glad to learn that here the Roman Catholic people are very friendly, because the great drawback to our work in this province is the prejudice and opposition of the Roman Catholics. But our missionaries here in this eastern part of our Dominion are working just as earnestly, just as faithfully and persistently as those we have met in other mission fields, and success must crown their efforts.

"All aboard!" calls out the conductor, and in a few minutes we are bound for Toronto, our trip around the world almost completed.

DEC. 1.—HOW TWO PROPHETS PRAISED GOD. (Praise Meeting.) Hab. 3: 17, 19; Zeph. 3: 14-17.

Praise to God for Himself rather than for His gifts is one great lesson to-day. Though there may be some who say, "Praise God is ours, Habakkuk and Zephaniah agree on this. Study the topic around this central thought. Then our juniors will see that to give God praise is a matter of principle rather than of impulse. We should give Him praise for what He is to us, not only for what He does for us. 'Salvator' and 'Savior' are suggestive words. They represent the full purpose and plan of God for us. To feed our bodies and to give us many physical and temporal bounties is only a small part of God's will concerning us. He is better than the best of His gifts, and all that He does is only to show us what He wants to be in our hearts. Children do not love their parents just because they feed and clothe and house them, but because they are parents and children. So with our Heavenly Father. We praise Him because He is our Father and we are His children. Many secondary reasons may be found, that this is the one great source of joy and praise—"I am His and He is mine for ever and for ever."

(With this thought as the central truth of your topic study, let the juniors find and write many illustrative Scripture texts, and so make your meeting a praise service in fact as well as in name.)

DEC. 8.—WORKING FOR GOD. (Our Work.) Hag. 1: 7, 8; 2: 4.

Perhaps we had better study this topic by asking two simple questions:—1. What is our work? 2. How ought we to do it? It is easy to see that the prophet wanted the people to do—repair, rebuild, refurbish, restore the Temple. They were enjoined to do this, and in the doing of it they were to be strong and united. The "temple" may stand for your local church. What is our work regarding it? (Get the juniors to express their opinions. They will tell you that it should be kept in good repair, be a pleasant place, well attended in its services, well equipped for work, and that officers, etc., be let Scripture realize their place in it. They should be there, be loyal in their attendance and support, etc.) But your local church stands for the Connexion. So follow up your study. Not loyal Methodists in a local sense merely, but true to the whole denomination is part of "our work." Personal loyalty is not sufficient. The Methodists are at best only a small part of the universal church. The Temple may thus mean the whole Kingdom of Christ. "Our work" is thus as wide as our Lord's sympathy, and that includes all "the world." What a great work ours is! Not to build a piece of worship called a church, only, but to fit up our hearts as living altars, to work and pray for other lives,

to look and labor for the day when His true church shall fill the whole earth with His glory. This is our real work. How should we do it? (You may easily secure many appropriate answers to this question. The juniors will tell you that we should do it willingly, gladly, together, always, etc., but do not omit the closing lesson that we should be "be strong" in it—strong in purpose, in spirit, in enterprise, in faith, in hope, in prayer, etc., and so may we be successful.) We do it as our work we are doing, it is also our work. He needs us to do it for Him, and if we do it not, we, as well as it, are the losers. It may cost us thought and time and money too, to do it well, but no matter what we put into it we shall get more out of it, and no other work pays so well. Then let us be "all at it, and always at it."

What Kind of Literature Should Juniors Read?

Juniors do read. They read what they have to, and in addition, they read what they are interested in. The text-books of the schools they have to read. Why? Simply because they realize that such reading is necessary to their education. They are frequently appealed to on this ground of necessity by their parents to do their home work. In like manner, our children should be made to realize the need there is for them to read the Bible. The consciences of many of our juniors might well be appealed to in this particular. If they were taught that an intelligent knowledge of the Bible is the foundation of good education, they would read it more. They should be led to see that the "must" is as imperative in relation to reading the Bible as to their ordinary school text-books. Children read books that interest them. Hence we should provide them with interesting books. Such books must be judged from the viewpoint of the boy or girl, when selecting reading for the young, parents will do well to study the individual tastes of their children, and at the same time recall their own childhood. One cannot easily make a child read. Most children do not need any "making," but rather require direction. Suitable children's books were never so numerous, or so cheap as in these days, so that there is no excuse possible for their absence from every home. Let the juniors have abundance from which to choose, and very few of them will fail to pick out the best—for them. Many a boy has formed the habit of reading pernicious books simply because they were the only ones he could easily get. The parent that fails to put within reach of his children the best books possible, is doing them grievous mental and moral harm. Books that give wrong views of living, that fail to inculcate high ideals of character, that put a premium on vice in any form, that are immediately exciting, that make a boy dissatisfied with home or school, that provoke within him a spirit of rebellion against parental authority, are bad books. They should not find a place in any home. Books that embody in their pages wholesome food essential to healthy individual life, that prompt the child to fill reverence and obedience, that develop the spirit of patriotic interest, that inspire confidence and love toward God, that make human brotherhood real, and that inculcate to deeds of kindness and help, even to the meanest-creature in the animal world, are good books. A list of these would be a long one. Such books our juniors should read, and we have confidence enough in them to believe that if they are prepared within their reach, they will choose them in preference to any others.

A Busy Man

A Baltimore man tells of an address made to some school children in that city by a member of the board of trustees:

"My young friends," said the speaker, "let me urge upon you the necessity of not only reading good books, but also of owning them so that you may have access to them at all times. Why, when I was a young man I used frequently to work all night to earn money to buy books, and then get up before daylight to read them!"

Beyond the Pale

A friend of James Whitcomb Riley tells of an occasion when the humorist, who is, as a rule, extremely averse to social functions, was induced to attend a "literary" dinner at Indianapolis, given in honor of a novelist of that city.

Riley had been told off to take in to dinner the sister of his host, an excellent woman, though anything but "literary."

The conversation touched upon the beauties of Chaucer, about whom a certain set of the city was then cultivating a fad. A spirited discussion ensued, during which the bewildered sister caught from time to time only the name "Chaucer."

At last she whispered to Riley: "Who is this Mr. Chaucer they're talking about so much? Is he very popular in society?"

"Madam," solemnly responded Riley, "that man did something that forever shuts him out of society."

"You don't say so!" exclaimed the worthy dame; "and what was that?"

"He died several hundred years ago," said Riley.

Profound Knowledge

Charles T. Copeland, Harvard's well-known reader, during the course of one of his lectures at Radcliffe College had occasion to read a page or two from a book, the name of which he took care not to mention. Stopping suddenly in the middle of a sentence, he said: "Now, I don't believe there are a dozen in this room who can tell me the title of the book this is taken from. Can you, Miss A.? Miss B.? Next, next," he continued, rapidly running over some fifteen scattered around the room, all of whom shook their heads with an "I don't know."

At last he lighted on one pupil seated directly in front of him. "What is the book, Miss X.?" he asked.

Without a moment's hesitation Miss X. named it correctly. Mr. Copeland brought his fist down on the table with his characteristic bang.

"There, young ladies!" he said, "aren't you ashamed of yourselves? Did you read the book for your own pleasure, Miss X.?" he added, with an appreciative smile in her direction, "or was it prescribed reading in some course? Turn right around there, and tell all these less fortunate ones how you happened to know the name of this book."

Slowly Miss X. faced the class, slowly and distinctly she spoke. "I knew the title of the book," she remarked, "because I saw it on the outside cover while Mr. Copeland was reading."

Then, amid the laughter of the class, she sat down with the same deliberation. "Oh, Miss X., how disappointing!" was all Mr. Copeland sighed.

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