



# THE ANADIAN EPWORTH ERA

Vol. VII.

S. T. BARTLETT, Editor  
WM. BRIGGS, Publisher

TORONTO, FEBRUARY, 1912

WESLEY BUILDINGS  
TORONTO, ONTARIO

No. 2

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You will do well to study the wise words of Bishop Vincent in the preceding column. They fittingly follow "Our Pledge" in last month's issue. It is sometimes objected by even well-meaning young people that the doing of the will of God to-day is so hard that it becomes impracticable, and they postpone it until some future time, when they fondly, yet foolishly, hope it may be an easy task. No folly is more idle and vain than that which prompts one to think and act in this way. Nothing is more positive and absolute than the power of habit, and when one becomes addicted to the practice of postponing a known duty, he only weakens his will in relation to the doing of it, and the probability of his ever fulfilling the Divine purpose in his life becomes daily less. For, whatever God may want me to do in coming years, His present call to me is that I here and now discharge to-day's duties according to His will. It may not be easy to so resolutely set head and heart, conscience and will, to the actual doing of it that one shall not swerve or weaken or fall; but it will never be easier than to-day, and there will never be any other way of right-living than just day by day doing the will of God our Heavenly Father.

God will give you increased knowledge. Would you do? Do what you now can and ability to do more will grow. Resolve to be, and the power to become will soon operate within your soul. Resolve to do, and your capacity for greater achievements will increase. Mere wishing to be good will avail you little, and a simple desire to be a useful Christian will be equally futile and vain. Your wish for goodness must be so intense that you will obtain it at any cost to yourself; your desire for usefulness must be so deep and strong that no matter how hard the discipline or severe the self-denial, you will give your best service to your Lord. With such a purpose within you, all opposition without will be unavailing to prevent you from reaching your goal.

**My Resolve** "I will this day try to live a simple, sincere, and serene life; repelling promptly every thought of discontent, anxiety, discouragement, impurity, and self-seeking; cultivating cheerfulness, magnanimity, charity, and the habit of holy silence; exercising economy in expenditure, carefulness in conversation, diligence in appointed service, fidelity to every duty, and a childlike trust in God.

"And as I cannot in my own strength attain this measure of wisdom and power, I make humble and firm resolve to seek all these things from my Heavenly Father in the name of His Son, Jesus Christ, and through the mystic and mighty energy of His Holy Spirit."

—John H. Vincent.

## February

'Tis February's changeful mood,  
When eve to morn is seldom true,  
And day which broke gusty and rude,  
In shifts in skies of sootiest hue;  
In mild repose one sun goes down,  
The next comes up with murky frown;  
But scarce hath tolled the hour of day,  
When glittering roll those frowns away.

—Caroline Webbs.

February is derived from februo, to purify, because the feasts of purification were celebrated at this season; but the Romans offered sacrifices to their goddess Februa for the spirits of their departed friends. In the Saxon language its name implies "coltwort," or "springwort," because worts begin to spring about this time.—Loring.

The one first thing that we need is purpose. As no one can make me God's child if I say "No!" so none can prevent my being His if I say "Yes!" to Him. Our daily relation to God is not primarily one of physical circumstance, but of filial attitude. Not of my powers, but of my volition, does He first question me. My willingness to serve rather than my opportunity for service is of prime importance. Before even knowledge of His will, is readiness to do it. If the spirit of obedience govern us, the ways and means for obeying will soon be made manifest. Many have proven it true, "To the upright there ariseth light in the darkness." Would you know? Do what you already know and

"Try." What a big little word it is. Small in itself, it enfolds a great principle, through the operations of which the grandest characters of earth have been developed and time's greatest achievements wrought. The history of all human effort is wrapped within its tiny compass, and to those who would fulfil life's sublimest purposes it patiently whispers its message of hope and cheer. Millions have heard its inspiring promise, and under its encouragement have taken heart again and have defied impending disaster. Under its hand stimulus millions more with revived spirits and increased endeavor have bravely faced threatened failure and have wrung success from the unwilling hand of grim and relentless Fate. Never yet have men heard aloud heeded its counsel without profit, while many have refused its leadership but to prove the utter insufficiency of all human resources without the essential spirit which it seeks to engender and train. And what has been shall ever be. You and I are not mere mechanical automations set upon by external force, but responsible living entities to make our own choices, perform our own deeds, carve our own futures, and shape our own destinies.

"Try" says "the best awaits you if you follow me. Will you come?" Say "I will," and be sure you do.

## Our First Need

### A Double Bond

In one of his imperishable stories, Sir Walter Scott refers to some young people associated for study and mutual profit. The expression he gives to their communion is suggestive. He says, "There was a bond betwixt them, a strong and interesting tie, the desire of obtaining knowledge, the pride of surmounting difficulties." Surely such a spirit of helpful fellowship is beautiful to see wherever it may exist among the young, and no other bond can unite a company of youth with such lasting profit to themselves and advantage to the homes and communities in which they live and labor. Whether the number of persons be two, or twenty, or a hundred, does not matter, and the same spirit produces similar results wherever the sphere of its operations may be. Brothers and sisters at home, pupils at school, students at college, members of Church or League, of Brotherhood or Club, of Circle or Class,—the same tie must bind them together if reciprocal advantage is to accrue from their association. The two-fold purpose mentioned by the great novelist is a most worthy one.—"to increase in knowledge," "surmounting difficulties." Every reader of this brief paragraph should be moved by it to the highest fellowship with those about him. Every Society to which this paper ministers must fulfil it or fall of its high and noble calling. To this end we exist, and in proportion as we accomplish it is our existence justified and made a blessing.

### Let Them Laugh

A thirteen-year-old boy, though sitting in the next room, was far away. With the characters in the book he was reading, he had little immediate concern for the people close at hand. All unconscious of everybody near by, he was alive to the scenes and incidents in which the hero of his story was playing so well his part. An occasional grunt of approval or displeasure came from his throat, and then all unannounced a merry laugh was heard. Louder and louder it rang, until the whole flat was filled with its melody. For to all who heard, it was melodious without a doubt. "Just listen to that boy laugh," one remarked. But he neither heard nor heeded. Another merry peal resounded. "What are you laughing at, —?" was asked. "Just laughing," came the reasonable reply. And I have thought of it many a time since. And why shouldn't he laugh, pray? Who has a better right to be merry than a healthy boy or girl? Who ought to laugh if such be denied the right? For a right it is. Some may account it a privilege and dote it out begrudgingly, but not I. Let the child laugh. Encourage them in the practice. Trouble and care will furrow the brow and give them cause for tears soon enough; let us keep the dimples in their cheeks as long as we can, and give them no occasion for premature weeping.

I dare say some of our old Sobersifters will remind me that Solomon said of laughter, "It is mad," and I do not wonder that he did. The kind of mirth he tried I would advise every man, and woman, too, to shun. It was "mad" in Solomon's day, is "mad" now, and never will be any other else. It never was sane, and never will or can be. But Solomon was not thinking of that kind when he said, "There is a time to laugh." So there is, and if we could all be childlike in our real enjoyment of it, happier would many of us be, and happier would we all make somebody else. So let the children laugh, say I, and, better still, laugh with them.

If for no other reason, laugh for your stomach's sake. And if no other argument moves you, let that of a celebrated physician set you a-laughing. Said he, "Laughter is a most healthful exertion; it is one of the greatest helps to digestion with which I am acquainted; and the custom prevalent among our forefathers of exciting it at table by jesters and buffoons, was founded on true medical principles." Surely that will make you laugh. Do it now!

### The Way They Used To Do

Of course we do it now; but when a man complains of present-day over-organization and the tendency to multiply committees to do the work contemplated, I feel like reminding him that such a plan is by no means a new one. It is hardly a creation of the present generation, which Carlyle wrote,

"Has any man, or any society of men, a truth to speak, a piece of spiritual work to do; they can nowise proceed at once and with the mere natural organs, but must first call a public meeting, appoint committees, issue prospectuses, call a public dinner; in a word, construct or borrow machinery wherewith to speak it and do it. Without machinery they were hopeless, helpless; a colony of Hindoo weavers squatting in the heart of Lancashire." Doubtless, there is too much disposition to shirk personal responsibility by relying necessary work to a committee, and in no place is this more marked in our Church than in the Epworth League; but, notwithstanding this, the benefits of wisely directed committees have been most practical, and a great volume of work has been done through their agency that without them would never have been accomplished. If we are no better than they were a half century ago in this regard, let us see to it that we grow no worse than we are. There are too many inactive committees among us. Sit them up, and no matter how regularly they may meet or

never pass sweeping and wholesale condemnation on amusements in general; but counsel and guide as to the form they shall take. When amusement becomes the business of life, or when it interferes with the proper discharge of business in life, it is a damage. Goethe well said, "If man had a higher idea of himself and his destiny, he would neither call his business amusement nor amusement his business, but would transacting business." Two extremes should be avoided, making a business of amusement and being so absorbed in business as to grow sordid, by reason of its entire lack. One strong objection to much present-day amusement is that it consumes hours that should be put in recreative sleep, and so unfits its votaries for the active duties of the succeeding day. Amusement that so robs a young man or woman, is wrong, no matter what form it takes. But in this strenuous age some form of amusement is necessary to all, and if it be selected so as to combine recreation and pleasure, and if it be so arranged to minister to, rather than rob body and mind, nothing can be said adversely to it. That popular amusements might be improved in these respects we should admit, and that the Church, the Home, and the School might do more for their improvement, I think we may all agree.

### Self-Discovery

"It was Thomas à Kempis who said, "The better you understand yourself, the less cause you will find to love yourself." True and honest self-examination may reveal much that is unlovely, no matter how far advanced we may be in Christian experience; yet it is wise that we really know ourselves intimately. Perhaps many people are more concerned about their relations to themselves; but that is no excuse to you and me for having but a superficial acquaintance with our own real inner selves. How much do you know, not simply about yourself, but of yourself, as no other being, but God can know you? There are days of hurry and bustle, of jostling crowds and thronging multitudes. One is seldom alone. And even if he seek solitude the tingling of the telephone bell scarce leaves him solitary for a quarter of an hour. One has hardly time to get alone and think. Little wonder, therefore, if a man is but poorly acquainted with himself. Yet self-examination pays, and to discover oneself, no matter what the analysis reveals, is profitable. Are my motives pure, my spirit kind, my principles sound, and my actions the genuine springs of action right, my ambition noble, my heart clean? A host of such queries confront us when we give God a chance to speak to our souls. Much that is unlovely will certainly be exposed to our self-examining eye, and yet, with it all will come the glory of the thought that God loves us, and by the omnipotence of Love will transform us if we but give Him right-of-way in our lives. Though such submission may seem to involve present loss in the self-denial involved, it will bring permanent gain as the results of the process become manifest. The cause of spiritual unrest is self-will; the secret of abiding peace is self-surrender. God's way for us is one of blessedness accruing from His daily dominance of our lives. We may prevent it by willful insubordination, and, choosing our own path, enjoy the transient pleasure of self-gratification; but so doing, we rob ourselves of the enduring profit that only those can know who keep themselves in cheerful harmony with His mind and will. To discover one's real relation to God, and to subjugate oneself to His control, are the first steps to such a life of blessedness.

### THE LAUGH OF A CHILD

I love it—I love it—the laugh of a child,  
Now rippling and gentle, now merry  
and wild;  
Blowing out on the air with its innocent gush,  
Like the trill of a bird in the twilight's soft hush;  
Floating up on the breeze like the tones of a bell,  
Or the music that dwells in the heart of a shell;  
Oh, the laugh of a child, so wild and so free,  
Is the merriest sound in the world for me.  
—Atheiwood.

methodically do their allotted work, remember that generally the best way to do something that you see needs doing, is to form yourself into a committee of one and do it.

### The Amusement Craze

I heard this expression the other day, and at first was disposed to sympathize with it. But on second thought it was suggested to me that this generation is no more under its spell than previous ones have been. It is easy to rail at youth and judge it censoriously; but it is hardly wise or fair to condemn the young for the very things that their fathers have done before them. The desire for amusements is natural to the human race, and in some form or other all its members seek it. We should

# The Heritage of Young Methodism

REV. W. B. FITZGERALD  
Leeds, Eng.

**T**HE young men and women of to-day are heirs of all the ages. It sounds like a paradox, but it is nevertheless true, that the youngest of us is the oldest, the least on the earth, starting life with an inherited experience, a racial wisdom, beyond anything the childlike patriarchs of long ago possessed.

"For we that on these days are thrown  
Must be the oldest ancients known.

\* \* \* \* \*  
For man alone—of all that lives  
In ocean, earth, or air—derives  
Light from his fellows: man alone,  
By looking backwards, marches on."

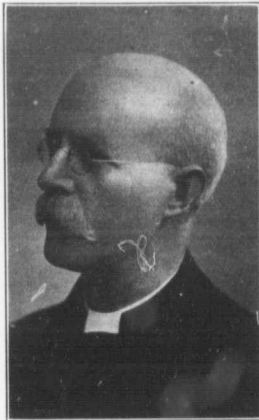
But young Methodists have an inheritance of their own, and my object is to awaken them to a sense of its splendor and worth.

First and foremost, there is what we owe to the unbroken Spiritual Life of the Christian Church. The roots of Methodism strike deep into the past. While we glory in the success of to-day, and the promise of to-morrow, we must not forget the debt we owe to yesterday.

From the heights of the past living streams of holy influence converge and unite in John Wesley, and flow on through him and his co-workers to the refreshing of the wide world. Born in a rectory, and trained at Oxford, our great leader brought with him the scholarly and devout traditions of the Anglican Church. Through both father and mother he was linked to all that was best in Puritanism. By his friendship with Peter Bohler, the Moravian, he touched another circle of influence, which reaches back to John Huss and the Bohemian Brethren, and through them to John Wyclif and his poor preachers of the fourteenth century. The thrilling story of the great change that took place in the little room at Aldersgate, where "one was reading Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans," establishes a bond of union between Wesley and the men of the Reformation. Every age of the Church contributed to the making of Methodism.

Ours, too, is a heritage of Character. We have no roll of saints. The early Methodists were, most of them, obscure men. "Not many wise, not many mighty, not many noble, were called." But the men and women who stirred the eighteenth century from its lethargy and sin are worthy to have their names inscribed on any calendar. One can only take names at random: John Nelson, the Yorkshire stone-mason, against whom mobs and press-gangs raged in vain; Halme, Evans, and Clements, intrepid Christian soldiers, the last of whom, wounded and fallen, declared even in the midst of the roar and din of battle, "I am as happy as Barbara Heck, the brave woman who ventured into a gaming house, flung the gamblers' cards upon the fire, and whose burning zeal led to the preaching of the first Methodist sermon in New York; Asbury and his circuit riders, who dared the perils of the wilderness for the

**T**HIS is the second article of a series addressed to young Methodists in all parts of the world, and published simultaneously in Great Britain, Canada, the United States, South Africa, and Australia. Mr. Fitzgerald is the Secretary of the Wesley Guild of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, a society of 4,572 branches and 174,577 members. He is editor of "The Guild," the author of "The Boots of Methodism," and of the section on "George Whitefield" in the "New History of Methodism."



REV. W. B. FITZGERALD.

faith that was in them; Barnabas and William Shaw in South Africa; Leigh and Hunt in Australia and Fiji; there is scarcely a land without its Methodist pioneers. As the heir to some stately mansion looks upon the portulaca on his walls, and feels his own pulse beat faster, as he remembers their deeds of gold; so we, in this gallery of our spiritual ancestry, may have our hearts stirred by the zeal, the devotion, the heroism, of these men and women of the past.

We Methodists have a glorious inheritance of Song. Methodism came singing into the world, and the echoes of that early day are not silent yet. The hymns which sent tears streaming down the faces of Kingswood colliers and Cornish smugglers are to-day enshrined in every Church hymnal. To pass from the psalms of Sternhold and Hopkins, of whom it was said that "their poetry was better than their poetry," to the hymns of John and Charles Wesley, was nothing less than a revolution. The gladness of "Oh, for a thousand tongues to sing," and the immortal music of "Jesus, lover of my soul," touched deep resonant chords in the hearts of the people. There was an intense personal note in the new song which made it a factor of no mean importance in the new evangelism.

"'Tis mercy all, immense and free,  
For, O my God, it found out me."

Among our treasures not the least precious are these gems of holy song.

We must not forget the heritage of Christian Truth handed down to us by our fathers. It is none the less ours,

because it is every man's. It is ours in a special sense, because the Methodist revival gave emphasis to its most soul-searching doctrines. In a dead, godless age, when Christianity was talked of contemptuously as an outworn creed; when, in Great Britain and America, the new populations created by a growing industrialism were practically pagan, it was like a breath of new life when men, aglow with love to Christ, boldly proclaimed that—

All men need to be saved;  
All men may be saved;  
All may know themselves saved; and  
All may be saved to the uttermost.

We are not alone in preaching the gospel of health and deliverance to-day, but it was our fathers who made it a living gospel in the lives and hearts of the people, and sent it out over the seas to far-off lands. Many of the old phrases have lost their freshness and potency, but the truths behind them are as essential as they ever were, and it is for us to give them living expression.

Once again we inherit from the past a worthy tradition of Social Enthusiasm. John Wesley was an individualist, but, broader than his theory, he vigorously attacked the social problems of his time. He believed heartily in applied Christianity. If he saw a grievous wrong, he asked for an ecclesiastical precedent before attempting to set it right. His dispensaries, his loan societies, his orphan houses, were anticipations of that larger social service called forth by the more complicated needs of to-day. The man who honestly cries to right the wrong is a lineal descendant of our founder.

We must not forget to count as part of our inheritance the large Catholicity of spirit which characterized not only John Wesley himself, but so many of the early Methodists. "The world is my parish," was his daring motto, and it is woven into the very fibre of Methodism. To-day we are witnessing the reawakening of this spirit. We are linking our world-wide forces. Old differences disappear in the light of common need. And while consolidating our Methodist strength by union, our sympathies deepen towards all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. We are beginning to understand the spirit of John Bunyan's words, spoken to his congregation at Bedford when he preached to them for the last time, "Seest thou a man with the spirit of God in him? Love him! Love him! Thou and he must meet in Heaven one day. Love one another and do good to one another."

A noble heritage! An inspiring heritage! If you, young Methodists only live up to their privileges they ought to be among the best Christians and most valuable citizens the world contains! Link hands, all the world round, for the uplift of all that is earnest, worthy, and true.

"Lead on, O Love and Mercy,  
O Purity and Power!  
Lead on till peace eternal  
Shall close this battle-hour;  
Till all who prayed and struggled  
To set their brethren free,  
In triumph meet to praise Thee,  
Most Holy Trinity."

## Life's Evening

REV. DR. PASCOE, HAMILTON, ONT.

THE evening of a good man's life ought to be, and usually is, its brightest and best period, in spite of the growing weakness of increasing years, the burden of which becomes more and more difficult to carry. Think of it! The voyage of life is so nearly ended and the haven of rest is so near at hand. So brief a span of life remaining, and then—the life eternal! Why, of all earthly crowns, that which is most glorious is the whitening head of the aged Christian, whose pliey is ripe and melow!

Yes, think of it! Past is the fery vengeance of youth; past are all its perils, all its strong and often sudden variations of passionate feeling, all its wild impulses, all its dreams and fears. Youth is only a memory now,—a landscape of life which lies farther, much farther, away from the present than Heaven does. It is still within sight in the distance, back yonder. As viewed from the hills of the Beulah-land, a soft sweet light plays over it, as the recollection of unnumbered mercies brings into distinctness its many and varied features. There is no sighing for that distant past, for life is richer now.

Past, too, are the hopes and struggles of vigorous manhood and all the strong man's toll, which involved so many interests—interests of God and man, interests of time and eternity; past all its battles and storms, all its achievements and reverses; past, seasons of trial and places of weeping, where the heart was wrung with grief, and all bright things looked dim because they were seen through the mists of tears. Past are the scenes of joy,—that in which the heart found its life-mate, and life brightened into bliss through virtuous love, and the tie was knit that death only could sever; that, when the first-born came, as a precious gift from God; that still bright time and scene, when and where the soul first truly felt that God indeed is love, and that He had lovingly forgiven sin. And those bright spots which are seen as memory lingers, where all earth's weariness and woe

sweating hours of the days of painful labor were. It stores away the fruitage of that strenuous time, and uses it. "More blessed!" Yes! For never was Christ so precious, never the assurance so sweet and full as now it is, that "all things work together for good." Never before were there such displays of the Heavenly Father's loving care, as in these days, "when the grasshopper becomes a burden." Never was the throne of grace so accessible as now; never so clear the conception and confidence of the truth that—

"To die, is but to fall asleep,  
In the soft arms of God."

The years, the months, the weeks, the days, fly swiftly now. In a little time the twelfth hour shall strike. The weepers will, as the last stroke falls, call it "night and death," but in reality it will be day, and life, and Heaven. Call it midnight if you will, but to the ransomed soul, it will be high eternal noon. The light of the undying day, kissed the hill-tops long ago; and now, at eventide there shall be,—There is light.

## Narrow-Minded Men

REV. R. O. ARMSTRONG, M.A., VIBDEN, IAN.

In that most stimulating and interesting biography of the late Rev. Hugh Price Hughes, by his daughter, reference is made to an incident in her father's career, "where he began one of the great patient works of his life—the education of the narrow-minded." This is not a task that men will readily seek for, but there is perhaps no greater work in the world. It certainly ranks next in blessedness to the work of considering the poor; and, like the poor, the narrow-minded are always with us. The fact is, by a little vigilant searching, we will find traces of this defect pretty near our own doors.

When Hugh Price Hughes was in his prime, Methodism was in a state of tur-

members. Methodism in politics was conservative. They looked with suspicion on the growing influence of democracy. Democracy they thought was irreligious. It did not attend Class-meeting. Cobden and Bright were to them more or less dangerous leaders. Hughes saw differently and set himself in alliance with the reformers, believing that the motive of these men at heart was moral and uplifting. So the conflict was on. Hughes, his daughter says, was patient. No doubt many thought otherwise, as he was strong in debate and said some things "hard to be understood."

There are narrow-minded people in the world yet. You find them most plentiful around Churches. There are two reasons for this. They are more easily seen there in contrast to the broad, generous character of the Christian. Then, it is the glory of the Christian gospel that it can adapt itself to the needs of all, and help, in time, even the narrow-minded. Macaulay refers to one of the characters he describes in his history as "an honest and pious, but narrow-minded man." A pious, traditional kind of average Church life appeals to capacities of that type.

Narrow-mindedness is largely a matter of temperament. If it prevails in its rule the result will be bad, just as would be the case if any one other temperament prevailed. Both the Puritans and anti-Puritans ran things to excess. They both showed bigotry, out of which great evils grew. The work of the Church today is to learn the nature of this temperament, its characteristics, and give it its due. Patience is required. So, if there are those around whom we can exercise our patience, should we not be thankful? The best teacher for the narrow-minded is example; therefore, set it. Logic will have very little effect on them. They simply cannot reason. Their conceptions are all in units. They can't see beyond their own surroundings. You may take infinite patience in explaining things to them, but if they are convinced at all it is your patience and not your argument that does it. Without intending to be cruel, they have a merciless way of criticising. Narrow-mindedness is generally concealed, and this conceit finds expression by criticising the powers that be. Those powers do not need to get annoyed, because, after all, such criticism is a compliment. The narrow man swoops down on his contemporaries when he is least expected. It is generally some defect in generosity or success that calls forth his wrath.

The great virtue of such men is their staying qualities. That works both ways, of course. He holds on to his narrowness and he holds on to his Church. He is not easily offended. If he was, his redemption would be well high hopeless in this impatient age. One of the hardest things in the world to conciliate is offended littleness. Therefore, be patient with all men. In these days of larger views, Imperialism in politics, union of the churches, and world-wide evangelism, let us not think or speak unkindly of those who do not see the larger vision just yet. They are faithful men, just the same, and those of larger vision may need more carefulness to temper their own characters.

Only a life of barren pain,  
Wet with sorrowful tears for rain,  
Warmed sometimes by a wandering gleam  
Of joy that seemed but a happy dream,  
A life as common and brown and bare  
As the box of earth in the window there;  
Yet it bore at last the precious bloom  
Of a perfect soul in a narrow room—  
Pure as the snow-leaves that fold  
Over the flower's heart of gold.



AT THE CLOSE OF A STORMY DAY.

were forgotten in the rich, full joy of God's manifested presence,—past, *all past!* And yet, how it all comes back to increase the gladness of this later day!

And now, if the sun does lie low and sinks lower; if the shadows of the evening begin to lengthen and deepen in chill portent of the coming night, that men call death,—yet is the late eventide of life more blessed than all the

mol through the influence of a transition stage in our national and ecclesiastical life. Methodism, though founded by a man of culture, had not appealed very largely to either the intellectual or social aristocracy. Hughes thought that it should. He did not see why thousands should leave our Church every year pressed out through an intolerant narrowness on the part of many leading

# The Epworth League as a Spiritual Force

REV. J. E. PETERS, DEREHAM CENTRE, ONT.

(NOTE: In an address on this important theme, given at the Newark District Epworth League Convention, some time ago, Mr. Peters reminded the young people of the essentially spiritual purpose of League work, in part as this article sets forth. His message is timely and merits careful study by all our workers.—E. P.)

IN the directly spiritual work of the League all the forces developed elsewhere are to be exerted. The social activities aim at widening the acquaintance of the members, strengthening their friendships, giving them a larger knowledge of human nature, teaching them the art of personally reaching their fellows; but the end in all is that they may win others to Christ. The literary work aims to introduce elevating and ennobling influences from the great realms of literature, science and art, to develop a wholesome mental discipline, to train the young speaker in powers of expression, that he may acquire self-command by practice and be able to give a pleasing and profitable statement of his ideas; but all this, too, that as a student he may be able to come to the Word of God with increasing ability to study, and then as a worker go forth with helpful ministry to others because of the knowledge and spirit thus acquired.

Here we lay the emphasis. The great object that underlaid all the thought and plans of those who called the League into existence was that it might be a spiritual force. Falling in this it fails absolutely as an Epworth League.

But how is this force to make its constraining and restraining power manifest?

We must look first to the individual member. All the good in him must be made to move. If he is to be a Christian worker, he must be born from above, and his whole life must be one of faith working by love. The character, rather than the brilliancy or enthusiasm of the worker, is the essential. If we want to lead others to Christ we must have been to Christ ourselves; if we want to help others we must have tried the methods of relief that we commend; if we want to get others to work we must say, "Come," not "Go!" Always, and everywhere, we must be what we expect others to be,—we must feel the love of Christ *constraining* us.

And what of the *restraining* power of spiritual force? How much there is in us that must be made to stop. One is easily offended if she is not sufficiently noticed; another will do nothing if he cannot have his own way; another engages in questionable amusements. These faults are visible, but there are more within us which are hidden by Omnipotence. There is a spiritual force that, applied to all the faults and blemishes in our characters, will act as an emergency brake and stop them, sometimes with a sudden jar, and again more slowly. Stopped they must be, however if we are to be forceful units in an Epworth League.

An Epworth League is a union of such individual members, qualified for service by the constraining and restraining power of spiritual force. How and where is this force to manifest itself in the union?

1. *The young people's Prayer-meeting.* Here we need bright and thoughtful singing; the singing of hymns that have "go" in them, and yet hymns that will go with us to the end of the journey because they possess that which is not only a pleasant fancy, but which is true to the feelings and aspirations of universal Christendom. We need prayers

from as many members as possible; occasionally sentence prayers for variety, but the more regular form of prayer ottener. That League will be the greatest spiritual force that has the largest number of members who, in private and in public, are gifted in prayer. All cannot sing, all cannot speak to edification, but all may have power with God and with man, by means of the fervent prayer of the righteous.

2. *The monthly Consecration meeting.* This should never be allowed to become formal, to degenerate into a mere calling of the roll and the hazzard hunting up of some verse of Scripture or



PHOTO BY J. J. WOODHOUSE.

TORONTO CAMERA CLUB.

THE EVENING OF LIFE.

of a hymn, that may be in no way true to the member's experience, or a real expression of his desires. This meeting is essentially the members' meeting; after it is once opened the leader can have but little to do with making it a success. It must be planned for each individual. He must strive to be present, must send an appropriate verse if he is forced to be absent, must arrange to say or quote,—not read,—something that is really an expression of his experience or his aspirations. He must be alert to catch some ideas or inspiration from what others say, and, above all, he must realize that his response to his name is a solemn renewal of all his vows to God.

3. *Look-out work.* Those who undertake to work here must be devoted, enthusiastic and persistent. Each member must constitute himself his brother's keeper whenever he sees that a word fifty spoken would be helpful. Let those of us who are in the inner circle of the active members be especially busy. Our work will be all the more effective for being planned. Let the Look-out Committee take time to consider carefully every case that needs attention, and let different members be appointed to see that person on different days. When such an one finds that so many are interested in him that he will be more likely to take their solicitations to heart, and yield to their wishes. It is morally certain that no League can long continue to be a spiritual force that allows its members to be indiffer-

ent to their duties without making an earnest effort to reclaim such, and that is not on the look-out for new members, both active and associate.

4. *Missionary Work.* The watchwords of the Forward Movement, "Pray, Study, Give," are at once a practical and a spiritual force. Left to itself the local League can make but a cursory, cursimbered objective, but linked with the other Leagues of the District it has a distinct interest in the missionary that it is helping to support in some far-away field. Day by day, in addition to the power received in answer to our missionary's own prayers, will be the increased power that comes to him in answer to ours. But our sphere of influence is not limited to him. We must pray for those amongst whom he works, receive his message. There is a subtle fascination in the idea that we can project our spiritual force as a District League so far afield, and that in so projecting it we do not dissipate, but conserve it. We are not to be merely a financial force in the mission field,—we must be a spiritual force as well; the possibility of large financial support may not be ours, but the possibility of our spiritual support is based upon the omnipotence and the omnipresence of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

5. *The regular services of the church.* The type for the church to copy is the family, not the boarding school. As it is best for children and for parents that they be found living together where their mutual influence will act and react, so in the church. To draw a sharp line of demarcation between services for the young people and for the old people is particularly unfortunate for both classes. The weekly prayer-meeting is a place where the leaguers may be a very effective spiritual force. Who better than the young people can get to the service when the night is dark, or cold, or stormy? Who better than they can help in the service of song? Who will better encourage those who are bearing the burdens of the church than the young people who cheerfully come up to the help of the Lord? When Leaguers can so effectively hearten their pastor and the fathers and mothers in Israel by a reasonably regular attendance upon all the means of grace,—Sabbath days and week days,—by participation in the quarterly love feast and the sacramental service, surely they will not thoughtlessly or wilfully neglect such splendid spheres of influence.

The light that enters by one window of this church blends so completely with the light that enters by the other windows, that no one can tell where its particular sphere of influence may be restricted,—the whole church is lighted. In like manner the spiritual force of each League can be so blended with the spiritual force exerted by all other organizations of the church at large, that all shall be resolved into a unit in hastening on that glorious consummation when Christ shall see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied.

You must be sure of two things—you must love your work and not be always looking over the edge of it, wanting your play to begin; you must not be ashamed of your work and wanting to be doing something else.—George Elliot.

## Peter—the Apostolic Leader

REV. J. H. M'ARTHUR, S.T.D.

*As a Fisherman* (Luke 5: 1-11; Jno. 21: 3).—The men whom God calls into his service are not the idlers, but the workers, not the men who have nothing else to do, but the men who are already engaged in some form of work. Moses was keeping the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, Elisha was ploughing, Amos was tending his sheep on the hill-tops of Tekoa, Levi was collecting taxes, and Peter was fishing, when God called them to public service in His Kingdom. The men whom God calls to honorable service are those who have already learned the beneficial discipline of labor. Peter was a fisherman, and on two different occasions Jesus directed him where to cast his net so that he got great hauls of fish. Jesus called him to be a fisher of men, and under His direction the Apostle succeeded in gathering great companies of men into the gospel net.

*As a Disciple* (Jno. 1: 40-42; Luke 5: 1-11, 6: 13-16).—There were three stages in the history of Peter's fellowship with Jesus, as there were also in the case of certain other disciples. The first stage commenced when John the Baptist pointed Jesus out to his disciples as the Lamb of God. Then it was that Peter was brought to Christ by his own brother Andrew. In this stage the disciples were simply believers in Jesus as the Christ, and were his occasional companions, especially on festive occasions. (See John 1: 4.)

The second stage commenced when Jesus found Peter and his partners at Capernaum in pursuit of their occupation as fishermen, when, in response to the invitation of the Master, "they forsook all and followed him." Peter and his partners became the constant companions of the Master, which involved the habitual abandonment of their secular occupations. (See Luke 5: 1-11.)

The third stage commenced when Jesus formally called and set apart the Twelve, as a select band to be trained for the Apostleship. It was the privilege of these chosen men to be always near the Master, to witness his wonderful works of mercy, and to hear his wonderful words of wisdom and of grace.

While this was the privilege of the whole apostolic band, yet Peter and James and John seem to have received special attention from Jesus. These three were taught special lessons in private, and were witnesses of scenes to which the others were not admitted. They only were permitted to enter the room where Jairus' daughter lay dead, and were witnesses of Jesus' miracle in restoring her to life. They only were witnesses of Jesus' glorious experience on the Mount of Transfiguration. They only were chosen to be near Jesus while He prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane. To Peter and John was entrusted the work of preparing the last passover. It would appear that in all these experiences Peter was being trained for special leadership in the church. "Jesus had many things to say to them; only trained hearers could fathom many things to do that only loyal pupils could undertake, a legacy of service to leave that only skilled followers could carry out."

*As a Leader* (Matt. 16: 13-20).—Peter seems to have been the recognized leader among the disciples, and that in spite of occasional jealousies which called for the Master's rebuke. He was spokesman for the twelve. This may have been due to his impulsive nature, his innate ambitions, his outspoken manner, and the natural boldness of his heart; qualities

which tended to push him to the front. It was Peter who sought to know the meaning of the parable of the Watchful Servant, and who asked the Master for the interpretation of the law of forgiveness, and of the law of defilement. He was the first to recognize the Lord as he came walking on the water, and, with characteristic boldness, ventured out upon its surface to meet him. He was the first to utter the famous confession, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," on account of which Jesus promised him the keys of heaven, by which we understand the power to exercise the legislative and judicial functions of His Church. Hence we find Peter proposing to fill the vacancy in

### PETER

Eager, torrential soul, which oft o'er-ran  
All bounds convention, and poured  
Along  
Unwonted ways a seafoam deep  
and strong;  
Yet 'neath the discipline of love this man  
Of foam became the rock, Truth's  
guardian  
And bulwark 'gainst the seething  
waves of wrong.  
When Pentecostal flame baptized  
his tongue,  
Till martyrdom fulfilled his Lord's  
great plan.  
O mystery of Love and of the Cross,  
Whispering, "Lovest thou me?" and  
"Follow me,"  
And straightway self forgetteth self,  
and loss  
Is counted gain, and death his large  
life.  
Christ towards the only goal of  
worldly strife.  
The vision that absorbs eternity.  
—From "Among the Immortals," by  
B. Walter Wright.

the apostolic band made by the desertion and death of Judas, and exercising the judicial function in rebuking Ananias and Sapphira in his wife, so that they both fell down dead. As leader, he preached the sermon on the day of Pentecost; he went down with John to Samaria to establish a church after the preaching of Phillip; he was sent as the first to preach the gospel to the Gentiles, to Cornelius and his family; and he pleaded at the Council of Jerusalem for the recognition of the Gentile converts in all the privileges of the Christian Church.

*As a Preacher* (See Acts 1-15).—Under the influence of the Holy Spirit, Peter preached on the day of Pentecost a sermon of such great power that men were pricked to their heart, and some 3,000 of them were led to accept the crucified and risen Christ as their Saviour. In this sermon, as in all his recorded sermons and addresses, his central theme was, "Jesus whom ye crucified." His preaching was in the power of the Spirit, with the result that many people were converted, and the Church added daily to her numbers.

*As a Christian Philanthropist* (Acts 3: 1-11, 9: 32, 36).—"Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have, give I to thee: in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk." Thus did Peter bless his suffering fellow-men. His sympathies went out to the needy and the afflicted, and, like his Divine Master, he healed them. He cured the cripple who waited at the gate of the temple called Beautiful so that he leaped for joy, praising God. He restored a man who had been stricken dumb for eight years, Ananias of Lydda. He brought back to life a woman

who was full of good works, Dorcas of Joppa. The Church of God to-day, in sending out missionaries to the benighted peoples of the world, must send out men who, like Peter and his fellow-apostles, are able to heal the bodies of men as well as their souls.

*As an Author* (1 and 2 Peter).—Peter has left us two Epistles, besides a number of sermons and addresses recorded in the Book of the Acts.

From the Epistles of Peter we note three things which we learn with reference to his character:—

First, his faithfulness in obeying his Master's "last in junction."—"Feed my sheep." He sought to comfort and to encourage and to warn the followers of Jesus. In his First Epistle he preaches the Gospel of Hope to the persecuted Christians of Asia Minor. In his Second, he sounds a note of warning against the false teachers, who were already making their influence felt in the early Church.

Secondly, Peter was not original, but practical.—There is no evidence in his writings that he was an original thinker like Paul. An examination of his First Epistle shows how much he was dependent upon the thought of others. In this short Epistle of 105 verses there are 35 references to passages in the Old Testament, 30 references to the teaching of Jesus as recorded in the Gospels, 16 references to passages in Paul's Epistle to the Romans, 17 references to Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians, one reference to Paul's Epistle to the Galatians, and eight references to the Epistle of James. He thoroughly studied, inwardly digested, and was powerfully influenced by the principles of Christ, the teaching of the Old Testament, and the Letters of Paul and James.

Thirdly, Peter was wonderfully influenced by his company.—He received impressions easily, and could not without an effort avoid reflecting the tone of the company in which he lived. His eminently sympathetic nature helped to make him a great leader, but, at the same time, it tended to make him largely dependent upon the thoughts and feelings of others.

When Jesus was yet a free man, Peter draws the sword to defend him; but when he was arrested, Peter's courage fails, and he begins to follow afar off. The presence of the Master and His disciples makes him bold, and he professes himself ready to die with Him; but the presence of his enemies makes him a coward, and he actually denies his Lord. At the sight of Christ he is bold and walks upon the water; but at the sight of the waves he fears, and sinks. At the Council of Jerusalem, he makes bold to offer the Gentile Christians the right hand of fellowship; but when certain Jewish Christians came from James, his boldness deserts him, fear seizes him, and he gives the cold shoulder to his gentile brethren. His nature he appears to be a boastful coward, but by the grace of God he becomes a courageous martyr.

### God In National Life

It sometimes seems to me that we look upon life as one might look upon a chessboard in which the pieces played the game themselves. Now it is a knight, now it is a castle, now it is a pawn, now it is a bishop, now it is a king that moves; and why they move back and forth, and what the end of it all will be, we are puzzled to determine. But these great historians of the past saw God's hand on the chessmen, saw Him moving them, and knew that at the end, white would checkmate black, and sweep the black off from the conquered board.—*Lyman Abbott.*

## The Summer School Movement

REV. C. T. SCOTT, D.D., BRANTFORD, ONT.

THE more we multiply the receptive years of any life, the larger will be the outcome of that life. Many of our young people who have been parted from school days under the pressing duties of this world, realize the need of earnest and thorough study of the great problems which face the Church in this age of religious renaissance. Hence the very name "Summer School" becomes inviting to many of our youth. So great is the popularity of this modern institution that new schools are being opened every season.

Another class of people, some of whom are no longer young, welcome this institution because it enables them to take a week's holiday under conditions which are re-creative to mind and spirit while affording wholesome pleasures. So long as we can keep the right balance between work and play at these Summer Schools, they will appeal to an increasing number of this class of attendants. If we should make the mistake of trying to crowd every hour with work, as did the Chautauqua movement a generation ago, we would fail to reach this important constituency of people whom we ought to influence and whose help we need.

The programme followed by one Summer School this year, which seemed to me almost ideal, was as follows: At 7.30 a.m., "Mound Meetings," for prayer and praise, were held in small groups at different parts of the grounds for half an hour. Breakfast at 8 a.m. The whole school assembled at 9 a.m. for an hour's systematic study of the Bible. The next hour, relieved by some

judiciously balanced, constitutes a real "school," ministering to our tripartite human nature, body, mind, and spirit. At no point was it tedious, and whilst much solid work was done, no student complained of brain-fag.

The Summer School idea originated in a plan for mission study. But the desires and needs of the people who gathered in these schools compelled the widening of their scope. The majority of these devoted young people who meet for study can have only a monetary relationship to the work of missions. What will they do with their lives? The very study of missionary themes began a longing to consecrate their characters as well as their cash. This yearning must be cultivated, informed, directed. Hence Bible study is introduced, not in a formal or superficial way, but in a manner that is spiritual and personal as well as scholarly and profound. If we are to capture this world for Christ we must conserve that greatest asset of the Church—the children who have not yet wandered into sin. So the Sunday School and Epworth League department is called in not only to give information on the best methods of work, but to correct the aims and inspire the endeavors of workers amongst the young. This branch of study is taken up with avidity at the schools. The best heralds of the coming King in this age are like "a voice crying in the wilderness. Prepare ye the way of the Lord." Christian civilization must be more thoroughly Christianized if we are to have a religion to commend to intelligent

schools during the past summer, one at Wellington, in the Bay of Quinte Conference, and two in Manitoba. At Wellington, a quiet though interesting town on the shore of Lake Ontario, the school was privileged to use the equipment and splendid grounds of a summer hotel. At Rock Lake, in Manitoba, we were

"Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife,"

and several miles from the nearest town and post-office. Here a basin of the Pembina River forms a beautiful lake, which is surrounded by heavily-wooded hillsides. Land has been purchased for the summer school encampment, which is situated on a high hillside overlooking the lake. At Shoal Lake we ride six miles in a launch to the southern extremity of the lake, ground is occupied as a summer resort. Here we have an exquisite beach, and across the bay a dismantled Northwest Mounted Police post, lends romance and history to the situation.

Space does not permit any detailed report of the schools, but we are glad to note that at each of them the spiritual appeals, found response in voluntary offering of young lives for the mission field, deaconess work, or the ministry. Association with our returned missionaries as well as the talented professors and connective officers acting as instructors at these schools, will be ever remembered as a great benediction. The new friendships formed must enrich us for all time, and add lustre to our hopes for the future. Indeed, the final evening at the last school attended seemed both a picture and a prophecy. We gathered on the beach after the even-



ROCK LAKE, MANITOBA, SUMMER SCHOOL, 1911.

singing, was occupied with an address from one of the instructors. The addresses by the instructors followed a definite system upon the theme of their department. At 11 a.m., the whole school broke up into groups, according to preference, for the detailed study of one of the books in the Course of Study. These classes closed promptly at noon. After luncheon the entire afternoon was given to pleasures and sports, so happily arranged as to gratify various tastes and suit all classes. In the evening a public meeting was held, introduced by a song service, at which one of the instructors gave an address, continuing his line of educational talk. This meeting closed with a short devotional service, and yet there was time left for pleasant social intercourse before the friends retired for the night. Such a programme of work and play,

heathen. To do this effectively we must cut down much civil and social and industrial undergrowth, which impedes the progress of Christian principles. Hence the Moral Reform department is now represented at the schools, giving information on civic and social conditions and presenting the new visions of social service. No branch of study is more sought after than this one. Thus by broadening the scope of study the interest in the Summer School has been greatly augmented. The inspirational and practical value of these schools to the young people of our Church, many of whom are accepted leaders in their own communities, cannot now be estimated, but we are sure many neighborhoods must feel the throb of a new life coming from these centres.

It was my pleasure to attend three

ing service. Some pushed off from shore in boats. A bonfire was lit. The big stars in the vast depths above us were reflected in quivering streaks on the surface of the lake. Around the bonfire impromptu speech and story were interspersed with the songs of our Christian faith, until the lingering glow of twilight had moved well under the north star. In this north land the roseate sky of evening just moves across until it becomes the eastern light of dawn. So we seemed to be in the twilight where two worlds blend, congenial souls were feeling the sad tinge of parting, but were cheering one another with the hope of the dawn of immortal day as they sang

"Good night! Good night! till we meet in the morning."

## Fanny Crosby: The Blind Hymn-Writer

MISS C. G. WALLACE, TORONTO, ONT.

PROBABLY no one since the days of Isaac Watts and the Wesleys has produced so many hymns that have been so sweetly expressive of the faith, hope, aspirations, and purpose of the Christian believer, as the subject of our sketch.

Frances Jane Crosby, the daughter of John and Mercy Crosby, was born in Southeast, Putnam Co., N. Y., March 20, 1820. Of her birthplace she writes: "Amid giant rocks and hills majestic, sunny glade and fertile plain, the blossoms of expectant youth, some of them frail promises of future harvests, were gathered in the good old town of Southeast. The scenery in that region is sublime, because natural, and more majestic than any handiwork of man. These gracious gifts of natural scenery left indelibly their imprint upon my mind; for, though deprived of sight at the age of six weeks, my imagination was still receptive to all the influences around me." The humble cottage where the first few years of childhood were spent, the music of the nearby brook, the big rock on which she used to sit and over which apple tree and grapevine clasped hands, the voices of the breeze, the warbling of the birds, the hum of the bee—all brought messages of inspiration to her listening ear and discovered to her "the fountain of perpetual youth flowing from the very heart of nature."

Her father died when she was very young, and she was very carefully trained and guided by mother and grandmother, both of whom, being women of exemplary piety, taught her useful and abiding lessons. When she was eight, the family removed to Ridgefield, Connecticut, and lived there for six years. In speaking of the sojourn here, she says: "My father, a kind Christian lady, in whose home we resided, and who had no children of her own, became deeply interested in me, and under her supervision I acquired a thorough knowledge of the Bible. She gave me a number of chapters each week to learn, so that at the end of twelve months I could repeat a large portion of the first four books of the Old Testament, and the four Gospels. At Sunday School we children would stand in turn in the aisles and repeat passages that had been committed to memory during the previous week. The habit of thoroughly learning my lessons helped me many times when I was obliged to learn long passages as a pupil and afterwards as a teacher, in the New York Institution for the Blind."

At a very early age her talent for rhyming and versification was manifested. The verse written when she was only eight years old, reveals a happy disposition under discouraging conditions:—

"Oh, what a happy soul am I!  
Although I cannot see;  
I am resolved that in this world  
Contented I will be.  
How many blessings I enjoy  
That other people don't!  
To weep and sigh because I'm blind,  
I cannot, and I won't."

When fifteen years old, she was sent to the New York Institution for the Blind, in which she was a pupil for some years, and later a teacher. In 1858 she was married to Mr. Alexander Van Alstyne, whom she had known as a pupil and teacher in this Institution. He insisted, however, that she retain her literary name, as it had become

known to the public, and by kindly criticism and advice greatly aided her in her life-work for forty-four years, when he was called to a higher service.

During the years spent in the Institution there grew, with her environment, a systematic intellectual development and her vivid imagination came under the control of maturing judgment. Her faculty for metrical expression kept pace with her other attainments. Her marvellous memory took the place of books which were accessible to others. All her work demonstrates the possession of a liberal education. The Bible has ever been to her a treasure-house, and its language and spirit are portrayed in her literary work.

While resident in the Institution its managers utilized her gift for verse-making by introducing her to audiences in order that the aims of the school might be demonstrated, and parents of blind children be induced to confide them to its care. In her volume, *The Blind Girl and Other Poems*, published in 1844, she shows her remarkable faculty for picturesque description, and a knowledge of natural scenery. While she suffered the privations of the blind, the light of content and a strong, unswerving religious faith pervaded all her writings. The story of her conversion in 1850, during revival services in Thirteenth Street Methodist Church, New York, is full of interest.

She did not begin to write hymns until forty-five years of age, the inspiration thereto being her acquaintance with Mr. W. B. Bradbury, the well-known writer of popular hymn-tunes. Her first hymn was written for him, "We are going to a home beyond the skies." Following this came a number of songs, secular and religious, whose spring was the musical genius of Bradbury, Geo. F. Root, W. H. Doane, Sylvester Main, P. P. Bliss, Sankey, and others." Most of Fanny Crosby's songs were written before she produced many of the hymns, upon which the larger portion of her reputation is based. Among them are, "There's Music in the Air," "Rosalie, the Prairie Flower," "The Hazel Dell," and others.

The story is told of Mr. Doane calling upon her one morning, saying he was in a hurry to leave town, but wanted words on the idea, "Safe in the Arms of Jesus." After he played the air to which he desired them adapted, she went to her room, and, returning in fifteen minutes, gave to him the lines which have ever since proved so full of consolation. Under similar pressure, "Rescue the Perishing" was written. Her talent, therefore, was an inspiration as much as conscious effort. Among the most familiar of her hymns are, "Saviour, More Than Life to Me," "Some Day the Silver Cord will Break," "Pass Me Not, O Gentle Saviour," "Blessed Assurance," "Saved by Grace," "All the Way My Saviour Leads Me," and "Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross." The hymn, "Keep Thou My Way, O Lord," appeared in 1869. It was set to music and used for years as the prayer-song in the Mayflower Mission connected with Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, N. Y.

It is estimated that the hymns from her pen number over five thousand. Many of them have been published by the Biglow & Main Co., New York, with whom she has been associated more than forty years. Added to these are secular songs, cantatas, and other lyric productions. At her own request some of her best compositions have appeared under a "nom de plume." We have

told that she never writes out her poems, but, completing them in her mind, dictates to an amanuensis. Thus she can compose a dozen hymns before committing them to paper.

For over half a century Fanny Crosby has been singing, and her songs are characterized by simplicity, directness, and intense earnestness. Throughout the Christian world her eighty-fifth birthday was observed in 1905, and to the attention of the public was brought a most interesting personality, which to many had been but a name, though her hymns had become known all over the world. This gifted woman resides at Bridgeport, Conn., and, if spared until the 24th of March next, will be ninety-one years of age. "Possessed of a strong and hopeful Christian faith, a faculty for hard and persistent work, and a kindly interest in all about her, she is, even in old age, one of the brightest of mortals, and the life of every circle into which she comes."

Her services to the cause of religion have won many beautiful tributes from various parts of the world, perhaps the most expressive being, "Fanny Crosby is a blind lady whose heart can see splendidly in the sunshine of God's love." Frances Ridley Havergal, deeply touched by these words, wrote a poem, which is still greatly prized by Fanny Crosby: a few of the lines we quote:—

"Dear blind sister over the sea!  
An English heart goes forth to thee.  
We are linked by a cable of faith and song,  
Flashing bright sympathy swift

along;  
One in the east and one in the west,  
Singing for Him whom our souls love

Sister, what will our meeting be,  
When our hearts shall sing, and our eyes shall see?"

Upon the bookshelf of all our young people should be *Memories of Forty Years*, her own life story, a volume full of intensely interesting personal reminiscences as well as helpful and inspiring truths.

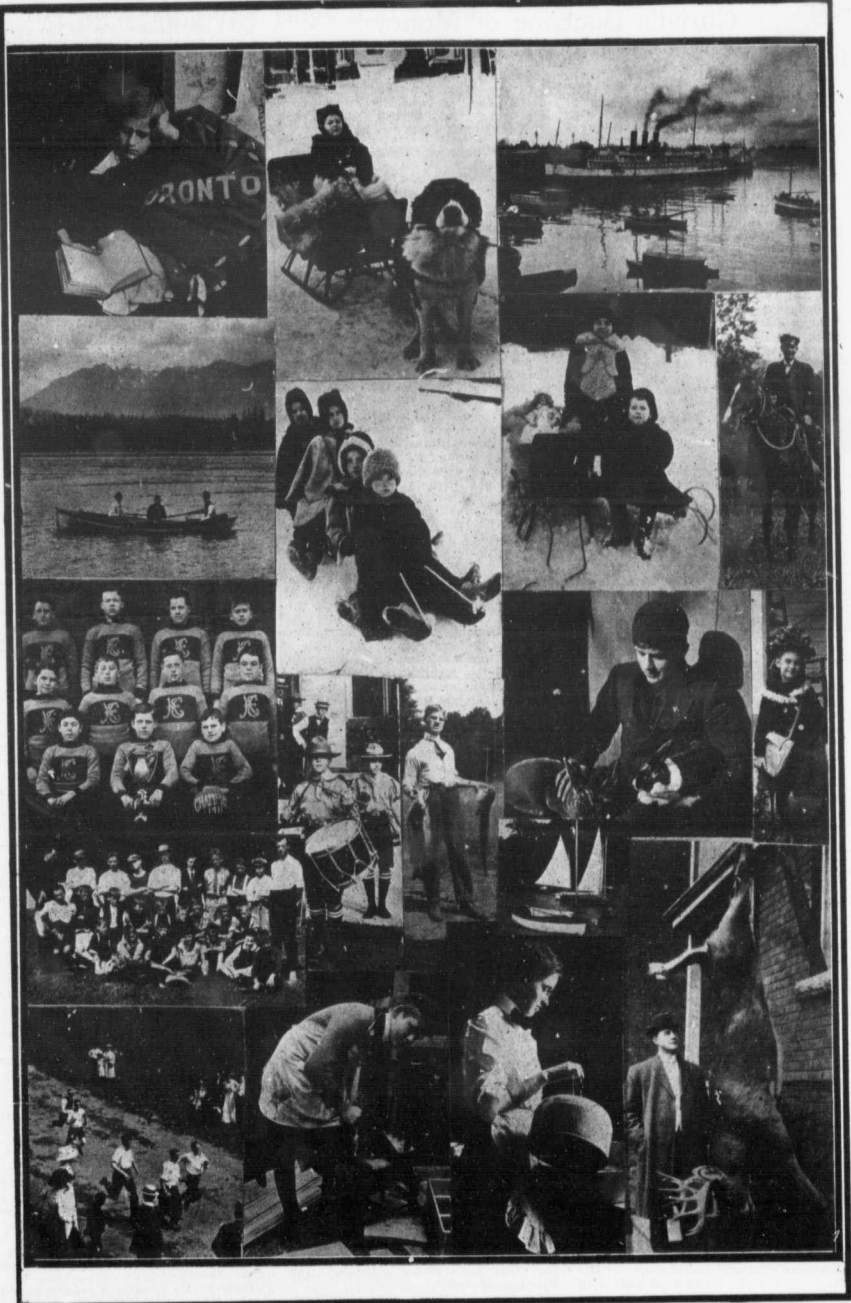
### Prize Competition

(See next page.)

A scrap-paper-page is before you. These are veritable scraps. They are not shown because of artistic merit, but for their suggestiveness. They all have a direct relation to various phases of young life. You will find representations of indoor and outdoor occupations, of study and play, of summer and winter, of scenes at home and those far away—the bits are all from actual life, of course, and will remind you of many scenes and associations, duties and pleasures, and what not? When you have examined the page thoroughly, think, and then get your pen to work. I will give five bound volumes (in cloth) of THE CANADIAN EPWORTH ERA for 1911 for the best five essays, letters, or compositions of any kind, on any subject whatever, suggested by any part or parts of the illustration. Choose your own topic, write on one side of the paper only, give your name and post-office address, and mail your production to me on or before the first of March. Anybody may write, on any subject suggested by the pictures, and at any length; but everybody must write with clearness, conciseness, and brevity of statement. About 500 words ought to be the limit in length of article. Now, then, everyone, set your wits and pens to work and some of you will surely win those five splendid volumes.

S. T. BARTLETT.





## Christ's Doctrine of Money

REV. S. T. TUCKER, B.A., B.D., GREENWOOD, ONT.'s

**S**T. PAUL said: "The love of money is the root of all evil."

This expresses the attitude of Jesus. He did not condemn money as an economic factor. He emphasized the influence of the acquisition and distribution of wealth on the character of the individual. Gladstone once said that, "If you know how to get the money, how he gets it, spends it, keeps it, shares it, you know some of the most important things about him."

Jesus treats the problem from three viewpoints:

### OUR OBLIGATION TO GOD.

Read Matt. 25: 14-30; Luke 19: 12-27; 12: 16-21, 14: 31-33, 18: 18-30.

Jesus taught that the prime business of any man is to "seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness." To work conscientiously and well, not primarily for personal gain, but for the sake of the work itself and its service to society, is to be about our Father's business.

Jesus nowhere condemns private property. He teaches that property is a trust from God. It is a gift in trust, for which we must give an account. Acquisition of property, like the desire to acquire knowledge, is a worthy ambition, provided it is under right direction and guided to right ends. When the possession of wealth becomes the end of all our effort, it dwarfs our life, and opens the door to a host of evils.

But God has given us wealth that we may use it, not tie it up in a napkin, bury it in a hole, or store it up in a barn. The merchant-man in the parable said, "Trade till I come." That means to use our wealth, not for the gain it brings us, but as stewards of our Master.

Jesus taught also, that by the right use of wealth, we increase it, "to every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance." True faithfulness consists in the proper increase, as well as the right use, of what God has given. The "Well done, good and faithful servant" comes after "Thou deliveredst unto me five talents; lo, I have gained other five."

Stewardship to God involves not only the responsibility to use and increase our wealth, but to *dedicate* it all to His service. This is the crux in Jesus' doctrine of stewardship. Jesus does not ask for a just and equitable distribution, or a fair share of our profits. He asks for all we have, and the service of the Kingdom. "The evil is not in the increase of wealth as much as in the refusal to renounce all for His sake. Jesus said, "Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be My disciple." He said to the rich young man, "Sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and come follow Me."

It is the "motif" of renunciation that determines our attitude to wealth. We should at all times view wealth as coming from God, and in trust for Him, and at His call handed back. If the thought of trusteeship fades, and we are excusing the unrighteous gain of money, then absolute renunciation is the only salvation.

Paul shows us that self-renunciation is not necessarily an indication of holiness. "Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not love, it profits me nothing." The value is not in the act of renunciation, but in the true spirit of love for God and His Kingdom, that will sacrifice all for His sake. The right attitude of soul with regard to riches is better than the mere

renunciation of them. The latter may lead to a dangerous form of asceticism. Jesus offers us two alternatives—mastery for the sake of His Kingdom, and abandonment for His own sake.

### RELATION TO OTHERS.

Read Matt. 6: 1-4, 9: 1-8; Mark, 12: 41-44.

Every man who holds wealth or power is a steward, not only to God, but also to society. Our responsibility to others in regard to wealth may be considered from two aspects. They are well expressed by the prophet, "Do justice, and shalt thou prosper." *Justice.* The fulfilling of the true spirit of stewardship will help much to satisfy the demands of justice. Justice calls on every man to render such service as he is able to the community, and to trust to God for himself no more than he needs.

Christianity advocates a democracy that implies the diffusion of education, political power, and wealth, among the common people. Autocracy and plutocracy in wealth, as well as in government, are passing away.

The great need of to-day is not more charity, but more sympathy and interest in human welfare, that give a good wage and create wholesome surroundings. The true democratic method of accumulating wealth, which implies a fair and just wage for labor to every man, will go a long way to solve the problem of distribution. An industrial democracy would be the realization of the social teachings of Jesus.

*Mercy or Charity.* We have not satisfied the demands of the teaching of Jesus when we have done justly. The work of Jesus on our behalf was not done to fulfil justice, but to manifest the Divine mercy in our helplessness. We have an obligation to the one that is helpless, and his ability, to every man according to his need, is the law of benevolence.

The problem of charity is not circumscribed by schemes of relief, but is a part of the problem of redeeming and renewing human character. Wealth should contribute to economic justice and charity should provide for economic self-help. The method of Jesus was to help the helpless on their feet. "Rise, take up thy bed and walk." Peter expressed the true Christian attitude to giving. "Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have give I thee; in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, rise up and walk." The highest aim of charity is to have a share in the making of a man.

Charity is the fulfilling of the vicarious spirit in relation to wealth. It is the losing of ourselves, that we may find ourselves in others. "For their sakes He became poor," was said of Jesus. Charity that is not a means to self-help impoverishes the community and dwarfs the personality of him who receives.

### RELATION TO CHARACTER.

Read Luke 16: 1-12, 16: 19-31, 12: 16-21, 10: 30-37; Matt. 21: 12-16.

Jesus emphasized the fact that the things which a man possesses serve as a subtle test of character. We are entrusted with property, because it is an instrument to moral and spiritual discipline. Too often, wealth creates a shrivelled nature, a corroded conscience, a self-centred soul. Jesus saw the terrible dangers in the possession of wealth, and he said, "How hard shall it be that hath riches enter into the Kingdom of God."

To Jesus, "Life is more than meat,

and body than raiment," and, "A man's life consists, not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." He reversed the world's standard of value, when he taught that true wealth consists in character, not in material possessions.

What is the teaching of Jesus in regard to the relation of wealth to personal character?

Wealth is a gift from God to be used and increased according to the principles of true stewardship. To him that has the power to use and increase wealth, shall be given more. Acquisitiveness, if a root of many evils, is also a root of every form of productive industry. It is not a question of extirpating, but of controlling and dedicating it to the service of others. Communism says all property should be held in common—no private property. This is based on the principle that innocence is better than virtue, feeling from sin better than overcoming. Jesus taught virtue was preferable to innocence, and victory over temptation to freedom from it. "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." Christ's cure for the evils of acquisitiveness was that property is a trust.

Wealth is not a possession to be held, but an *instrument* of service for others. Wealth is not ours in any sense. It is a gift to us, by the use of which we are to develop our personality. Jesus said, "If, therefore, ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches, and if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?"

Jesus reversed the measure of greatness and power. "Whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant." Wealth is not an instrument of mastery over others, but of service on behalf of others. The Christian capitalist is the servant, not the master, of industry. "Neither be ye called masters, for one is your master, even Christ."

The sin of the rich fool rested in the fact that he kept all his wealth for himself, and was not rich toward God. Likewise, Dives was condemned because he lavished his wealth on himself, and neglected poor Lazarus. The Good Samaritan was praised because he used his possessions to help a man in need. A rich man may enter the Kingdom of Heaven only when he transmutes wealth into loving service.

Benevolence is measured by the *spirit* in which it is given, and the *object* for which it is given. Jesus condemned the charity given by the Pharisees because it was given with a selfish purpose. True benevolence seeks not to relieve our responsibility in respect to the needs of others. It seeks to place others on our basis of self-help and self-respect.

The need of the poor man is not simply relief under adverse circumstances, but courage to better his circumstances. Charity is personal, not institutional. We lose the best part of the benefit when we hand over our benevolence to some outside dispensation. Charity is fulfilled by the personal contagion of sympathy and love. It is twice blessed—it blesses him that gives and him that takes. Charity in the form of alms-giving may be a virtue. Its value depends not on its munificence, but upon the spirit of sacrifice and consecration it reveals. Jesus said of the widow, "This poor widow has cast in more than they all," because she gave herself in the gift.

"For the gift without the giver is bare; Who gives himself with his alms feeds three—

Himself, his hungering neighbor, and Me."

## Conserving the Boys and Girls

(NOTE: At the Bowmanville District Epworth League Convention, in a discussion on the work of the Junior League, Mrs. Lee, of Enniskillen, gave the following address. We believe it contains an important message, and ask for its careful perusal by all who have the highest interests of our children at heart.—Ed.)

Mrs. Lee said: "I would like to start off this discussion along the line of conserving our boys and girls. One of the *Gleaner* notes says: 'The Juniors of to-day will be the Seniors of to-morrow.'"

Every year on this earth of ours 32,000,000 people die and 39,000,000 are born, and so it is only too true that the future men and women of the world, and, coming nearer home, of our Canada, will be just exactly what our present generation is making of our boys and girls. For they are so truly the creatures of their environment. Very few of us realize to what extent we are influenced thereby.

We are hearing a great deal about Canada to-day. She is rapidly making history, but let me tell you that it is neither her railways nor her wheat fields that constitute her chief asset, but her boys and girls; and it lies with us largely to determine whether they shall be saved for the Kingdom of Christ or stolen from us to swell Satan's host. Christian boys and girls are a nation's noblest heritage.

Speaking of environment, let us start in the home and at the beginning, and let me say that every child's birthright should be a healthy physical body, for that is the foundation of character, and no parents have a right, because of ignorance, indiscretion, selfish gratification or dissipation, to bring a child into the world physically handicapped. I wish every young person in this audience could have heard Dr. Slemmon's address the other evening in our League, on "Alcoholism and Heredity." It would at least have set you thinking, and made you realize that the physical conditions of the next generation will depend to a very large extent on the manner of living now.

Take it for granted that our boys and girls are physically sound, and that young children belong to Christ, we must devote our best talent to keeping them in the fold.

If we are to hold them,—and let us cling to good old England's motto, "What we have we hold,"—then it is necessary to have strong, morally clean and spiritually pure men and women as their leaders, for children need less of criticism and more of example.

Boys and girls are hero-worshippers. Let us strive to have in their leaders something to imitate and pattern after—an ideal for them.

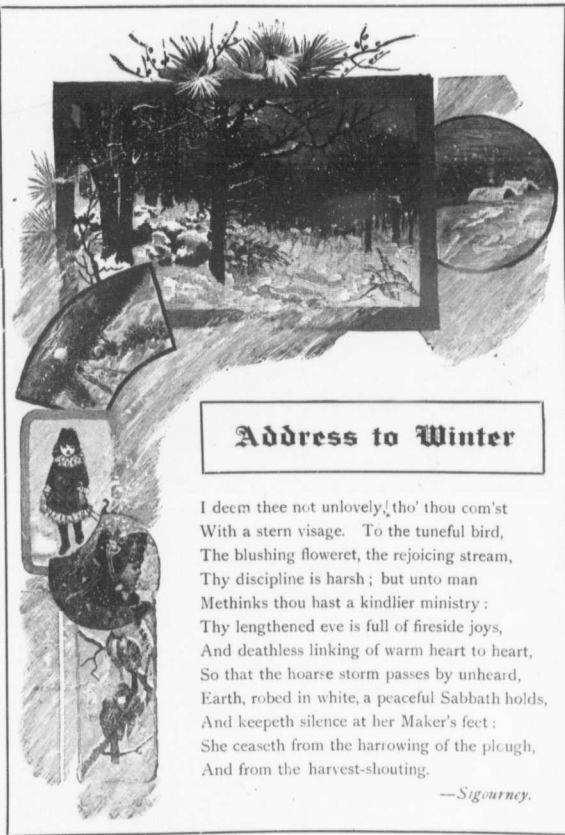
Do not appoint as a leader of boys a tobacco user, a user of profane language, a professing Christian at home but a half-fellow when he is with "the boys" in some back room of a hotel a few miles away from home, a man who holds woman's honor lightly, nor a man who, though his name may figure prominently on the church roll, will in his political life vote for a party because it had always been his party, even though it upheld measures which were the greatest hindrance to God's cause in our country. But, oh, if it be possible, let us set before our boys men whose lives are guided by sound principle, not insane prejudice, and who will support the right cause irrespective of party.

Let us select leaders for our girls with the strongly maternal instinct, who feel a mother's love for all young girls, and who realize that there is greater reward even in this world in helping

some girl's life to shine out brightly for Christ than to have a fine cabinet of cut glass and silver, or a more up-to-date afternoon tea or "At Home" than their neighbors. If the women of this world who spend their lives in frivolous manner would be at home to their own families, instructing their sons and daughters in true ideas and standards of life, we would have fewer divorce cases, and a more ideal and God-like state of society. Don't put gilded butterfiles in as leaders of your girls

in return beautiful flowers or glossy foliage; we cultivate with much labor our trees and bushes and expect fruit in return. And we take the child life and feed, clothe, nurture, train and educate it, and in the end we expect fruit, not selfishness, but service for others. And with all three we get out of each just exactly what we have put into them.

Put responsibility on the boys and girls. They'll measure up to it. Give them work. Keep them busy. Let them realize that their Leagueship is not to be on a passenger ship, but that every one is part of the working crew. Let



### Address to Winter

I deem thee not unlovely, tho' thou com'st  
With a stern visage. To the tuneful bird,  
The blushing floweret, the rejoicing stream,  
Thy discipline is harsh; but unto man  
Methinks thou hast a kinder ministry:  
Thy lengthened eve is full of fireside joys,  
And deathless linking of warm heart to heart,  
So that the hoarse storm passes by unheard,  
Earth, robed in white, a peaceful Sabbath holds,  
And keepeth silence at her Maker's feet:  
She ceaseth from the harrowing of the plough,  
And from the harvest-shouting.

—*Sigourney.*

if you wish them to develop Christian womanhood.

Have leaders for both who will not let mock modesty deter them, but who will follow the dictates of conscience, and who will have purity talks with our young; for fathers and mothers in the great majority of cases have sadly neglected this most important side of child education. I am convinced that more than three-quarters of the sins are committed through ignorance rather than willfulness.

We carefully nurture a plant and ex-

us put forth every endeavor to hold our young in Sunday School and Junior League, and not have to try to save them after they have fallen, for "Prevention is better than cure."

"Heaven is not reached at a single bound;  
But we build the ladder by which we rise  
From the lowly earth to the vaulted skies,  
And we mount to its summit round  
by round.

## Methodist Home Missions of Long Standing

REV. J. H. M'ARTHUR, S.T.D.

THE Missionary Work of the Methodist Church is divided into two departments, "Home" and "Foreign." The Foreign Department includes Missions in Japan, in China, among the Orientals in Canada, and among the Indians of Canada. The Home Department includes Domestic Missions, French Missions, City Missions, Immigration Work, and Work among European Foreigners in Canada. "We have," according to the Missionary Report, "682 Missions among the English-speaking people of Canada, and 676 domestic missionaries, who are dependent wholly or in part on the

due to the character of the soil upon which the people endeavor to eke out a living. The land is sandy, or rocky, or marshy, or broken. Sometimes there is no market conveniently near where they can sell such produce as they can spare. They live in a backward place.

*Emigration.*—Some such missions, however, might hope soon to become self-sustaining, were it not for the fact that there is a constant outflow of the population, thus depleting the ranks of the Church. The young men go out from their homes to seek their fortune in the cities or in the Western Provinces of our Dominion. In some cases



SOME CONNEXIONAL OFFICERS.  
(See page 43.)

Missionary Society for their support." Most of these are new missions formed in our Western Conferences, necessitated by the rapid development of the West. These missions in a very short time become self-sustaining circuits, and in turn become sources of supply for the missionary fund. There are a few missions, however, which are not new, but old, and are properly described by our title. These are weak fields, and, being worthy, have a claim upon the Missionary Society, according to the principle that the strong should help the weak.

### CAUSES OF THEIR WEAKNESS.

Why is it that these fields have not long before now become self-supporting? Inquiring into the causes of their weakness, we find at least the following five:—

*Circumscribed Territory.*—In some cases it is impossible for the mission to extend its borders, or in any way to enlarge its territory. On one side the field may be bounded by an expanse of water, and on the other side the territory may be occupied by other denominations or by people speaking a different language. In such cases there is nothing for the missionary to do but to faithfully and intensively work the circumscribed area within which his mission is confined. The mission may be worthy, but it cannot hope to grow. It, therefore, needs the aid of the Missionary Society.

*Poverty of the People.*—This is often

whole families move out. While these churches are thus kept weak, their strength goes out into other churches in our land. Thus, by a law of nature, the weak are being robbed, and the strong are being made stronger. "Unto every man that hath shall be given; but from him that hath not, even that which he hath shall be taken away from him."

*The Encroachment of other Denominations.*—In some cases the members of our missions are selling their farms and removing to places where they may have a more congenial environment and a more hopeful outlook. These farms are readily bought up by members of other denominations and of other races. In this way the Roman Catholics are encroaching upon our Protestant communities, the Germans upon the English-speaking, and it is only a question of time until certain of our Methodist and other Protestant communities will be replaced by those of Roman Catholic and Lutheran faiths. So long, however, as our own people remain in these neighborhoods we as a Church are under obligation to provide for them the privileges of the Gospel.

*Discouragement.*—This is also a cause of weakness, but it comes about as a natural result of the aforementioned conditions. Living and laboring where the circumstances are anything but buoyant, and where the outlook is anything but hopeful, it is little wonder that some of them have given way to

discouragement. What these missions need is not merely to be carried along, but to have new life infused into them, so that becoming conscious of their own strength, they may speedily advance to self-support.

### HOPEFUL SIGNS.

These conditions, working separately or combined, have kept some of our Domestic Missions weak and dependent, but under the sympathetic and fostering care of the Missionary Society many of them are becoming self-supporting, so that their numbers are gradually becoming less.

In the last General Conference Quadrennium, from 1906 to 1910, a large number of these Missions became independent. This is due to a wise, progressive, and vigorous policy adopted by the General Board of Missions, and the hearty co-operation of the Conferences. In the Hamilton, London, and Toronto Conferences there were 55 such missions in 1906, but four years later, in 1910, 31 had reached a self-supporting basis, and that in spite of the increased cost of living, and the consequent increase in the salaries of the missionaries. These independent circuits, formerly missions, are now repaying into the funds of the Missionary Society, through their ordinary contributions to the Missionary Fund, what they received in the way of grants in the years gone by.

The members of many of these poorer missions manifest a fine missionary spirit, for they contribute to the support of their missionary an amount which is larger than the average amount paid by the members of the independent circuits, and in addition to this they contribute to the missionary fund as freely as those on the stronger and self-supporting fields.

Some of these missions are, therefore, not really a charge on the church, for, although they receive grants from the Missionary Society, they contribute to the missionary and other connexional funds an amount which in some cases is equal to the amount of the grant which they receive.

In order that these fields may become entirely self-supporting, it will be necessary for certain readjustments to be made, indeed some have already been made within the bounds of our own denominational work, others have been made in co-operation with the Presbyterian and other denominations, but not until the question of Church Union becomes an accomplished fact can we hope to place all our missions in the older settled parts of the country on an independent and self-sustaining basis.

### Begin With the Boys

"If you are going to do anything permanent for the average man you have got to begin before he is a man. The chance of success lies in working with the boy and not with the man," says Colonel Roosevelt. "If children are not brought up well they are not merely a curse to themselves and their parents, but they mean the ruin of the State in the future."

These are wise words, and they ought to appeal strongly to every father and mother to look well to the morals of their boys. The wise king said: "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." The perils to which boys, and girls, too, are often exposed in the school days are not always fully appreciated by parents but they are real.—*Examiner.*

"God is in no haste; and if I do what I may, in earnest, I need not mourn if I work no great work on the earth."

## Citizenship—Its Achievements

J. ERNEST ROBERTSON, ALMA, ONT.

**T**HE secret of the success of any organization is leadership. Citizenship Department of our League is, we believe, an instrument which, wisely used, will win young men and boys to the Church. Male leadership is absolutely essential. On the Fourth Vice-President, led, assisted, and trained, falls the responsibility of leading this department. No half-hearted leadership can succeed. The Leader of the Citizenship Department, because of his close contact with young men, must have the "winning vision." The Leader of this department should be a man chosen by the pastor or president from among the best men of the Church. The opportunity for service, its difficulties, and its possibilities, should attract a splendid leader, no matter how small the Church may be. Pastor, if your church has not this leader, on you falls the responsibility of developing one or more in a training class. You have the ability and experience that should enable you to do this. Fourth Vice-President, your power of leadership depends largely on your teachability, added to your personality. We urge you, therefore, to be willing to follow your pastor-leader.

In attempting to carry out the following suggestions, the League Executive must act wisely. Let these be merely suggestions. We make no attempt to plan a programme for "your" league, as local conditions make it such that what can be worked splendidly in one society is absolutely impossible and impracticable in another. Originality counts most. Nor do we expect that any league will attempt to do all we suggest in one year, or in a number of years. We suggest that you select a few things that you know you can do, and do well. This gives strength for better tasks. In arranging the year's programme of practical work, we suggest this plan: Let the young men of the Church get together, and, having gone over a large number of ideas, decide on what they can do, all working untidily. The Executive can then arrange the outline plan for the year intelligently, and from the young men's standpoint. Thus, with efficient leadership, the "Ideals" will, in a large measure, be achieved. We urge that you guard against the danger of attempting too much, of doing things in a half-hearted manner, and exhausting all your ideas without accomplishing any good results. Keep to the practical affairs of everyday life, with its varying needs in your community, and so make it count in the building of a greater Canada.

### PATRIOTISM.

1. Organize a Patriotic Glee Club, Whistling Club, or Orchestra.
2. Study Canadian Scenery. Debate: "Resolved, that Canadian Scenery surpasses that of any other country."
3. Have a map drawn of your community, town, village or surrounding farms, as the case may be. Mark present location of trees; where trees might be planted; rubbish heaps; unproductive commons; unproductive river banks; obtrusive signboards; unsightly advertisements, and such like. Have a discussion on needed improvements of above.
4. Organize a tree-planting campaign, a clean-up campaign, and similar campaigns of education for the beautifying of the neighborhood.
5. Plan a civic banquet for young men and boys, with addresses, toasts, etc., all managed by the young men. Have an outside speaker give a short, enthusiastic, patriotic address.
6. Have a series of biographical

studies of great men; example: great scientists, explorers, statesmen, moral reform leaders, and others.

7. Compile a history of your community. Interview the pioneers for much of this.
8. Conduct studies of Provincial and Dominion questions, — Constitution, Courts of Justice, etc., always in the form of Mock Parliaments, Mock Trials, Mock Councils, and such like.
9. Plan and conduct a Patriotic Concert. Utilize your own home "talent."

### MUNICIPAL POLITICS.

1. Organize clubs in horticulture, poultry, vegetable gardening, on the community basis, the members of the club electing councillors with all officers, as reeve and clerk, who conduct the business of their municipality. Open council meetings where they discuss methods of improving their poultry club, gardens, etc., should be held. The boy most enthusiastic in bringing out ideas, would naturally be the most successful candidate at the next election.
2. In connection with the above, at a club municipal fair or community play day, have members make exhibits and award prizes. (These two suggestions will be found to work splendidly with the juniors.)
3. Conduct a community survey for the purpose of getting an exact value of the land, what it is best adapted to produce, and how to increase the productivity of this soil.
4. Conduct a study of foreign peoples, their soil, climate, food, clothing, religion, education, ability to work, etc., especially those who are coming to Canada. In what parts of Canada should these locate in order that the climate, soil, and physical features generally may be similar to that from which they came? What steps must be taken, immediately, to make them good citizens?

\$5,000." Study the following question in detail: "Does our present License System, allowing the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors, tend to maintain, raise, or lower this economic standard?" Morally? Intellectually? Physically?"

2. Study various methods of dealing with the traffic.

### MORAL REFORM.

1. Organize a campaign for clean speech and clean living. Circulate the pledge against cigarettes and tobacco. Educate against the use of slang.
2. A campaign for community hygiene and sanitation. (Analysis of well water, sewage, and drainage from houses, back yards, and outbuildings, breeding-places of flies, etc.)
3. A series of health talks, led by a Christian physician.
4. Secure the names of young men and women who have left your community for the cities during the last ten years. Ask them for letters describing the foreign element, the city morality, a poor boy's or girl's chance in the city, the overcrowding in the poorer sections, the death-rate in these and other sections. Compare the reports from the different replies, and draft a statement of city conditions for the benefit of your community. Endeavor to cover every phase of city life.

### ATHLETICS.

1. Organize a tennis, baseball, croquet, basketball, hockey, or snowshoe club.
2. Plan a community play day, to include every man, woman, and child. Have an occasional "paper chase" among the younger people.
3. Physical games in which no apparatus is needed. (Use "Indoor and Outdoor Games" by Chesley, 10c.)
4. Varied calisthenic exercises. Plan for occasional League "tramps." Keep the eyes open while the limbs are active. Then talk about what you have seen.
5. A practical talk by a Christian physician on the value of physical training.



VICTORIA WEST, B.C., EPWORTH LEAGUE EXECUTIVE.

5. Conduct educational classes for foreigners.
6. A community study, "Why Boys leave the Farm?"
7. Conduct mock county council, township council, school meetings, board of health, board of trade.
8. A series of practical talks on "The Franchise."

### TEMPERANCE AND PROHIBITION.

1. "It is estimated that every young man who reaches the age of twenty-one has an economic value to his country of

### IN GENERAL.

1. Arrange a series of life talks by prominent men on banking, law, ministry, teaching, farming, medicine, etc., as a profession.
2. Arrange a series of practical talks on "How things are made" such as books, boots, silk, hats, and such common things of which we use so many yet know so little.
3. Photo. competitions among your young people having cameras will do much to cultivate the esthetic sense and artistic taste.

## The Legend of the Holy Grail

WHAT was the Grail? Where did it come from, and what became of it? Many people who have seen references to this one of the most famous legends in all history, have wondered how the old story originated, and how it came down to us in its present form. Briefly these are the facts concerning it and the legend, as nearly as we can know them, for the dust of ages which has so long obscured them.

Many different writers have used this ancient story, which in its primitive form, was of Celtic origin and which was one of the most popular romances of the Middle Ages. The first trace we find of it is as an unfinished poem—by Christian de Troyes, a French trouvère, who died about 1195—called "Parceval," or "Le Conte del Graal," which was completed by a person or persons unknown. On this poem, Volfram von Eschenbach, of South Germany, founded, about 1210, his "Parzival," which is considered the finest poem on the legend.

In the oldest form, the hero is Parzival or Percival. In the other, of which the best and most complete version, and the one most familiar to us, is by Sir Thomas Malory in his "Morte d'Arthur," the hero is Sir Galahad, the son of Lancelot du Lac. Tennyson uses this second form in his "Idylls of the King." On the other, older version, Wagner founded the music-drama "Parzifal."

The Holy Grail, called the Sangreal by the ancient writers, was the cup from which Christ drank while at the Last Supper. Joseph of Arimathea, wishing to preserve something of our Lord's, took the cup with him from the table. During the crucifixion, when one of the Roman soldiers thrust his spear through the dying Saviour's side, some of the blood which flowed from the wound was caught by Joseph in this cup, which thenceforth became doubly sacred.

Joseph took the cup to England, and placed it in the Abbey of Glastonbury, which he founded. Here it remained for many generations, an object of veneration. Many mystic qualities were attributed to it, and by its beneficent presence peace and plenty were shed over all the land.

So long as the guardians of the cup were pure in thought, in word, and in deed, all was well. But at length a young monk, to whose care it was committed, forgot his vows. The Grail vanished, and with it went the prosperity of the land. Violence and distress became the people's portion, until the reign of King Arthur. He did his best to restore what he could of happiness and prosperity, but without much success.

One day, when all the Knights of the Round Table were feasting with the king in the great hall at Camelot, a soft radiance suddenly illumined the place, and the air was filled with sweet odors. The Holy Grail appeared, veiled in a scarf of white samite, so that it could be seen only indistinctly. It hovered in the air above the table for a moment, and slowly vanished again.

Then rose in his seat Sir Gawaine, the Courteous Knight, and vowed a solemn vow to go upon the pilgrimage of the Grail, so that, if by chance it might be recovered and brought back, the torn land would be at rest once more.

Then appeared an old man, leading by the hand a youthful knight of fair countenance, and the old man said:

"Peace be with you, fair sirs! I bring you here a young knight of the line of Joseph of Arimathea—and the name of the knight was Sir Galahad.

Now at the Round Table there were

twelve seats for the twelve disciples of Christ, and one for the traitor Judas. None of the knights had ever ventured to sit in that seat, since a Saracen, who once placed himself there, was swallowed up; and it was called the Siege Perilous from that day. But Sir Galahad sat there unharmed, so that the king and his knights each looked at him in wonder; and on the table before him there appeared these words:

"This is the seat of Sir Galahad, the good Knight!"

So they marveled more than ever, and said:

"Perhaps this is he who may achieve the adventure of the Sangreal!"

The knights then celebrated a solemn mass, and set forth each upon his own way to seek the Holy Grail. But only three ever saw it; and to but one of these did it appear unveiled.

First of them all started out Sir Lancelot du Lac, the bravest and most courageous knight of all the Table round. For many a day he rode through pathless forests, until he came at last to a stone cross, near which was an old chapel; and, looking through a chink in the wall, he spied an altar richly decked with silk, and on it a tall branched candlestick of silver, bearing his lighted tapers.

Here he would fain have entered, but there was no door. So he laid himself down upon his shield beneath a tree at the foot of the cross, for it was night. And as he lay between sleeping and waking, there came a sick knight, borne in a litter, who lamented and complained, crying:

"Oh, sweet Lord, how long shall I suffer thus before the blessed cup shall give my pain relief?"

Sir Lancelot, as though in a dream from which he could not waken, saw the candlestick come out before the cross; and after it came the Holy Grail, veiled in red samite, and borne in visible hands, and the knight was healed of his disease. Then the tapers and the cup returned into the chapel, and all was dark.

As the stranger knight knelt before the cross to give thanks, he beheld Sir Lancelot, and wondered that he could rest thus when the holy vessel was present near him. But his squire said:

"I trow this man is guilty of sins of which he repenteth, but which he hath not confessed; and this was true. For Lancelot was the lover of the king's daughter Guinevere, and therefore the Grail was not for him. So they departed, and Sir Lancelot woke, and wept and sorrowed until the break of day."

Then he arose and wandered on until he came to where dwelt a satyr hermit, and to him he confessed his sins. The hermit absolved him, and ordered him to perform a severe penance, and Sir Lancelot abode with him for a while, and repented sorely.

It chanced, then, that one night he came to a great castle, guarded by lions. As he entered, he laid his hand upon his sword, but it was smitten out of his grasp, and a voice cried:

"O man of evil faith, trustest thou more in thine arms than in thy Maker?"

Sir Lancelot crossed himself and the lions suffered him to pass unharmed. He came at last to a chamber where the door was shut, and within a voice, sweeter than any mortal's, was singing. Sir Lancelot knelt down and prayed, and the door opened. All around him was a wondrous brightness; and the voice said:

"Enter not, Sir Lancelot!"

In the chamber he beheld a table of silver, and on it the Sangreal, veiled in

red samite. And about it stood a throng of angels holding a cross, and the tapers and ornaments of the altar.

In joy and amazement Sir Lancelot forgot the command, and stepped forward to enter the room, but a hot breath smote him to the ground, he felt himself lifted up, borne away, and laid upon a bed, where he lay for twenty-four days; and in his sleep he saw many a vision of strange and wondrous things. When he awoke, and told those about him of what he had seen, they said to him:

"Sir, you have seen all that you shall see, and the quest of the Sangreal is ended for you."

Sir Galahad, when it came to his turn, rode forth without a shield upon his journey, and on the fifth day he came to a great white abbey, where he met two knights, who told him that within that place was a shield that none might wear save he alone who was worthy.

On the morrow they rode to where the shield was hanging; when one of the knights, called King Bayedama, took it; and hung it about his neck. Then came riding a knight clothed in white armor, who tilted with King Bayedama, overthrew him, and wounded him sorely, for the shield slipped from his shoulder and refused to cover him.

The next day Sir Galahad put on the shield, when it hung in its place. He then rode to the place of meeting, and asked of the white knight a solution of the mystery.

The latter replied: "This is the shield of the gentle knight, Joseph of Arimathea, and when he died he declared that none should ever after safely bear it, save only the good knight Sir Galahad, the last of his line, who should perform many wondrous deeds;" and, speaking thus, the white knight vanished from sight.

Many great deeds did Sir Galahad, and many a lonely heath, many a gloomy forest, many a pleasant countryside, and many a town, did he visit and bring ings, till at last he came to the borders of the sea, guided by a gentle woman, the sister of Sir Perceval, a brother Knight of the Round Table.

There he found a vessel in which were Sir Bohort and Sir Perceval, who welcomed him warmly, and they seaward passed over the sea to the great rocks, where was a fearful whirlpool; and there lay another ship, by stepping on which they might gain the land. The three knights went on board, Sir Galahad first.

Here they beheld the table of silver, and the Holy Grail, veiled in red samite; they all knelt before it, and Sir Galahad prayed that whenever he should desire to die, his prayer might be granted. Then was heard a voice saying:

"Galahad, thou shalt have thy wish; and when thou desrest the death of thy body, it shall be granted thee and thou shalt find the life of thy soul."

The ship now began to drive before the wind, till it came to the city of Sarag. There the knights took the silver table out of the ship, Sir Bohort and Sir Perceval going first, and Sir Galahad behind.

On reaching the city gates they met a man upon crutches, and Sir Galahad called him to come and help to carry the table; when the cripple arose and bare it with Sir Galahad, although it was ten years that he had not walked without aid.

The king of that city had just died, and in the midst of the council a voice cried out bidding them choose as ruler the youngest of the three strangers. When Sir Galahad was chosen king, he commanded a chest to be made of gold and jewels, wherein he placed the Sangreal, and every day he and his com-

rades kneeled down and prayed before it.

When it was a year to a day that Sir Galahad had reigned in that country, he went in upon a day to do homage to the holy vessel. And first he saw a man who kneeled before it in shining raiment, surrounded by a multitude of angels; and the man rose, and said to Sir Galahad:

"Come, servant of the Lord, and thou shalt see what thou has long desired to see."

And he stepped back, and the angels wove him, and led her, away to the Holy Grail, shining as though with the very

light of heaven, and the veil of samite had fallen from it. When Sir Galahad saw this, he trembled. The stranger said:

"Knowest thou me?"

The man said: "I am Joseph of Arimathea, whom the Lord hath sent to bear thee this fellowship." Sir Galahad lifted up his hands to heaven, and said: "Now, Lord, if it please thee, I would no longer desire to live."

And after he had prayed the angels bore his soul up to heaven, and a hand came from above and took the Sangreal up out of their sight, nor hath mortal man ever since beheld it.—*Selected.*

## Literary Training in the Epworth League

REV. W. G. HENDERSON, ST. LAMBERT, QUE.

AMONG the present organized activities of our Church, none should be richer in promise of future results than the association of its youth for Christian culture and intellectual development.

As we advance in life, we are apt to get out of touch with the enterprising spirit of the young. We realize that, long our grasp of the present world, our interests are more with the next. Hence the disposition among matured Christian workers to look upon religious agencies as being more concerned with matters future and unseen than with those present and seen. The great desideratum of the day, however, is the practical, the utilitarian is ever in demand. The present calls for a faith that does more than dream of a future heaven, and insists that the Church shall grapple with those great social, moral, and economic problems that here and now imperatively require solution. The Church can no longer afford to omit emphasis on the fact that her message is to the man; the whole man, that man's physical, intellectual, and spiritual being, are all included in the great redemption. She cannot ignore the consequent truth that Christian effort is concerned with the proper care of the body, and with the necessary training for the service of God of the mental as well as the spiritual faculties.

The culture of the intellectual, therefore, cannot be overlooked. The rational faculties are included in Christ's purchase; and are to be trained for God's glory and man's good. The Epworth League is providential. It came at the right moment. It is the hand by which eager and enthusiastic youth are to be drawn gently and surely to Christ and wholly given for Him.

The young manhood and womanhood of our day say they do not want a religion too ethereal for this world. They are not in heaven yet, and do not desire to go there at present. It is no sign of a robust and lively faith to be forever lamenting the necessity of our sojourn upon earth; desiring to be freed from its responsibilities and its discipline, and forgetting in this singing its abounding opportunities for good. "We are here," say the young folk, "and we desire to enlist under Christ's banner; to win victories for Him; to cast out demons; to work in His vineyard, and to receive at last our Lord's welcome. We want a religion that will strengthen us for this mission; and the church that offers us the best equipment for this work is the church for us."

This is just what a genuine apostolic church will offer them. The Bible is not a book for angels, but for men. It is not for heaven, but for earth. Christianity is not exclusively for the dying hour or the sick chamber. Christ came to show us how best to live; how to make the most of our most vigorous

manhood; how to attain to the useful which is the most successful life. In order to do this, it says, "Take care of thy body; culture thy mind; consecrate thy affections." It is just at this crisis that the Epworth League introduces appropriately and opportunely its literary work. Not many of our youth have the privilege of a collegiate course, but all can avail themselves of the means of self-culture that the League affords.

Increased mental power, if consecrated to God, means increased spiritual influence. Ignorance is not a virtue. It never was the mother of devotion, but of superstition and bigotry. In the Sabbath school, the class-room, or the prayer-meeting, the cultured Christian is a greater power for good than the illiterate one. Thus the Literary Department of the League commends itself. The greater the intellectual calibre, the greater the capacity for God, for heavenly duty and reward. A cultured Paul has a greater capacity for God than an illiterate saint.

League Literary Training should begin with the *perceptive faculties*; these avenues through which our ideas come to us. Our senses are the windows of the soul; through them we receive our knowledge of the external world. These powers are the first called into action. Outside objects striking the mind through them awake its energies and arouse the reflective faculties. The perceptive powers then are of the first importance. If a man does not cultivate a habit of close attention; if he walk through the world half asleep, he is not likely to acquire a store of matter on which the rational powers may work. Had Moses not turned aside to see why the bush burned without being consumed, he would have missed his greatest commission. How many having eyes, see not, having ears, hear not!

The acquisition of knowledge lies largely in observation. You may not have much time for the study of the library, but you are daily mingling with your fellow-men; they are living books; you see in them a continuous variety of manners, of motives, of character. If you are constantly on the watch, what a vast and varied supply of practical knowledge may you acquire, and practical knowledge is the most useful to the ordinary man.

Our Epworth Leagues should encourage their members to be observant, to lay up stores of practical information. By holding stated conferences, at which each member shall be expected to contribute some offering to the general fund of information, some flower plucked by the wayside of every-day life, each will be a benefactor, besides being enriched himself by the observations and testimonies of his fellow-observers.

Next to the perceptive faculty is the *memory*; the storehouse of the mind, the

granary where all the corn to be ground into mental food is stored. Vain would be the exercise of observation were it not for this receptacle. Cultivate assiduously, therefore, this faculty, for an accurate, retentive, prompt, and practical memory is largely the product of persistent cultivation. Useful and necessary, however, as memory may be, do not unduly exalt its importance. After all, it is but a storehouse. There are men whose memories are so stored, and whose thinking powers are so dwarfed, that they are but retailers of the intellectual products of other minds. Never substitute memory for thought. It is not the food a man receives, but what he digests, that builds up his physical frame; it is not what a man remembers, but what he thinks out for himself, what he assimilates, that really develops mental power. Still, as a purely mnemonic exercise I would suggest to our Leagues, a course of reading followed by oral examinations; so that the spirit, not the letter, of what we read, the soul, not the mere body, may be indelibly fixed in the mind.

After memory, let me emphasize the value of cultivating the *reflective powers*. It is not merely that a man hears or reads that constitutes intellectual wealth. "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good," is a golden aphorism. To excite reflection there is no better method than the Socratic. If congregations would accept occasionally a catechetical service instead of the ordinary sermon it would prove of great benefit to the church. Next to being well catechised by another, self-examination is beneficial.

Our Leaguers should ever remember the importance of keeping the reflective faculties bright and clear from rust by judicious and systematic exercise. It would be an excellent plan for our societies to spend a short time at each meeting in an oral examination upon the sermons of the preceding Sabbath.

I would not forget the cultivation of what may be styled the *ornamental powers* of the mind. They are not to be undervalued or despised. The imagination, the fancy, the taste, are to the mind what light, shadow, and color are to the landscape. Without these, how tame and dreary would the fairest scenes become. Let our young friends, therefore, not forget poetry, and painting, music, and art.

These suggestions bear reference only to the intellectual life. Let me say, however, that all intellectual culture must be subordinate to the great and fundamental design of the League; the spiritual development of the character. The training of the heart is as essential as that of the brain. The man, the whole man, must be trained for God. Let the entire life be laid upon the altar, let us give God all there is of us; let us preserve our bodies in purity; let us train, develop, and polish our mental manhood to the fullest extent of our opportunities; let us open wide our affections, our spiritual being, to the Saviour, who ever stands knocking at the door of our hearts; then may we hope for a useful, and therefore happy, life here; and for a glorious and triumphant entrance into the Hall of Holies when earthly labor shall have ended.

'Lord, endue Thy word from heaven  
With such light, and love, and power,  
That in us it silent leaven  
May work on from hour to hour.

"Give us grace to bear our witness  
To the truth to be embraced;  
And let others both their senses  
And their quickening virtue taste."



## OUR STORY



### The Conversion of Widow Gregory.

WILLIAM H. VAUGHAN, TORONTO.

(Read at the Christmas Service of the Woodgreen Methodist Sunday School, Toronto.)

WIDOW GREGORY was a church member. That could not be considered a serious fault; on the other hand, it is generally deemed quite proper and highly respectable. But it was the one important fact in the widow's life, and the circumstance which bounded her somewhat limited view.

The name of her church would give but little indication of her religious views. Indeed, her creed seemed a composite one, and partook more or less of various types. She was a fire-eating Methodist, a hard-shelled Baptist, and a pre-destined Presbyterian in one; these, mingled with a strong strain of Puritanism of the days of Cromwell, combined to make her, as everybody thought, and she herself believed, the most religious person in the community. Dr. Higgins said she had more religion to the square inch than any one he had ever known, and the doctor knew most everybody.

But, then, she could not help it. It was born in her. Before she had married Jim Gregory, she had been Cynthia Allen, and the Allens for generations had essayed to set the standards of morals and religion in the neighborhood. As a girl she had been serious, and everyone wondered why it was that fun-loving, good-natured Jim Gregory had been attracted to her; but when the widow subsided they thought he might perhaps draw her out of her serious ways. But not so. He became a candidate for the original Mr. Henpeck. The years had not turned the lines of her firm mouth upward, but downward, until a decided melancholy droop was always seen on her face.

The late lamented James Gregory, as she always referred to her husband, had died a few years previous, leaving her at fifty with a very comfortable portion of this world's goods, a wonderful fund of advice, which she always kept on tap ready to distribute indiscriminately, a will that could brook no interference, and a temper which generally rose to the occasion.

She was a self-constituted arbiter and critic of the conduct of the whole neighborhood, and laid down very strict rules governing all phases of life for the guidance of her neighbors. And woe betide any one who fell short of her standard, for they were sure to receive some of her ever-present admonition in phrases more forcible than charitable.

She showed no partiality. Old and young, male and female, all and sundry, must conform to her ideas as chief church member, or be assigned a place in her black books and be subject to dreadful warnings and dire condemnation. It was not surprising, then, that her sphere of operation was large and her circle of friends small, for there were few indeed who escaped her critical inspection in the church or out of it.

Indeed, the minister himself was a poor, deluded soul, not well grounded in faith, because he preached twenty-minute sermons on such commonplace topics as your duty to your neighbor and Christian citizenship rather than discourse for

an hour or more on the nature and attributes of God.

Was it any wonder, then, that most of the congregation should be "weak brethren" in her eyes? And she firmly believed that were it not for her watchful admonition and her striving to bolster up these weak ones and to coerce and prod them up to her standard, that the church would collapse just as utterly as though the main supports were removed from the building itself.

She delighted to hark back to the years gone by. "Those were the days!" she often explained. There were no meetings now like the kind they used to have. Those were the times of a "free and full salvation," and she spoke of it upon every occasion possible, until one day old Dr. Higgins had remarked to her: "Well, Cynthia, it's my opinion salvation is more free than full in your case, and I guess the church treasurer will back me up."

From that time forth Dr. Hiram Higgins became the subject of her most virulent attacks. He received twice as many warnings and lectures as his neighbors. The minister was taken seriously to task for his intimate association with the "unbeliever." But the doctor regarded himself in the light of a public benefactor, for he said:

"The more time she spends on me the more rest some one else will have."

So time went on, and Widow Gregory still preserved the church from absolute decay, and wondered why it was that consuming fire from heaven or heat from the forest had not been the lot of Hiram Higgins.

She was accordingly somewhat surprised one day late in the fall to see the old doctor coming up her pathway and leading a child of about five years of age by the hand. She girded herself for the fray, and met him with an austere look and manner.

They talked for a while, and the widow ejaculated with decision:

"Hiram Higgins, I tell you it's impossible. I'm sorry the child's mother is dead, but I can't help it. Do I look like a likely person for a matron of an orphanage asylum for little children whose fathers may be drunkards, and do not care for them? Hiram, I tell you it's according to scripture, 'I will give the fathers visited upon the children,' and you can't go against scripture." And that's right, Cynthia, you can't, and scripture says, 'Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these ye have done it unto me.'

"The devil can quote scripture, you know," she replied.

"So he can, so there's a pair of us," chuckled the doctor.

"Hiram Higgins, it's not to be thought of. I can't afford it. I am sure I am not justified in spending the money the late lamented James Gregory worked so hard for, in any such way."

"Cynthia, you have a big home here, and it's empty and cheerless. What you need is a child's face and a child's laughter, and something to love, and so I brought him to you. I'd take him myself, but I'm too busy, and, besides, a bachelor can't bring a child up right. I'm going to leave him, and if you can't afford it, I'll pay his board." And without another word he was gone, leaving the poor little chap.

Widow Gregory started after him, paused, then sat down, and apparently forgot the child. She was lost in thought.

"Please, I'm hungry," piped a timid voice, at last.

"Boy, what's your name?"

"Please, ma'am, Billy—Billy Dugan."

"Well, William, I shall keep you here to-night, but to-morrow you must go."

"Are you going to whip me?" asked the boy, half frightened.

"No, child, no."

"Then, why do you call me William? Mother only called me that when she was cross at me," and the little voice trembled. "I think I'd like to be called Billy best. Uncle Hiram calls me that."

"Who's Uncle Hiram, pray?"

"Why, the doctor man who brought me. He says he's my uncle."

"Oh, he does, does he; well, you might have a better one, I'm thinking."

"Oh, he's a good man, and he was kind to my mother, and brought her clothes and food, and he told me nice stories. Are you going to be my mother now, my really mother's gone?"

"Fine stories he'd tell you!" ejaculated the widow, ignoring his question.

"Yes, he did," persisted the child. "About a good man, who was always doing good things, and he loved poor people, too, just like mother and me. Uncle Hiram said his name was Jesus, and he wanted me to be a good boy all the time. Say, don't you think Uncle Hiram is just like Jesus, for he loves poor people and is kind?"

Widow Gregory did not reply, for she was thinking. The little chap sat on the floor beside her, and then his little head nestled against her skirts and he was asleep. Gently she lifted him to a couch.

That night when she put him to bed he slipped to his knees.

"I want to say Uncle Hiram's prayer," he said. "He held me on his knee and told it to me one night—that was before mother died," and there was a catch in his voice when he started:

"Dear Jesus, I am just a little lamb, and I want you to be my shepherd and take care of me. I'm so small, but you said, let little children come to you, and I know you will watch me while I sleep. When I wake in the morning make me a good boy each day, so that I will grow to be a good man, like you were. Amen."

I guess Uncle Hiram said that prayer when he was a little boy, for he is a good man." The little head nodded, the blue eyes closed, and he was fast asleep.

Widow Gregory retired late that night. What she was thinking we do not know; perhaps of unfulfilled hopes, perhaps the mother heart stirred within her, but, just as she went to sleep she said to herself, "I think I shall call him Billy."

A month passed, and again the doctor and the widow were found in conversation.

"Well, Cynthia, here is a check for the month's expenses, and I have managed to find Billy a home."

"So have I," she said, as she tore the check into small pieces. And as the doctor went down the street he murmured: "A little child shall lead them."

Christmas drew near, and Billy talked of Santa Claus and candles and toys. He had never known a real Christmas, but Uncle Hiram had said that Santa Claus would come, and he believed it with all his childish heart.

The night before Christmas, Dr. Higgins, laden with mysterious parcels, went to the widow's home. There he found an enormous pile of parcels, and the minister in deep consultation with the widow.

"Now, have we forgotten any?" she asked, just as the Doctor entered. "Why, what's all this?" he asked, his eyes big with astonishment.



"This doesn't concern you," she replied; yet her tone was not as icy as she had tried to make it.

"Just leave your parcels and clear out. Come around to-morrow afternoon and have Christmas tea with Billy."

The Doctor came, but what was that noise he heard as he neared the place? Surely one small boy could not make such a hubbub, nor did he, for when the good Doctor got inside he found a score of merry, romping, happy-faced children as well as the minister and his wife.

"Oh, uncle, uncle, he comed, he comed!" shouted Billy.

"Well," said Cynthia, when asked to explain, "I thought Billy would enjoy his first real Christmas more if he had company. The house seemed too large for one little boy to enjoy it all alone. So we borrowed some children for the occasion. The minister helped. The old place has been empty, but it shall never be so again."

The children departed, each with an ample parcel, and the old people sat down. Billy snuggled into the Doctor's

arms, "Oh, uncle, he really comed; Santa Claus really comed."

They talked on and on with happy hearts, and as Billy slumbered he occasionally murmured, "He comed, he comed."

"Yes," said Cynthia, as though talking to herself, "he came, and not only Santa Claus, but Christ came again to me. I have been Christian, but I fear I have not been religious. I have observed the letter but not the spirit. I have had faith but not works. But I think I have been converted. I have been a church member. That was my boast, but I fear I have not been a Christian. Hiram, you were right; being a church member is not everything."

"Yes," said the minister, "but being a church member sometimes helps a lot," and he glanced at the Doctor.

Billy roused in his sleep, "He comed. He really comed."

Widow Gregory was silent. "Thank God," said the minister, and as the Doctor hugged the sleeping Billy he murmured, "Amen."

## The Cause and Cure of Dull Meetings

MISS EDNA LINDSAY, OWEN SOUND.

I have often asked my friends, "Why don't you come to the League?" I have been answered, "Oh, the meetings are dull and uninteresting;" "no one makes me feel welcome;" "the other young people get off into cliques, and I feel so left out that I wish a hundred times that I was at home."

Perhaps too often these replies represent the truth. Why should it be? We can make the stranger and timid feel most happy and welcome if we try, and they will want to come to each League meeting, and join our membership. The first thing necessary for brightness in our meetings concerns the place where they are held. A bright, well-ventilated, nicely-decorated room is required. Nothing is more apt to induce dullness than a damp, close, dimly-lighted and cold room. Have an atmosphere of gladness pervading everywhere, from the time the young people enter the door until they leave.

There is a tendency, especially of the young ladies, to get off into cliques, and laugh and talk of what happened last night, and what is going to happen to-morrow; consequently those who are not interested just sit and look on, and are not thought of at all. No wonder they do not enjoy themselves.

Then again, we have the same method each evening of conducting our meetings. It gets monotonous and tiresome to have generally the same half-dozen or less on the platform, and give the topic the year round. Why not try some new plan? A very common truth, presented in an uncommon way, may arouse interest, and even gain in force, by the method employed to make it known.

Give some meeting without a leader. Give out the subject a week or two previous, requesting all to carefully study the topic, as they may be called upon. Someone appointed has the programme written upon the blackboard, with names of participants, and the meeting will prove interesting and helpful, each will do his or her best readily.

Have a leaguer, occasionally, to take notes on the sermon, to be read and discussed at the next meeting of the League. This will brighten both preacher and congregation.

Assign different Leaguers to conduct in turn a song service before the regular

meeting, and especially have bright, crisp singing; not slow, dragging notes, that almost put one to sleep. Have a capable, active pianist, or organist, and if she does her part the singers will have to keep up with the music.

Hurried-up programmes make our meetings dull. Make a meeting, for which intelligent preparation has been made, many days ahead, is conducted "on the spur of the moment," and is killed before it has well begun to live. Good programmes require careful planning ahead of time, ought to have definite purpose in view, begin promptly, call for edification rather than mere amusement, never last long enough to tire or weary the audience, and should enlist and train new talent, as well as enjoy the old.

When selecting names for topics leaders, some names is suggested, and the reply may be, "Oh, I don't think he could take a topic;" and perhaps that very person is just overflowing with talent, but no one knows it. How can we find out? Get each member on our roll to do something, for all Leaguers should be on some committee where their talents may be developed by definite activity. When one feels he is part and parcel of a living, moving organization, that throbs with vitality, and that it is only perfection as he fulfills his part, then he is nerved to put forth his best effort.

To hold our League, and prevent dullness, we ought to bind the members together by one common purpose, unite them in the enthusiasm for one great cause, combine them by co-operation in helpful committees. Don't say, "You ought to," but "Let us." Lack of purpose, systematic methods, prayerful leadership, absence of enthusiasm, is sure to deaden a League.

If an interesting programme has been prepared, and we hope for a crowded meeting, how are we going to reach the young people and let them know, and make them interested, if we do not advertise? The stale, unattractive pulpit announcement is forgotten almost as soon as heard. Appeal to the eye as well as to the ear; don't be afraid of printers' ink, or a pen and ink post card invitation. Or have an alert young man or woman at the church door to give a cheery verbal invitation.

Awaken inquisitiveness on the part of

your members, and do not disappoint them when they come. Be pleasant. A story is told of a young Swede, who, not understanding English, stood at the corner of the street and gave out printed invitations to the passers-by to attend services in a mission. He had a happy smile, and showed a white and beautiful set of teeth. If they thanked him, he smiled; if they cursed him, he smiled. He did not understand, and people thought him so good-natured, and so full of the more inviting, to accept the invitation. They were really smiled into the church. Let us be like the Swede, ever ready to smile. "Laughter is contagious. Be cheerful and you make everybody around you happy, harmonious and healthful. Laughter and good cheer make love of life, and love of life is half of health."

Our League is sure to become dull without the social department coming to the front very frequently; and yet there is a danger of changing our services into entertainments only if we indulge too freely in these merely to accept the entertainment has a lawful place in the League; but it is a subordinate place, and comes incidentally, not as the main object or purpose of the meeting. Social evenings are splendid for becoming acquainted, but what we want is to cultivate a taste for something permanent. Seek to sweeten and purify lives; use handshakes, smiles, greetings; seek personal acquaintanceship; cultivate the head and heart together; pray, study and think on a high moral plane. Don't forget your aim is to reach the heart. Remember the League motto, "Look up, lift up."

When League members are absent, show them their absence has been noticed, and it will let them know that their presence the last time was felt. If members leave town, follow them with a letter to their new abode, that the Church or League there will be glad to hear from them.

To keep our society alive we must be devoted, wide-awake, and looking for opportunities for all sorts of work. Have a real live president at the head of the executive, and insist on each convener carrying out his or her allotted work, with as many new inspirations as possible, to brighten and cheer and interest the young people. To have an enthusiastic meeting we must come—readily, attentively, seriously, merrily, and eagerly.

Are you ready to do the little thing—

The hand to pass the song to sing;  
The cheery word to give a friend,  
The helping hand you oft might lend?  
Remember, 'tis the little things that count,

E'en pennies will make a great amount.  
And a welcome smile from our Saviour

Will surely not be a little thing.

### Seeing Double

On a pleasant Sunday afternoon an old German and his youngest son were seated in the village inn. The father had partaken liberally of the home-brewed beer and was warning his son against the evils of intemperance. "Never drink too much, my son. A gentleman's steps when he has enough. To be drunk is a disgrace."

"Yes, father, but how can I tell when I have had enough or am drunk?"

The old man pointed with his finger. "Do you see those two men sitting in the corner? If you should see four men there you would be drunk."

The boy looked long and earnestly. "Yes, father, but—there is only one man in that corner."—Lippincott's.



## WEEKLY TOPIC CALENDAR

WITH SUGGESTIONS BY THE EDITOR

**FEB. 18.—GREAT HYMN WRITERS:**  
FANNY CROSBY. Psalm 116.

This meeting is in charge of the Third Department, and should be made both sociable and literary in character. The Music Committee should carefully select and arrange the hymns, all of which should be chosen from the compositions of the blind poetess. A very wide field affords ample scope for variety. Have solos, duets, and choruses as the talent of your members admits. A dozen or more persons may be appointed well ahead of the meeting to prepare brief statements regarding their choice of Fanny Crosby's hymns, and to tell why they so choose. There is material enough in the article written by Miss Wallace and printed on a previous page for several short addresses. Do not read this article in the meeting; but so plan that its statement of facts will be utilized by two or three persons at least, as the foundation of the story of the lady you are studying about. These may be appointed to: (1) Outline the story of her life, (2) Describe the varied qualities of her hymns, (3) Show the force of her inward spirit to counterbalance her affliction, and (4) Explain the widespread influence of her hymns. As an interesting social item in the programme, let the organist or pianist, after the addresses have been given, play over the first measure or two of a number of her well-known hymns and see how many of the audience can instantly recognize and name the hymns. This may be made both entertaining and instructive, but it must be put through promptly and be allowed to drag.

**FEB. 25.—CHRIST'S DOCTRINE OF MONEY.** Luke 12: 16-20.

The Fourth Department has charge of this meeting. Mr. Tucker's article in this issue lends itself very readily to division. If I were Leader, I should arrange with three persons to show how money relates to (1) Our Obligation to God, (2) Our duties to one another, (3) Personal character. I should expect each of these to restate the teachings of Jesus as epitomized by Mr. Tucker, and when each speaker had finished I should expect him to catechise the members on his phase of the subject. In this way I should try to interest the majority by encouraging them to take some part. Not what the Leaguers hear, but what they remember, is the test of value of what has been said to them. And there is no better way of fixing facts or truths in the memory than by audibly stating and restating them in the presence of others. You might arrange a striking acrostic, given by five persons on as many themes. The following is only a sample of a number that will occur to you:

M ake all you can by honest industry.  
O n nothing absolutely; but as God's Steward.

N ever spend more than you earn.  
E conomize on self; be extravagant on others?

Y ou have little sense if you either despise or abuse money.

**MARCH 3.—STUDIES IN N. T. CHARACTERS:** PETER. Luke 5: 1-11; Acts 12: 1-19.

In his article on a previous page, "Peter, the Apostolic Leader," Dr. McArthur has presented this topic under six different headings, and the First Vice-President and members of the C. E. Department have a splendid opportunity to deal with the record in a most helpful way. Attached to each of the six sections referred to, are given illuminative scripture passages. These should be studied and their contents stated. After the whole case has been fairly presented, questions relating to present-day Christian life and labor should be brought home to each mind. For this is your monthly Consecration Meeting, and the study of the evening should terminate in a renewal of the Pledge by the active members, and an earnest appeal to accept it to the associates. Seek to find out, for instance, the traits in Peter's character which we ought to guard against, what elements of strength that he showed we may seek to emulate, what qualities of leadership in him are desirable today, and how the Church can continue the work last committed to him by his Master. These are specimen sub-topics of value and importance, but most important of all is that each young person among us should be constrained to make Peter's great confession of the Lordship of Christ. Let all your study tend to this, "Thou art the Christ."

**MARCH 10.—METHODIST HOME MISSIONS THAT HAVE EXISTED FOR A GENERATION OR MORE.** Luke 24: 48-53.

If the Missionary Vice-President will give time and thought to this meeting, it might be conducted in the form of a cross-examination of a number of persons who represent different types of home mission fields. Dr. McArthur's article has given material for this; but it must be locally arranged. The presiding officer might give a summary of our mission work, stating how it is divided, and stating the number of missions and missionaries in our Church at home. Then, let a number of persons be arranged to represent the missions that remain "on the fund" year after year. Make them explain their case. You will see that at least five such representatives may be summoned. The dialogue may be quite easily arranged. Then comes the question, "What about it?" To restate the content of the article under "Hopeful Signs," would be the privilege of some associate judge or of some jurymen, if you have a jury, and the climax may be reached by the suggestion of church union, which in turn may lead to a very profitable discussion of this vital and timely theme. Keep the thought of the members throughout fixed on the great subject of our Home Mission work.

**N.B.—**You are strongly advised to read carefully what Miss Lindsay says about "hurried up programmes" in her article on page 41. It is your Editor's candid judgment that League programmes fall more frequently from lack of beforehand preparation than from any other cause. When the plan for the meeting has not been carefully thought out by the Committee and the various parts allotted to the members well ahead of time, it is obligatory on some one person "to get the topic" and "one person" very often runs the meeting into a rut and dullness results. The cure for all this is obvious.

### A Social Visit with the Connexional Officers

There is a group photograph in this number which will interest you. But we shall come to it later. Did you ever think how profitable you might make an evening spent with all the Connexional Officers? I am sure you have; but you will never have the privilege of their presence all together at your meeting. That would be impracticable; but in their absence you may well study about them and their work. The constitution and management of the Connexional Departments of the Methodist Church would be too big a study for you to take up on any one evening; but I think you may spend a very pleasant half-hour or more over the picture already referred to. Look it up.

On the 27th of December last, a Conference of all the Connexional Officers who were within easy reach was held in the Timothy Eaton Memorial Methodist Church, Toronto, and your Editor thought it a good opportunity to take a group photograph of this lot of fine-looking men. (Perhaps the lot are not each fine-looking, but they together make a fine-looking lot. That's what I mean.) The sexton very kindly let the light in, and the result of the Editor's work you must judge for yourselves.

Now, then, who are all these men; what phases of Church life do they represent, what activities do they serve in, short, what do you know or not know about them? My suggestion is that you get all your members to bring their ERAS with them to the meeting, and that you together have a friendly contest and find out just what you can from one another regarding the men and all they stand for in the Church. If there are not enough ERAS to go around, (and there will be,) you may have to group your members together, so that all may see the picture and help in the pleasant work of identification. In that case the contest will have to be carried out by groups or companies, not by individuals.

Or, instead of confining your attention to the men in the picture, you may extend your investigation so as to include all the Departmental Officers of the Church. For this, you had better get your Pastor's Discipline, or perhaps he will help you himself, which would be better. Find out, somehow, how many men were elected to official positions by the last General Conference, to what offices they were appointed, and what their duties are. Ascertain also how many additional men have been appointed by the General Boards of the Church, and in what capacities they serve. Know where these men are located, in what territory they work, and what the Departments they represent expect of them by way of service.

I have an idea that many of our young people do not know as much about the Connexional machinery of the Methodist Church as they should if they are to intelligently believe in and support it as loyal members or adherents, and this will give your League a fitting opportunity to instruct them. I hope that I shall sometime be able to show you a complete group of the Connexional Officers; but it is a most rare occasion on which they can possibly be brought together, and for the present this number of them must suffice. The rest are men equally as important, wise and useful. To them the whole Church owes a great debt, not only for the personal service they individually render, but for their leadership in the great enterprises to which it is committed. Under them may the whole Methodist membership become increasingly useful for God.

## Topic Studies for Next Year

The plan introduced last spring of making the Topics for our Leagues run concurrently with the League rather than the Calendar year has worked well. The present list ends with April, the new begins with May. For the year 1912-13, the same general plan of allotting topics suitable for the four departments of the Adult League work, will be followed. The first meeting of the month is thus appropriated to the Christian Endeavor, the second to the Missionary, the third to the Literary and Social, and the fourth to the Citizenship Departments. Topics eminently suitable to each have been chosen. The general plan is as follows:

On each first meeting of the month, beginning with May, a study in the Parables of our Lord will be taken. The twelve in order are: The Sower; The Mustard Seed and the Leaven; The Hid Treasure and the Pearl of Great Price; The Good Samaritan; The Friend at Midnight and the Importunate Widow; The Rich Fool; The Great Supper; The Prodigal Son; The Pharisee and Publican;

to us; The Modern City; The Making of a City; The Struggling Masses; Undermining the Home; Social Life in City and Country; Religious Conditions and Movements in our Dominion; City Government; The Seamy Side of Social Pathology; Philanthropy as a Science; Social Service; Canadian Citizenship and Christian Citizenship.

The fifth evenings as they occur and the fourth evening in December are provided with special programmes. The course from beginning to end should be eminently appropriate to real, earnest League study as well as both enjoyable and entertaining. If each vice-president gives due care to the preparation of the programme of leaders, a splendid variety must be apparent throughout the year.

The full Topic list and the Junior Topics also, will be duly printed by the Book Room and be on sale in quantities there. All orders for the printed topic-cards should be sent to Dr. Briggs, not to the Editor of this paper.

The best assistance possible will be



FRIENDLY ADULT BIBLE CLASS, WATERFORD, ONT.

can; The Two Sons; The Ten Virgins; and The Pounds.

On each second evening of the month Missionary studies will be followed through the year, as follows: The Unfinished Work of the Great Commission; Some Heroes of Canadian Indian Missions; Africa, Some Men Who Have Worked for Its Redemption; China's Challenge to the Christian Church; The Call to the Young and out of it are Leadership; Home Missions, a Factor in Nation Building; The Claims of British India and Its Debt to the Missionary; City Missions, the People at Home Who Need Our Help; Canada's Non-English-speaking People; Japan, What Are We Contributing to Its Evangelization? Korea, a Miracle of Missions; and The Islands of the Sea and Some of Their Missionaries.

On each third evening of the month a study in one of the great masterpieces of Hebrew literature will be presented. Both in the Bible and out of it are marvellous gems of literary beauty with which our young people ought to be familiar. The list is: Joseph Made Known to His Brethren; The Song of Moses; David's Lament Over Saul and Jonathan; David's Song of Victory; The Source of Wisdom; The Greatness of God; The Song of the Redeemed; An Appeal to Youth; The Virtuous Woman; The Glory of Jerusalem; The Strongest Thing; and In Praise of Great Men.

On each fourth meeting of the month studies from "My Neighbor" will be taken. This is the only text-book which as such will be studied throughout. It presents the following important themes

provided in each issue of our paper for the preparation of the topic in the meeting, and we shall continue to do all we can to help our young people in their study and work. But we cannot do their study and work for them, nor eliminate all personal application by them. It is Individual Study that counts.

### A Live District Executive

Note: In a former number reference was made to the prospective work of the Chatham District Epworth League, and the plans proposed to make District visitation and guidance of local leagues effective. The Executive recently met at Charing Cross in order to help the Leagues on that side of the District, and at our request for a simple statement of what was actually done, the alert and thoroughgoing President, Mr. A. E. Hopper, has written the following facts, without intending them for publication. We commend the course of our Chatham District officers, and would like many others to follow their lead in District management.—Ed.

"Our meeting was called for five o'clock for the District officers and all the Leagues around Charing Cross, that is, the local officers of those Leagues, and at the appointed hour about forty were present. There were six Leagues represented. We went forward with our business with myself in the chair. Rev. Hunter was away owing to the death of his brother. A resolution of sympathy was drafted and sent to him. A committee was appointed to send word to Ridgeway District, notifying them of our intention of supporting our own Missionary, also to notify Dr. Stephenson of our intention. A letter was sent to every League in the District

asking for them to share their part of the increase in Missions. A resolution was passed to be forwarded to the different Leagues, stating that each of the District officers was willing to visit every League once during the year, and pressing upon them to arrange a date for those meetings. The matter of prayer circles was talked over, and a resolution along that line was drafted. Our object in this afternoon session was to get in touch with the local officers, and I think the apparent interest they took in the business showed plainly that they are commencing to realize that the League, if properly handled, is a power for good.

"At 6.30 we went to the basement of the church, where the young women had arranged a lunch. All presidents and vice-presidents sat in groups together and talked over plans, difficulties, and successes, in their respective Departments, in a friendly way. One hour of social time was profitably spent.

"A large gathering from the neighborhood assembled at 8 in the evening. Meeting was opened by the President of the home League, and then I took the chair. All resolutions were read and adopted. I gave an address, pointing out the duties lying upon local officers. Their earnestness in their work was the keynote to success. Each Department followed, led by the District Vice-Presidents, mapping out the work and giving suggestions.

"I think it was time well spent, and any sacrifice was fully repaid by the apparent interest.

"We hope to hold at least two more gatherings of similar nature in the near future, each at some central point."

### A Strong Bible Class

The Friendly Adult Bible Class was organized just three years ago in the Waterford (Ont.) Sunday School, and has a membership of 125 or more. The President is Mr. J. A. Vancervery and the Teacher Mr. Ward Foster. The life of the class permeates the whole congregation, and its activities minister to the varied needs of Church work. In the photograph of the class may be seen persons of extreme age as well as those of less extended years. Near the centre of the group are Mr. and Mrs. Grace, both over 90 years old when the picture was taken late in the summer of last year. It means much to have such a body of representative men and women banded together for study, service, and sociability, and any Church which has an organization should be always active in aggressive Christian work. The Organized Adult Bible Class is possible in any community no matter what the size of its Sunday School may be.

### Easily Disposed Of

The teacher was trying to impress upon her class the necessity of resisting the sinful human heart, and to drive her point home she produced her watch. "Now, boys," she said, "you see this watch is a sensible watch obviously true that there was no danger of contradiction. "Now," she continued, "just suppose for a moment that it did not keep correct time, that I found it was willing to go any way but the right way, what should I do with it?"

There was a usual pause, which pupils indulge in because it flatters the teacher by making her suppose her problem is a very deep one, and that her wisdom is therefore very profound. Then a bright little boy held up his hand.

"Please, miss, you would sell it to a friend!"

WHAT THE  
POSTMAN  
BROUGHT



Two Mission Study Classes are hard at work in Trinity League, Toronto. Every League should have one. Write to Dr. Stephenson for particulars and all needed supplies.

The Century E. L. of Medicine Hat, Alta., held "one of the most unique socials" ever held in that city on Halloween last. We hope to give particulars so as to be of use to others for next fall. They would be untimely just now.

Campbellford Leaguers now number 83, and prospects are good for them to pass the 100-mark soon. The *Herald* gave a splendid report of the Rally held at the beginning of the winter, and from all accounts all is going well with the young people's work there.

The Juniors of Waterloo have formed a Pocket Testament League. In order to ensure a larger average attendance, the time of meeting has been changed from Wednesday evening to Saturday afternoon, as more suitable for the younger and smaller folk. They held a very interesting Christmas meeting.

The Queensville League reports prosperly. A meeting of Juniors and Adults in the fall was much enjoyed, and similar union meetings are being planned for the future. The idea is excellent, and as the President remarks, "They seem to go into the work with deeper interest after."

A friend at Victoria Road very properly suggests that more general attention should be paid to the Pledge in the Epworth League, and that the motto should be occasionally emphasized. The importance of both these suggestions will be admitted by all wise Leaguers. Carry them out in your society.

The Westmoreland Epworth League, Toronto, presents a splendid missionary report for the first six months of the current League year, having raised in that time the sum of \$304.41 for the Forward Movement. This League is strong at all points, and is as busy a hive of young Christian workers as any could find anywhere.

Miss Hetherington, Millbrook, Ont., gives a good and practicable suggestion for a literary programme. She says, in a recent letter: "A plan we found very successful for impressing on the general public the facts in connection with the biography of an author or any great man is this: Have some one prepare a sketch of the life, and arrange it in eight or ten or twelve brief statements of facts about him. Prepare folders with spaces numbered to correspond with the facts to be used, and fill out one space of each folder, leaving the person to complete his sketch by getting the other seven or nine or eleven facts from others in the room, so that when finished each will have an outline sketch of the life of the person studied, to take home and keep as a souvenir."

Little Britain League made good use of a number of their ex-presidents recently. These past officers gave wise counsel and timely advice to those now in charge. We commend this practice. The old-timers ought to be able to very materially assist the present officers, as the result of experience gained in the past.

Bro. Brearley, Woodstock, Ont., writes that the League with which he is connected is working hard to raise money for the repairing and decorating of the lecture-room of the church. Four high-class concerts are being given in course, and next month a banquet will be held. The funds already in hand ensure the success of this most worthy and commendable enterprise.

The President of Stanstead (Que.) League well remarks: "The influence of the Epworth League will keep growing greater, and I am sure that the best results will be obtained only when each one realizes his responsibility to others and adds his sincere help to the cause." It is a whole sermon in that short but wise sentence. How does it strike you?

"As a result of the Convention, one president reports that at their last Executive meeting all the members present, nine in number, led in prayer; some for the first time." This is from the St. Catharines District, and sounds good. All official members should attend the Executive, and every Executive meeting should be as truly a place of prayer as of business.

The President writes encouragingly of the work of the College Street, E. L., E. Toronto, as a whole; but one of the best items in his letter is that at one consecration meeting recently, of the 55 present, 53 gave personal testimony; and that still more recently, out of 60 present 54 testified. This resulted in a formal calling of the roll, but by starting the members in turn to speak. Good use is made of the Missionary Clock, and at the ordinary meetings placard notices are freely displayed.

The second vice-president of the Cobourg District sends the plan of District Visitation on behalf of the Missionary interests of the League. It provided for a dual representation at each local society with two addresses at each meeting, one on the work of Rev. W. E. Smith, M.D., the representative of the District in West China, and the other on the Forward Movement. A similar plan should be undertaken in every District. Increased interest and enlarged subscriptions would result. Our District Leaguers are waking up to the need and value of systematic visitation of every circuit.

The following is an extract from a letter written to a Leaguer who, with some others, had paid a visit to the Central Prison, Toronto. The name of the writer only is omitted. Surely such visitation pays: "I, . . . . . have finally realized my weakness, and I am thankful I can say with confidence, 'I am not ashamed to own my God, or to defend His cause,' and as we read in the New Testament at the time Peter was in prison a company assembled at a House for prayer on his behalf, I would, therefore, be glad, when you are in the Throne of Grace, you would remember me in your petitions; also ask the League to do the same. I assure you that all the boys in this institution, including myself, enjoyed the visit of the Westmoreland League, and hope it will not be long before you pay us another visit."

The Paris League is doing special work in a "Teachers' Bible Training Class." The report progress, with steadily increasing membership. To inform and interest all the officers and committees in their work, Miss Gurney says, "It helped, to supply each family with a Constitution, and also to have the members of the different committees stand while the vice-presidents read their duties." Such a drill by committees would be beneficial in most Leagues.

A Leaguer, referring to a visit to the West last autumn, wrote: "As I looked over the great wheat fields a thought of our Epworth League work, 'The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few.' I was much impressed with the importance of doing things quickly, not to spend all our time tinkering about, doing nothing, but to make every day count for something definite, as much will be lost if the harvest wait." This is no place for moralizing; but we would like to see to apply the same principle to our correspondence, and make sure that 1912 finds you actively doing something for the Kingdom.

In a nicely written letter, Annie McCormick, President, names the following items as constituting the special work of the Sherbrooke Street Juniors: "At Christmas, the Juniors have a Christmas tree, and we all furnish gifts of some kind, which go to the Children's Memorial Hospital. At Easter we meet in St. James' Methodist Church, where we bring flowers, which are taken to the sick. At Thanksgiving we donate provisions, which go to the poor." What a beautiful spirit of true Christian benevolence and real philanthropy such course of training must cultivate in the hearts of the young! They surely know something of the Scripture, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

A letter from Beamsville has the right ring in it. Miss Corcoran says: "We are also actively engaged in the Local Option campaign. At one of our Executive meetings we appointed a committee of young men to attend all the Temperance meetings held in this place, and to do all they can outside of the meeting to persuade men and women to vote the right way." Good idea! Every League should be an active centre to advance both Temperance education and Prohibition legislation everywhere through the country. Make your society count for the highest social ideals as well as for a pure personal morality.

In conducting a League in a country place, there are two difficulties than those connected with its internal management. What do you think of this, for instance, coming from the President of a League within the bounds of the Toronto Conference? Surely it represents a very deplorable condition of affairs, and calls for drastic measures.

"I presume that you are aware that ours is a country centre. The process of evil seem very strong in and around this community. We have been troubled for a long time by young men and boys coming to the meetings for the purpose, evidently, of disturbing and annoying the meetings. Naturally, as a League and a congregation, we are anxious to obtain good order by as quiet a means as possible, and have refrained from doing anything harsh, but it has been found that this plan will not work. The offenders have recently been admonished by the pastor, and warned as to the consequences of their misbehavior, but with no permanent results. Matters have been steadily growing worse, and we have found it necessary to take legal steps to defend ourselves. I hope these measures for a short time until we get the matter settled."

"The work was in a flourishing condition while we had a fair chance." Truly all the heathens are not in far-away, benighted lands!

The Wareham Leaguers interested themselves and incidentally papered their Church, through the manufacture and sale of an autograph quilt last season. Even a small community may profit in many ways from the devotion and industry of busy young people like these. Do something for your Church.

At Molra, last fall, three boys were started in a contest for new League members, and the winner was given a year's subscription to this paper. An increase of some members resulted. Why didn't some person think of THE ERA as a reward before? Thanks, Mr. Dunlop, for the suggestion. I hope many others will follow your lead, and that many bright boys may receive the paper for their work's sake.

A model report of a League Rally in Devine Street, Sarnia, has been received. The meeting was large, representative, and enthusiastic. Each vice-president gave a report of the departments in turn, and the Pastor and Assistant Sunday School Superintendent gave addresses. The work as a whole is most encouraging, and under wise pastoral guidance and effective official leadership, still greater prosperity is in store for the Devine Street Leaguers.

No comment is necessary on the following seasonable and wise advice from Mr. Cousins, of Barton Street League, Hamilton: "Encourage social visitation between Leagues as much as possible. The young people of to-day will be the backbone of the Church of to-morrow, and in unity is strength. Nothing will draw the young people together like genuine sociability." Put the emphasis on the last adjective as you read it, please.

Everything counts, even old rubbers; so an enterprising young man in a certain Ontario city tells me that they are arranging "an old rubber night" for some time in March. You see the point, don't you? It's all right, and the sum total received from those accumulated worn-out-foot-protectors-during-the-winter, will be put to splendid use in commendable Church work. It is surprising how these little things,—fragments,—amount up in the aggregate. Let nothing be lost! is a grand injunction, which many persons and societies might follow to their lasting profit.

It is pleasant indeed when such a statement comes to my desk as Mrs. Dooxee makes concerning her League at Hastings: "All our meetings are good, but some, of course, are especially bright and interesting. We have a splendid staff of vice-presidents, who spend a good deal of time and thought on their meetings, and the different department committees are always willing to help in whatever way they can." It is not only an honor, but a joy to be President of an Epworth League under such happy conditions. Why isn't your League like it? Or is it?

Rev. W. F. Armstrong had been seeking an organ for Rev. Mr. Hopkinson, of the Peace River District. Their hearts have been gladdened through the generosity of Mr. T. H. Graham and the Sunday School at Ingleswood, Ont., who are sending a fine new Sherlock-Manning organ, which will have to be trekked 500 miles before it reaches its destination. This school has also sent a used organ to Rev. W. L. Lawrence, Cobalt, who suffered severe loss in the recent fire there. The friends at Ingleswood will feel the happier by thus helping their brethren in their labors of love.

The Etoula E. L. President scores a good point in suggesting that more and more the Church be made the centre of the social life of the people. She "would have social evenings often, have good programmes in which the Leaguers as well as outsiders should take part, and invite all the people of the community to attend. She would send the young people on a crusade to obtain at least one new member each." All good, and conducive to growth in both numbers and League service.

The missionary work of the Aylmer Epworth League is being well developed. Early in the winter personal envelopes were distributed among the young people, in which they were asked to enclose their "Thank-offering for the Bounties of the Year." A generous response was made. The League will raise \$125 or more for Missions during the year. This will by no means prevent the realization of the supreme aim of the League, which is stated by the President to be "to deepen the spiritual life of the people as an outcome, the winning of souls." The League will not should not compromise its work by simply raising money, nor should it think its work so "religious" or "spiritual" that money does not enter into it!

## PLAN TO COME— FOUR DAYS.

A SUNDAY SCHOOL AND EPWORTH LEAGUE INSTITUTE for all workers of Toronto Conference will be held in the Metropolitan Church, Toronto, on March 11th, 12th, 13th, 14th, 1912.

A "Strong Programme," dealing with all the problems of "rural" and "urban" work is being prepared.

Prizes will be "enthusiastic" and the "best" yet. "Bilets" will be provided for outside delegates. "Every League" and "Sunday School" in the Conference should be "represented."

Keep dates open. Look out for further notices.

The Centennial Y. P. S. of Victoria, B.C., have "organized a Mock Parliament along the lines of the Provincial House, and propose to deal with legislation to give the franchise to women, in part, and to give them in practice public utilities," and other advanced subjects. The president rather doubts "whether the Hon. Premier McBride will get a hunch therefrom," but still the young people are going ahead in their study and advocacy of meritorious public questions. In this we believe they are right, and that many others are like-minded with them is one of the encouraging signs of the times.

The Junior League of Thorold has been enjoying splendid meetings, and one plan used by them is practicable almost anywhere. Miss Dale writes: "We have a Bible alphabet, memorizing one verse beginning with one of the letters, each Sunday, until the end of the alphabet, when we have a memory contest between the two sides." This is simple; but another practice of the Juniors of Thorold is equally feasible: "We also have the Juniors take notes on the pastor's sermons; and at the Consecration service they answer the roll with thought from a sermon. The pastor is invited to be present to hear them." This will be profitable to both pastor and young folk, and be mutually stimulating to all concerned.

From Sidney Crossing comes a wise remark to the effect that "there should be an evangelistic spirit in all we do or our efforts are fruitless." We need to be reminded of this from time to time that our efforts may not partake of cold, formal, perfunctory, routine. Nothing will so keep every faculty alert and every talent employed to the utmost of its capacity as a warm sympathetic heart moved by the love of Christ and actuated by the spirit of personal ministry. That is true evangelism.

A splendid account comes from East Calgary, Alta., of the work of the Boys' Brigade. Its object is "the advancement of Christ's Kingdom among boys and the promotion of habits of obedience, reverence, discipline, self-respect, and all that tends to true Christian manliness." Its motto is "Sure and Steadfast." The company has some 35 to 40 members, a Band. The Bible Class meets on Sunday morning, and the interest of the boys is very marked. Monday is recreation night, when various indoor games are enjoyed by the members, and on Thursday the Company drill takes place. An ambulance detachment receives special instruction on Friday evenings. Of this, Captain E. S. Harris says, "You can see we have a very full programme, but all this work is carried out each week with a promptness and dispatch which has no equal in this city, thanks to the very capable officers under my command." Success to the 1st Calgary Co. of The Boys' Brigade!

We are glad to record the growth and prosperity of the Mizpah Mission Circle of Winchester, Ont. Last year they raised over \$1,000 for the W. M. S., and this year are proceeding to do even better than that. The members are divided into sides, and under careful management each is seeking to outdo the other in the laudable enterprise for which all are working. An interesting feature of their work is the use of a Missionary Ladder. The information to be given was printed on narrow boards, which, one by one, were nailed on the supporting sides, forming steps. The top round of all was nailed on by a small boy, and contained the title of the text-book for the year's study. It may easily be seen that such a ladder might be built up round by round by a most interesting process, and that when complete, a great deal of valuable information may be displayed. If it fits any subject, and is given in a form in the memory better than if they are only orally repeated. Try it!

In a most cheerful letter from Heathcote we are told that "it is fourteen years since the League was organized, and in that time it has never been closed, summer or winter." My correspondent wisely says, "It seems to me that some Leagues are too ready to close for the summer." I agree thoroughly with her. The Heathcote folk are alive and at work. A Teacher Training Class is studying "The Canadian First Standard Course," and frequent Bible conferences have added interest and profit to the meetings. The leader in these, usually the third vice-president, prepares the questions, and the method followed is patterned after the old-fashioned spelling match. Events have been devoted to Genesis, Exodus, The Early Life of Christ, The First Year of His Public Ministry, and such important themes. Last, but not least, Miss Dooks reports, "we have a prayer circle in our League similar to the one mentioned in the November Era." All of which is good and most encouraging to the General Secretary.

Have you a Missionary Clock? If not, have one. You can make it with little trouble and less expense. Prepare the dial after any size most convenient and fitting. Above 12 put the amount you aim to raise during the year. If it is \$50, every five minutes will represent \$5. As you raise any amount, move the hands accordingly, and see how soon you can reach twelve o'clock. The probability is that if you use the clock advisedly, the time it represents will pass quickly, and you will perhaps be able to move the dial over a couple of -ircuits of the dial, instead of one, during the year. There is stimulus in it if properly utilized.

An encouraging E. L. Rally was held a few weeks ago in Wicklow. The pastor, Rev. H. W. Foley, gave a splendid address, and the choir, composed mostly of Leaguers, rendered The Epworth League Hymn and Loyalty to Christ as anthems. The Church was decorated with flags, and red and white bunting, and the motto, "Look Up, Lift Up!" was prominent. The members wore red and white badges." So Miss Hall reports, and in her letter adds, "We could not do without THE ERA. Our members are few, but we try to do all we can. Each officer has THE ERA. We congratulate you on the continued improvement, in the paper, and wish we could increase our subscriptions." If every E. L. were in as healthy a condition as the Wicklow League, small though it may be, the whole Church would benefit. What is the state of yours?

The following are the principal plans which the Owen Sound District League is seeking to carry out during the present year: That each League have a week of special evangelistic effort, that week of special prayer-meetings be held during the winter for the "shut-ins," wherever possible; that Rallies be held on the District at central points; that the Leagues take turn in writing a weekly letter to the Missionary, Mr. Steinhauer; that every League have a copy of the letter written by Mrs. Steinhauer and read at the Convention; that each League hold a memory evening under direction of the Third Department, when not a book shall be opened, but everything be given from memory; and that the Third Vice-President of each League write to the same officer of the other Leagues, both giving and asking suggestions. The District is providing a lantern for Mr. Steinhauer, and, taken all in all, their condition is good and prospects favorable.

Epworth League Day on the Lowville Circuit was particularly attractive. The sermons on the Sunday were preached by W. M. Scott, of Victoria College, and were inspiring to young and old. On Monday evening the Lowville League gave an "At Home" to the ex-members and friends of the congregation, and the evening was most profitably spent. Music and addresses formed the programme. One item, The Roll Call, was the most interesting feature of the evening. Letters of invitation had been sent to all ex-members near and far. About a dozen letters were received from ex-members from a distance, which were read in answer to the call of the names, messages of kind remembrance, and prayerful interest though absent in the old friends. Reference was made to three of the members who had died since the organization of the society seventeen years ago. Appropriate familiar hymns were interspersed during this number. The efficient president, Mrs. G. A. Coulson, took charge of this part of the programme. The pastor, Rev. J. F. Kaye, occupied the chair.

Refreshments were served at the close. The Leagues of this Circuit are alive, and the influence created by them is a felt power in the churches.

Here's a poser: "Our Epworth League would appreciate very much if you would send us some suggestions. Thanking you in anticipation." Never mind where it came from, it represents quite a number of places, more indeed than I like to admit even to myself. As if the Editor could write a prescription to meet the needs of a case he does not even know about, much less understand! Quackery! Brother, sister, this paper is full of "suggestions." Study their purport, adapt them as far as desirable to your own League, and profit by the practical pointers that others may give you; but please use your own brains.

The Victoria West (B.C.) Epworth League is having a good year. In addition to the ordinary work, they have divided their section of the city into portions, to each of which some member

visitor is responsible for looking up all who have been assigned for visitation. This newcomers, the "irregulars," and others requiring attention, in the interests of Church and League. This is evidence of their desire and determination to render some practical service to the cause with which they are connected, and is a sample of one kind of work every Epworth League should undertake.

If you do not get your ERA regularly, and are sure the trouble is not in your own local postal arrangements, write Dr. Briggs, giving particulars. All papers going to one post-office are enclosed in one package, so it is assured that if somebody else in your town got an ERA, yours also reached your post-office. Start enquires there. *And please remember that the paper is issued on the pay-in-advance principle. This may not always be pleasant to the subscribers; but the publishers deem it the best all-round policy to follow. The label on your paper tells when your subscription is again due. Consult it and renew promptly.*

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Subscription Price: 60 cents a year. A Club of six, \$2.60. The Paper will not be sent after term of subscription expires.

Subscriptions should always be sent to the Publisher, WILKIN BROS., Wesley Buildings, Toronto, Ont. All other matters concerning the Paper should be sent to the Editor, Rev. S. T. BARTLEY, 35 Richmond St. West, Toronto.

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Strong drink makes weak men. Your lungs can't be washed, but they can be aired.

Filth for files and files for fever.

When you don't know what to eat, eat nothing.

Dry-dusting moves dust; it doesn't remove it.

So-called chest protectors are targets for coughs and colds.



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Breathes freely and fully: the more you expand your chest the less you will contract colds.

Floods of sunshine in the home may fade carpets, but it puts the bloom of health upon your cheeks. Take your choice.

Merchant—Did you deliver my message to Mr. Smith?

Boy—No, sir; he was out and the office was locked up.

Merchant—Well, why didn't you wait for him, as I told you?

Boy—There was a notice on the door saying, "Return at once," so I came back as quick as I could.—Exchange.

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