

THE CANADIAN EPWORTH ERA

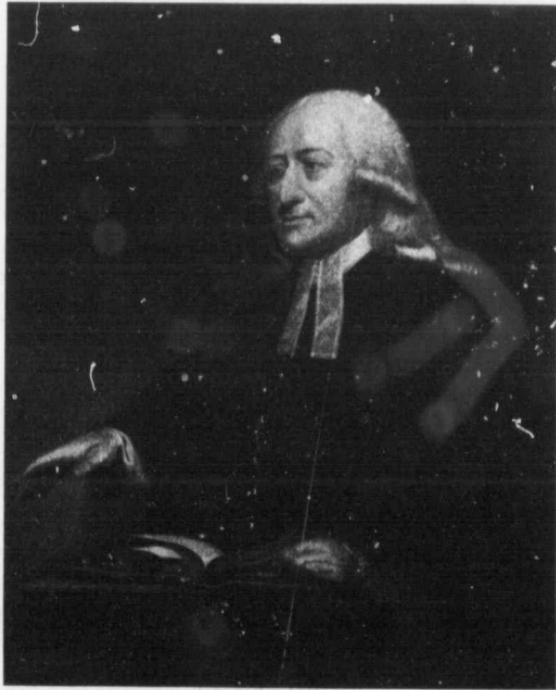
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TORONTO, FEBRUARY, 1899.

No. 2.



Published Monthly,
in the
Interests of
the
Young Peoples
Societies
OF THE
METHODIST
CHURCH,
BY AUTHORITY
OF THE
GENERAL CONFERENCE.



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John Wesley

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IT WORKS.

Mayor Jones, of Toledo, has nailed to the wall of his factory a strip of tin bearing these words:

"The Rule Governing This Factory: Therefore whatsoever ye would that men do unto you, do ye even so unto them."

He says: "After nearly three years of testing I am pleased to say that the Golden Rule works. It is nearly 1900 years since Jesus gave it to the world, and I think the lazar his professed followers can do to try it."

ONE SOLDIER'S DEATH.

A simple story, yet a most touching one, is the Chicago *Times-Herald's* description of the last hours of Private Ben Jones of the 1st Illinois:

He had lain in a stupor all day. Fever had depleted his reserve force. Toward evening he opened his eyes and said to Nurse Mary:

"You say something."

"What?" she asked.

He drew his breath and answered, "You say, 'The Lord is . . .'"

He was too far gone to speak it all; but she understood.

She bent over him and repeated, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will—"

"Yes," Private Jones interrupted, "the valley of the shadow."

He turned his face from her and fell asleep forever.

"REACH CHARLES HIS HAT."

It is said that Charles Wesley was sometimes easily annoyed, and on one occasion, at a Conference, he became so irritated at the prolix remarks of a speaker that he said to his brother:

"Stop that man's speaking. Let us attend to business."

But the offender was relating his religious experience, and though it was at so great a length, John Wesley evidently thought that no one had a right to interfere with it. He was therefore allowed to continue, but the moment came when Charles could contain himself no longer.

"Unless he stops," he whispered to John,

"I'll leave the Conference." By this time John was enjoying the man's simple story, and he only turned and whispered to some one sitting near:

"Reach Charles his hat."

—*Youth's Companion.*

HOW WESLEY EARNED TEN GUINEAS.

The eminent artist, Mr. Coely, who had in his gallery a fine bust of John Wesley, tells this story concerning it:

Mr. Wesley had often been urged to have his picture taken, but he always refused, alleging as a reason that he thought it nothing but vanity; indeed so frequently had he been pressed on this point that his friends were reluctantly compelled to give up the idea.

One day he called on me on the business of our church. I began the old subject of entreating him to allowing me to take off his likeness.

"Well," I said, "knowing you value money for the means of doing good, if you will grant my request, I will engage to give you ten guineas for the first ten minutes you sit, and for every minute that exceeds that time you shall receive a guinea."

He stripped off his coat, and in eight minutes I had the most perfect bust I had ever taken. I counted out ten guineas into his hand.

"Well," said he, turning to his companion, "I never till now earned money so speedily; but what shall we do with it?"

He wished me good morning and proceeded over Westminster Bridge. In a few hours every penny of the money had been given away in charity.

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The Canadian Epworth Era.

Vol. I.

TORONTO, FEBRUARY, 1899.

No. 2.

THE DIVINE LULLABY.

BY EUGENE FIELD.

I hear thy voice, dear Lord,
I hear it by the stormy sea,
When winter nights are black and wild;
And when, affright, I call to thee
It calms my fears, and whispers me,
"Sleep well, my child."

I hear thy voice, dear Lord,
In singing winds and falling snow,
The curfew chimes, the midnight bell:
"Sleep well, my child," it murmurs low
"The guardian angels come and go—
O child, sleep well!"

I hear thy voice, dear Lord!
Aye, though the singing winds be
stilled,

Though hushed the tumult of the deep,
My fainting heart with anguish thrilled
By thy assuring tone be thrilled—
"Fear not, and sleep."

Speak on—speak on, dear Lord!
And when the last dread night is near,
With doubts and fears and terrors wild,
Oh, let my soul expiring hear
Only these words of heavenly cheer,
"Sleep well, my child!"

✕

Great Times.—One of our exchanges puts on its title-page the following sentence from Max Muller: "The times in which we live are great—so great that we can hardly conceive them great enough, so great that we, old and young, cannot be great and good and brave and hard working enough ourselves, if we do not wish to appear quite unworthy of the times in which our lot has been cast."

✕

Christian Science.—The *Central Presbyterian* has the following strong words on Christian Science: "It is to be hoped that the world will receive a warning of the utter falsity and absurdity of the whole scheme. There is neither science nor Christianity in it, for the first claim of its followers is that they reject Christianity and have no use for science. What a mass of people there are in our so-called Christian lands who can be duped by any and every humbug! What a vast need there is for intelligence and moral sanity."

✕

What Would Jesus Do?—Rev. F. B. Meyer, who has written many devotional books of a high order, says in a recent issue of *The Christian Endeavor World*: "I suppose there is no question that should be more often on our hearts than the inquiry, *What would Jesus do?* And there is none which, if properly answered, would sooner secure the Christian life, for which, in our best hours, we so

eagerly yearn. Would you live a true Christian life, then let this be the line and plummet by which you test every bit of masonry that you build into the structure of your character: *What would Jesus do?* Not what is 'good form'; not what will secure recognition and advancement; not what will curry favor with the wealthy and influential; but always and everywhere: *Would Jesus do this if He were here!* *What would Jesus do?*"

✕

Christian Endeavor Day.—The eighteenth anniversary of the Christian Endeavor Society will be celebrated on February 2nd. At the end of its first five years the organization numbered 800 societies. In ten years it had grown to 16,000, and at the last International Convention 54,000 societies were reported. The growth has been steady and constant, and the movement now extends to almost every country under the sun.

✕

A Great Reader.—Mr. Sheldon, the author of "In His Steps," was born in Wellsville, N.Y., in 1857, but his youth was spent on a farm in Dakota. Of the family life at that time his father says: "Charles has been a great reader from the very beginning of his early school days. When he entered college he had probably read more standard works of the day than nine-tenths of the college graduates. He began story-writing when on the farm in Dakota, sitting down with the family where everything was going on—talking, working and all the rest—in the one room which served as kitchen, dining-room, sitting-room, parlor and study, and with his pencil and paper would scribble away, and the next thing we would know, his story, thus made up, would appear in the Yankton weekly paper."

✕

John Wesley's Portrait.—Quite a number of our readers have asked why John Wesley's picture was not published on the front page of our first number. One reason was that we could not obtain a really good cut at the time of publication, and, of course, nothing but the best would do for this paper. Through the courtesy of the *Northwestern Christian Advocate* we are now able to present our readers with one of the finest likenesses of John Wesley ever printed. It has been reproduced from a valuable English engraving. This number of THE CANADIAN EPWORTH ERA will be worth preserving because of this portrait, if for no other reason.

✕

The Standard of Authority.—In his pastoral address Rev. Hugh Price Hughes, President of the English Wesleyan Conference, gives some good advice to "the people called Methodists." He says:

"Every true Methodist is like John Wesley himself, 'a man of the Book.' His ultimate appeal is always to the Bible, and especially the Bible in its final and complete form, the New Testament. Whatever cannot be unmistakably found in the New Testament has no decisive authority for a Methodist." The address closes by urging a.l to be in Wesley's sense true "Methodists." Let them, like Wesley, incessantly study the Bible and bring every doctrine of man in every aspect and relation of human life—ecclesiastical, social, political and commercial—to the final and decisive test of "Thus saith the Lord."

✕

The Cigarette Evil.—There can be no doubt that the cigarette habit among boys is becoming alarmingly prevalent. Many lads are seen on the streets puffing tobacco smoke, and many more indulge in retired places. Ministers, teachers, and parents, have a duty to perform in warning the young of the evil effects of this habit. It has been established beyond doubt that boys who use cigarettes, invariably suffer in health, and they do not stand so well in school as those who abstain. This should be known everywhere.

✕

Wesley's Catholicity.—John Wesley was a man of very decided opinions, and yet he cultivated the warmest feeling of fraternity towards those who differed from him widely. He said to men whose views were quite contrary to his own, "If thine heart is right, give me thy hand." "I do not mean," he goes on to say, "Be of my opinion. You need not; I do not expect nor desire it; neither do I mean that I will be of your opinion. Keep your opinions, and I mine, and that just as steadily as ever. You need not endeavor to bring me over to you, or to come over to me." Mr. Wesley's conduct was consistent with his preaching. It was in harmony with this large-hearted charity that he received as his guest a Roman Catholic priest. He subsequently became a priest's guest and preached in his chapel. He published the biography of Thomas Firmian, one of the early propagators of Unitarianism in England, saying in the preface, "I was exceedingly struck in reading the following life, having long settled it in my mind that the entertaining wrong notions concerning the Trinity was inconsistent with real piety. But I cannot argue against matter of fact. I do not deny that Mr. Firmian was a pious man, though his notions of the Trinity were quite erroneous." Knowing this of Mr. Wesley's precept and practice, we are not surprised that he wrote the immortal words, "I desire a League, offensive and defensive, with every soldier of Jesus Christ." This should be the attitude of our Church to-day.

THE COMMON TASK.

My soul was stirred; I prayed: "Let me

Do some great work so purely
To right life's wrongs that I shall know
That I have loved thee surely."

My lips sent forth their eager cry,

"The while my heart beat faster,

"For some great deed to prove my love,
Send me, send me, my Master!"

From out the silence came a voice,

Saying: "If God thou fearest,

Rise up and do, thy whole life through,

The duty that lies nearest.

The friendly word, the kindly deed,

Though small the act in seeming,

Shall in the end unto thy soul

Prove mightier than thy dreaming.

"The cup of water to the faint,

Or rest unto the weary,

The light thou givest another's life,

Shall make thine own less dreary;

And boundless realm of faith and love

Will wait for thy possessing;

Not creeds, but deeds, if thou wouldst

win

Unto thy soul a blessing."

And so I wait with peaceful heart,

Content to do his pleasure,

Not caring if the world shall mock

At smallness of the measure;

Of thoughts, or deeds, or daily life,

He knows the true endeavor—

To do his will, to seek his face—

And he will fail me never.

"IN HIS STEPS: OR, WHAT WOULD JESUS DO?"

IS IT PRACTICABLE?

REV. G. W. KERBY, B.A.

FEW, if any, books published during the century have generated a wider interest in religious circles than Charles M. Sheldon's "In His Steps." It has not only brought fame and fortune to its author, but it has stirred the heart of the religious world and begotten a strong desire to see the spirit and teachings of Jesus embodied in all our modern life. It is, we believe, one of the hopeful signs of the time that a book of this description should meet with so ready and large a demand. It is now being translated into nearly every language, while over one thousand volumes a day of the author's works have been sold during the past year. It begins to look as if the religious novel would be one of the most potent factors in bringing about the fuller realization of a practical Christianity. Certain it is that if the writing of such books as "In His Steps" will only serve to turn the hearts and heads of thousands of the young people of this age from the kind of mental pabulum they have been surfeiting their minds, then one of the greatest evils will be destroyed and a new era of thinking and reading inaugurated. It is better, someone says, "to raise the community one inch than to raise the individual a mile." Sheldon's book will help

do both, we think. One does not have to agree with all he has said in order to see that immense good must follow from such a book. There will probably be no great divergence of opinion as to the general benefit. There will be, and there is, considerable difference of opinion as to the practicality of Sheldon's idea when applied to specific cases. It is this latter question we are asked to discuss in this article. To this end we have sent out questions to different business and professional men asking for their judgment and experience on the subject. We wrote a banker, lawyer, physician, newspaper editor, and a wholesale merchant and manufacturer, and received answers from all but the lawyer. The questions sent were: Is Sheldon's idea practicable? If so, how would it affect your business? The answers received were as follows:

I. FROM THE BANKER.

"What would Jesus do?" and is the principle as set forth in the book, "In His Steps," practicable to-day if applied to banking and similar financial operations is a question that cannot be answered by a simple "yes" or "no."

Ever since the beginning of time all the business of the world, financial, commercial, and all political or national organizations have been founded on the principle of "selfishness," or might is right, and let each look out for himself. When Jesus came He inaugurated a new order of things. The Magna Charta of His Kingdom is the Sermon on the Mount, and is summed up in "Love thy neighbor as thyself," and "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them," and exemplified by Paul, when he says, "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus," and "in lowliness of mind each counting the other better than himself; not looking each of you to his own things, but each of you also to the things of others."

Banks are established for the purpose of making gain, not as benevolent institutions, and to conduct them successfully means to increase their earning powers, build up greater reserves, and add to their financial strength, in order that there may be increased dividends to their shareholders or owners. This requires skill, sagacity and foresight on the part of the management to use every opportunity that presents itself to the best advantage, and honesty, justice and impartiality in all its dealings with the public that its confidence may be won and retained, and without which it is impossible to carry on the business. These qualities of honesty, fidelity, uprightness and justice are not the exclusive prerogative of the Christian—Christ-man, one who has the Christ spirit—though he cannot be devoid of them; but they can be and frequently are shown in the highest degree by those who may be called Agnostics, Buddhists, heathen or not of any religion.

The conducting the business requires every man to meet all his obligations or undertakings promptly or suffer the consequences, even to the extreme rigor of the law; his needs, necessities, or misfortunes cannot be considered as extenuating circumstances for his failure or for causing loss to others. To allow

sympathy or sentiment to enter into the management would disorganize the whole business, and soon bring upon it disaster and final ruin. But if Jesus were here and animated by the same spirit as when on earth, when "seeing the multitudes he was moved with compassion for them because they were harassed and fatigued," He would first consider their necessities, their misfortunes, or even mischances, and relieve them, perhaps forgive the debt, and not consider the result upon the "profits." "The Spirit of Christ" and "the spirit of the world" are in direct opposition to each other, and will not coalesce, and cannot be harmonized.

II. FROM THE NEWSPAPER EDITOR.

"As a Christian I am bound to believe, and conscientiously do believe, that a man who does his full duty to God in temporal matters will be taken care of and will want for no necessary thing. That he will be spared financial sacrifices and probably persecution as well, I do not think is promised. I presume your question is not meant to have such a drastic application, but to ask if, without any great sacrifice, Sheldon's lines cannot be followed in the ordinary business enterprises of life. I think they can be. What is called for, I presume, is honest dealing with the public both in prices and in statements, and equitable treatment of employees according to the best light one may have of what Jesus would do. There should be nothing impossible in all these things. I have found nothing of this nature impossible in connection with the job printing branch of my business. A more difficult question presents itself when the conduct of a modern daily newspaper upon Sheldon's platform comes to be dealt with. We have little of precedent to guide us. The Montreal *Witness* has been successful, and yet it has adhered pretty well to Sheldon's requirements. The New York *Witness* has had a different fate. In a large field such an enterprise would not be chimerical; in a restricted field it would be difficult of accomplishment. We must face conditions, not theories. Here we have two daily papers, one on either side of politics. My paper, while my own personal property, is in a sense a party trust. If I conducted the paper entirely as my personal feelings would dictate or as Sheldon advocates, there would soon be a third paper, and I would be dependent for support upon such elements in the community as place righteousness above all other considerations. I am afraid I would find myself relying upon a broken reed. Yet much has been done, more might be done. With a single exception of a prize fight of such universal interest that it was impossible for a secular newspaper to treat it with indifference, my paper has usually ignored or dealt lightly with all such events. No undue prominence is given to cases of indecent assault, etc. No advertisement of medical quacks who seek to prey on the errors of youth, are accepted. So far as possible an attempt is made to conduct a 'clean sheet' and to throw the influence on the side of morality. This is probably not all Jesus would do, but as a newspaper is moulded by its constituency and cannot get far in advance of it, it seems to be the most convenient, if not the most heroic policy."

III. FROM THE PHYSICIAN.

"I do not think Sheldon's ideas would work out in any way short of a complete and, I may say, miraculous revolution in society from apex to base. Our constitution has grown into its present tolerance, nay, even demand for caste, heritage, wealth, business sharpness, etc., so that a ground-work is laid. As to my own a profession it would not work, because to do as 'Jesus would do,' only necessary calls would be allowable, and this would not pay horse feed. It would drive seven-tenths of the profession out of business to seek a living. There is a mystery, a deception, about the operations of the profession which the diseased mind demands. The man who can study and pilot human nature most successfully is he who can do the largest practice. Then to put Jesus in the place of any man-to-day is to strain one's imagination that the thing must fall flat at first conjecture. Many things in Sheldon's book show weakness, and are worked out on other lines than most minds would frame as being what Jesus would do. I am of opinion that while Sheldon's book is calculated to do good, yet it must do also some harm, in the way he places his standard, as it seems so high that mortals are thoroughly discouraged in looking at the ideal Christian life presented."

IV. FROM THE WHOLESALE MERCHANT AND MANUFACTURER.

The principle laid down in Sheldon's book, he teaches doing as Jesus would do, no more, no less; or applying the principle taught by Jesus, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do you even so to them." Is this practicable? Yes! How would it affect wholesale business? Advantageously! In business my experience is that it pays to do right to those with whom you come in contact, from the boy sweeping the floor to the millionaire who buys your goods. Sheldon only advocates doing right, and right must pay."

We have already exhausted the space allotted for this article, and so we must allow the above answers to speak for themselves without further comment.

SMILE WHEN'EER YOU CAN.

When things don't go to suit you,
And the world seems upside down,
Don't waste your time in fretting,
But drive away that frown:
Since life is oft perplexing,
'Tis much the wisest plan
To bear all trials bravely,
And smile when'e'er you can.
Why should you dread to sorrow,
And thus despoil to-day,
For when you borrow trouble,
You always have to pay.
It is a good old maxim,
Which should be often preached:
"Don't cross the stream before you
Until the stream is reached."
And though you're strong and sturdy,
You may have an empty purse
(And earth has many trials
Which I consider worse);
But whether joy or sorrow
Fill up your mortal span,
'Twill make your pathway brighter
To smile when'e'er you can.

—American.

MR. SHELDON'S VISIT TO TORONTO.

SINCE REV. CHARLES M. SHELDON'S books have become so well known and widely read, he has received many invitations to preach and lecture in various cities. These have been uniformly declined, with two exceptions, Philadelphia and Toronto. The pastor of Bond Street Congregational Church in this city, Rev. Morgan Wool, succeeded in beguiling the popular author across the line, on the ground of old acquaintance. Great interest was manifested in his visit, and immense multitudes attended the services. Mr. Sheldon seems to be exceedingly indifferent to money getting, as he came to Toronto without asking anything more than his travelling expenses. He might just as well have carried off several hundred dollars, as no man has come to us for some time whom the people were more anxious to hear. It is exceedingly gratifying to meet a man who has not been spoiled by popularity, and who is not dominated by the mercenary spirit.

Bond Street Church, on Sunday morn-



REV. CHARLES M. SHELDON.

ing, January 22nd, was crowded to its utmost capacity with people who came from all parts of the city. Every inch of seating space was occupied, sixty-five persons sat on the pulpit platform, while hundreds were glad to get standing room.

At the evening service probably a thousand people waited on the streets outside the church for an hour, and then went away disappointed, the building being filled by ticket holders.

Mr. Sheldon is a pleasant-looking man of about forty years of age, with nothing ministerial either in his appearance or manner. He makes no attempt at oratory, but quietly talks to the people in a conversational way, the whole address being of the simplest kind.

On Sunday morning his subject was "Jesus the Standard of Conduct," and the text was taken from John xxi. 22. He insisted that Jesus was the standard of conduct for the whole world, and for every age of the world, because He is an authority on life. He did not say anything about literary matters. He did not discuss political problems, but He had much to say of character and conduct.

He was tempted in all points as we are, and He met these temptations as a man, never summoning to His assistance any divine help. The result of following Jesus is a result that always lifts the individual and the community up higher.

The speaker went on to show that following Jesus must not be a slavish thing. We are not to do the exact things that He did while on the earth. We are rather to be animated by His spirit in all that comes to us in our present circumstances. This following Jesus will send the Christian out to do something for his Master. He will not be satisfied with simply attending worship, but will be anxious to work for Christ. Mr. Sheldon said that one reason why so many Endeavor meetings were cold and lifeless, was because many of the members were trying to give expression to an experience which they did not possess. They never do anything to get any religion, and consequently what they attempt to say is formal and dead.

Perhaps the most interesting of the services was the conference on Monday afternoon, which was largely attended by the ministers of the city and many others.

Mr. Sheldon answered a big batch of questions in a very satisfactory and common sense way. He declined to discuss economic or theological queries, upon which there exist great divergence of opinion, but stuck close to his text: "What would Jesus do?" Some strong things were said against church debts, unconverted people singing in the choir, Sunday labor, etc.

Of course, there is nothing new in Mr. Sheldon's message, but he emphasizes, and places in attractive form, some old truths concerning which we need "line upon line." His visit to Toronto will do good

"A GOOD 'UN."

THIS incident of city mission work in London calls for tears rather than a smile:

One of our Methodist sisters, a cultivated, refined lady, went into a wretched slum to visit a sick woman. She found the children almost naked. There was no fire. The poor woman was very sick, and too feeble almost to move, and she was lying on rags in a corner. The whole place was very dirty. The first thing the sister did was to bring food into the home; and then, having given them a good meal, she made a fire. Then she sent out for some soap and a scrubbing-brush, and cleaned the whole place. When all had been made as snug and clean as possible it was quite noon. She had been there all the morning.

On going away she said to the woman, "You will be all right for to-day. I will come again in the morning and see how you get on. I will look after you; I won't see you starving."

The woman said, "If you please, miss, who sent you?"

The sister replied, "The Lord Jesus Christ sent me."

"The Lord Jesus Christ sent you? Well, look here, the next time you see him tell him from me he's a good 'un, he is."

THE NEW GOVERNOR-GENERAL.

THE Queen is represented in Canada by a Governor-General who is appointed by the Imperial Government, and holds office for five years. All official communications between the Home and the Colonial Government must pass through him. It is his duty to assemble, prorogue, and dissolve Parliament, and he assents to bills, or vetoes them, in the name of Her Majesty. He is supposed to occupy a position of absolute neutrality between the opposing political parties. The Governor-General has an office in the Parliament Buildings at Ottawa, and a residence in the vicinity of the capital city, known as Rideau Hall which is a writer in the *Canadian Magazine* terms "a shapeless jumble of buildings." The grounds are spacious and beautiful, but the structure itself is a kind of a conglomerate, having been added to from time to time, until it has cost altogether about \$300,000.

The Governor-General receives a salary of \$50,000, but usually spends more than this amount, as he is expected to exercise lavish hospitality. During the past thirty years Canada has had a number of able men as governors, the most eminent probably being Lord Dufferin. Lord Aberdeen, who has just left our shores for his Scottish home, has been exceedingly popular. During his long tours through every part of the Dominion he has come into contact with all classes of the people, and has taken special pains to make himself acquainted with the resources of the country. Lord Aberdeen's success as Governor of Canada is due, in no small degree, to the influence of his estimable wife, who has interested herself to an unusual extent in educational and philanthropic enterprises.

The new Governor-General and his lady have only assumed their new duties, but have received a cordial reception from the people, and their stay in Canada promises to be pleasant for them and us. The Earl of Minto is not quite as young a man as his photograph would indicate. He was born in 1815, and is of Scottish origin. He served in the Scots Fusilier Guards, was a volunteer in the Egyptian campaign, and was colonel of the South Scotland volunteers. In 1883 Lord Minto married Miss Caroline Grey, youngest daughter of the late General Grey. He began his Canadian career as Military Secretary to Lord Lansdowne, Governor-General in 1883. When the North-West rebellion broke out in 1885, he at once volunteered and went to the front as chief of the staff of Major-

General Middleton. Soon after he arrived at the front he earned a place in the commanding officer's diary, and did many gallant deeds at Fish Creek and Batoche.

During Lord Minto's recent visit to Toronto, the address of welcome from our General Conference was presented to him, a number of leading ministers and laymen being present upon the occasion. The address assured His Excellency "that the aim of the Methodist Church is still, as it has always been, to further the ends of good government by teaching and enforcing that righteousness which exalteth a nation, by endeavoring to promote reverence for the divine name, obedience

through your own precept and example, how to lead an upright and God-fearing life, and thereby instilling into the minds of those with whom you are brought in contact the necessity of those four greatest attributes mentioned in your address, namely, loyalty, sobriety, honesty and industry, you are surely fulfilling your mission in this life, and at the same time helping to build and maintain that vast empire to which we are all so justly proud to belong."

THE APPLE, AND ITS STORY.

WOULD you like to learn the parable of the apple that grew on a tree just outside my study window, and upon which I have been keeping watch from the days of its ladyhood, on through its careless boyhood and selfish manhood, until the awful hours of its withered and useless old age?

It had grown where two strong twigs nursed it, and partly screened it from sight, and held it from the sway of the wind. Its summer days were a song. Its time of ripening was filled with defiance and laughter. It looked on the fall of its comrades in the autumn with contempt and pride. No little girl on the way to school should strike her teeth in juicy glee into its sides because it yielded to the push of the night wind. No boy, with his sharp eyes looking for a Blushing Beauty to bring down with the stroke of a stone, or the reach of a pole, or the shake of a limb, or the stretch of his avaricious arm from his perilous place on the uncertain branch, should drive it from its hiding. It saw its obedient mates fill the baskets which carried their luscious comfort into the house, unmoved,—but it said, "How secure am I, and independent and free!"

It saw the leaves fall one by one, and thought their romping was ill-mannered and foolish, as they played hide-and-seek in the fence corners. But the winds grew fiercer against it, and the frosts stung it viciously, and the sleet clung with wild passion to its wrinkled flesh—for all its firmness had gone, and the color had left its cheeks and it was a faded, weather-beaten, ugly thing. One day it fell and struck the ice beneath—a dead thing; a rotten thing. No little girl wanted it; a boy with his strong boot kicked it out of sight. It broke in pieces, as vile as an apple of Sodom, and as useless. "He that will save his life shall lose it."

And so there are men who neglect their opportunity for service, for the fulfilling of their God-appointed mission, until they are stripped of everything of



LORD MINTO.

to the divine law, the religious observance of the holy Sabbath, the diffusion of sound Christian education among all classes of the people, and by the inculcation, both by precept and example, of such sentiments concerning loyalty, sobriety, honesty and industry as shall contribute to a true, happy and useful citizenship."

In his reply Lord Minto thanked the deputation for their kind words. In the course of his remarks he said: "I think I am correct in saying it is a matter of history that no nation can be truly great or powerful unless she herself is held together by the religious feeling of her people. By teaching the love of God, by showing those whom you influence,

good they had, when they are an offence, alike to God and men.

REV. D. W. SNIDER.

Milton, Ontario.

SAVE THE CHILDREN.

BY MISS M. WELLSFOOD.

THE Church realizes as never before the necessity of winning the children for Christ, knowing that, unless we secure them in youth, the evil days will come and the years draw nigh when they will have no pleasure in Christian work. Most persons who are Christians were converted in early life. All religious statistics bear out this statement, and yet with this undisputed truth staring us in the face, the Church often tries to turn the sinner to God only after he has become old, and hardened, and unimpressionable.

As some one has said, the parent and Christian teacher too often say, practically,—“My little boy, my little girl, you are quite too small to be a Christian now, but in about ten years, after you have been for a while a bad boy, a dissipated young man, a light-hearted, frivolous young woman, then some powerful whirlwind of religious experience will smite you and you will be dreadfully sorry for your sins, and then Christ will save you, but you must go through all this experience, you must do something wicked to be sorry for first, you must be somewhat bad before you can be good.” Not that we say this in so many words, nay, any one would be shocked to have such language put into his mouth, but that is really what every one says who urges children to wait until they are older and more experienced before they give their hearts to Him who died for them. We know that many parents who love their children dearly, and respect the cause of religion, yet hold back their Christian children from an open profession of religion, because of what seems to them the very best motive—they fear that their boys and girls do not know what they are about, do not mean what they say, do not realize what a far-reaching thing it is to be a Christian. But we would remind them that the Bible has given us a test for conversion and we need no other, “By their fruits shall ye know them.”

The opposition of parents often arises from unreasonable expectations of perfection and growth in grace. Said one parent to a little girl scarcely twelve years old who had begun to serve God: “Now, my child, if you are a Christian I

shall never expect you again to show the least sign of fretfulness or impatience as long as you live, and if you do I shall conclude that you are deceived.” Now, if some great supernatural being—an arch angel for example—should take that woman by the arm and say to her, “You are a church member, now I shall never expect to see the least imperfection in your character, and if I observe any flaw in temper, disposition, imagination or in word I shall conclude that you are deceived,” we wonder how she would stand the test. We should expect only childlike faith in child-Christians.

Kinnmount, Ont.

I went down among the ships in the harbor. I saw a great many ships, and I observed that they belonged to different lines. There was the Cunard Line, the North German Lloyd Line, the American-Hamburg Line, the White Star Line, Red Star Line, and many others. Now, I said to myself, though these ships represent different companies, they are all sailing on the same ocean; they are all driven by the same forces of wind, or steam, or tide; they are all guided by the same chart; they are all engaged in the same business of promoting intercourse with the other hemisphere; and they all reach the same shores across the sea. Now, I said, that illustrates the doctrine

of the Methodist Church as to the relations of the various denominations to each other. See, here is your Methodist standing on the shore, and he lifts up his eyes, and sees a noble vessel, steaming down the bay. Look at her! See the grace of her outline, the flowing curves, the perfect form. See how she rides the waves like a thing of life and beauty. Go aboard of her and she is finished in antique. Look at her costly furnishings—the mirrors, the cut-glass, the polish and the splendor. See how proud her passengers are, and how eager to welcome you on board. That is the grand old *Episcopal* ship! And she is headed for the open sea out yonder with all sail set. And as she passes by your Methodist—if he is a good one and true to his belief—lifts up his voice and cries: ‘God bless thee, old ship, and give thee a prosperous voyage!’ And let all the people say amen!

“Yonder comes another. It is a very different sort of ship. It moves slowly but steadily through the waves. It was built for strength rather than speed—an iron ship—built to weather any storm and ride unshaken through any sea. And she will not alter or revise her *predestined* course one iota for all the tempests that may agitate the roaring deep. That is the grand old *Presbyterian* ship! And she is headed for the open sea out yonder, and your Methodist, as she passes by, lifts up his voice and cries: ‘God bless thee, old ship, and give thee a prosperous voyage!’ And let all the people say amen!

“Yonder comes another! What a monster ship she is! A double-decker; and she sits *deep* in the water, and the waves leap around her and play about her; for she is a favorite of the deep—the grand old *Baptist* ship! She, too, is headed for the open sea out yonder, and as she passes by, your Methodist salutes her from his heart: ‘God bless thee, old ship, and give thee a prosperous voyage!’ And let all the people say amen!



LADY MINTO.

DENOMINATIONAL SHIPS.

BY REV. S. A. STEEL, D.D.

THOSE who had the privilege of hearing Rev. Dr. Steel deliver his lecture on “The Pioneers of Methodism,” will remember the fine word picture he drew of the friendly attitude of Methodism to the other churches. We are glad to be able to reproduce this portion of the eloquent address from *The Rambler*:

“Let me see if I can illustrate the broad, liberal, and truly Christian belief of the Methodist Church as regards other denominations. I am very fond of ships. Some time ago, being in New York City,

"But yonder she comes at last! My, what a ship she is! Look at her length; look at her breadth; look at the smoke boiling out of her chimneys, telling of the heart of fire that is burning in her depths; see how her propellers are churning the ocean white as she forges ahead over the leaping waves! And see! Her decks are crowded with people of every nation under heaven, and 'all her company rejoicing. It is the grand old Methodist ship. And as she rounds to, and the gang-plank is thrown out, and your Methodist rushes on board, he lifts up his voice like a trumpet, and cries:

'Come on board this noble vessel!
Sail with us o'er life's rough sea.

THE INDIANS AT RAT PORTAGE.

BY REV. ALFRED ANDREWS.

WHEN I arrived at Rat Portage, on Dominion Day, nothing more impressed me than the fine manly

appearance of the large number of Indians who were present in various parts of the town during the celebrations. They were better dressed than I have ever seen any large band of Indians either in Manitoba, the North-West Territories, or Ontario. They all came in canoes, from many different directions, and had they been together there would have been a fine flotilla.

I at once began to inquire about their religious belief, and found that all were heathen, pure and simple, and that there has never been any missionary work done among them except a very small mission some miles away conducted by the Church of England, and occasional visitations by the priests. They have no schools of any account, so far as I can learn, and I have not, so far, found any of them who can talk English, beyond a few words which answer for trading purposes. They belong to the Chippewa family, and do not understand the Cree. On inquiry of the agent, I find there are between three and four thousand in the Rat Portage agency. They have reserves, but their nomadic habits prevent much improvement on these reserves. In the winter they go to their hunting grounds, separating into small bands. In the summer they fish, work at lumbering somewhat, and tow some of them are employed about the mines. Many of them spend a good deal of time picking blueberries, of which there is usually a wonderful supply. These are sold to good

advantage for shipment east and west. Then there are raspberries and strawberries, which are picked and sold for home consumption in the town.

Some of the more industrious work all winter in the lumber woods, or cutting cordwood for sale. Many of them act as guides to prospectors for gold, for which they are well paid, and occasionally a prospector gets a rich find of gold.

I have made many attempts at ascertaining how to reach these people with the Gospel, but ignorance of their language closes my mouth. Were I younger, I should regard it as a most important work to spend some time with them to get the language and then work earnestly for their salvation. For me that is out of the question. But where are the young men who have volunteered for service among the heathen? Are they dazzled with the glamor of far-off fields? Are heathen of a foreign land more deserving of attention than those in our own

would send their children to their schools. He told me of an Indian who could speak good English, and promised to bring him to me a couple of days after. However, he did not come. I have since seen the agent, Mr. Pather, and the new inspector, Mr. Levee, both of whom assured me that every encouragement would be given to any proper missionary work among them. Having far more work in this busy town as a Methodist minister than I can do, it is but little time that I can personally devote to this Indian question, and I feel that I am only partially qualified to write on the subject, and not at all able to do justice to it, but my heart goes out to these people and to some one or more whom I trust the Lord may call. I would say with an earnest heart, 'Oh, brethren, help.'

ORGANIZED EFFORT.

IF a business man should attempt to carry on his enterprise with the un-

organized slack-twisted methods of an ordinary congregation, the sheriff would soon sell him out. If a farmer were to cultivate a few fertile patches, and let the rest of his farm run to weeds and stray cattle, his only consolation would be abusing his "luck." A congregation should be so organized that every member and attendant would be induced to do his part toward supporting the home expenses of the church and its benevolences. Every member and attendant should be seen personally and



ALMA LADIES' COLLEGE, ST. THOMAS, ONT.

privately and induced to agree to give a specified sum to the home support and to all the causes in which it is enlisted. As things now are half the membership give next to nothing and attendants the whole of nothing. It is not a large task. The workers and givers will accomplish more by bringing do-nothings to their duty than by trying to do it all themselves. These appeals for causes when half the membership is absent and the other half bored, is a poor substitute for efficient and thorough organization. The best work the churches can do at the beginning of the business year, is to organize thoroughly for work and for benevolence, the point of perfection being when every member and attendant is brought to do all that is in him or her to do.—Interior.

Perhaps the trouble is that the actual condition of these people has not yet been duly placed before them, and although near by they are little known. A week ago I had a conversation with an Indian who could speak very little English, but in answer to direct plain questions he told me that they had never had any missionaries, except the priests, and they had no books. He said they would like to have missionaries, that they would be kind to them if they would come, and that they

privately and induced to agree to give a specified sum to the home support and to all the causes in which it is enlisted. As things now are half the membership give next to nothing and attendants the whole of nothing. It is not a large task. The workers and givers will accomplish more by bringing do-nothings to their duty than by trying to do it all themselves. These appeals for causes when half the membership is absent and the other half bored, is a poor substitute for efficient and thorough organization. The best work the churches can do at the beginning of the business year, is to organize thoroughly for work and for benevolence, the point of perfection being when every member and attendant is brought to do all that is in him or her to do.—Interior.

A BIRD that can sing and won't sing, is a great deal kinder than the young man next door who can't sing, but will sing.

ON THE ROAD.

A VISIT TO THE RAILWAY CITY.

ST. THOMAS is generally known as "The Railway City," and well does it deserve the name. The following roads run into the city: Grand Trunk, Michigan Central, Wabash, Canadian Pacific, Lake Erie and Detroit; and nearly one hundred trains pass through each day. A large part of the population are engaged in railway work, as the Michigan Central has its Canadian headquarters here, and pays out \$50,000 per month in wages, etc. The yard of this road, with its innumerable tracks, sidings and switches, is a great sight, particularly at night when there is a perfect sea of lights. The preacher who discourses to the children in St. Thomas on lessons to be learned from the signal lamps, does not need to explain the meaning of the different colored lights, for these are quite familiar to even the boys and girls.

St. Thomas is, however, an interesting place apart altogether from its railways. It is the seat of Alma Ladies' College, one of the finest institutions of the kind in America. The building, as will be seen by the illustration, is a splendid specimen of architecture, surrounded by spacious and beautiful grounds. Inside, it is a model of comfort and convenience. The picture on this page is an exact photograph of one of the student's rooms. All the rooms are not as elegant as this, but all are clean, neat, well heated and lighted. The class rooms are spacious and well adapted for their purpose, the art room being particularly well furnished. All the subjects usually taught in similar schools are looked after by competent teachers. I was specially interested in the department of Domestic Science, or Cooking School, which has been recently added. It is

an indication of the practical tendencies of the times that the young ladies are being taught the mysteries of "Cookology," as well as the other "ologies." The room provided for the cooking class is fitted with every appliance for carrying on the work efficiently, and the lady instructor understands her business perfectly. Very little attention is paid to the preparation of fancy dishes, but the girls are taught to make well the plain every-day articles of food that are most likely to be used in the average home. Many of the so-called cooking schools are a delusion and a snare, because the instruction is only suitable for the wealthy class who can afford to have the expensive things they are taught to cook. The pupils in this de-

partment are not only taught to cook, but to buy, and are taken to the butcher shop where they are shown the various cuts that are usually ordered. A department of this kind deserves to be encouraged.

Taking tea at the college recently afforded the opportunity of seeing the pupils together in the dining hall. They are as healthy and as pretty a lot of girls as one would meet in a year's travel, and although subject to discipline appear to enjoy college life immensely. After supper they have half an hour for recreation, and at half past seven the evening study hour commences. Everybody is supposed to retire at half past nine.

Alma College has not had all smooth sailing by any means. During recent

sent. The attendance for this session shows a considerable increase, and the outlook for the College is brighter than for some years past.

One of the most prominent public buildings of St. Thomas is the Amasa Wood Hospital, named after the donor, Amasa Wood, Esq., who was one of the oldest and most highly-esteemed citizens of the Railway City. The hospital is not as large as those of greater cities, but in every other respect it is a model. For neatness, cleanliness, and general comfort it is unsurpassed. Before its erection it was necessary to send patients to London at considerable inconvenience. It is worth much to a town to have an institution like this within its borders.

Methodism stands well in St. Thomas.

There are three churches, well located and prosperous. George Street Church is a beautiful edifice, attended by one of the largest congregations in the London Conference. A couple of years ago the building was burned, but it has been rebuilt, and is now more attractive than ever. The pastor, Rev. Dr. Philp, is very popular. Grace Church, in the east end, is doing well under the pastorate of Rev. H. Irvine.

The latest addition to the churches of St. Thomas is known as the "Hunter and Crossley Central Methodist Church," which is worthy of special mention on account of its unique design. The audience room is a perfect gem of architecture, and when lighted up by the electric lamps in the ceiling, presents a most beautiful appearance. The pulpit is placed in one of the corners, and the choir is located to one side, the whole being planned so that there is not an inch of space wasted. The seating capacity of the church is six hundred, but by opening the door separating the lecture room, accommodation is provided

for four hundred more. In very few churches is this arrangement an entire success, but here it works admirably, and the platform is so planned that those who sit in the lecture room can see and hear as perfectly as those in the main auditorium. The fame of the church has gone abroad, and visitors come from long distances to see it. Recently a gentleman travelled from Chicago for the express purpose of examining the building, and the next week another arrived from Nova Scotia on the same errand.

There are four large and beautiful stained glass windows, one of which was contributed by the Epworth League and has the League motto and Maltese cross. Another very fine window is the gift of the railway men. It is adorned by



STUDENT'S ROOM IN ALMA LADIES' COLLEGE.

years it has been burdened by a very heavy debt which has become a considerable cause of anxiety to the authorities. The Principal, Rev. R. I. Warner, M.A., is, however, managing the institution with ability and economy, and there is reason to believe that there is a bright future before it, if a few thousands of the indebtedness could be removed. The ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church stood by Alma College nobly, and many of them contributed beyond their means for its establishment and continuance. The Church should see that their work is not in vain, by making a substantial reduction in the debt, and thus assure the permanence of the institution.

At a recent meeting of the Board of Directors encouraging reports were pre-



THE AMASA WOOD HOSPITAL.

the headlight of a locomotive, in addition to other attractive features. Two very pretty windows have been donated by Messrs. Crossley and Hunter, the well-known evangelists, through whose liberality the congregation were encouraged to undertake the building. The trustees have shown their appreciation of the evangelists' generous gifts and kindly interest by naming the church after them. Great credit is due the former pastor, Rev. C. T. Scott, under whose enthusiastic leadership the work was carried to a successful issue. The present pastor, Rev. H. W. Crews, M.A., came to St. Thomas last July, after a five years' pastorate in Chatham.

HUNTER-CROSSLY
CENTRAL METHODIST CHURCH

There is no great wealth in Central Church congregation, but what is better, there is plenty of energy, perseverance and faith, and these are sure to win.

The mite-box system was introduced into this Church early in January, when two hundred boxes were given out to members of the congregation and their friends. It is expected that about \$700 will be realized by thus looking after the little.

The three Leagues of St. Thomas, while on terms of the greatest cordiality and fellowship with the Young People's Societies of other denominations, have frequent union meetings among themselves, and work together most harmo-



REV. J. E. HUNTER

REV. H. T. CROSSLEY

nously, one helping the other on anniversary and other special occasions.

A. C. C.

IF I WERE A BOY.

BY BISHOP J. H. VINCENT.

"If I were a boy!" Ah, if I only were! The very thought sets my imagination on fire. That "if" is a key to Dreamland.

"If I were a boy"—well, if I were a boy such as I was, of the same sort, with the same beginnings, the same blood, the same surroundings, the same teachers, the same home (blessed home!),



REV. H. W. CREWS, M.A.

the same classmates, the same accidents, atmospheres, and aspirations, the same interior opinions, passions, and conflicts—should I have come into the same life, by the same path, with the same experience and outcome? Could I have made the product different in any degree?

If I were a boy with my present knowledge of the end, or the state of present progress towards the end, with my memory of the past and man's view of a boy's life—what would I do?

First I should have an early conversation with my parents. I should bring my later wisdom to bear on them. I am older now than my father was when I was a boy, and I might give a word of advice even to him.

If I were a boy, I should want a thorough discipline, early begun and never relaxed, on the great doctrine of will-force as the secret of character. Faith in God is, I know, the foundation. But it must be true fear, and not a wretched terror; the fear of which is a reverent and holy love for a loving King who is a Father, and who is as gentle as a mother, and who loathes selfishness, falsehood, and meanness. If I were a boy I should want my teacher to put weight of responsibility upon me; to make me know and feel that God furnishes the material and the conditions, but that I must do the work of building my character; to fill me with the thought that I am not a "thing," a stone, a lump of clay or putty, but a "person," a "power," a "cause," a "creator," and that what I am in the long run, in the final outcome, I am to make myself.

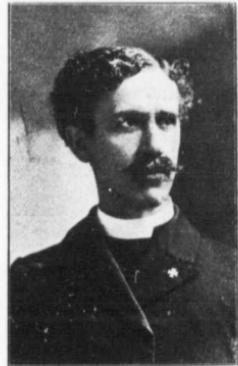
Father and mother, older brother and sister, pastor and teacher, neighbor and best friend, books and periodicals are good teachers. Classes for letter-picking and word-building, for difficult spelling and reading, are very good. Classes in

numbers, for mental problems and drawing geometrical lines, are excellent. But the best class, to be early organized and longest sustained, the class in which a two-year-old can be an advanced pupil, the class that never graduates, is the class in which a boy is trained to say, "I ought; I can; I will."

If I were a boy with my man's wisdom, I should eat wholesome food and no other. I should chew it well and never "bolt it down." I should eat at regular hours. I should never touch tobacco, chewing gum, or patent medicines; never once go to bed without cleaning my teeth; never let a year go by without a dentist's inspection and treatment; never sit up late at night, unless a great emergency demanded it; never linger one moment in bed when the time came for getting up; never fail to rub every part of my body every morning with a wet towel, and then with a dry one; and never drink more than three or four tablespoonfuls of ice-water at one time. But all this takes will-power. Yes, but that is all it does take.

I should never say a word to anyone who might be worried about it, and only kind words of others, even of enemies, in their absence. I should keep no unclean thoughts, pictures, sights or stories in my memory and imagination. I should want to be able to say, like Dr. George H. Whitney, "I have never pronounced a word which I ought not to speak in the presence of the purest woman in the world." I should treat little folks kindly, and not tease them; show respect to servants, and be kind to the unfortunate.

I should play and romp, sing and shout, climb trees, explore caves, swim rivers, and be able to do in reason all the manly things that belong to manly sports: love



REV. C. T. SCOTT, B.A.

and study nature; travel as widely and observe as wisely as I could; study with a will when the time came for study; read the best books; try to speak accurately and pronounce distinctly; go to college and go through college, even if I expected to be a clerk, a farmer, or a mechanic; try to be a practical, everyday Christian; help every good cause; "use the world and not abuse it"; treat older men and women as fathers and mothers, the young as brethren and sisters in all purity.

The Quiet Hour.

THE ANGEL OF PATIENCE

To weary hearts, to mourning homes,
God's meekest angel gently comes;
No power has he to banish pain;
Or give us back our lost again;
And yet in tenderest love, our dear
And heavenly Father sends him here.

There's quiet in that angel's glance,
There's rest in his still countenance;
He mocks no grief with idle cheer,
Nor wounds with words the mourner's ear;

But ills and woes he may not cure
He kindly trains us to endure.

Angel of Patience! sent to calm
Our feverish brows with cooling palm;
To lay the storms of hope and fear,
And reconcile life's smile and tear;
The throbs of wounded pride to still,
And make our own our Father's will.

O thou who mourest on thy way,
With longings for the close of day;
He walks with thee, that angel kind,
And gently whispers: "Be resigned;
Bear up, bear on, the end shall tell;
The dear Lord ordereth all things well."
—*John Greenleaf Whittier.*

PURITY is power. The rose, among the sweetest and most beautiful of God's creations, is armed with thorns, nature's sharp bayonets for warding off attack. Purity is the defence of beauty; modesty is the safeguard of innocence. The severe elasticity which repels familiarity is as absolutely essential for the safety of the soul as genial attractiveness is for its beauty.—*A. J. Gordon.*

God knows our needs before we ask. Then what is prayer for? Not to inform Him, nor to move Him, unwilling to have mercy, as if like some proud prince He required a certain amount of recognition of His greatness as the price of His favors. But to fit our own hearts by conscious need and true desire and dependence to receive the gifts which He is ever willing to give, but which we are not always fit to receive. As St. Augustine has it, the empty vessel is by prayer carried to the full fountain.—*Alex. McLaren.*

THERE is no joy in a half-enlisted life. It is people who go at things with all their heart that get the real pleasure out of life. If one is going to be a Christian it is better to be one out and out, heart-enlisted, active and earnestly engaged. The most useless and only unhappy Christian is the one not given wholly to Christ. Some Christians are a little too religious to enjoy sin, and yet too sinful to enjoy religion. Of course they are unhappy. Let us enter the Christian life with zeal if we enter at all. Let us go at its work "with both hands earnestly." Let us give ourselves wholly. Then we will have joy and such success

as will leave us no room to question if life is worth the living.—*Dr. G. B. F. Hallock.*

A WHILE ago I held in my hand a strange sort of nut, a thing like a small cannon-ball—it might have been made of iron. "How do you crack it?" I asked. "Well," said the man, "you want a blacksmith's hammer to do it. The boys fling them against the wall, and have to do it half a dozen times before they get them opened." As I looked at it I thought there was a more excellent way than that. Plant it in the ground. Let it be quickened with new life from within. Let the gentle forces of sunshine and shower move upon it, and again the old husk would be rent. So it is that God begins to make us beautiful, by the power of a new life.—*Mark Guy Pearse.*

GOING back is sometimes a dangerous business. It may prove disastrous to others as well as to ourselves. In certain mountain passes in Austria are found sign-boards bearing, in German, the words, "Return forbidden." These roads are so narrow and precipitous that there is no room for two carriages abreast; therefore to attempt to retrace one's path might bring disaster upon one's self and upon those coming after. Once having started there you must keep straight on until you have reached your destination. To-day's pressing duties call us forward, not backward. There are others coming after; we must push ahead for their sakes and for our own. Austria is not the only place where there is need of the warning, "Return forbidden."—*C. G. Tumbull.*

THE Bible rings with one long demand for obedience. The key-word of the Book of Deuteronomy is, "observe and do." The burden of our Lord's farewell discourse is, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." We must not question or reply or excuse ourselves. We must not pick and choose our way. We must not think that obedience in one direction will compensate for disobedience in some other particular. God gives one command at a time; if we obey this we will flood our souls with blessing, and lead us forward into new paths and pastures. But if we refuse we shall remain stagnant and water-logged, make no progress in Christian experience, and lack both power and joy.—*Rev. F. B. Meyer.*

"THE LIVING GOD."

How many times we find this expression in the Holy Scriptures. And it is just this very thing which we are practically prone to lose sight of. We know it is written "the living God;" we may speak about Him as the living God, but in our daily life there is scarcely anything we practically so much lose sight of, as the fact that God is the living God and He is now whatever He was three thousand or four thousand years since; that He has the same sovereign power, the same saving love toward those who love and serve Him as ever He had, and that He will do for them what He did for those two thousand, three thousand, four thousand years ago, simply because He is

the living God, the unchanging One, the same as ever He was.

Oh, how therefore we should confide in Him, and in our darkest moments and in our greatest trials and in our heaviest difficulties and afflictions should never lose sight of the fact that He is still the living God and ever will be the living God!—*George Muller.*

THE BEST OF PRAYERS.

When through the grace of the Redeemer we reach the land of heavenly promise, and review this present mortal life from the perspective of eternity, we shall look with wonder at some of the prayers that we have offered, so haphazard, so thoughtless, so little mixed with faith and feebly winged with hope, and will be amazed that where we were so genuine in earnest in asking, God was so generous and sagacious in giving. The truth is that God is so anxious to bless His children that He does not wait for a perfect prayer before granting a blessing, else the benefit would never come. Under these circumstances the best of prayers is that which we might be given more purpose, more point, more power in prayer.—*The Observer.*

REST, BUT DO NOT LOITER.

The junction of Fleet Street and Farington Street, at the foot of Ludgate Hill, is one of the most crowded thoroughfares of London. Two tides of travel meet there, the one pouring towards the Bank of England and the commercial quarters, the Surrey side of the Thames, and the other pouring towards Blackfriars's Bridge.

In the centre of that junction, between two lamp-posts, there used to be a solid oak bench, or "settle," with a high back, and on that back was the inscription, "Rest, but do not loiter." On that bench thousands of people in the course of every day used to rest their weary limbs.

Like that poor man's bench in seething London, stands the unrepaid ordinance of the Sabbath, and over its blessed portal is written, "Rest, but do not lounge or loiter."—*Theodore L. Cuyler.*

ONE AT A TIME

When I was a little boy helpin' mother to store away the apples, I put my arm round so many o' them and tried to bring them all. I managed for a step or two. Then one fell out, an' another, an' another, an' two or three more, till they was all rollin' over the floor. Mother lauged.

"Now, Dan'el," says she, "I'm goin' to teach you a lesson." So she put my little hands quite tight around one.

"There," said she, "bring that, an' then fetch another."

I've often thought about it when I've seen folks who might be doin' ever so much good if they didn't try to do too much all at once. Don't go tryin' to put your arms round a year, an' don't go troublin' about next week.

One day at a time, one hour, one minute—yes, one second, is all the time we get at once. So our best course is to "do the next thing next."—*Daniel Quorm.*

Missionary.

Notes.

THE China Inland Mission now numbers 773 missionaries and 318 stations and out-stations, with 605 paid and unpaid helpers.

THERE are more than thirteen thousand converts in Java alone from Mohammedanism as the result of the work of the various Dutch societies.

ON Baratonga, where seventy years ago the inhabitants were fierce cannibals when John Williams first came among them, there is now a sewing machine in every household and "nearly every family has an American buggy and a pony or two."

A MISSIONARY in Assam, eating his breakfast under the shade of a tree, says: "When I asked the blessing, it was really quite necessary to explain that I was not worshipping the food on the table, but giving God thanks for it; for they worship almost anything."

A NATIVE of India said to a missionary: "We do not fear your books, for we need not read them; we do not fear your preachers, for we need not listen; but we do fear your women, for they are winning the hearts of our women, and when homes and hearts are gone, what is there left for us?"

THE *Missionary Herald* says that the British and Foreign Bible Society reports for the year prior to April 1st that it had distributed 4,387,152 copies, which is more than 180,000 beyond the circulation in any previous year. The versions of eleven of the great languages of India and Ceylon are now undergoing careful revision.

WHATEVER you may be told to the contrary, the teaching of Christianity among the 160,000,000 of civilized, industrious Hindus and Mohammedans in India is effecting changes—moral, social and political—which, for extent and rapidity of effect, are far more extraordinary than anything you or your fathers have witnessed in modern Europe.—*Sir Bartle Peere.*

THE *Missionary Review* gives an account of a remarkable meeting at Ekwendeni, Africa, where a collection no less remarkable was taken, amounting to about \$30. "It consisted of money, £1 8s.; 11 knives, 14 earthenware pots, 16 baskets, 1 mat, 67 fowls, 2 sheep, 2 goats, 105 pounds of beans, 97 pounds of flour, 235 pounds of maize, 34 pounds of potatoes, 62 pounds of pumpkins, and 3 pounds 6 ounces of beads. The money does not include the European contributions, which amounted to £2 18s. The total value of the collection, European

and native, according to native prices, is £6 1s. 5d."

"THE collective judgment I have formed," says Bishop Foss, "is about this: That Christianity, and the Methodist type of it, in India, have brought forth in this generation a volume of Christian evidences of greater value to the world than all the volumes of Christian evidences that can be gathered from the libraries of the theological seminaries of both hemispheres; that in our time the Christian religion has so taken hold in the vast empire of India, among almost three hundred million people, as almost to enable the careful observer to see the very footprints of the ever-living Christ all over that land."

Mission Mites.

THERE are 10,000 missionaries.
Forty million heathen die every year.
They are dying at the rate of 109,000 a day.

THERE are 1,000,000,000 heathen in the world.

EACH missionary is responsible for 100,000 souls.

IN China there is one ordained minister for every 500,000.

CHRISTIANS are giving at the rate of one-tenth of a cent a day.

THERE are 300,000 pupils in mission evangelical schools in India.

A medical mission was established as early as 1824 at Jerusalem.

AT every breath we draw four souls perish, never having heard of Christ.

THE largest heathen nation in the world (China) is represented at Washington by a Christian.

The Red Man.

Bishop Whipple, who has known the red man intimately for many years, says: "The North American Indian is the noblest type of wild man in the world. He recognizes a Great Spirit, has an abiding faith in a future life, passionately loves his family, and will lay down his life for his tribe. He is the soul of hospitality. If his bitterest enemy came to him, he would be treated with as much courtesy as if he were a friend. The Indians are also a truthful race, unless dominated by drink. I have never known an Indian tell a lie. Last year I heard an officer in the army say: 'I have lived twenty-one years with the most warlike Indians on this continent; half the time I have been hunting them, and the other half they have been hunting me, and I have never known an Indian to tell a lie,' and every officer in the army will endorse this. They are also very honest, and have a dry humor. Many years ago I was holding a service near an Indian village camp. My things were scattered about in a lodge, and when I was going out, I asked the chief if it were safe to leave them there while I went to the village to hold a service. 'Yes,' he said, 'perfectly safe. There is not a white man within a hundred miles.'

Amended.

Those were thrilling words and hopeful prophecy uttered by the Hon. Abram S. Hewitt in a notable address on education some time ago:

"The eighteenth century will be known as the era of liberty; the nineteenth century as the era of evolution of force, and the twentieth century as the era of universal education, until the reproach that there is a human being uneducated shall cease to exist."

Shall not the Church amend that prophecy by declaring that the twentieth century shall also be the era of universal evangelization, until the reproach shall be removed that there is an immortal soul without an opportunity of hearing the glorious Gospel? If she so wills, it can be done.—*Charles B. Galloway.*

Words from Missionaries.

Let us advance on our knees.—*Joseph Hardie Nessium.*

The prospect is as bright as the promises of God.—*Adoniram Judson.*

Give until you feel it, and then give until you don't feel it.—*Mary Lyon.*

I will go down, but remember that you must hold the ropes.—*William Carey.*

If I had a thousand lives to live, Africa should have them all.—*Bishop Mackenzie.*

That land is henceforth my country which most needs the Gospel.—*Count Zinzendorf.*

My Jesus, my King, my Life, my All, I again dedicate myself to thee.—*David Livingstone.*

Facts are the fingers of God. To know the facts of modern missions is the necessary condition of intelligent interest.—*A. T. Pierson.*

I cannot, I dare not go up to judgment till I have done the utmost God enables me to do to diffuse His glory throughout the world.—*Asahel Grant.*

It is my deep conviction, and I say it again and again, that if the Church of Christ were what she ought to be, twenty years would not pass away till the story of the Cross would be uttered in the ears of every living man.—*Simson N. Colburn.*

A Rousing Watchword.

THE *Missionary Outlook* appears in a new dress and enlarged form, but as usual, it is filled with valuable missionary information. The first page of the January number contains a stirring appeal for \$275,000 for missions, during the coming year. Here are a few sentences from the *Outlook's* article:

"We must strike as never before for a grand total of \$275,000. Let our Church from sea to sea inscribe it upon her badges and banners. Let it ring out from every platform, and pulpit, and pew—\$275,000 for missions." And let every Epworth League and Christian Endeavor Society, and Sabbath School, and Methodist in Canada say, '\$275,000 for missions.' And if in the spirit of love for God and souls it is done, the windows of heaven shall open and God will pour out upon us such a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

YOUNG PEOPLE'S

Forward Movement for Missions

DEPARTMENT.

In charge of F. C. STEPHENSON, M.D., C.M.,
Corresponding member of the Students' Missionary
Campaign, 568 Parliament Street, Toronto.

Origin of the Movement.

The origin of the Students' Missionary Campaign is sacred. It can be traced to small prayer-meetings and the secret closets, but who would dare say that the Lord told him first, or that he even first interpreted and obeyed the command? We believe that He who is called Wonderful, Counselor, instructed all those who could and would help in this great work. In venturing to look back over the few steps which we have taken, we should not even pause in our forward march bearing the banner of love around the world.

Although many agencies and conditions have combined to make a Forward Movement for Missions possible, yet two comparatively new organizations seem to stand out as buttresses on which we have been able to build:

First, the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions, which originated in 1886, and spread so rapidly from college to college throughout this continent. The missionary spirit was greatly quickened in our Canadian colleges, volunteer bands were formed, and many colleges undertook to send out one of their number to represent those who could not go to the regions beyond. Among these efforts was the organization of the Canadian Colleges' Mission, which, by uniting Trinity and Toronto Medical Colleges with Toronto University, undertook to support Dr. R. A. Hardy in Corea, Victoria University, Wesleyan Theological College, Montreal, and Wesley College, Winnipeg, raised money to send out missionaries. Albert College, Belleville, undertook to support a missionary for three years. Many perplexing questions were raised by the energetic efforts of the students. The chief of these was the difficulty of controlling and directing. Hoping to unify and direct the efforts of this new force, the Intercollegiate Alliance was organized.

This organization, being interdenominational, could do little in the way of legislation. It, however, proved a great blessing in that it brought all denominations together to consider and discuss many phases of missionary work. It has knit together the missionary spirits of all those who have been privileged to attend the conventions, and has therefore done untold good. But the great questions, such as "What can a College Missionary Society do for Missions?" "Is it wise for each College to try to support one of its Graduates?" etc., could not be settled with satisfaction to all concerned, although they were discussed at conventions and in college halls. During these years from 1889 to 1894, while our college halls were thronged with missionary enthusiasts, the young people in our churches were organizing. The Christian Endeavor and Epworth League

came forward to fill a long-felt need. The Young People took up readily with Christian Endeavor or the Evangelistic Department. They had received training for their work in the prayer-meeting, fellowship meeting, and special services. The literary and debating societies had somewhat prepared the way for the Literary Department. The Social Department naturally followed in the path made by socials and entertainments. The Missionary Department of the Epworth League was very much needed but very hard to organize and sustain. Who could help organize this Epworth League Missionary Department better—and who would rejoice more in the opportunity to thus work for the extension of the Master's kingdom than the enthusiastic missionary student?

(To be Continued.)

Suggested Programme.

For February.

SUBJECT—The Indians of Our Dominion.
The Stranger within our Gates.

HYMN—185.

READING—Subject for the Month.

PRAYER—OF THE SCRIPTURES—Isaiah 40, 25-31. HYMN 51.

PAPER (10 minutes)—"On Our Work Among the Japanese and Chinese in British Columbia."

REFERENCES—The Missionary Report, page 35. Letter in January Outlook. W.M.S. Report, pages 78-83.

PAPER (5 minutes)—"On Religions of the Japanese and Chinese."

DISCUSSION. HYMN 233.

THE INDIANS OF OUR DOMINION—References, List of Indian books published.

PAPERS (5 minutes)—On "The Origin of the Indians," "Their Manners and Customs," "Where they Live in Our Dominion."

PAPER (10 minutes)—"On Our Work Among the Indians in British Columbia, North-West Territories and Ontario."

REFERENCES—The Missionary Outlook and the Missionary Reports (W.M.S. and General Society).

HYMN—375.

News from Kitamaat, B.C.

Rev. George H. Raley, our missionary at Kitamaat, who has been taken up for support by the Wingham District Epworth League, issues a printed letter quarterly. As the Indians at Kitamaat are only beginning to learn of Christ and His teachings, the paper telling of the work and its needs has appropriately been named Na-na-Kwa (*The Dawn*). The following extracts are interesting:

THE WHITE MAN.

A new era has been entered upon in the history of the Kitamaats. Hitherto the tribe has largely kept to itself and apart from the outside world. Now a number of white men are coming and going, government employees, surveyors, explorers, also civil engineers and prospectors. Thus far all have had a good influence. No word of complaint has been heard by us. The white men have respected the by-laws of the Indian Council,

and have regarded the customs of the people, and more than that they have attended when practicable the church services. We should be more than delighted if such a state of affairs should be in the future; then should we gain the benefits of civilization and happily be deprived of many evils which apparently follow in the wake of it. What is wanted now is a Christian colony for the Kitamaat Valley, men and women personally consecrated, who, while building up the country, clearing and tilling the land, will be living examples of practical Christianity to the natives.

A REQUEST FOR MEDICINE.

Considering the fact that the young man who wrote the following letter had but little advantage in the way of school, it is very good. This is verbatim, similar ones are not uncommon:

I am Crap river now

Feb. 14 th 1897

My Dear

Mr. Raley at Kitamaat.

I want please sent, me milson (medicine) for me Because I am got sick all time and my wife got sick to and my In law mother to get sick every time, my head sick and my heart sick and all my skin out side you sent me all sam Blood drink milson and all sam like my wife milson all sam you give him in Kitamaat that time he was sick like Black milson, and milson for that outside skin I am Crap River please sent me this river. I am yours

love Andrew Smith

WITCHCHAFT STILL PRACTISED.

"About two years ago," says the *Glencora News*, "an Indian boy was disembowelled near Telegraph Creek, as a sacrifice for having bewitched a member of his tribe. For some unexplained reason no official notice was taken of the crime. Lately, however, the magistrate at Telegraph was informed that another sacrifice was in contemplation. A boy, aged fourteen, was to be slaughtered for bewitching and causing the death of a girl." We have heard the matter was quietly and judiciously investigated by the missionary, with the gratifying result that the boy was saved from a most barbarous death; and placed in one of the "cities of refuge"—a home for Indian children.

From London District.

The London District Epworth League president writes: "It has been no trouble to pay our money every quarter as it has come due. Our Treasurer gave in her report that she had paid to our Chairman of the District \$225 per quarter thus far, and we are praying, planning, and therefore looking for greater results this year than last."

OUR PLAN OF WORK.

1. By getting all the information we can about the need of a missionary in our field.

2. By talking to the members about the field and its needs, and soliciting their interest as well as their mite.

3. Systematizing time, giving and prayer.

This District will try to have the Leagues incited by the officers this year, and we hope and pray that God's blessing may attend our work."

Question Drawer.

NOTE.—Questions bearing on League or Sunday School work will be answered in these columns from time to time as space may permit.

Q. Should officers be elected annually or semi-annually?

A. The constitution provides for annual election of officers only, which is much to be preferred to an election for six months. The latter is too short a term for the best work to be done.

Q. When does the Epworth League year close?

A. The last General Conference decided that the League year should close at the same time as the church year. The annual business meeting is to be held in the month of April, when officers are to be elected for the year.

Q. How can we get the older people to attend the League?

A. Invite them personally, and make them feel that they are heartily welcome. Occasionally ask one of the senior members to give a short address, or take charge of the topic. Determine that there shall be no lines of division between the old and young in the Church.

Q. Which is the better plan: to appoint leaders for the year, or from month to month?

A. Have leaders arranged for six or twelve months, and get the names printed in connection with the topics. Some changes will, of course, have to be made before the time is up, but these can be attended to by the First Vice-President.

Q. Is it wise to have associate members on Committees?

A. By all means. The very best way to interest associate members in League work is to put them on some committee, and give them work to do. There are several committees upon which associate members can do fine work, such as the floral, visiting and relief, social and literary.

Q. How often is it wise to have a social evening?

A. That depends very much upon local circumstances. In some places a social can be held to good advantage once a month. In others once a quarter or once in six months is frequent enough. It is better to introduce much of the social element into the ordinary meetings than to have social entertainments too often.

Q. Where the members have acquired the habit of coming late, what would you recommend?

A. Announce, distinctly and emphatically, that the meeting will begin absolutely on time, and then keep your promise though there are only half a dozen present. In some societies a placard is hung out with the words "I am early." When the minute announced for commencing the service arrives this is turned, and the tardy member finds himself confronted by the words "You are late."

Q. Is the Epworth League Reading Course intended to be a rival of the C.L.S.C.?

A. By no means. The Chautauqua course costs \$7.00, and this is beyond the reach of many people. There is plenty of room for a course, more popular in character, and which costs only \$2.00. The two courses appeal to two different constituencies, and there is no competition.

Q. What would you do with Committees which do not work?

A. Let the President hold the Chairmen of Committees responsible. Suggest work that ought to be done, and urge them to get at it. Remind and re-remind the delinquents until they realize the importance of the duty which has been assigned them. The President should always call for Committees to report in writing at the monthly business meeting. Verbal reports encourage carelessness.

Q. When it is necessary to hold the prayer-meeting in the church or in a room several lines too large to accommodate those who attend, how can we prevent the members from scattering?

A. If the seats are movable, pile up in a corner those not likely to be used. If seats are stationary, have a certain portion curtained off, or marked in some way, which is to be regarded as the meeting place. Do not allow any one to sit outside of this. With the leader inside

the altar, and half of the members down behind the stove a good meeting is well-nigh impossible. If the leader cannot induce those present to come to the front, let him go back where the principal gathering is. In some way, get together.

Q. If it is impossible to attend both League and Church prayer-meetings, which would be more helpful?

A. That depends largely on local circumstances, and the individual alone must decide. As a rule, however, the young people should endeavor to be present at the church prayer-meeting. The League meeting was never intended to take the place of the weekly meeting in which old and young participate together. Never speak of the church prayer-meeting as "The old people's meeting," for it is nothing of the kind.

Q. How can we get young men interested in the League?

A. Let the members of the League interest themselves in the young men of the neighborhood. Get acquainted with them. Give occasional social receptions, and make the regular meetings as attractive as possible without lowering the standard. Do personal work. Let those who know unconverted young men best go after them, and give them urgent and kindly invitations to attend the League services. When they join either as active or associate members, immediately give them something to do.

Prominent League Workers.

II.—REV. R. N. BURNS, B.A.



THE honor of having organized the first Epworth League in Canada belongs to Rev. R. N. Burns, B.A., of Orillia. Shortly after the amalgamation of the Young People's Societies of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in 1889, he sent for the League literature, and at once took steps to have the new society introduced into the Elizabeth Street Church, Barrie, of which he was then pastor. As early as 1883 he had formed a vigorous Young People's Association in Yonge Street Church, Toronto, modelled after

the old Literary Association at Cobourg, but infused with the Christian spirit. He saw, however, that an organization which united all Methodist societies under one constitution would be an improvement. The first meeting of the League was held on October 29th, 1889. Before that Conference year was over, a convention was called of the Methodist Young People of the district. It was the first gathering of the kind in Canada, and was quite successful in interesting the young people in the new society. Mr. Burns was made President of the Methodist Young People's Association of Ontario in 1891-95—an important year, which culminated in the magnificent convention in Elm Street Church, Toronto, with its rousing watchword, "Revivals and Missions."

A page in the *Christian Guardian* was edited by Mr. Burns, in the interest of Young People's work, for about a year. He had much to do with framing the first draft of constitution for the Epworth League, which was adopted by the General Conference with very few changes. He has been Secretary of the Toronto Conference, and has occupied pastorates, with eminent success, in Barrie, Gravenhurst, Toronto and Orillia. Woodgreen, Yonge Street and Wesley churches in Toronto have enjoyed his ministry. In each place he has given special attention to the young people, without in any way neglecting other departments of church work. He was on the programme at the Cleveland and Chattanooga Conventions, and occupied the chair at one of the principal meetings of the Toronto Convention. Mr. Burns is a pleasing speaker, an energetic worker, and an enthusiastic wheelman.

Practical Plans.

Reading Room.—Brant Ave. Church, Brantford, has a first-class free reading room, open every night in the week from seven to ten. It is supplied with the leading dailies, weeklies, magazines, etc., in addition to a small library, writing desk, paper, envelopes, etc. Since opening, the average attendance has been between twenty-five and thirty, mostly young men.

A Two-Cent Stamp.—A novel method of reminding the Endeavorers that have adopted the two-cents-a-week plan of giving to foreign missions has been adopted in the society of the Phillips Congregational Church, of South Boston. Each Endeavorer is given a small box for the collection of his money, and upon the lid of the box is pasted a two-cent stamp.

Brevity.—The prayers in the prayer-meeting should be brief. It is better far, to have five prayers of three minutes' length each than one of fifteen. The one of fifteen is almost certain to set a number to sleep and to throw a coldness over all. The five of three minutes each are just as certain to keep everybody aroused and to increase their fervor—provided, of course, they be earnest and sincere. The more individuals that can be induced to take part in the meeting the greater will be the interest and attractiveness.

The Prayer-Meeting.—There ought always to be distinct topics before the meeting. These topics carefully stated and insisted upon by the leader will give point, freshness, directness, energy to the prayers. General petitions are dull precisely in proportion to their vagueness and impersonality. Specific and personal petitions become from the nature of the case more intense, pithy, and penetrated with life and power. The prophet Elisha's prayer was for the dead boy of the bereaved mother. How personal it was, how burning, how passionate and persistent. So, too, Jesus prayed for the dead daughter of Jairus. So again He summoned Lazarus by name from the grave. His sheep, He says, are known to Him by name. There was an individuality about all His work; there should be the same in ours.—*Christian Work.*

The Consecration Meeting.—Don't have two successive consecration meetings alike. Always have prayer at the opening. Banish all business except the earnest and loving reception of new members. Have songs few and fitting. Discourage—and forbid, if it must come to that—all the various ingenious make-shifts whereby the weak members of the society seek to fulfil the letter without fulfilling the spirit of the pledge. Make it known that the rule regarding three consecutive absences from consecration meetings will be enforced strictly, and

then—strictly enforce it. Urge absent members to send earnest testimonies, and not always in the form of Scripture quotations. Suggest that these messages be sent occasionally (not always, of course) to the more backward members, with the request that they read them to the society. In short, a good consecration meeting, like everything else that is good, does not come for the mere asking, but only as the result of definite working and praying. When it comes, however, it is a golden blessing, well worth, many times over, all the effort and painstaking you have put upon it.—*Christian Endeavor.*

Tourist Social.—The refreshments are put up in small paste-board boxes in the form of a trunk or valise, to each of which is attached a check. Every person, upon entering, is provided with one of these checks. The programme consists of addresses or talks on some tour that has been made during the previous summer. At a social of this kind held in Chatham, Ont., there were three such speeches, one descriptive of a "Bicycle tour," another on a "Geological tour," and a third concerning a "Fishing tour." Such a programme can be made very instructive as well as interesting. This social has also been successfully tried in London and St. Thomas.

Faithfulness to Pledge.—The most important duties of the Lookout Committee are: First, to be faithful to the pledge themselves so that they may be in a better position to encourage and strengthen others in doing what Jesus would have them do. See that the old members do not get careless and that the new members take part in the meetings. Be sure and let those who are timid see that the attempt which they have made has been appreciated. Visit the sick. Labor with and pray for the associate members that they may accept the Saviour's love and forgiveness and thereby come into active membership with all its privileges and duties. Have committee meetings often and let the chairman see that every member is doing something for Christ and the Church. Never overlook strangers.—*The Inland.*

The Corresponding Secretary.—It would be a good plan for the Corresponding Secretary to be solemnly pledged in presence of the society to faithfully answer all communications, of an official character at least. It is a perennial complaint with District, Conference, and general officers that about 60 per cent. of local corresponding secretaries utterly neglect to answer letters of the greatest importance. Here are some of the more important duties of the corresponding secretary: 1. To answer promptly all communications, particularly those coming from League officers. 2. If time is necessary to obtain information, send a postal card at once, stating that the letter has been received, and will have attention as soon as possible. 3. When the annual election of officers takes place the list of new officers should be written out, with post office addresses, and mailed to the District League Secretary, and also to the General Secretary, Room 9,

Wesley Buildings. *Please do not neglect this.* 4. Send written announcement of League meeting each week to the pastor for use in the pulpit. 5. See that an account of all public League meetings is forwarded to the local paper for publication. 6. Let the editor of this paper be kept informed of any practical work that the League is doing.

The Social Committee.—Dr. McGill, in the *Christian Union Herald*, makes the following excellent suggestions:

"The chairman of the new Social Committee was a bashful young fellow, who felt greatly embarrassed when notified that he had been chosen to fill such a position. His first impulse was to resign, or to refuse to serve; but he was just a little bit too conscientious for such a course. Then he had listened to a sermon, on the subject of personal responsibility; and the influence of that was still upon him. He made up his mind that it was his duty to be the leader of his committee in the use of such means as might suggest themselves to promote the social interests of the society. He also accepted of the fact that responsibility for suggesting a plan of work was laid upon him.

"He went to the secretary of the society and secured a copy of the complete roll of the society. There were just eighty names. These he divided into five equal parts, preparing a list of sixteen names for each member of the committee. Then he saw each member of his committee, and called a meeting at a time when each member could be present.

"We can not, as a committee, ask our young people to be specially friendly with each other, unless we set them the example by showing ourselves especially friendly to all of them.

"Then he asked each member of the committee to read aloud his list of sixteen names, and to indicate the number of those in whose homes he had called during the last year. The result was somewhat surprising. Members of that committee began to realize that a sphere of usefulness was opening up for them. Then the chairman continued, 'I am going to ask each one to call upon each individual in your list, whose name is not marked as having been already called upon, within the next week. I shall do the same with my list. Let us make our calls social and friendly, and let us use the opportunity to talk up the interest of our society. Then let us meet together one week from to-night, to compare notes. After we have done that we will exchange lists, and proceed in the same manner for the next week, and so on, for five weeks, or until every member of our society has been called upon by every member of the Social Committee.'

"The above is not a recital of all that the new Social Committee did; but it does indicate how, under the leadership of an efficient chairman, it entered upon its work. It does not require a prophet or the son of a prophet to tell of the splendid results in the society and congregation. And now, what is there to hinder any Social Committee from doing a similar work? What are you doing for your committee, Mr. (or Miss) Chairman?"

The Canadian . . .

Epworth Era

ORGAN OF THE EPWORTH LEAGUES AND
OTHER YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES
IN THE METHODIST CHURCH.

Published Monthly at TORONTO, ONT.

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Communications for this Paper, News Items, etc., should be addressed to the Editor, Rev. A. C. CREWS, Wesley Buildings, Toronto.

St. James' Church, Montreal.

St. James' Methodist Church, Montreal, is seriously embarrassed. Indeed, that is altogether too mild a description of the state of affairs. It is in imminent financial peril, and unless the whole Church comes to the rescue this fine property will pass out of our hands.

Just why the Church is in such a condition is too long a story to tell here, but the fact is before us, and the question that confronts us, "What shall be done?" An appeal, authorized by the General Conference, is now being made throughout all our work. Let the response be generous and prompt. If the

Church is saved it will need the combined efforts of all the churches, and even the small contributions must be looked after.

We should remember that this magnificent building, none too fine for the place it occupies, belongs to us all and not merely to the local trustees. If the Methodist Church allows our cause in this important centre to be swamped by debt, we will never again dare mention our connexionism. This is not in any sense an advertisement, and we are making this appeal unsolicited. The cuts of the building have been made expressly for this paper, and at our own expense. We want our readers to see that St. James is worth saving.

Helping the Pastor.

HOW THE ORDINARY HEARER MAY HELP.

It has been said that "no man can be any richer than his wife will let him." Whether this be true or not, it certainly is a fact that no minister can be any more successful than his congregation will depend very largely upon the hearty co-operation of the people. It may seem a little strange, but it is nevertheless a certainty, that the congregation have much to do in making the sermon effective. There are many ways in which they may help the pastor to preach:

1. *Help by being present.* Nothing has such a depressing effect upon a preacher as empty pews, especially if they happen to be immediately in front of him. The average hearer can have no idea of how much his simple presence in the pew encourages his pastor, particularly if the day is wet or stormy. If these were understood people would make a greater effort to get out.

2. *Be on time.* Punctuality may be one of the minor moralities, but it is

intensely bored. Such persons are a hundred-fold worse than the sleepers in their chilling effect upon the pastor. It is sometimes said of such a hearer, "O, that is his way of listening, but he hears every word that is said." It is a very poor way, and one that should be avoided.

5. Pray for the pastor before leaving home, on the way to church, and during the service. On the road home avoid criticism, but talk over the subject of the sermon with others and emphasize good points.

6. When the sermon strengthens and helps you, do not forget to tell the minister that his words have been a blessing to you. He hears enough fault-finding; let his heart be cheered by words of encouragement.

"Two or Three."

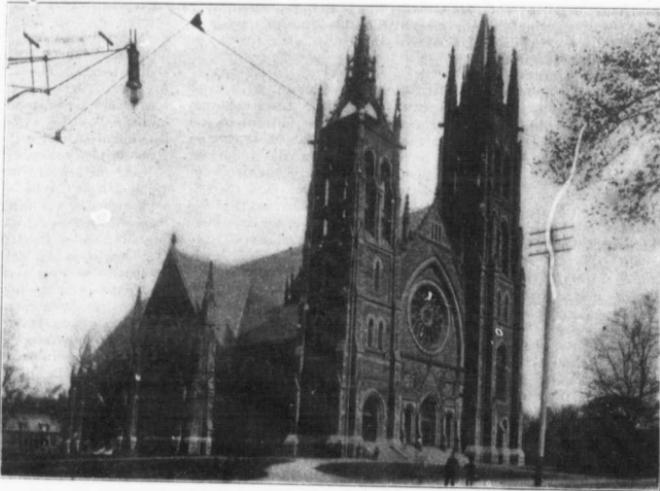
When there are only a few persons present, is it worth while to hold a meeting? is a question which has often perplexed League presidents and pastors not a little. There is a very strong temptation to undervalue the importance of a small

audience, but we believe it is always best to hold the meeting that has been announced, no matter how few may be present.

Dr. Buckley, editor of the *New York Christian Advocate*, in a personal interview, told us that he once preached in Detroit to an audience of three men, on account of a great storm. Some years after, one of these men, meeting the doctor, said, "Do you remember preaching in Detroit to three

men?" "Yes," replied Dr. Buckley, "I recollect it perfectly." "Well," continued the gentleman, "I have heard you frequently, but never knew you to be so interesting or so eloquent as on that Sunday morning." It is a mark of true greatness to exalt an ordinary occasion and determine to do one's best.

It is related that Bishop Randall was announced to preach in an Eastern church on behalf of his missionary work in Colorado. The evening came and proved dreadfully stormy. Only six persons appeared. For a moment the good Bishop hesitated. Finally he concluded that it was his duty to carry out his appointment; the question of congregation was none of his business. Accord-



ST. JAMES' METHODIST CHURCH, MONTREAL.

nevertheless important. A celebrated man once said, "It is part of my religion not to disturb other people's religion." It is always a satisfaction to the preacher in coming into the pulpit to find the people "all present before God."

3. *Listen as did Lydia of old, who heard the truth with "her heart open wide."* Let the ears and eyes be open also. It is a shame to sleep in church. The snoozing pewholder is a damper on the preacher's enthusiasm.

4. *Put yourself in a listening attitude.* There are hearers in almost every congregation who assume a lazy and careless position, fasten their eyes on the floor, and whose whole appearance leads one to conclude that they feel themselves

ingly the service went on, and he preached his sermon to the six people. In the collection which followed was one offering of \$200. This amazed him. The next day he received a note from a gentleman asking him to call at such an office. The Bishop responded. "I am the one," said the gentleman, "who gave you the \$200 last night. But after getting home I did not feel quite satisfied with doing that. I propose to make the sum up to \$1,000; and here is my check for the balance." It is not likely that the good Bishop after this ever had any doubts with reference to his duty when called upon to face a small congregation.

Hackneyed Illustrations.

Do not use them. It is not necessary when there is such a wealth of fresh and interesting incidents to be obtained from the papers and elsewhere. It is surprising that so many speakers will weaken their remarks by dragging in anecdotes that have long since lost their force on account of familiarity. At our recent General Conference a speaker of some note related, in detail, that old yarn about the soldier in Cuba who was saved from being shot by having the English and American flags wrapped about him. When this story was first told in Toronto, in Elm Street Church, by Rev. J. O. Peck, D.D., it

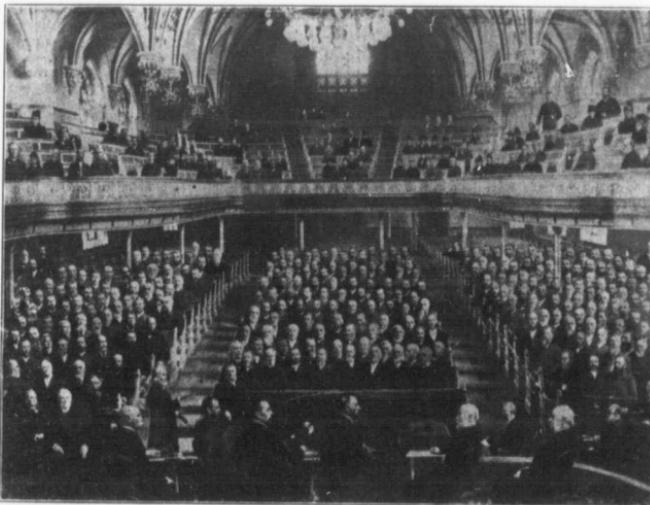
aroused great enthusiasm, and the vast audience burst into applause though it was Sunday evening. Its latest repetition in our city fell decidedly flat. A colored brother who was introduced to the General Conference, actually spent several minutes in telling the ancient story of how the old woman killed the bear when her partner claimed the credit. Illustrations wisely chosen add greatly to the effect of a sermon or address, but time-worn chestnuts should be avoided.

The Pastor and the League.

One of our district secretaries, in sending out report blanks to the local leagues, among other questions asked the following: "How often has your pastor attended the League meetings during the year?" Laying aside the propriety of asking such a question, the answers are

decidedly interesting. The majority of the societies report that "the pastor attends the services quite frequently." Two or three state "that he is always present," while one secretary says, "The pastor has not been seen once at the League during the past year." This district is probably a representative one in this respect, although we can scarcely believe there is an average of one minister to a district who entirely ignores the League. It is most astounding that any pastor could so put himself out of touch with his young people as to be absent from their meetings for twelve months. As a rule, our ministers are thoroughly in sympathy with the League, and are regular attendants of the services.

The young people, on their part, should recognize that the pastor is the chief officer of the League, whose advice should be sought in everything that is undertaken.



INTERIOR OF ST. JAMES' CHURCH AND THE GENERAL CONFERENCE.

The General Conference.

The picture on this page serves a double purpose, showing the interior of St. James' Church, and also giving a very excellent photograph of the General Conference at its last meeting in Montreal, about eight years ago. Inside the altar rail to the extreme right is Rev. W. McMullen, English Representative, next to him sits the General Superintendent, Rev. Dr. Carman, and still farther to the left are Rev. S. F. Huestis, Rev. Dr. Badgley, and Warring Kennedy, Esq. Many of those occupying the pews will be easily recognized, especially by the aid of a magnifying glass. Of course it is impossible to bring out every face in a picture of this kind.

The General Conference meets once every four years and consists of ministers and laymen in equal numbers, elected by the Annual Conferences, the representation being one minister and one layman for every twelve ministers.

Well Done, Vancouver!

The League of Princess Street Church, Vancouver, has only thirty members, but has already sent a list of seventeen subscribers for this paper. If all the Leagues in Canada would do equally as well, we would have a circulation of 50,000 within a month. How was this fine list at Vancouver obtained? By the enthusiastic work of one young man, Mr. Victor W. Odium, who commenced the canvass without the aid of either sample copy or prospectus. Here is an extract from his letter:

"It was with much pleasure that I heard we were to have a paper of our own. By *see*, I mean the Epworth Leagues of Canada. My first thought was, 'How can I aid the project?' The most reasonable answer seemed to be, 'Get up a club.' Accordingly I set to work, and in our own little League of about thirty members I have succeeded in getting seventeen subscribers. Appended is the list. Whenever the paper first appears, kindly do not overlook any of these. When asked by those whom I canvassed to show a copy of the periodical, I answered, 'Anything that the Epworth League runs will be a success, and you can trust that the paper will be worth far more than double the money.'"

If we had just one worker like this young man in every League in Canada, how things would move!

A Delightful Book.

Rev. S. A. Steel, D.D., writes thus of "The Fairy Land of Science," one of the books of our Reading Course:

"This is one of the most delightful books ever written on scientific subjects, whether for young or old, though it is specially adapted to the young. The author not only knows her subject, but what is equally as important when others are concerned she knows how to tell it. She has a poetical imagination that enables her to set the solid facts of nature in such a light that they fascinate the mind. This little volume is worth a ton of that profligate but fashionable fiction that floods our literary channels. Get it, read it, and put it in your children's hands. It is indeed more wonderful than any fairy tale invention ever conjured up out of the abyss of fancy."

ANY local Union, whether it be denominational or interdenominational, which requires the societies to give up their regular meeting once every three months to allow members to attend the rally, is of doubtful benefit. There should be Unions in all our towns and cities, but once or twice a year is often enough for a united gathering.

The editors of *Acta Victoriana* have surpassed themselves in the Christmas number of that periodical. They have produced a magazine of 160 pages, which for the character of the material, general make-up, illustrations, etc., would do credit to the most experienced magazine editors. It is undoubtedly the best number ever issued in the history of *Acta*. As an editor of this sprightly journal we rejoice in its success.

In the December *Acta* several pages are given to autograph answers to questions which had been submitted to a number of eminent men. In reply to the inquiry, "What motto would you give to a Canadian young man?" Sir J. G. Bourinot says, "Be modest, industrious and patriotic." Dr. Parkin: "Speak and act the truth." Rev. Dr. N. Burwash: "High thought, plain life, hard work." George E. Foster, M.P.: "Dare to be yourself."

These gentlemen were asked, among other things, to name their favorite hero in Canadian history. Sir J. G. Bourinot and Dr. Grant chose Champlain; Dr. Parkin selects Brock; Hon. G. E. Foster names Sir John A. Macdonald; while Dr. Burwash's favorite is "The pioneer missionary." This pep into the inner thoughts and personal preferences of these eminent men is exceedingly interesting.

We congratulate the League of Bridge Street Church, Belleville, upon having successfully reached the tenth anniversary of the opening of their reading room. Such enterprises are often commenced with much enthusiasm, but after a little time the workers become "weary in well-doing," and the undertaking is abandoned. The Belleville people have had the gift of "faithful continuance," and deserve great praise.

ANYTHING more absolutely stereotyped than the Evangelical Alliance programme for the Week of Prayer it would be hard to find. The same old subjects are planned for the same evenings of the week exactly as they have been arranged for many years past. "As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be" is evidently the motto of the Alliance. It is no wonder that interest in the Week of Prayer is dying out.

REV. DWIGHT L. MOODY says: "I have become convinced the way to reach the masses is to reach them—that is, to go after them. I have not announced 'Hold the Fort' in my meetings for years. The time for holding the fort is past, and now we must go out of the fort and fight hand-to-hand with the power of evil. The Bible Institute at Chicago aims to equip workers who can fight in this way—hand-to-hand."

We are exceedingly gratified at the number of older people in our churches who are subscribing for our paper. It was supposed that the senior members of the Church were not specially interested in the Young People's pages in the *Christian Guardian*, and that was one reason why they were removed. The old folks find, however, that they cannot get along without knowing what the young people are doing, and subscriptions for the League paper are coming in from all quarters.

WE have received a copy of *The Gleamer*, a little paper devoted to local church interests on the York circuit, and edited by the pastor, Rev. S. W. Fallis. The "copy" has been first written on a typewriter, and then printed on a mimeograph or cyclostyle. So well done is it, that a close examination is necessary to satisfy the reader that it is not the product of the printing press. The little paper is a revelation as to what can be accomplished by a typewriter and copying process.

REV. ROBERT COLLYER made the remark on one occasion that during his twenty years' residence in Chicago he had not known of a single man who had come prominently to the front in any pursuit who was born and bred in a large city. The leading men in every calling—judges, lawyers, clergymen, editors, merchants, and so on—had been reared in the country, away from the follies, the vices and the enervating influences that are known to exist in all large towns. This is encouraging to the country boys.

ONE of our ministers in the London Conference tells the following story: Having occasion to stop at a hotel in a country town, he asked the landlord if there was a Methodist minister in that place. The answer was, "Yes, I believe one came last July, but I don't know his name." Suddenly a happy inspiration struck the Boniface, for he added, "If you will wait a moment I can find out, for I noticed it in the paper a few days ago." After consulting the paper, he communicated the desired information by saying, "Yes, I have found it. His name is John Wesley Epworth League." The League in that town had evidently been doing some advertising.

THE idea of "expansion" seems to be taking a strong hold upon some of the American public men. Gen. James H. Wilson, a distinguished cavalry general of the Civil War, said publicly not long ago, "I hope to see the day when our starry flag shall float everywhere, from the frozen North to the sunny clime of Central America. We are too big and powerful and progressive to have neighbors on this continent, and I trust that before the next administration of the President closes the flag will fly over every foot of the continent, from the northern extremity of the Dominion of Canada to the Gulf of Mexico." Such bombastic talk will meet with little approbation on either side of the line. Annexationists, in Canada, are as hard to find as robins in January.

An ex-editor writes, expressing surprise that we are able to publish a paper like this, with so few advertisements, for 50 cents. He says, "I would prefer the paper without 'ads,' but how you can make it pay is more than I can tell." There is only one way by which it can be done, and that is to obtain a large subscription list. It is our present intention to allow only a small amount of space to be taken up by advertisements, but our subscription list must be a large one in order to carry out this policy. Will you help to make it so?

Prominent People.

MUNKÁSY, the noted Hungarian artist, now confined in an insane asylum near Bonn, has been spending his time lately before a mirror painting his own portrait, which is said to be an excellent likeness.

MISS CLARA BARTON is writing a book on the history and work of the Red Cross from its beginning down to the present time. It will describe in detail the work of the American National Red Cross for many years.

FATHER CHESNEY died in Montreal on the 16th ult. at the ripe age of nearly ninety years. Almost up to the time of his death he labored on a new book, "Forty Years in the Church of Christ," which will probably be completed by his son and published shortly.

The *Conventualist* says: "Theodore Roosevelt's father was a Christian business man who attained wealth by working only five days a week. One other day was spent in visiting the poor and doing good, and the first day of the week was spent in worshipping God and learning how to be good."

Zion's Herald says the following tribute to the late Dr. Daniel Wise: "A Nathaniel in whom indeed there was no guile, living an inoffensive and holy life, moulder of character to generations of young people, with his great work still to go on through his books, with sure hope of an abundant entrance into the other life, he had indeed no reason for concern about 'posthumous reputation.' Great, grand, useful life!"

ADMIRAL DEWEY once gave his men a lesson in neatness which none of them ever forgot. While in a foreign port the Admiral ordered the heaviest hoisting tackle in the ship out of the hold without delay. Nobody could see any occasion for it, as there seemed nothing either to be taken on board or sent ashore. But when, after two hours' hard labor, the tackle was ready, the Admiral ordered that a wad of tobacco which had been thrown under one of the guns be hoisted overboard and dumped into the sea.

Across the Line.

The Cabinet of the Epworth League in the Methodist Episcopal Church has adopted "The Quiet Hour" as one of the features of its work.

REV. W. I. HAVEN, D.D., 1st Vice-President of the Epworth League, Methodist Episcopal Church, has been elected Secretary of the American Bible Society.

The *Northwestern Christian Advocate* thinks that: "A million souls for Christ and twenty million dollars for H's work can, by faith and work, both be secured during the next two years."

The Epworth League Hand-Book for 1899 is out. It contains ninety-six pages, and is full of interesting information concerning the League. It deals principally with the work of the Methodist Episcopal Church, but several pages are devoted to Canada and the Church South. The price is only five cents per copy, or sixty cents per dozen.

The General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church is to be held in Chicago. Local Methodists will provide the Auditorium for the Conference. The gathering will cost them about \$8,000.

REV. E. A. SCHELL, D.D., General Secretary of the League of the Methodist Episcopal Church, will sail from New York, about the middle of February, for a tour of Egypt and the Holy Land.

Literary Lines.

REV. EGERTON R. YOUNG'S "By Cannon and Dog Train" has been translated into the German language and published in Germany.

The latest story of Lord Kitchener is that when asked if he contemplated a narrative of the Sudan campaign, he answered, "No, no; do let us have one general who has not written a book!"

MR. GLAISTONE once said: "The next best thing to the reading of a good book is, perhaps, the perusal of an intelligent review of it. To me it is always a source of lively satisfaction."

The January number of the *Methodist Magazine* has an illustrated article of unusual interest on "An Experiment in Altruism," by James L. Hughes, that ought to be read by every employer of labor.

DR. GEORGE MACDONALD is in a very weak state of health. He still, however, greatly enjoys music and is the loving care of his family. The story by Dr. Macdonald published in the *Christmas Sketch* is in all probability the last thing he will write.

A LITTLE album which Alfred Tennyson presented to a fellow-undergraduate when at Cambridge, was sold in London the other day for \$16. This price was, perhaps, not excessive, for the little book contained the original manuscript of "St Agnes' Eve," as well as two other poems in the poet's own handwriting.

JULES VERNE, the indefatigable French author, now seventy years old, has achieved the probably unique feat of having written books that exceed in number, by six, the number of years he has lived. Perhaps Miss Braddon, among English writers, with fifty-five novels to her name in thirty-seven years, most nearly approaches this marvellous record of industry.

OUR Book-Room has arranged to issue a Canadian Copyright Edition of a new story by Mrs. Kingsley, entitled "The Cross Triumphant." The enormous sale of her first story, "Titus," and the popular sale of her later stories, "Stephen" and "Paul," have made this lady's name a household word in Canada. Sunday School libraries should be on the lookout for the new story.

A SECOND edition of Miss FitzGibbon's admirable biography of her grandfather, Lieut.-Col. James FitzGibbon, the "hero of Beaver Dam," has just been published by our Book-Room. Few books can be placed in the hands of the young that teach more striking lessons of loyalty to allegiance, fidelity to trust, and fearless devotion to duty than the life of this noted soldier who served Canada so well in her hour of peril.

GRANT ALLEN—one of Canada's distinguished sons abroad, whom we admire more as a naturalist than as a novelist—has just written a book of fascinating interest entitled "Flashlights on Nature," the Canadian market for which has been secured by our enterprising Book Steward. In this book Mr. Allen tells of a vast number of Nature's wonders in animal and plant life. Mr. Allen's telling descriptions are admirably supplemented by one hundred illustrations by Mr. Frederick Enock, himself an enthusiastic naturalist who will often watch for hours to portray the bursting of a chrysalis or some other of Nature's operations.

Canadian Personals.

REV. T. ALBERT MOORE, of Hamilton, is trying to reach the non-church-goers, by holding services every Sunday afternoon in the Opera House. They are largely attended.

MISS LOTTIE WIGGINS is meeting with good success as lecturer and organizer for the W. C. T. U. Her experience in Christian Endeavor work will prove valuable in this new sphere.

CROSSLEY and HUNTER are now holding meetings in the People's Temple, Boston. *Zion's Herald* publishes their pictures, and gives a very appreciative account of the opening services.

REV. J. D. P. KNOX is giving stereoscopic sermons in the James' Bay Church, Victoria, B.C. The church is full, and many are seen at service who have not been inside a place of worship for years.

SINCE our article on St. Thomas was put into type, Amasa Wood, Esq., one of the best known residents of the Railway City, has passed away. Mr. Wood did not wait until death to be benevolent, but gave away large sums during his life. He exceeded



THE LATE AMASA WOOD, ESQ.

over \$15,000 in the splendid hospital, which he gave to the city of St. Thomas. Half a dozen churches were erected in various parts of Elgin County, through his generosity, and one in Japan which he rebuilt when it was destroyed by fire. Mr. Wood was exceedingly kind to the poor, and to the Indians, who had no better friend. He lived to the ripe age of eighty-six, and during his declining years found a great deal of pleasure in doing good.

REV. WILLIAM SAVAGE is one of the most active young Leaguers we know of. He has addressed twenty Leagues in different places since Conference, besides preaching nearly every Sunday. Pretty good for a man over eighty!

TENG CHEU THOM, our Chinese missionary at New Westminster, supported by the Toronto West District League, raised about \$200 among his fellow-countrymen in San Francisco, Portland, Seattle, etc., for the rebuilding of his burned-out mission premises.

DR. AND MRS. KILBOURN, our medical missionaries in West China, are now on furlough in Canada. They were accorded a reception by the Toronto East District League, which supports them. They will be kept busy during the remainder of the winter attending missionary meetings at various points.

General Religious Items.

DURING the reign of the Queen the British and Foreign Bible Society has issued 196 new translations of the Bible, or of portions of it.

THERE are now in London seventy-three Young Men's Christian Associations, with a total membership of 13,697. There are now in the world 6,466 centres—an increase of 234—with a membership of 315,000.

"I FIND not how, in any words which I have been able to frame with tongue or pen," says Bishop Foss, "to make any statement strong enough to voice my own burning conviction that the Lord Jesus Christ is taking India."

LAST year the railroads of America contributed over \$150,000 towards the support of railroad branches of the Young Men's Christian Association throughout the country, and the officials of the roads that have so liberally donated for that cause state that the money thus expended has been a paying investment.

SPAIN is not altogether Roman Catholic. Recent statistics show that there are now in the country 56 Protestant pastors, 35 evangelists, and 16 helpers. There are 116 Protestant schools, with 61 male and 78 female teachers, who instruct 2,500 boys and 2,100 girls. There are 80 Sunday Schools with 3,250 scholars.

THE new Metropolitan Tabernacle, in London, which is being built, will be much like the old one, with which the honored name of Spurgeon was so long and wonderfully associated. About the main difference will be the omission of the top gallery. It will still have a large seating capacity, accommodating between 4,000 and 5,000 people.

What They Say.

HERE are a few brief extracts from letters, recently received, showing how our first issue has been received:

REV. DR. WITHROW says: "I am delighted with the first number of the ERA. It is something to be proud of."

REV. PROF. ANDREWS, of Sackville, sends congratulations, and expresses the opinion that "the paper will surely succeed."

REV. J. T. CALDWELL, M.A., sends a post card bearing these words: "Delighted with the ERA. It is the best Young People's paper I have seen."

REV. JOSEPH EDGE, London, writes: "I am perfectly delighted with your effort. I must confess I had no expectation of receiving such a paper."

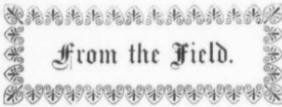
MR. H. P. MOORE, of the *Acton Free Press*, writes: "I have pleasure indeed in extending my congratulations. The ERA is far beyond my expectations."

REV. R. N. BURNS, B.A., of Orillia, says: "I congratulate you upon the general get-up of the CANADIAN EPWORTH ERA. I like the orderly arrangement, and the bright spicy nature of the matter."

REV. DR. POTTS sends the following cheering note: "Let me thank you most heartily for the first issue of the CANADIAN ERA. It is a very interesting paper and likely to supply an important need."

REV. G. W. KERRY, B.A., says: "The new paper is all right. God speed it on its mission. I trust that it may be read by many of the older friends of the Church. It will be a tonic to keep the heart young."

REV. A. LANGFORD, D.D., of Orangeville, writes: "I wish to thank you for the bright, inspiring, new paper you have given our young people. It is just what we need, and is justly entitled to the generous support of the Church."



From the Field.

Brockville, Wall Street.—The League of Wall Street Church, Brockville, has 86 members—72 Active and 14 Associate. It ought to do good work, for it has the best of appliances in the recently reconstructed church. The building does not show to the best advantage on the outside, but in the interior arrangements it is scarcely surpassed by any church in Canada. During the past year the League has held 53 devotional services, which seems to be an indication that it takes no summer holiday. There are three departments and ten committees in working order. In addition to the regular services, the society has charge of a weekly prayer-meeting at the Park Street Mission,



WALL ST. CHURCH, BROCKVILLE.

and about twenty cottage prayer-meetings have been held in homes where sickness and old age prevented the inmates from attending public service. The Lookout Committee made 78 calls, while 250 calls were made on the sick and the poor. A Sewing Circle made up and repaired clothing, and this was distributed by the Relief Committee. The Flower Committee sent out 144 bouquets to cheer and brighten sick-rooms; to each of these bouquets a verse of Scripture was attached, and thus they proved silent messengers, bearing the words of God. The Forward Missionary Movement has been adopted, and quite a number of the members are contributing two cents per week.

Belleville, Bridge Street.—"The open door" is a catchy phrase for designating the nations who are willing to trade with others. It might appropriately be used to describe the Bridge Street Methodist Church, which, since January 1st, 1889, has literally kept "the open door." It is now ten years since the free reading-rooms and parlors of that church were opened to the public. They have steadily grown in popularity, until now it is admitted by those who ought to know that they have accomplished even more than the purposes for which they were at first established. The anniversary was celebrated on Monday evening, 2nd ult., by a union meeting of all the Epworth Leagues and Christian Endeavor Societies of the city.—*Daily Sun.*

Toronto, Agnes Street.—The members of the Agnes Street E. L. of C. E. held a New Year's reception the afternoon and evening of January 2nd. The lecture-room

was decorated and arranged very much like a home parlor. The Social Committee served refreshments to the callers, and a good program of excellent music was rendered. The object of the reception was to provide an enjoyable home-like evening for the young people whose homes are out of the city and who were not permitted to enjoy the festivities of the home gatherings. It was a success.

Toronto West District.—All the Leagues except one are contributing to missions this year. The Forward Movement is the immediate cause. The Missionary Vice-President is aiming at \$500 and is quite hopeful of obtaining it. Last year \$325 was the District's offering to the Missionary Society. As fully half the churches are poor ones this is a good showing, this being only the second year of a systematic effort.

T. H. K.

Nile.—The President writes: "Our Epworth League begins the new year with a membership of sixty-eight, which is an increase since the beginning of the year. Sixty Associate members have voluntarily taken the Active member's pledge. Our average attendance for last year was good when we consider that we are situated in a country place and some members have to travel about three miles to reach us. Our League has not only been self-supporting, but has given \$10.00 to the Forward Movement for Missions and donated \$51.30 to the assistance of the church. In looking over the past we are able to say we thank God and take courage. We are looking forward to a year of hard work, and are expecting great results."

Carman, Man.—The President writes: "Our Carman League has enjoyed a very prosperous year. We number about eighty members, with forty active. All the departments of the League have been built up and are doing good work. In connection with the Literary Department we have organized a Reading Circle. Ten sets of the Reading Course books have been received, representing a membership of twenty. Varied programmes will be furnished by the Literary Committee. The educational value of the Course is showing itself in all our studies, and we hope to have a winter of pleasure and profit."

Scarboro'.—The Corresponding Secretary of Centennial League writes: "In response to an invitation from the Epworth League of Centennial Church, Scarboro', Mr. Edgar Allin, of Toronto, came out on Sunday, January 15th, and gave two splendid addresses. In the afternoon he occupied the pulpit, and gave a very searching, helpful and practical talk, based on the text, Christ's command, 'Follow me.' In the evening he addressed the League, giving a general survey of missionary work, illustrating his remarks by a number of maps, charts and diagrams. We derived great pleasure and profit from the address. It will do much to revive interest in Missions in our League. Mr. Allin is at present taking a course in medicine at Trinity Medical College preparatory to entering the Foreign Mission Field."

Hartley Bay, B.C.—This is an Indian League on the Pacific coast that is doing earnest evangelistic work. One of the officers, Mr. E. T. Patelas, writes that ten souls have been won to Christ at recent services. This is the kind of news we like to hear.

Alberton, P.E.I.—Two new Leagues have been organized on this circuit—one at West Devon and another at Casquesno. The latter society meets every Thursday evening, and also takes charge of the public service on

the alternate Sunday evening from that on which the regular preaching service is held.

Melita, Man.—The League here is prospering. The meetings are characterized by large attendance and deep spiritual interest. The Forward Evangelistic Movement was observed and the Reading Course is proving a great blessing. Sometimes as many as a hundred attend the League service.

Wyoming.—Rev. Geo. N. Hazen, pastor, writes: "Our League is in a good condition. A short time ago we organized a Reading Circle with twenty members, and we are now taking up 'The Makers of Methodism' and 'Fairland of Science.' A deep interest is manifested. We have adopted the 'two-cents-a-week' plan as a means of systematic giving to missions. Mr. John Richardson is our indefatigable President."

Philanthropic Work.

The Parliament Street League, Toronto, distributed twenty-five large baskets of provisions to poor families at Christmas.

The League at Roland, Man., sent a Christmas box of \$40 to the missionary at Lumber Camps, Rat Portage, as the stipend there is very small.

The League of Wesley Church, Toronto, at Christmas sent provisions to fifty families of the deserving poor of the neighborhood. The young folks enjoyed the work.

The young people of Carlton Street Church, Toronto, decided to raise money for the poor, and to do the giving some time in February, when the poor would be in more need of help than at Christmas.

The Intermediate League of Bridge St. Church, Belleville, gave Christmas dinners to eight poor families, and distributed a large quantity of clothing to them, also gave a donation of food and clothing to the City Mission.

Trinity League, Toronto, purchased a quarter of beef at Christmas, and a number of turkeys. These, together with clothing, groceries, toys, picture books and candies were distributed. Twenty-five families were helped and cheered.

The E. L. of C. E. of Sydenham Street Church, Kingston, joined forces with the King's Daughters at Christmas, and obtained supplies by holding a pound prayer-meeting. The scholars of the Sunday School brought books, toys, etc., and there was enough and to spare for all in need. Each family helped received a vast amount of potatoes, butter, etc. The poor children were delighted with the toys, and the children who gave them were equally delighted.

Centenary E. L. of C. E., Montreal, has a Sewing Circle, whose duty it is to repair all articles of clothing given to them and to make new garments from old clothing. During the last three months of 1898, 248 articles of clothing were distributed to the poor. At Christmas the society sent out twenty-one large dinners and two donations in money. The number of those who have engaged in this work is that they have obtained a great deal of happiness through giving happiness to others.

The League of Gerrard Street Church, Toronto, sent 14 baskets of provisions and 6 parcels of clothing to poor families during the Christmas holidays. To patients in the various hospitals, 12 glasses of jelly and 12 parcels of fruit were sent; 26 stockings filled with candy and cake were forwarded to the Isolation Hospital and 17 to the Orphans' Home; 26 articles of clothing were made for the Children's Shelter; 13 bouquets sent to sick and aged ones; 74 visits made to private homes, and 4 letters

of encouragement written. Besides all this, some of the young people went on Christmas Day to a home where husband and wife were both ill, and prepared a good hot dinner for the children.

Just a Line or Two.

The League of Brant Avenue Church, Brantford, recently observed a week of self-denial.

The Christian Endeavor Society of Queen Street Methodist Church, Kingston, has become an Epworth League of Christian Endeavor.

A new League has been organized at Dawson City, Our Klondike missionary, Rev. James Turner, says, "The League promises to be a potent factor in our church work."

The Young People's Society of Agnes St. Church, Toronto, has become an Epworth League of Christian Endeavor. At the opening meeting thirty Active members were enrolled.

THE REV. THOMAS ATHOE, of Lynden, says that the services held in connection with the Evangelistic Forward Movement on that circuit were the most interesting he has known in thirty years' ministry.

ACCORDING to the recently published Missionary Report, the League of Parliament Street Church, Toronto, contributes to missions more liberally than any Methodist young people's society in Canada. During the past year it gave \$108 to the General Missionary Fund and \$100 to the Forward Movement, a total of \$208. There is no other League that approaches this.

Goderich District Convention.

The fourth annual convention of the Epworth Leagues and Sunday Schools of the Goderich District was held in the town of Goderich, in North Street Methodist Church, on Tuesday and Wednesday, January 17th and 18th. Tuesday's afternoon session was devoted to Sunday School work, the rest of the time to the League work. The congregations were not so large as at former conventions; but this is due, largely, to the almost impassable state of the roads and the prevalence of the disease la grippe in some parts of the District.

The first address was given by Rev. A. L. Russell, of Seaford, on the subject, "The Relation of the parents to the Sunday School." Rev. Jasper Wilson, of Goderich, gave several qualifications that would be necessary for success in Sunday School teaching.

The open parliament on Sunday School work, led by Mr. G. M. Elliott, was taken up mainly by discussions on "The Catechism, and How to Teach it," and "How to keep the grown-up boys and young men in the Sabbath School."

Rev. E. Millard, of Clinton, gave an enthusiastic and profitable address on the importance and influence of little things. He was followed by Rev. R. Emberson, of Toronto, who spoke on the Young People's Forward Movement for Missions. He sketched briefly the origin and work of the movement and the necessity of its maintenance.

The sunrise prayer-meeting on Wednesday was attended by a large number, and was a season of grace and sweet delight to all present.

The first address of the forenoon session was by Rev. J. Greene, of Holmesville, on "The Relation of the League to the Class and Prayer-meeting." This address was followed by an interesting discussion on "How to get the members of the League to attend the Class-meeting." The District officers' reports which followed showed that the

Leagues of the District, twenty-five in number, are in a flourishing condition.

Mr. Emberson, of Toronto, led an open parliament on committee work, when an animated discussion took place and was entered into by many much interested in the work.

The District Executive Committee for the year is as follows: Hon. Pres., Rev. W. Rigby, Blyth; Pres. Mr. G. M. Elliott, Goderich; 1st Vice-Pres., Mr. S. T. Walters, Holmesville; 2nd Vice-Pres., Miss L. Acheson, Goderich; 3rd Vice-Pres., Mr. E. W. Vanliss, Varna; 4th Vice-Pres., Mr. Wm. Tamm, Blyth; 5th Vice-Pres., Miss M. Salkold, Goderich; Secretary, Mr. A. P. Sheppard; Treasurer, Miss M. Latimer, Seaford; Representative of District on Conference Executive, Rev. E. L. Armstrong, Goderich.

As Others See Us.

The new Epworth League monthly has appeared and should make a decided hit among the Methodist Young People's Societies.—*Stratford Herald*.

THE first number of the CANADIAN EPWORTH ERA is a highly creditable production. The cover is artistically designed and the paper contains thirty-two pages of reading matter presented in an attractive form.—*Toronto Mail and Empire*.

If the standard reached by the first number of the CANADIAN EPWORTH ERA is maintained, the paper should have no difficulty in at once winning a front place among the publications of its kind in Canada or indeed in the United States.—*Toronto Globe*.

THE CANADIAN EPWORTH ERA, that is what they call the new monthly. The handsome paper pranced into our sanctum for the first time and made a graceful bow. We liked it at first sight, and more intimate acquaintance has intensified our admiration.—*Epworth Herald*.

A new publication in the field of religious journalism is the CANADIAN EPWORTH ERA which is issued from the Methodist Book-Room. The first number is entirely free from imperfections so generally found in an initial edition of such a venture. Typographically and artistically it is as creditable to the Publishing House as it is to the Editor, the General Secretary.—*Toronto News*.

ANOTHER light has appeared in the literary and ecclesiastical sky, and promises to shine with more than ordinary attraction to the eye of Junior Methodism. If the first number is a fair sample of the future issues of the paper it promises to reach a high point of usefulness and popular favor in Canadian Methodism. We wish our newly arrived contemporary every success.—*Missionary Outlook*.

NORTHERN lights glow along the northern horizon about this time. Opportunely, then, the CANADIAN EPWORTH ERA has appeared. The contents of the first number are varied, interesting and of a high order. It has caught the secret at the very start of saying things in a bright way. Surely it is a very modest request that its publishers make for five thousand subscribers right away. Five times that number would seem to be in keeping with its worth and promises.—*Zion's Herald, Boston*.

THE newest and one of the best of our exchanges is the CANADIAN EPWORTH ERA, published monthly, in the interests of the Young People's Societies of the Methodist Church. The numerous departments are full of good things. The editor and his many contributors have made a creditable beginning and the paper should find an abiding place in thousands of homes. The *Christian Guardian* finds an opportunity for criticism on the ERA's first page. How tastes do differ. To our eye the title-page

could be improved in appearance only by a more artistic grouping of the maple leaves around the heading. The rustic leaves are charming. They are formed of sections of limbs, and it would be as difficult to find a stump among them, as it might be to find a clump in the *Guardian* critic.—*Utica and County*.

THE CANADIAN EPWORTH ERA is a beauty, a real beauty. Paper, type, arrangement, press work—all are not merely good but very good. From its handsome first page to its final advertisement it is essentially artistic and up to date. Then as to its contents. It contains quite a variety of well-chosen items, original and selected, of special interest to Leaguers. Its paragraph writing is breezy and pointed, and its helps for Leaguers and Sunday School work are full and well arranged. We were heartily glad when the move was made for a League organ, and now that it has come, and come in good shape, we hope Leaguers east and west will sustain the venture and make it an increasing success.—*The Halifax Wreath*.

The New Constitution.

The new constitution of the Epworth League, containing all the changes made by the recent General Conference, is now ready. We are sorry for the delay in getting this little book out, but nothing could be done before the publication of the Journal of General Conference proceedings, which necessarily required some time, as strict accuracy is required. The new constitution is a little larger than the old one, but will be sold at the same price, ten cents per dozen. Every League should be supplied with a sufficient number of copies to give to each member. It frequently happens that members fail to do their duty because they do not know what is expected of them. It pays to give the fullest information. The old constitution is now out of date. Send orders for the new one to either of our Book-Rooms, in Toronto, Montreal, or Halifax.

Letter Box.

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—One look at your bright paper, THE CANADIAN EPWORTH ERA, convinced me of its inestimable value, but having what appeared to me, under present circumstances, an extravagant number of papers coming to my home, I did not decide to subscribe for it until I read to page nine. There I met with these striking and suggestive words: "This will undoubtedly be one of the purposes of the ERA to make those who read it spiritually and intellectually better acquainted with God." The Methodist Church has still its thousands of loyal men and women, whose words and actions indicate that they are in direct communion with the Source of all spiritual power; but we are fully convinced that a closer walk with God, on the part of our young people generally, is absolutely essential. This, we are aware, may be said of professing Christians everywhere and in every denomination; but at present we are feeling extremely anxious about the young, upon whom the future of our Church depends. We who rank as leaders should ever be careful lest we speak or act so as to leave an impression upon the minds of any that religion consists in cold formalism. Vital godliness must continue to be the distinguishing characteristic of Methodism. This is what made the dear old Church a living and developing power in the days of our forefathers. And upon this rock, vital godliness, we must build for the future. Accordingly we pray that your paper may become a grand success in building up the members of our Epworth Leagues spiritually.

JOS. BLESEDELL.

Sambo, Jan. 7th, 1899.

Fourth Annual Convention, Hamilton Conference League.

TO BE HELD IN CENTRAL METHODIST CHURCH,
WOODSTOCK, FEBRUARY 21ST, 22ND
AND 23RD, 1899.

Our Motto: "Whose I Am, Whom I Serve."

The Hamilton Conference Convention will be the only Conference gathering that will take place this year. It will be held in the beautiful and thriving town of Woodstock, than which there could scarcely be a better place for such an assembly. The Leagues in Woodstock are greatly interested, and will do all they can to make the Convention a success. The pastor, of Central Church, Rev. S. Sellery, B.D., is in thorough sympathy with League work and may be counted upon to help from start to finish. The same may be said of Rev. R. W. Woodsworth, of the Dundas Street Church. The Convention Church is a fine one, as will be seen by the accompanying picture. It was one of the first churches in Canada to adopt the amphitheatre style of seating. An audience of 1,200 persons can assemble within its walls, and every person can see and hear with the greatest comfort. There are probably as many young men in the galleries of Central Church on Sunday evening as in any church in Canada. The Convention will cost the Woodstock friends considerable work, but they will be well repaid in the blessings that will surely come upon their Leagues and churches. The following is the programme:

TUESDAY EVENING, FEB. 21.

Music furnished by Central Methodist Church Choir, Woodstock.

7:30—Service of Song conducted by Mr. Crooker, Woodstock.

8:00—Devotional Service. Rev. S. Sellery, B.D., Woodstock.

8:29—Opening Address by the President, Mr. S. Bruce Wilson, Secretary of Y.M.C.A., Paris.

Music.
8:45—Address: "The League of To-day." Rev. E. S. Rowe, Toronto.

Music.
9:15—Address: "Timely Observations." Rev. W. F. Wilson, Hamilton.

WEDNESDAY MORNING.

9:00—Morning Devotion and Bible Reading. Rev. W. H. Harvey, B.A., Fergus.

9:30—Address: "Work and Its Equipments." Rev. F. E. Nugent, Pres. Hamilton Conference, Hespeler.

10:00-11:00—Junior Department Review.

- (1) "How can we best Promote the Missionary Spirit among the Juniors Mrs. J. E. Hockey, Waterdown.
- (2) "The Catechism of the Junior League." Orlando White, Beachville.
- (3) "The Intermediate League." Miss Mary Hope, Hamilton.
- (4) "The Junior League and the Literary Department." Mrs. T. J. Parr, Merriton.

Papers 10 min. each. Discussion 5 min. each.
11:00—Round Table Conference. Rev. A. C. Crews, Gen. Sec. of Epworth Leagues, Toronto.

11:30—Reports of Officers.

WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON.

2:00—Prayer and Praise. Rev. M. C. Peart, B.A., Roc's ford.



REV. S. SELLERY, B.D.



CENTRAL METHODIST CHURCH, WOODSTOCK, ONT.

2:10—Election of Nominating Committee.

2:30-3:30—Social Department Review.

- (1) "Social to Entertain." Miss Lena Cornish, Niagara.
- (2) "Social to Instruct." Miss Alice Smith, Paris.
- (3) "Social to Uplift." Rev. W. B. Caswell, B.A., Woodstock.
- (4) "Social to Save." Rev. T. J. Atkins, Ingersoll.

Papers 10 min. each. Discussion 5 min. each.
3:30-3:45—Social Converse.

3:45-4:15—Forward Movement in Bible Study and Evangelistic Work.

4:15—Reports from District and Local Leagues.

General Discussion.

4:15—Forward Movement in Missions. Reports from District and Local Leagues. General Discussion.

WEDNESDAY EVENING.

Music by Central Methodist Church Choir.
7:30—Service of Song. Mr. Tanney, Woodstock.

8:00—Prayer and Praise. Rev. E. J. Clarke, Barford.

8:10—Address: "Child Culture, Its Cost and Compensation." Rev. S. T. Bartlett, Madoc.
Music.

8:40—Address: "Something Wrong and How to Right It." Mr. W. H. Moss, Dundas.

9:10—Address: "The Man Behind the Gun." Rev. A. C. Crews, Toronto.

THURSDAY MORNING.

7:00-8:00—Sunrise Prayer Meeting. Rev. T. A. Moore, Hamilton.

9:00—Morning Devotion and Bible Reading. Rev. A. J. Irwin, B.A., B.D., Ayr.

9:30—Report of Nominating Committee and Election of Officers.

10:00-11:00—Literary Department Review.
(1) Reports of Reading Circles from Literary Vice-Pres. of Districts.

(2) "Sample Literary Evening." Mr. J. H. Fryer, Galt.

(3) "The Model Reading Circle." Rev. J. A. McLachlan, M.A., Aetion.

(4) "Pleasure and Profit of Bible Study in the League." Prof. Reynolds, Guelph.

Papers 10 min. each. Discussion 5 min. each.

11:00-12:00—Missionary Department Review.

(1) "Missionary Library in the League." Mr. Clem. Bernath, Palmerston.

(2) "Money and Missions." Rev. W. E. Gilroy, B.A., Arkwright.

(3) "Sample Missionary Evening." Miss Sadie Bowes, Hamilton.

(4) "The League and Moral Reform." Rev. A. A. Bowers, B.A., Cayuga.

THURSDAY AFTERNOON.

2:00—Old-fashioned Love Feast.
3:00-4:00—C. E. Department Review.

(1) "The Secret of Power." Rev. W. S. Jamieson, Tara.

(2) "How to Interest Young Men in League and Church." Mr. J. W. Hopkins, Woodstock.

(3) "How to Treat the League Topic Attractively." Rev. E. E. Marshall, B.A., Port Colborne.

(4) "Christ the League's Model." Rev. H. J. Treloven, Brantford.

4:00—Round Table on Reading Course." Rev. T. J. Parr, Merriton.

4:30—Introduction of Officers Elect. Reports of Committees.

THURSDAY EVENING.

Music by Central Methodist Church Choir.
7:30—Service of Song. Mr. L. Gunn, Woodstock.

8:00—Prayer and Praise. Rev. R. W. Woodsworth, Woodstock.

8:10—Address: "The Methodism of Tomorrow." Rev. Dr. Tovell, Toronto.
Music.

8:40—Address: "Closing Words of consecration." Rev. A. C. Courtice, D.D., Editor of *Christian Guardian*, Toronto.

Collection and Closing.

The Reading Course

John Bright and the English Tongue.

BY THE REV. JAMES LUNDEN.

In reading the best books there is a double benefit: (1) the acquirement of information; (2) the formation of style. It is about the latter accomplishment that I now write. In my youthful days there were no Epworth Leagues, and, therefore, no "reading circles"; but our Sunday School teacher (a man of high and leading to-day in English commercial and political life) organized a Mutual Improvement Society, of which I acted as secretary for a number of years. Our weekly debates stirred up within us a strong desire to seek some training in the art of expression in writing and speaking. This led to the formation of a class under the leadership of a graduate of Oxford, for the analytical study of Milton's Paradise Lost. Before the class was started, a question arose among us as to whether we could better gain our end by taking up the study of Latin, or by confining ourselves to the works of the great masters of English speech. At that time John Bright was in the fulness of his powers, and stood before the nation, apart from politics, as its most consummate orator and as the great conservator of the purity of the English tongue. With the audacity of youth I wrote to him, and asked the question which we could scarcely decide. He replied, with a kindness that was characteristic, in a long letter, in which in a very careful and detailed manner he elaborated his views and gave advice. That treasure (as I think I am justified in calling it) I unfortunately lost in shipwreck. However, though the letter perished, its contents I could not forget. In substance Mr. Bright wrote as follows: He did not consider much Latin or much grammar necessary; but he urged as essential the constant study of standard English works. He advised the attuning of the ear to the purity and rhythm of the English tongue at its best, by reading aloud the productions of its great masters; and he thought that the practice would be especially helpful if it could be done in the presence of, say, an intelligent schoolmaster who could correct any faults. He recommended daily conversation with educated persons as also of prime importance. This counsel which I now send to the press for the first time, believing it will be of interest and use to many, and to the members of our reading circles specially, is valuable because of its authorship; and also, because it carries with it the stamp of self-evident though often forgotten truth. It is well known that John Bright was an unwearied student of the English Bible, also of Milton, Macaulay and other great writers; and from such sources, as from a well undefiled, he drew the faultless speech and the matchless eloquence for which he was so distinguished.

I may add that in connection with our League here we have a "reading circle." We are perusing at present, "Makers of Methodism." Two readers are appointed for each evening, and a short interval is arranged for music. The dictionary and encyclopaedia are in frequent requisition. Interesting conversations often arise during the course of the reading. Our meetings are held in different homes and as many as twenty have been in attendance. We com-

menced with only one set of books—this shows that good can be accomplished with slender means. We always close with family worship. It is our purpose to hold one or two public meetings and give the people the benefit of our study.

Mill Village, Nova Scotia.

Among the Circles.

BRANT AVENUE, Brantford, has a vigorous Reading Circle of some twenty or thirty members. Meetings are held at the parsonage every two weeks. The Circle is arranging for a course of University Extension Lectures.

REV. G. W. DEAN, of Portage la Prairie, writes: "We have started a Reading Circle with fifteen or twenty members. The Circle did good work last year, but the plans are much better laid out, and on a broader basis, this time."

The Corresponding Secretary of the Walkerton League writes: "In our Reading Circle we have finished the study of 'Making of the Empire,' and 'Makers of Methodism.' The study has left our circle of



JOHN BRIGHT.

young people proud to belong to the British Empire, and prouder still to be connected with the Methodist Church."

The League at Kensington, London, has a fine Reading Circle. Fifteen members, and nine full sets of books.

The Reading Circle of Douglas Church, Montreal, has an active membership of twenty, under the enthusiastic leadership of Mr. A. Mossman, who writes: "The utmost interest prevails, and we are certain that the Circle will prove a source of strength to our League."

Suggested Programmes.

MAKERS OF METHODISM

NOTE.—The figures in brackets indicate the time allotted for each part of the programme. Including ten minutes for devotional exercises, the meetings are planned to last one hour and a half.

No. 1.

- ROLL-CALL—Quotations from *Overland*. (10)
- LESSON—Chapters 5 and 6. (10)
- TABLE TALK—Local Preachers and Their Work. (20)

- PAPER—Our Duty to the Criminal. (10)
- CHARACTER SKETCH—John Howard. (10)

No. 2.

- ROLL-CALL—Quotations from the CANADIAN EPWORTH ERA. (10)
- LESSON—Chapters 7, 8, 9. (10)
- DEBATE—Would the Methods of early Methodism be as effective if used to-day? (20)

- TABLE TALK—Eloquent Preachers in Methodism since Whitefield. (15)
- CHARACTER SKETCHES—Geo. Whitefield. (5)
- Countess of Huntingdon. (5)
- John Fletcher. (5)
- QUESTION DRAWER. (5)

No. 3.

- ROLL-CALL—Quotations from the *Missionary Outlook*. (10)
- LESSON—Chapters 10 and 11. (10)
- PAPER—Duty of the Methodist Church to Missions. (20)

- TABLE TALK—How can interest in our Missionary work be increased? (20)
- CHARACTER SKETCHES—Barbara Heck. (5)
- Dr. Coke. (5)
- QUESTION DRAWER. (10)

No. 4.

- ROLL-CALL—Quotations from the *Christian Guardian*. (10)
- LESSON—Chapters 12 and 13. (10)

- PAPER—The Pioneers of Methodism, and what we owe them. (20)
- CHARACTER SKETCHES—Ashbury. (5)
- Gilead Duseley. (10)
- QUESTION DRAWER. (10)

NOTE.—The time allotted for the Lesson is not intended for reading the chapters, as that is supposed to be done at home. It affords the opportunity to speak of specially beautiful passages, and to refer to facts and incidents that have made a deep impression.

MAKING OF THE EMPIRE.

No. 1.

- ROLL-CALL—Quotations from Tennyson. (10)
- LESSON—The Story of Newfoundland. (10)
- TABLE TALK—The origin of the present troubles with France re fishing rights. What are these rights? (20)
- PAPER—The Pioneer Colony.
- PAPER—Should Newfoundland enter Confederation? (20)
- QUESTION DRAWER. (10)

No. 2.

- ROLL-CALL—Quotations from Coleridge. (10)
- LESSON—Bermuda and the West Indies. (10)
- PAPER—Bermuda as a Winter Resort. (20)
- PAPER—Products of the West Indies. (20)
- TABLE TALK—Value of Colonial Possessions to Great Britain. (20)
- CHARACTER SKETCH—Christopher Columbus. (10)
- QUESTION DRAWER. (10)

No. 3.

- ROLL-CALL—Quotations from Milton. (10)
- LESSON—Central America, Gibraltar, and Malta. (10)
- PAPER—The countries of South America and their populations. (20)
- PAPER—The Nicaragua Canal. (20)
- PAPER—The Siege of Gibraltar. (20)
- CHARACTER SKETCH—Sir Walter Raleigh. (10)
- QUESTION DRAWER. (10)

No. 4.

- ROLL-CALL—Quotations from Macaulay. (10)
- LESSON—The Story of India. (10)
- TABLE TALK—Imperial Federation. (20)
- PAPER—The Sepoy Rebellion. (20)
- PAPER—Position of Britain in India to-day. (20)
- CHARACTER SKETCH—Havelock, the Christian Soldier. (10)
- QUESTION DRAWER. (10)

Junior Department.

The Boyless Town.

A cross old woman of long ago
Declared that she hated noise.
"The town would be pleasant, you know,
If only there were no boys."

She scolded and fretted about it till
Her eyes grew heavy as lead,
And then, of a sudden, the town grew still—
For all the boys had fled.

And all through the long and dusty street
There wasn't a boy in view;
The base-ball lot where they used to meet
Was a sight to make one blue.

The grass was growing on every base
And the paths the runners made;
For there wasn't a soul in all the place
Who knew how the game was played.

The dogs were sleeping the livelong day,
Why should they bark or leap?
There wasn't a whistle or call to play,
And so they could only sleep.

The pony neighed from his lone stall,
And longed for bridle and rein;
And even the birds on the garden wall
Chirped only a dull refrain.

The cherries rotted and went to waste,
There was no one to climb the trees;
And nobody had a single taste,
Save only the birds and bees.

There wasn't a messenger boy—not one,
To speed as such messengers can;
If people wanted their errands done
They sent for a messenger man.

There was little, I ween, of frolic and noise;
There was less of cheer and mirth;
The sad old town, since it lacked its boys,
Was the dreariest place on earth.

The poor old woman began to weep,
Then woke with a sudden scream,
"Dear me!" she cried, "I have been asleep;
And O, what a horrid dream!"

—St. Nicholas.

A Christmas Treat.

The Junior Leaguers of Park Street Church, Chatham, decided to make Christmas pleasant for the poor children of the city, and arranged quite a demonstration. In the centre of the Sunday School room a Christmas tree had been placed and laden with presents of toys and clothing for the guests of the Leaguers. On both sides sat fifty poor children of every creed and color, who had come to receive the Christmas gifts provided for them, while bustling around and looking after their comfort were all the little Leaguers. The whole affair was under the general superintendence of Mrs. Knott and Misses Ethel White, Flo Smith and Mabel Merriam. The visitors were first entertained by an interesting programme.

At the conclusion of the programme a loud knock came to the door and Santa Claus was admitted. After shaking hands with all the children, he began to distribute the gifts from the tree. Clothing, toys and candy were handed to all and a more pleased lot of children it would be hard to find. At the conclusion Mr. Baker made a brief speech, stating that "It is more blessed to give than to receive." This had been proven in the happiness of both the givers and the receivers. This happy afternoon was the result

of a month's toil, and the children should be given great credit for their noble work.

The whole entertainment and presents were provided by the children. They asked no assistance from outside sources.

A Junior Paper.

The Intermediate League of Park Street Church, Chatham, Ont., published a little magazine at Christmas, called *Christmas Greetings*. The cover is neatly printed, but the inside pages are typewritten and copied. The young editor introduces his publication by saying, "Most of our members are having their first experience in being on a newspaper firm, and realize that it is a great deal harder than it looks." They have, however, produced a very creditable little paper with many good things in it. The following is the President's address, which we take from its pages:

"If we try to conform to the pledge in all its details now, it will be easier for us to live a Christian life when we are older. If we follow our pledge now, we will be kept from all evil. First of all, we must trust in Jesus Christ for strength to keep our pledge with Him. This is the hardest part—to trust in Christ for strength—for we are apt to think that we are strong enough alone. We have some knowledge of what is right and what is wrong, but it is sometimes very hard for us to know exactly what to do, especially if we are tempted by pleasures that are not right. But we must train ourselves to say 'No.' Then after many tests we will become strong. But at first when we are not strong, we should go to a secluded room, and there ask God for strength and a way out of our difficulties. Selfishness is constantly creeping into our lives. Sometimes we do not want to work for others or please others; it is all self. If we allow this to become habitual to us, it will be impossible for Christ to use us. Let us keep Christ first in our lives always; let us do this work willingly and heartily."

Superintendent's Dont's and Do's.

Mrs. Alice Seudder on "Things to Remember About a Junior Meeting," says some good things. First, some things not to do:

"Do not go to a children's meeting worrying about its success. No amount of worry ever added to its attractiveness. Give plenty of time for preparation, and go with a bright, cheerful heart. Leave every anxiety behind you. Smile and pray all the way from your house to the church. Be like a sunbeam always with the children.

"Don't scold. God and the children will leave if you do.
"Don't go unprepared.
"Don't talk or pray too long. You can't present all the needs of a universe in a prayer service for children, nor must you exhaust too much time in giving advice—even good advice.

"Things to do:
"Be alive. 'With all thy heart and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.' This must be the spirit of every leader of children. There is no danger whatever of having too much life, but I have more than once seen dull people who have spoiled a meeting. I felt all the time like saying, 'Wake up! wake up!'

"Be rested. Don't exhaust your nervous force any more than is absolutely necessary on the day of the meeting, for you will need a large reserve in readiness to draw upon.
"Be child-like. The simpler the language, and the more suited for children the illustrations are, the better the meeting."

How make Junior meetings interesting? Pray, plan, and work. Let the boys and girls do everything that it is possible to have them do.

Have variety in programmes, but bend all to the aim of winning the children to Christ and training them for His service. It will be hard work, to be sure; but what that is worth having to do we get in this life without hard work? I know of no other line of work that pays as good dividends.

It Helps Boys.

I think the Junior League is the best thing that was ever got up for boys. Boys are so lively that they are sure to get into mischief if they don't have something good to keep them busy. Nights and Saturdays, and even Sundays, are bad times for boys, for they get into bad company and learn lots of wicked things. But when you've got the Junior League to go to Saturday afternoons and Sunday School and church on Sunday, and hear so much about Jesus and how to be good, you don't feel like trying to do all sorts of wicked things. I am sure I don't, and I know lots of boys just like me. I think the Junior League is a great blessing if it doesn't do anything more than help the boys to grow up into good and wise men.—MASTER GEO. ATKINS in *Epworth Herald*.

Bible Drills.

The Bible drill is one of the most interesting features of the Junior meeting. No need of monotony here; the field is so broad. One drill the Juniors are especially fond of is questions about Bible characters and places, asked alphabetically or otherwise. For instance: Let them commit to memory a gospel alphabet, or an alphabet of Bible commands. Have them learn "every-day" verses, simple verses applicable especially to daily tasks and worries. Let them search out and bring to the meeting a "swarm of Bible bees"—Scripture texts telling what Christians should be; for example, "Be ye kind one to another." "Be ye doers of the word and not hearers only." "Be of good courage." Select a list of these and have them committed to memory, always learning the reference.

Select a certain chapter and ask the Juniors to read it over during the week, and select what they think the most important verse in it. At the next meeting ask for the results of their reading, and their reasons for making the selection they have.

Drill them on the books of the Bible, and the writers. If the Juniors thoroughly learn these, they will not ask, as one lady recently asked another in prayer-meeting, if the book of James was in the Old Testament or the New. It is a good plan when the superintendent wishes the Juniors to find references, to give out several at once, and as soon as they find them, to stand. This produces a little heartful rivalry, as it shows who has the best knowledge of the position of the books of the Bible.

Occasionally appoint a boy or a girl to tell the story of some Bible hero, omitting all names. When the story is ended, let the society give the names of the characters mentioned; or, ask the Juniors to write out the story of Joseph, Daniel, or Moses in their own language, and have these stories read in the meeting.—*Watchword*.

A BEAUTIFUL silk quilt has been made by the Junior League and helpers of Euclid Avenue Methodist Church, Toronto, which they desire to sell and devote proceeds to the support of Tong Cheu Thom, the Toronto West District Missionary in British Columbia. This handsome quilt is beautifully worked with silk floss, lined with the best saten and bound with good silk ribbon. It can be seen at any time at the Central Office of the Epworth League, Room 9, Wesley Buildings, Toronto. The highest offer secures the quilt. Address T. H. Lockhart, 292 Markham Street, Toronto.

The Sunday School

EVERY indifferent church member is a block under the wheel of the Sunday School, impeding its progress and disheartening the workers. What right or excuse can a Christian offer for indifference in the work which all believe to be the work of the Lord?—*Evangelical Bible Teacher.*

The Home Department aims to reach those who have lost their interest, if they ever had any, in the Sunday School. It provides a wide-awake visitor to enter the home and arouse an interest. The old people, the "shut-ins" and the "can't-get-outs" are made to feel that somebody cares for them; they leave their place in the Sunday School, and are moving in the great current of Bible study.

The *International Evangelist* recently gave a picture of Miss Libbia Lettman, claiming that she is the youngest superintendent in office. The Rev. E. B. Edmunds says of her: "She was fifteen years old, May 30th, 1898. She was then on her fourth year as superintendent of a Sunday School of Woodman, Wis. No grown people attended the school. She became superintendent when eleven years old, and has continued since, and faithfully."

A SUPERINTENDENT in Chicago laid his hand kindly on a little girl's head at an entertainment given by his school. The little girl was the daughter of a saloon keeper. She had brought her father that night to hear the music. At the close of the exercises, the father who had seen the kind act of the superintendent, stepped up to him and handed him \$5 for the Sunday School work, saying, "Not many people speak so to my child." It pays to be kind.

EVERY Sunday School ought to be provided with Bibles, but this is often not the case. A superintendent in Illinois tried many methods to secure the introduction and use of the good book in his school, but in vain, until he adopted responsive Scripture reading in the opening exercises. The Psalms were used for this purpose, and, as those without Bibles could not take part, it was not long before the number of Bibles was doubled, and even quadrupled.

By using five minutes, either before or after the lesson, in drilling the entire school on certain biblical or church information, it will surprise anyone to find what a large fund of important data can be stored in the mind for future usefulness. Knowledge of the Bible, of missionary efforts, of the denominational activities, the evils of the liquor and tobacco habits, etc., can thus be imparted, and in this way the session can be made to sweep a far wider area than merely the lesson for the day.

Do you hear the divine call to organize the Home Department? This outreach of Bible school effort is a providential remedy coming none too soon to bring about home Bible study and home co-operation with the Sabbath School, as well as to reach the many classes of people now prevented from attending our schools. You want to accomplish these desirable objects, here the Master points the way. Is it not His own voice calling to this blessed further service?—*Sunday School Herald.*

A SPLENDID chance to add four choice volumes to the Sunday School library is afforded in the Epworth League Reading Course of this year. The sensible way to replenish a library is to purchase books, not by wholesale, but a few at a time so that attention can be given to quality. Superintendents and librarians will make no mistake

in getting the League Reading Course for the use of the teachers and older scholars. They are cheaper than any other books that can be procured. Write and get them before the stock is exhausted.

Grace Church Sunday School.

The Sunday School of Grace Church, Winnipeg, is one of the largest in Canada, having a membership of 845, and it is doing a great and good work. The average attendance is 500, but often there are over 600 persons present. One of the reasons for this large attendance is the attractive nature of the service, a bright and interesting programme being presented every Sunday afternoon.

At a quarter to three o'clock a song service, led by an orchestra of fifteen instruments, begins in the school room. This is always largely attended, and the seating capacity of the school every Sunday is sorely taxed. An instrumental or vocal solo is generally included in the programme.

The adult Bible-class, which meets in the body of the church, is in charge of Mr. E. L. Taylor, and has a large membership.

The school has been favored with excellent superintendents, which accounts, to a



MR. W. H. PARR.
SUPERINTENDENT GRACE CHURCH SUNDAY SCHOOL.

considerable extent, for its success. Under the direction of Mr. S. R. Parsons a very high state of efficiency was reached, and when Mr. Parsons left the city it was a great loss to Grace Church. The work was, however, well carried on by Mr. W. D. Pettigrew, who although a very busy business man gave great attention to Sunday School work. The present superintendent, Mr. W. H. Parr, is a young man to hold so responsible a position, but he is full of energy and devotion to the work. A very superior staff of teachers is associated with him, and harmony prevails everywhere. The school has a library of a thousand volumes. All the departments are well sustained, but special emphasis is being laid upon the Home Department, under the direction of Mr. Thos. Ryan.

International S. S. Convention.

The Ninth International (Fourteenth National) Sunday School Convention, representing the United States, the British North American Possessions and Mexico, will be held (D.V.) in the city of Atlanta, Ga., April 27th to 30th, 1899.

The International Sunday School Lesson Committee will meet on Tuesday, April 25th.

The International Sunday School Executive Committee will meet on Wednesday morning, April 26th, at ten o'clock.

The International Sunday School Field Association will meet Wednesday morning,

April 26th, at ten o'clock, in the First M. E. Church South.

The Sessions of the Convention will be held in the Opera House, beginning Thursday morning, April 27th, at nine o'clock, and continuing until Saturday evening.

Special meetings will be arranged for the Lord's Day.

Ontario is entitled to send 60 delegates, Quebec 16, New Brunswick 30, Manitoba 12, Newfoundland 8, North-West Territories 16.

Suggestions.

The Sunday School of Broadway Tabernacle, Toronto, has issued a little local paper which is printed on a postal card. From it we select the following valuable suggestions to teachers:

Be punctual. School session begins at 3 o'clock, but any teacher who is not in his place at least ten minutes before that hour is LATE. The wise teacher will make valuable use of those ten minutes.

During the opening and closing services, sit with your class in front of you, not behind you.

Be as careful in looking after the hymn books as if they were your own personal property. At the close of the school, the box—not the floor—is the place for them.

Do you ever mention the Home Department to your scholars? If not, why not? You should not rest satisfied until each scholar's parents are members of the Department; or, better still, regular attendants at school.

Give the Sunday School your first and best; its importance demands it!

Four things you should seek to secure from each member of your class each Sunday: A studied lesson, the memory verses, his own Bible, an offering; yes, there are five: attendance at one preaching service.

A sick scholar is your opportunity.

Some good books which would be found helpful in preparing the present lessons: "The Life of Christ," by Farrar, Ederheim, Geikie, or Stalker; "Why Four Gospels?" by Gregory; "The Story of Jesus Christ," by Elizabeth S. Phelps; "The Messages of the Books," by Farrar; and "The Interwoven Gospels," by Wm. Pittenger.

When the bell rings, it is for you as much as for your scholars. Set a good example by promptly heeding its signals.

No Sunday School class can be successful in the highest degree that does not make much of class organization. If you have but five or six scholars, give each of them an office, with some definite work to do.

New Year's Rallies.

For five years past the Sunday Schools of Toronto have held a great union meeting in Massey Hall on New Year's morning following the example of Montreal and Winnipeg. Other cities have gradually adopted the same beautiful custom, until now we have a chain of meetings reaching across the Continent. On New Year's day of this year gatherings were held in Montreal, Toronto, Hamilton, Winnipeg and Victoria, and happy greetings were exchanged between the different cities. The Toronto meeting was the largest yet held, the Massey Hall being well filled. Forty schools were represented, having a membership of 17,842. Last year these schools raised for all purposes the handsome sum of \$14,381. We would like to see similar rallies held in London, St. Thomas, Belleville and other cities. It is a practice that helps greatly in the cultivation of the Connexion spirit.

Devotional Service.

By REV. T. J. PARR, M.A.

FEB. 5.—"IDLE IN THE MARKET-PLACE."

Mat. 20: 1-16.

HOME READINGS.

Mon., Jan. 30. The idle talent Mat. 25: 24-30.
Tues., Jan. 31. Idle words Mat. 12: 33-37.
Wed., Feb. 1. Sowing, morning and evening Lev. 11: 3-6.

Thurs., Feb. 2. Fasting attire 2 Cor. 11: 23-28.
Fri., Feb. 3. The night cometh John 9: 1-17.
Sat., Feb. 4. Laborers are few Mat. 9: 26-38.

Here is a striking parable, one as little understood in its meaning as it is remarkable in its form. It has twentieth century lessons, has this first century parable. And what teaching of the great Master, parabolical or otherwise, has not its application to modern life? Christ spoke not for the first century merely, but for all time; not for Palestine only, but for the whole world. The narrative for the week's study forms a part of Christ's answer to Peter's question, "Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?" In that question lurks the spirit of the hireling. There seems to be a demand for so much pay for so much work. Instead of regarding reward for service as a favor, the question seems to claim it as a right. It is against this necessary spirit, worldly and unchristian, that the parable is directed. It is not intended to teach that all workers in the Kingdom of God receive equal reward; for we are instructed in other places in the Bible that this is not the case. Nor is it the purpose of the Master to imply that the performance of great service for Him necessarily insures a great reward, although that may be true. The heart of the whole parable is a stern rebuke against the reduction of the hireling spirit of the world into the affairs of the Kingdom of Heaven. The spirit in which one renders service for God determines its character. The motive, the intent, is the essential thing. Christ wants love of Him, not love of reward, to inspire men.

Having pointed out the motive of the parable, learn now some of its plain and practical teachings which God gives us well presents, for it is the practical view of the moral situation which is most helpful to our busy Leaguers.

1. **PRIDE GOETH BEFORE A FALL.**—For many centuries, and all alone, the Jews had been laboring in the Lord's vineyard; while the Gentiles, wholly given up to every species of idolatry, had been standing unhired and idle—living without God or divine hope in the world. They were now about to be admitted to equal privileges with the Jews. They were to be received into the fold of the Church which recognizes no distinctions, but which is as wide as God's mercy. Christ shows that the Jews, by their own willful and wicked procedure, forfeited the favor of God and were dismissed from the glorious honors and gracious rewards of service. Building our hopes on any external religious advantage is vain. "God is spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth." "I'm a Methodist"; "I'm a Baptist"; "I'm an Episcopalian"—all this is useless. Outward religious forms amount to nothing, unless there is personal faith in Christ and loyal service in His name. The Jews, failing to serve, were discharged. The Gentiles, unhired but willing to work, were summoned and received. Here is the true test of the perpetuity of any institution. Serve and you live; cease to serve and you die. Epworth Leaguer, this applies to you, O Epworth Leaguer, thou youthful, mighty giant, in this is found your life or death!

2. **SELFBISHNESS AND SELF-RIGHTEDNESS.** In Peter's question there are traces of a selfish and self-righteous spirit. He and his companions had not left great possessions to follow Jesus as the rich young ruler had, with whom he was probably comparing himself. They were fishermen, and earned a precarious livelihood from the troublous sea. And yet he puts in a claim of merit and reward under cover of devotion to Him. He says, "Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee," asking, "What shall we have therefore?" As if it were not enough to have Christ for his reward. "What shall we have?" In modern parlance, "What money is there in it?" a question which points more to his personal profit, than to his soul's welfare, or Christ's honor.

We are not called into the vineyard to sit idle by our kind. So the great Teacher told the parable which declares that those who stand on the value of their works alone, forfeit their Lord's favor; that those who enter the Lord's vineyard merely for the grapes they can eat, or for the worldly advantage which such a situation will afford, shall be dismissed from this position, while those who work in one hour in the true spirit of Christian service obtain their reward, salvation, is not of works, but of grace. "Not by works of righteousness that we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us."

3. **NOT IDLENESS, BUT CHRISTIAN ACTIVITY REQUIRED.**—"Show me thy faith by thy works" is the demand of James; "Be careful to maintain good works" is the counsel of Paul, and the testimony of the whole Bible, that faith without works is dead. We are not called into the vineyard to sit idle, to fold our hands and slumber. In amending our habits, in cultivating our hearts, in resisting temptation, in conquering besetting sins, in fighting the good fight of faith, in being instant in season and out of season, in keeping our banner flying, and in winning, step by step, the way to heaven, how much have we to do! An idle Christian is as much a contradiction in terms as a dishonest, or a Sabbath-breaking, or a hypocrite Christian. No Christian liveth for himself—in a world bleeding from so many wounds, so afflicted with sorrow, and suffering, and oppression, and ignorance, and wrong, and crime, where sinners perish around us as in a great shipwreck, crying, "Help, we perish." Instead of having nothing to do, Leaguers, might we not wish to have a thousand heads to plant, and a thousand hearts to feel, and a thousand hands to work, the zeal of Paul, the wisdom of Solomon, and the years of Methuselah!

4. **INDUSTRIOUS IDLENESS—A PARADOX.**—In that crowd in the market-place of idle men, some were talking, some laughing, some yawning, some sleeping, some playing, and yet none working in the vineyards, a picture of the world surely, where people, busy in their daily toil for bread, keep in mind of wealth, or pleasure, or fame, have not one hour to spare for the things that belong to salvation and their everlasting peace. Busy and yet idle! We might go to the counting-room, the crowded shop, the silent study, the public assembly, the festive hall, the applauding theatre, the whirling ball-room, and say, "Why stand ye here idle all the day?" For a man is idle unless he serves God in the activities of his life. God calls men from such busy trifling, from the life of laborious idleness to a service which is as pleasant as it is profitable, as graceful as it is dutiful, saying, "Work while it is called to-day, seeing that the night cometh when no man can work."

The case of the men hired at the eleventh hour affords no encouragement to procrastination. They had not been hired, they had not been called till that late hour, and they instantly responded. The parable teaches promptness, not procrastination. He would be a strange man in this day and age who could truthfully say, "I have never heard the Gospel message—I have not been

called—no man hath hired me." The call has gone forth—"Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation."

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS:

What God does: Rom. 3: 24; 1 Cor. 4: 7; Eph. 2: 8; 2 Tim. 1: 9; Titus 3: 5.

What we must do: 1 Chron. 22: 16; Prov. 10: 4; Eccl. 9: 10; Isa. 52: 1; Amos 6: 1; Rom. 12: 11; Eph. 4: 28; Luke 2: 49; John 5: 17; 9: 4; Prov. 6: 6; 24: 30-32; Titus 2: 14.

FEB. 12.—"THE JOY IN FINDING THE LOST."

Luke 15: 1-10.

HOME READINGS.

Mon., Feb. 6. The joy of the shepherd. Mat. 18: 12-14.
Tues., Feb. 7. The joy of the sinner. Luke 10: 1-17.
Wed., Feb. 8. The joy of sorrow and repentance. John 4: 35-38.

Thurs., Feb. 9. Joy amid persecution. Luke 21: 30-34.
Fri., Feb. 10. Returning with joy. Ps. 126: 1-6.
Sat., Feb. 11. Lasting joy. Dan. 12: 1-3.

In this fifteenth chapter of Luke are three parables. Each states the joy experienced over a saved soul—joy on earth, joy in heaven. Each narrative represents the sinner in a peculiar condition; for the parable of the lost sheep represents the stupid and bewildered sinner; that of the lost piece of money, the sinner unconscious of himself and of his own real worth; that of the prodigal son, the conscious and voluntary sinner, the most serious and aggravated case. Indeed, the first two parables are an inseparable pair. They are a double star; you cannot tell how much light comes from the one, or how much from the other. They are alike, for in each there is a loss, a seeking, a joyful finding. They differ in the extent of the loss, the manner of the loss, and the toil of recovery. Again they are alike in teaching the lesson as to the lost condition of the sinner, the power and willingness of God to save, and the importance with which God and angels regard each sinner's salvation. They vary in giving different views of the sinner. He is stupid, weak and foolish like a sheep. He is dead and helpless like the tarnished coin. The shepherd represents Christ's active and atoning work for man's salvation; the woman's activity illustrates the work of salvation in the soul itself—enlightening, cleansing, transforming to fit it for acceptable service, and close relationship with God.

1. **THE SHEPHERD'S SEARCH.**—Beautiful and heart-touching as this picture is, of the shepherd away among the barren mountains searching minutely in every ravine and thicket, it wants a little explanation, says Maclaren, in order to be brought into correspondence with the fact which it expresses. For his search for his lost property is not in ignorance of where it is, and his finding of it is not his discovery of his sheep, but the shepherd's discovery of the shepherd. We have to remember wherein consists the loss before we can understand wherein consists the search. God's possession of man is not simply His possession by creation. There is only one way in which spirit can own spirit, or heart can possess heart, and that is through the voluntary yielding and love of the one to the other. So Jesus Christ, who, in all His seeking after us men, is the voice and hand of Almighty Love, does not count that He has found a man until the man has learned to love Him. For He loses us when we are alienated from Him, when we cease to trust Him. The search, then, is for love, for trust, for obedience. The shepherd's seeking is shown in the way by which the love in Jesus Christ moves round about our closed hearts, looking for an entrance. He left the ninety and nine that were safe on the high peak of the mountains of God, and came down among us, out into the wilderness, to seek and to save that which was lost. And here, in our midst, that unseen Form is passing along and speaking to

our souls. He seeks each of us by the inner voices of our hearts and minds, by those strange whisperings which sometimes we hear, by the convictions of duty and truth which at times flash across our inner being. He is seeking us by our unrest, by our yearnings after we know not what, by our dim dissatisfaction which insists upon making itself felt in the midst of joys and delights, and which the world fails to satisfy as much as it fails to interpret. In these and in other ways the Shepherd is seeking, and happy are they who will be found of Him.

2. THE SEARCH INTERRUPTED.—It seems an absurdity, and yet it is a great life-lesson—that Christ's effort can fail and be thwarted. Not that His search is careless, but that we shroud ourselves in darkness through which His love can find no way. The infinite love of Christ is free from all blame. God appeals to us in the strongest, tenderest ways, and says, "What more could have been done to thy vineyard that I have not done unto it?" Nothing has been left undone on God's part, but men turn away from Christ's appeals, and are unwilling to have this man to save them, or to rule over them. And one great reason for this resistance of divine love is that men do not believe that they need that love. Some think they are in the flock when they are not. Some have no taste for the sweet pastures that are provided, and would rather starve where they are. It is solemnly true that we do not need to do anything to put the Shepherd away. A deaf ear hears not. "I called and ye refused. I stretched out my hands and no man regarded." That is all! That is what we do, and that is enough to miss the heavenly music for ever.

3. THE SEARCH PROLONGED.—"Until he find it." That is a wonderful and merciful sentence. It indicates the vastness of Christ's perseverance, and patient forgiveness. Men tire of searching. Can a mother forget or abandon the seeking after a lost child? Yes! if it has gone on for so long as to show that further search is hopeless, she will go home and nurse her sorrow in her heart. It is another thing that the word "until" indicates, viz., the possibility of bringing back those who have gone farthest away and have been longest absent. The world has a great deal to say about incurable cases of moral deformity. Christ knows nothing about 'incurable cases.' And in accomplishing this task, our Leaguers must remember, that it is one by one, and not in the mass, that souls are saved. Jesus saves the Samaritan woman by convincing her of the depth of her need; He saves Zaccheus by inviting him to receive Him into his house as his guest and Redeemer; He saves Nicodemus by showing him the necessity of being born from above before he could enter the kingdom of heaven; and He saves Mary Magdalen by delivering her from the power of seven evil spirits. Oh, that each Leaguer of the eighty thousands in the Canadian Church would win at least one soul for Christ during this bright new year.

4. THE JOY OF FINDING.—Christ experienced a rapture of delight when He found a lost sheep. Witness His bearing at the well of Sychar when His joy over the repentance of the woman of Samaria made Him forget hunger, inasmuch that the disciples wondered if any man had given him to eat. That joy, combined with a true, honest, experienced, made all His burdens light, made every trial seem itself, abhorrent to His sensitive nature, more than bearable. Then, it is the Good Shepherd himself that rejoices over his own recovered property; but so vast and expansive is it, he calleth his whole celestial family to rejoice with him. In this sense, it is joy "in the presence of the angels of God," they catch the flying joy, sharing it with the Great Deliverer. But this joy is not a successful finding is terrestrial as well as celestial. There is joy among men as well as among angels. The poet speaks of "the luxury of doing good." But the ecstasy of soul ex-

perienced by the one who is instrumental in saving a soul from death is a foretaste of heaven itself, is a paradise possessed. Have you ever known that joy, fellow-worker!

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS:

2 Chron. 15: 2; P's. 27: 4, 8; Prov. 8: 17; Matt. 6: 33; Luke 19: 10; Col. 3: 1; Neh. 8: 10; P's. 126: 3; Rom. 14: 17; P's. 9: 14; 1 Thess. 2: 19; Acts 8: 39.

FEB. 19.—"A MISSIONARY CHURCH."

(A MISSIONARY MEETING.)

Acts 13: 1-12.

HOME READINGS.

Mon., Feb. 13. The Church commissioned. Acts 1: 6, 8. Tues., Feb. 14. Witnessing in Jerusalem. Acts 4: 23, 33. Wed., Feb. 15. Witnessing in Judaea. Acts 8: 1-14. Thurs., Feb. 16. Witnessing in Samaria. Acts 8: 5-17. Fri., Feb. 17. Unto the uttermost part. Acts 13: 1-12. Sat., Feb. 18. Except they be sent. Acts 13: 25, 26; Rom. 10: 14, 15.

The Church at Antioch, from which went forth the first missionaries, was a true church. Its chief president was the Holy Spirit. Its ministers had various gifts, prophets, teachers, missionaries. Its membership was mixed, not confined to one class, but composed of Jews and Gentiles. Its doctrine was evangelical, consisting of the tenets of the Gospel. Its worship was scriptural, including fasting and prayer. Its spirit was missionary, sending forth the first evangelists to the heathen. From such churches all through the ages, great religious lights have come to evangelize and bless the world. If you are faithful and efficient foreign missionaries, look well to the home church.

1. WHO WERE THE FIRST MISSIONARIES?—Their homes shall be remembered and honored as long as the world stands. In the scroll of history's greatest heroes and benefactors, these men shall find a permanent place, the first missionaries of the Cross, Barnabas and Saul. These were men of faith, gifts and graces. They were first converted, then consecrated. They were men of fine natural endowment, and of broad culture and experience, fitting sample of the men whom the modern Church should send to the missionary field. These two men were both prophets and teachers, two important offices in the early Church—a prophet being one who authoritatively uttered divine communications; a teacher, one who had the gift of teaching and explaining what the prophet uttered.

2. HOW WERE THEY CALLED TO THE WORK?—It is correct to say that these first missionaries received both an internal and external call.

(a) *The call came to the Missionaries themselves.*—We cannot state definitely by what means the Holy Spirit voiced His will to these men. The Spirit speaks to men by conscience, by reason, by providence, by the Word, and by speaking unmistakably within the soul so that there is no doubt as to the way to be pursued. Had these men not the moral conviction and strength wrought by the personal call, it might have been difficult to persuade them to undertake so arduous an enterprise. But they had received their marching orders from King Immanuel, and with enthusiasm they entered upon the work.

(b) *The Call came in outward form to the Church.*—Without the authorization of the Church they were not to proceed. The work of carrying the Gospel into regions beyond may be done to some extent by private individuals; but the duty of sending the Gospel into all the world rests with the Church in its corporate capacity. Hence ambassadors should be sent in its name and by its sanction.

(c) *When given?*—"As they ministered unto the Lord and fasted." The inference is that either the whole body of the Church or its leaders, were at this time seeking heavenly light and guidance on this very

point—the carrying of the Gospel into other lands. How true it is! If we desire to do great things for God and His Kingdom, we must seek the Spirit of grace and supplication. The individual believer has made his best progress in this spirit, and the Church is never prepared for its important duty without it.

(d) *By whom given?* This call was given by the Holy Spirit, the invisible, but ever-present and divine representation of Jesus Christ, whom Christ promised to send as the Guiding Teacher of His Church, after He had withdrawn His bodily presence. And the same Spirit must still call forth the Church's ministers and missionaries.

(e) *Their departure.* After their ordination to the missionary office Barnabas and Saul were sent from the Church at Antioch with the fervent prayers of the people, commending them to heaven for protection on their journey, for assistance in their labors, for success in their enterprise. Away they went to carry the light of truth and life into darkened understandings and benighted hearts, to proclaim the message of salvation to a lost world, to bring the nations into loyal submission to the King of kings—an errand sublime in its conception and magnificent in its execution. These people of Antioch Church looked forward doubtless to the time when their first missionaries, now setting forth, would return with tidings of what great things God had done by their hands. And this actually happened (Acts 14: 27).

WORK REMEMBERING.

1. A missionary is God's man, in God's place, doing God's work, in God's way, and for God's glory.

2. The whole advance of Christianity has been a missionary movement. From the time that Paul went to Cyprus and Asia to the latest missions of any Board in America, Christianity has been a missionary religion.

3. Every man has his own particular mission in the church. Some are best for regular teachers, but would be failures as evangelists or missionaries. Some are splendid evangelists who would be of far less account as regular pastors or teachers.

4. The Holy Spirit guides the Church now as He did in the early time. And in how many ways! The Young People's Society, the modern Sunday School, the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, the Missionary organizations, the Bible Societies, and other developments of Christian activity have been as really inspired by the Holy Spirit as was the sending of the first two missionaries.

5. How to find our mission. It is of first importance that we find out what that mission is, and enter upon the performance of our Father's business. We may find this in various ways that Saul and Barnabas did: (a) The Holy Spirit will teach us. The promise is as true to us as to them. (b) We shall find the will of the Spirit by prayer and self-surrender, that is, by intensely earnest seeking with a complete yielding to God, to do with us as He will. (c) The knowledge of our work will come gradually to us, as we prove our fitness, and are led on in the duties and work that come to us day by day.

6. A missionary's requirements: (a) A call from the Holy Spirit. (b) Ordination from his brethren. (c) Recognition by the Church. (d) A definite sphere of labor. A missionary's inspiration: (a) The divine call concerning him. (b) The Spirit's impulse within him. (c) The Church's prayers behind him. (d) The sighing of the heathen world before him.

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS.

Num. 8: 14; Acts 9: 15; Matt. 9: 38; Rom. 10: 15; Eph. 3: 7, 8; 1 Thess. 7: 20; Matt. 28: 19, 20; Rom. 10: 14, 15; P's. 68: 31; Acts 28: 25; P's. 72: 8-11; Isa. 9: 7; Zech. 14: 9; Matt. 13: 33; Rev. 11: 15.

FEB. 26.—"PALM-TREE CHRISTIANS."

Ps. 92: 1-5.

HOME READINGS.

Mon., Feb. 29. Known by fruit.—John 15: 1-4, 45-47.
 Tues., Feb. 21. Chosen to bear fruit.—John 15: 14-21.
 Wed., Feb. 22. Fruits of righteousness.—Phil. 1: 1-11.
 Thu., Feb. 23. Fruit of the Spirit.—Gal. 5: 22-29.
 Fri., Feb. 24. Fruit in its season.—Jer. 1: 13, 19.
 Sat., Feb. 25. Not ceasing to bear fruit.—Jeh. 17: 7, 8.

Palm-tree Christians—a cheery name indeed, one well understood in the land where it was first used, and conveying a wealth of meaning. In these days when the palm-tree merchant, and the palm-tree politician, and the palm-tree banker is so much in evidence, it is high time that believers were asserting themselves, claiming their own name and property, and demonstrating to the world that there is such a thing as a palm-tree Christian. To hear some people talk, one would imagine that to become a Christian was to lose all your friends and a large part of your property, to exchange prosperity for adversity, and happiness for melancholy. And they say this because they don't know what they are talking about, making their statements all the more emphatic in proportion to their ignorance of the subject. What some people don't know about the Bible and practical religious experience would fill many libraries. "The wicked flourish; look around and see," they say. Yes, the wicked flourish with a short-lived gaiety. But what does experience, divinely illuminated, say regarding the prospering wicked: "When the wicked spring as the grass, and when all the workers of iniquity do flourish; it is that they shall be destroyed forever." That is the end of it all—no one to mourn; or that brought about with the destruction of the work comes the ruin of the worker. Tempted soul, be not envious of the wicked; you have more than they; and what you have will endure. For what does experience, divinely illuminated, say of the Christian: "The righteous shall flourish like the palm-tree; he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon." Oh, yes, that seems a most desirable state of things.

I. NOT PROMISED TO EVERYBODY.—This enticing promise is definite. It does not say, "Flourish, ye inhabitants of the earth, like the palm-tree." No! There is a particular class of people who are described as thus flourishing. The righteous. This is the Old Testament word for the Christian or the saint. The term has reference to external conduct as based upon internal principle. The righteous—those who do right because they love God. These are the people that shall flourish like the palm-tree, and grow like the cedar. Some people expect this desirable result, this flourishing state, who do not comply with the conditions. They claim to be righteous, because they were converted at a camp-meeting twenty-five years ago—and have made no progress since. These folk may claim existence of faith which saves, but they lack the spiritual qualities which can claim the promise, "Shall flourish like the palm-tree." It is important not only to prove the chronology of our spiritual birth, but to show the active exercise of that event in the living present of our lives. No Christian can flourish like the palm-tree who is living below the plane of God's requirements concerning him.

2. THE MEANING OF THE PROMISE.—Now, see how the palm represents the righteous man, the progressive Christian:

(a) *In Its Steady Growth Upward.*—It is tall, slender, and erect. Dr. Thompson says, that neither heavy weights which men place upon its head, nor the impotent urgency of the wind, can sway the palm aside from perfect uprightness. It seeks to rise as far as possible from earth and as near as possible to heaven. So the good man's affections are set "on things above," his "citizenship is in heaven." Nothing can sway him from his established uprightness. He seeks heavenly principles for earthly con-

duct. He grows up into Christ. Like Goldsmith's village preacher—

"As some tall cliff that lifts its awful form,
 Swells from the vale and midway leaves the storm."

Though round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,
 Eternal sunshine settles on his head."

(b) *Its Flourish in Spite of Hindrances.*—The palm flourishes where other trees would wither and die. "On the northern borders of the Great Desert, at the foot of the Atlas Mountains, the groves of date palms form the great feature of that parched region, and the excess of dryness is such that wheat refuses to grow, and even barley, maize and coffee corn afford the husbandmen only a scanty and uncertain crop. The hot blasts from the south are scarcely supportable even by the native himself; yet here forests of date palms flourish." The palm does not receive so much in winter's copious rain, nor does it droop under the drought and burning heat of summer. It grows, and grows steadily in the face of obstacles and hindrances. A picture this of the golly soul. The influences that try him and threaten to crush him are powerless to do so. By the grace of God, they even promote his growth. He grows rich by loss, strong by trial, patient by tribulation, joyous by suffering.

(c) *In Its Perennial Freshness.*—The palm is an evergreen. At all times, and in all seasons, it loses not its verdure. So the Christian, spiritual and progressive, will grow and flourish without intermission. Progress is the rule of his life; the goal attained to-day will be the starting point of to-morrow. He will not have his winter of God's presence and graces. He himself will display the external signs of ever-increasing strength and joy.

(d) *In Its Fruitfulness.*—On an average the palm yields from three to four hundred pounds' weight of dates annually, and has been known to produce six hundred pounds' weight. It is a very fruitful tree. The true believer will also produce the fruits of the Spirit from his internal life. Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, obedience, purity, charity, helpfulness to others will be some of the gifts of fruit which he will bear in abundance to the glory of God and the blessing of the world. May the number of palm-tree Christians greatly increase in all our Leagues!

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS:

2 Chron. 16: 9; Ps. 1: 3; Ps. 5: 12; Ps. 37: 3, 9, 25; Ps. 84: 11; Prov. 3: 4; Prov. 14: 34; Isa. 33: 15, 16; Matt. 6: 33; 1 Tim. 4: 8; Gen. 19: 15, 22; Rom. 6: 18; 1 Sam. 12: 1-4; Micah 6: 8; Dent. 13: 7.

MARCH 5.—"THE GATES OF ZION."

Ps. 87: 1-7. Ps. 100: 1-5.

HOME READINGS.

Mon., Feb. 27. How amiable are thy tabernacles!—Ps. 84: 1-12.
 Tues., Feb. 28. Strength and beauty in sanctuary.—Ps. 96: 1-13.
 Wed., Mar. 1. Holiness becometh their habitation.—Ps. 93: 1-5.
 Thu., Mar. 2. Reverence my sanctuary.—Lev. 20: 1-13.
 Fri., Mar. 3. Help from the sanctuary.—Ps. 29: 1-9.
 Sat., Mar. 4. Vows paid in God's house.—Ps. 116: 1-19.

Oriental cities, many of them, were surrounded by walls as a means of safety and protection for the inhabitants. In these walls were passages through which the people could pass in and out at certain times, and which were secured by strong gates and unison work. The principal gateways of important Eastern cities were wonderful places. They were Courts of Justice, places of assembly, market-places and gossiping resorts all in one. At the gateways special care was taken to increase the strength of the wall and its power of resistance, since the most formidable attacks of the enemy would probably be made there. From the

fact, too, that princes and judges sat at the gate in the discharge of their official duties, the word gate became a synonym for power or authority. This is illustrated in Matt. 16: 18, where the expression "gates of hell" means powers of hell. The gates of walled towns are shut at sundown or shortly after. Travellers often hasten in their journey when they see the sun declining, lest the day expire before they reach the city gates. It not uncommonly happens that, with all their exertions, they are too late; they are then compelled to spend the night outside, exposed to storms and robbers. But the prophet Isaiah represents the Church of Christ with her gates "open continually"; New Jerusalem, with the same divine idea. "And the gates of it shall not be shut all by day; for there shall be no night there." From these facts, we may gather the meaning of the topic, the Gates of Zion. Zion was one of the hills upon which Jerusalem was built, and was sometimes used as a name for the city. But as Zion was the dwelling-place of the God people, and the city of the temple, it came to mean the Church of God. And, as we have seen that "gates" is a synonym for power, we have as the significance of the phrase, "The gates of Zion," the power of the Church of God.

Now, young people, how can you appropriate personally the power of the Church of God? How can the community in which it stands be influenced and benefited by the power of the Church of God? The Church becomes a power as it is respected for worship, as the people wait upon God for His presence and help. A neglected church cannot be a power. This leads us to say that public worship is more acceptable to God than private devotion. This should be remembered well by our youth rising into manhood and womanhood. "I can be just as good by staying home and reading a sermon or pious book as by going to church," say many, and not a few of them young people. By saying this, young man, or young woman, you are simply showing your utter ignorance of God's Word, and God's designs concerning His Church and concerning you. "The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob." God loved Zion more, but He loved Zion more. He loves the worship of His people in their homes much, but He loves their worship in His sanctuary more. Neglect not private devotion, but not the conspicuous place of public worship.

I. PUBLIC WORSHIP IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN PRIVATE WORSHIP.—So suggests Dr. Hickok. "Why is this so?" you say, "I have not thought of it in that way?"

(a) *Because of the divine institution of public worship.* The Sabbath is favorable for the religious worship. But when God gave special ordinances to His ancient people, conspicuous among them all was this solemn institution of public worship. Three periods in the year were assigned as seasons of holy convocation, etc. There were also the public services for the moons, the year of rest, and the year of jubilee. Moreover, each day at the temple was the morning and evening sacrifice offered. In the fact that God thus instituted public worship we see His high appreciation of it.

(b) *On special occasions, public worship of God has been specially demanded.*—Many instances occur in connection with God's dealing with His people when some special interposition was followed by a requisition for the public acknowledgment of His supremacy and authority as their Lord and Sovereign. On occasions like these the elders were commanded to proclaim a fast, to call a solemn assembly, etc. So also when there had been a special delivrance from pestilence, or famine or war; or when there had been remarkable providential bounties, the whole nation was called to thanksgiving and praise.

(c) *The ordinance of public worship is perpetuated by the Christian dispensation.*—

The example of inspired apostles and primitive saints is left on record in regard to their frequent "coming together in one place," and "with one accord." The solemn injunction is given in the New Testament as applicable to all ages, "not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together." This fact indicates God's high regard for public worship and His will in regard thereto.

2. *Why is public worship more important than private worship?*
 (a) *Because public worship is attended with greater sacrifices.*—That piety is best which will make the greatest sacrifices. That faith or love is the strongest which will bear the greatest strain. As a general rule faithful attendance upon public worship is a higher expression of Christian character than a feeble attempt at private devotions.

(b) *Because it exerts a more powerful moral influence.*—The influence of secret prayer and private devotion upon the life of a Christian is very great. So also is morning and evening family worship. But in the public courts of the Lord, there are many influences flowing in upon the soul, and many emotions are there awakened which can never spring out of closet devotions. The sanctuary is emphatically "the house of God and the gate of heaven." The Christian graces kindle anew in Christian communion as the coals glow with increasing light when brought into close contact with one another.

(c) *Because it is connected with great displays of the power of divine truth.*—Nowhere upon earth are sinners so convinced and saints so comforted as in the solemnities of public worship. It is in the house of God where the quick and searching words of divine truth reach the sinner and bring him a humble penitent to the mercy-seat. It is in worship when the saint of God is lifted quite above himself and his earthly losses and claims the riches of the kingdom of heaven.

(d) *Because it is the great means of perpetuating and extending the Church.*—The light of the present day Christianity would go out in darkness before the generation had passed were public worship to be deserted and the churches closed. Keep up this agency in its purity and strength, and civil, social and religious blessings abound. Allow it to fall into decadence, and virtue fails, sin is rampant, and the social fabric is threatened with disaster.

(e) *Because it is most like heaven.* The place on earth the most like to heaven is the house of God on the Christian Sabbath, filled with sincere and humble worshippers. These things being so, seek union with the Church; esteem its worship a solemn duty and precious privilege; unite in that worship with deep humility, profound reverence and great delight.

THE ANGEL PRESENCE FOR THE NEW YEAR.

The following lines were suggested by the first prayer-meeting topic in this year, and written by a Leaguer in Wingham, Ont.:

Comrades! o'er this fair Dominion
 Lift as one your heart in prayer
 For the Guiding Angel presence
 Thro' the pathway of this year.

There's no time to waste in faltering
 Look! the work is vast indeed;
 Can we spend an idle moment
 As we face a world of need?

Let us each take hold of duty,
 With a firm determined hand,
 With the faith that overcometh
 With a will that can command.

Comrades! who can tell of victories
 Waiting to be yours and mine?
 If we let the Angel lead us,
 Through the year of '99

The Book Shelf.

Essays for the Times. Studies of Eminent Men, and Important Living Questions. By Rev. E. H. Dewar, D.D. Rev. S. O. A.

Dr. Dewar is a profound thinker and an able writer. This volume contains some of his very best work, the result of years of experience and research. It will well repay careful reading.

The Kingdom Within. Selections from the Imitation of Christ by Thomas à Kempis. Edited by Francis E. Clark, D.D. Published by the United Society of Christian Endeavor, Boston, Mass.

This is one of a series of little devotional books known as "The Classics of the Quiet Hour," which is intended to furnish a choice selection for every day in the month. The extracts from Kempis have been carefully made, and the volume will prove helpful in the development of the spiritual life.

The Children's Prayer. Addresses to the Young on the Lord's Prayer. By James Wells, D.D. Published by Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrer, Edinburgh. Price, 30 cents.

Many volumes have been written on the Lord's Prayer, but this is the first time we have seen one specially prepared for children. It is made interesting by the introduction of many illustrations, and the language is within the reach of the young mind. The addresses are really excellent.

In the Heart of the Hills. By Hattie E. Colter. Edited by Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrer, Edinburgh. Price, 30 cents.

This is one of the sweetest stories we have read. It tells how a Nova Scotia girl, the daughter of a minister, goes to the Cariboo mining district of British Columbia to reside with her married sister, where she establishes a mission for the miners, and inaugurates anumber of philanthropic enterprises. She makes everybody love her by her self-denying efforts for the good of those by whom she is surrounded. The book is a beautiful commentary on the Saviour's proverb, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

Travellan's Little Daughters. By Virna Sheard. With illustrations by Reginald B. Birch. Toronto: William Briggs, Publisher. Price, 25c.

A very pretty story, artistically illustrated by Reginald B. Birch, the famous artist. Libravians should get this book for the special benefit of little girls. They will be greatly delighted with it.

Dwellers in Gotham. A Romance of New York. By Anton Hale. Toronto: Wm. Briggs.

A story of more than ordinary interest, descriptive of various social conditions in New York. Rumor has it that the author is a preacher, but he does not preach in these pages, nor even moralize. The meanness of selfishness and greed are, however, portrayed in the most powerful manner, and the story impresses its own moral. Some of the characters in this book are quite striking, and the dialogue is usually animated and frequently quite witty. The volume is well worth reading.

Diane of Ville Marie. A Romance of French Canada. By Leslie Mackinnell. Published by Wm. Briggs, Toronto.

This story carries us back two hundred years, and the scenes described are located amid wild and uncivilized surroundings. It gives a very good idea of the life of the early French settlers in Canada, and the dangers they encountered from the Indians. It is a perfectly safe book to place in the Sunday School library.

John the Baptist Among the Methodists is the somewhat sensational title of a little book which is a plea for the baptism of the Holy Ghost in view of the supposed immediate coming of Christ. It impresses some important truths in highly dramatic form.

We have received a copy of the "Presbyterian Christian Endeavor Manual for 1898," by Wm. T. Ellis, published by the Presbyterian Board of Publication, Philadelphia. This handy little volume contains at least ten "Topic Thoughts" on each of the year's Christian Endeavor topics, with plans for the leader of every meeting, committee helps, Christian Endeavor facts, etc. Especially noteworthy is the Manual's careful statement of the proper character and work of Christian Endeavor. The price is only 10 cents.

CHARLES M. SHELDON'S BOOKS.

We have received a package of eight volumes of Mr. Sheldon's works from the Canadian publishers, The Peace Printing Co. They are bound in paper and sell for 25 cents each. Mr. Peole informs us that the sale in Canada has been exceedingly satisfactory. Since last May 70,000 copies have been disposed of by this one firm, within the bounds of the Dominion; 4,000 volumes have been sold on the Grand Trunk Railway during the last five months. *In His Steps* is so well known that it needs scarcely a word. If any of our readers have failed to read this wonderful little book we advise them to get it at once. *His Brother's Keeper* deals with the labor question in a most graphic description of a great strike. Next to *In His Steps* it is probably the author's strongest work. *The Crucifixion of Philip Strong* is a tragic tale showing how a noble man, who endeavored to exemplify the spirit of Christ, was opposed and persecuted.

The Redemption of Freeborn is a story of social conditions that actually exist in many cities. It tells how degraded neighborhoods have been uplifted and blessed by the Social Settlements. It is a most interesting book. The other volumes are *Robert Hartley's Seven Days, Overcoming the World, The Twentieth Door, Richard Bruce*.

A TRIBUTE TO REV. JOHN McDONOUGH'S BOOKS.

The Canadian Teacher, published in this city, pays the following tribute to the series of books, narrating his early experiences in the North-West, written by our well-known missionary, Rev. John McDougall:

"For graphic accounts of life in our Canadian prairies nothing has been written to compare with the works of the Rev. John McDougall. Mr. McDougall's pages are full of vim and life; every line rings with the strong, sturdy, self-reliant spirit of our hardy Canadian manhood.

"Forest, Lake and Prairie," which has been reviewed in our columns, covers the years 1842-1862. 'Saddle, Sled and Snow-shoe,' which was, also, previously reviewed in *The Teacher*, takes up the story where the former book ended, and carries the account of the author's adventures down to January, 1855.

"Then comes the latest volume, 'Pathfinding on Plain and Prairie,' which completes the story to the late autumn of 1868. We know of no better fishing, bear-hunting, deer-shooting stories. For boys filled with a spirit of adventure the volume will prove a rare treat, while the most careful parent may rest assured that, while his boy is reading the work, he will not meet with one word, phrase, or sentence, or thought of even a questionable character. Pure, lofty, manly, Christian, our author's words can have no other effect than to raise the reader to a higher level of thought and life.

"While they are eminently suited for boys, those of mature years will read the volumes with interest as they give us a true and vivid picture of the development of our vast 'undiscovered country,' and a graphic account of the spread of Christianity among these western wilds."

Around the Tea Table.

A Riddle Solved.

Facts and Fancies.

John's Objections Sustained.

"Look ye, man, why haven't you cleaned and polished my boots?" asked Dean Swift of his eccentric servant, John, at an inn where they had just passed the night.

"What's the use of polishing such things?" asked John, as he held up the boots, discolored and grimy.

"Very true," said the dean, and without further protest he put them on. Then he went to the office and gave orders that John should have no breakfast. He partook of his own, and directed the hostler to saddle the horses and lead them to the door.

"Mercy!" cried John, when he found the dean ready to start, "I haven't had any breakfast yet."

"Oh," replied Swift, "I can't see the use of your breakfasting; you would soon be hungry again."

John could think of no answer to such an unexpected application of his own sophistry, so he maintained a stoical silence.

They mounted and rode on, the dean in advance reading his prayer-book, and the servant following at a respectful distance.

"Hark ye, my man," said the stranger whom they met, after he had observed the two closely, "you and your master seem to be an uncommonly sober pair; may I ask who you are and where you are going?"

"We are as near saints as we can be," replied John, solemnly, "and we are going to heaven, I hope. My master's praying and I'm doing the fasting."—*Success.*

He Understood.

Many are the complaints made by customers over the abruptness of clerks, but the New York *World* prints a story to show that the shopkeeper is sometimes almost too willing for the would-be customer to explain his wants.

"I want some kind of a door-spring, one that won't get out of order," said a customer.

"A door-spring?" answered the hardware man.

"Yes, and one that won't require the strength of an elephant to open."

"Hem!"

"And it must be strong enough to bring the door all the way to, and not leave it swinging open a couple of inches."

"I see."

"And when the door closes I don't want it to shut like a catapult, with a jar that shakes the house from its foundations."

"Yes. You want one that will bring the door all the way to, and yet do it gently."

"That's the idea. But I don't want any complicated arrangement, that requires a skilled mechanic to attend to."

"No; of course not. You want something simple, yet strong and effective."

"That's the talk! Something that can be put on or taken off easily; something that will do its work quietly, yet thoroughly, and won't be eternally getting out of order."

"I see. I know exactly what you want, sir, just exactly."

"Well, show me one."

"We don't keep door-springs."

A TENNESSEAN tells this story of a darkey freight hand on a Southern railway. He had been placed in charge of a mule whose destination was marked on a tag attached by twine to the mule's leg. Before the animal had been persuaded to enter a car, he managed to reach the tag; and, before Sambo could interpose, the darkey had it well chewed up. The old man looked at the local freight agent, and asked in perturbation, "What I goin' to wid dat mewl? He done et up de place where he's goin'."

Not long ago a gentleman of Cleveland received a letter from his lawyer. He could not read a word of it, but thought that perhaps his wife, who had once or twice before deciphered bad handwriting for him, could do so, and took it home with him. His wife had no better luck than he. "Why don't you take it over to Jimmerson, the druggist?" she said. "They say he can read anything."

His wife referred to an important law matter, and was anxious about it. So he put on his hat and overcoat and went over to the drug-store.

"Can you make this out?" he said.

The druggist took it and glanced it over. He took it to the nearest gas-jet and looked it over again. After a long scrutiny, he marched to the back of the store and disappeared behind a partition. The gentleman thought that very likely he had gone to get a magnifying-glass. He was gone a little while, and then came back with the letter in one hand and a good-sized bottle in the other.

"There you are," said the druggist.

"What's this?" inquired the gentleman.

"Why, your tonic."

"Who said anything about tonic?"

"Why, you handed me the prescription."

"Prescription?"

"Yes, here it is."

"What?" roared the other. "Did you think that was a prescription? It's a letter from my lawyer about a suit!"

He went out chuckling with delight. The Cleveland paper does not tell, however—as it certainly should have told—whether or not he paid for the tonic.—*Cleveland Pain-dealer.*

"THAT'S IT!" exclaimed the old lady at the concert, as the singers came out in response to an encore. "Make 'em do it over again until they get the thing right."

EUROPEAN.—Why is it that so many of you Americans come over here to see this country before you have seen your own? American.—Well, the truth is we want to look over the continent thoroughly and find out whether we like it or not. If it suits us we may decide to take it.

The lecturer on health had finished his discourse, and invited his auditors to ask any question they chose concerning points that might seem to need clearing up, when a lean, skinny man rose up and asked, "Professor, what do you do when you can't sleep at night?" "I usually stay awake," replied the lecturer, "although, of course, everybody should feel at liberty to do otherwise if he chooses. Are there any other questions?"

FIRST Successful Business Man. "I had only a common-school education, but I found it sufficient. You, I believe, were a college graduate?"

SECOND Successful Business Man. "Yes; graduated with high honors, too."

FIRST S. B. M. "Now, tell me truly. Did you ever find any practical use by what you learned at college?"

SECOND S. B. M. "Um—yes. One night when burglars got into my house, I scared them off with a college yell."

A CLEVERMAN taking occasional duty for a frier in a country church was greatly scandalized on observing the old verger, who had been collecting the offertory, quietly abstract half-a-crown before presenting the plate at the altar-rails. After service he called the old man into the vestry and told him, with emotion, that his crime had been discovered. The clerk looked puzzled. Then a sudden light dawned on him. "Wha, sir, yer doocant mean that 'owd 'awf-cran o' mine, do yer? Wha, ah've 'led-off' with his last fifteen year!"

It is estimated that about 2,000,000 bicycles have been made in Europe and America.

PROFANITY is forbidden by both the army and the navy regulations of the United States.

In the Bank of England sixty folio volumes or ledgers are filled daily with writing in keeping the accounts.

A POUND includes 2,185,000 seeds of blue grass, 1,421,040 of timothy, 863,000 of white clover, 152,000 of red clover, and 243,000 of alfalfa.

The whistle of a locomotive can be heard 3,800 yards, the noise of a train 3,300 yards, the report of a musket and the bark of a dog 1,800 yards, the roll of a drum 1,600 yards, a dinner-bell two miles.

GUMMA-PERCHA from the leaves of the caoutchouc tree is now being used by French makers of submarine cables. It has all the advantages of the product from incision into the tree, while being less expensive and more durable.

In the days of Henry VIII. of England post-offices were unknown, and letters were carried by Government messengers, who were subject to hanging if they delayed upon the road. Truly, in those days the letter carriers, at least, must have realized that "delays are dangerous!"

The express engines of most railway lines cost between \$15,000 and \$20,000. Their working career depends very much upon the road they have to travel. Steep gradients play sad havoc with them, and will shorten their lives by two or three years. The speed of engines is regulated by time-tables, but there is such a thing as making up lost time. This depends on the driver. If he is of a cautious and steady turn of mind, he will act up to the time-table, and be late rather than travel beyond the authorized speed.

The catalogue of the British Museum will be finished before the end of the year 1900. It will then consist of about six hundred quarto volumes, containing an average of two hundred and fifty columns each. Its complete at present, with the exception of the entries referring to England, France, Germany, Great Britain, liturgies, and a portion of the Bible. From first to last it will have been in progress for about nineteen years, during which time accessions have been pouring in at the rate of some forty thousand a year.

It is the popular belief that the flight of birds is much swifter than that of insects, but a number of naturalists who have been making a study of the matter think that such is not the case. A common house fly, for example, is not very rapid in its flight, but its wings make 800 beats a second, and send it through the air twenty-five feet, under ordinary circumstances, in that space of time. When the insect is alarmed, however, it has been found that it increases its rate of speed to over 150 feet per second. If it could continue such rapid flight for a mile in a straight line it would cover that distance in exactly thirty-three seconds.

LIVINGSTONE said it was amusing to listen to the exclamations of surprise from the native Africans on seeing their faces in a mirror for the first time. They would beseech him to allow them to see themselves in this wonderful glass. "Why," said one woman, "my ears are as big as pumpkin leaves." "I have no chin at all," said another. "I would have been pretty but for these high cheek bones." "So how my head shoots up in the middle," and so on their remarks continued in a way we can well imagine. Livingstone would sometimes pretend to be asleep for the sake of listening to the funny speeches, while the looking glass entertainment was going on.

Home Did It.

President McKinley, addressing a company of aged men and women, early settlers of northern Ohio, said: "It is a proud pleasure to be able to credit to my wife and to my mother whatever good things my fellow-countrymen ascribe to me. My wife and mother mankind is indebted for those high moral qualities, gentleness, truth and virtue which are so indispensable to good character, good citizenship and a noble life. Our whole political fabric rests upon the sanctity of the American home, where the true wife and mother preside. They teach the wife and girls purity of life and thought, and point the way to usefulness and distinction. The world owes them more than it can ever repay. The man who has a pure and true love for mother and wife requires no bond for his good behavior, and can be safely trusted in every relation in life."

Bird Schools.

The Hartz Mountains in Germany, so says the *Youth's Companion*, are the centre of the canary-bird industry. "The birds raised there have schools for the training of their voices. The best voices are carefully selected and their owners set apart in a class by themselves. A canary with a faultless voice and long experience in singing is chosen for a teacher. When the time comes to train the young birds they are suffered to hear and imitate only the pure notes of the leader of the school. The St. Andrews canaries are reckoned the finest singers in the world. Singing-schools for birds also exist in New York, where imported German bullfinches are trained with the aid of a flute, a reed organ, and the human voice. The trainers are marvellously expert whistlers. Bullfinches can be taught to pipe the tunes of popular songs and operas."

Electricity and Balking Horses.

One of the recent extensions of the use of electricity is in conquering a balky or lazy horse. A western Pennsylvania gentleman owned a horse which he said was worth \$1,000, provided he could cure him of balking. It was suggested that he try electricity. He purchased a three-volt storage battery, and connected it by wires to the bit and the crupper. The battery was placed in the rear of the cart to which the horse was attached. At first the horse refused to move, but stood with all four feet braced. Then the owner touched the button connected with the battery. When the horse felt the shock, he started, jumped and began to move off at a lively pace. Every day for a week he was given the same lesson. His owner, who does not care to sell him, declares that now he never balks, bites or kicks. The West Pennsylvania Humane Society, which investigated the method, came to the conclusion that a small amount of electricity used upon a horse was more humane than a whip. —*Omaha Ch. Advocate.*

On Entertaining Guests.

When you have guests at your house it is a capital mistake to act upon the theory that you ought to be with them, talking to them, or seeking to entertain them in some fashion all the time. The sensible guest will thank you if you leave him to his own devices for at least a good half of the time. Let him retire to his room to read or write or doze; let him wander about the place or the village unattended, making his own discoveries, and he will have a much better time than if you are always at his elbow. It is a good idea to put a few of your brightest books and papers in the guest chamber, so that he can retire there during the leisure intervals certain of finding the best company. The moment a guest feels that he is in the way,

or that his presence is putting the family to the slightest inconvenience, to a sensitive person the charm of the visit is gone. Of course, in a great house with an abundance of servants the question of the entertainment of guests is reduced to a fine art, but most of us do not have establishments, but we have a decent guest chamber, and would greatly enjoy a visit of a few days from an old friend. The way to make such visits a happy memory for the guest and for yourself is to let the routine of household life go on as usual, and to devote the ordinary intervals of leisure to his companionship. The rest of the time let him shift for himself. —*The Watchman.*

Caught in the Devil's Snare.

Young Mr. Hobson has been represented by his friends as a devoted Christian. Accounts of his consistent and zealous religious life have been widely published by those who have known him intimately. We have no reason to doubt the correctness of these representations. But the young man's head has evidently been turned by his achievements and the public praises which have been lavished upon him. A week ago last Sunday he travelled all day on a railroad train to give a lecture engagement in Chicago in the evening. All day Sunday crowds besieged the box-office of the Auditorium buying tickets for the lecture. He spoke to a great crowd upon a secular theme, while the multitude indulged in noisy and unseasonably demonstrations. This was a profanation of God's holy day, which no true Christian would be a party to.

Hobson is to be pitied. He has brought

disgrace upon the church of which he is a member; and has publicly and shamefully denied his Lord. His Chicago performance shocked the Christian sentiment of this city, and grieved a host of the young people who had proudly boasted that the hero of Santiago was a Christian.

As for the one hundred and sixty-three girls who are reported to have kissed the youth at the close of his lecture, they were one hundred and sixty-three fools! —*Epworth Record.*

He Attracted a Crowd.

A Cleveland paper says that in front of the New England Building a member of the Salvation Army stood the other day with his tin-labelled contribution box, with its plainly lettered invitation to contribute to a Christmas dinner fund, poised in front of him, and watched the passers-by. Perhaps a lack of dropping nickels and dimes prompted an innovation in his methods, perhaps not. Anyway he suddenly raised his voice and cried:

"How to make 5,000!"

He stopped suddenly, and so did several people.

"By this time twenty people were halted about him.

"How to make 5,000!"

The twenty grew to a crowd.

Then he finished the sentence:

"How to make 5,000 poor people happy with a Christmas dinner!"

Of course a large proportion of the crowd drifted away, but quite a number left a remembrance in the tin box. And the wise soldier of the Cross smiled.



Miss Annie Snyder is a young lady who is rapidly coming to the front as a public entertainer. Her circular contains very strong testimonials from Revs. Dr. Dowart, Dr. Stone, C. O. Johnston and others, while the

press generally refer to her readings in the most complimentary manner. Miss Snyder is a member of one of our city churches. She will be pleased to arrange engagements with Epworth Leagues and churches.

Our Paper.

We are exceedingly thankful for all the kind things that have been said of our paper, by friends, and by our contemporaries. After faithful work has been done it is pleasant to know that the result is appreciated.

LET the members of our Young People's Societies show their appreciation in the form of subscriptions accompanied by dollars and cents. Every member, active and associate, should be asked to subscribe.

WHEREVER a faithful canvass has been made, the results are highly gratifying. In many places the young people seemed just waiting to give their subscriptions.

It is surprising how many applications for samples, and subscriptions, are coming from the United States. There must be a lot of Canadians scattered around in Uncle Sam's territory.

STRANGELY enough, the best lists of subscribers have come from the smallest societies. The League at Medicine Hat, N.W.T., was organized about a month ago with a membership of twenty-two, but it sends a list of sixteen subscribers. This League carries off the palm for the largest proportion of membership enrolled as subscribers.

THE great West is apparently going to lead our subscription list. Calgary sends thirteen names, and a note from Rev. W. Bridgman, of Virden, Man., states that they expect to send twenty-five subscribers from that town.

WALTON, on the Goderich District, does magnificently well in sending in a list of twenty-three names. For a League of thirty-six members this is splendid. May such societies be multiplied a thousand-fold!

It should be remembered that no names are entered upon the subscription books until the half dollar has been paid. The following are some of the best lists that have come to hand. The canvass in many places has not yet been completed:

Woodbridge.....	26	Inglewood.....	7
Walton.....	23	Burlington.....	7
Parkdale.....	20	Hawkestone.....	7
Vancouver.....	17	Carry.....	7
Medicine Hat.....	16	Malloytown.....	7
Galt.....	16	Zion Hill.....	6
Douglas, Man.....	16	Woodstock, Central	6
Salford.....	14	Siloam.....	6
Calgary.....	13	Moorfield.....	6
Eastwood.....	11	Eastwood.....	6
Aylmer.....	10	Chesterville.....	6
Winchester.....	10	Dundas.....	6
Wingham.....	10	Neerawa.....	6
Bright.....	8	Oxford Mills.....	6
South Edmonton..	8	Simcoe.....	6
Miami, Man.....	8	Watford.....	6
Barnston, Que.....	7	Melgund, Man.....	6

COMING CONVENTIONS

- 1899.
- FEB. 7.—Owen Sound District Epworth League Convention at Markdale.
- FEB. 21-23.—Hamilton Conference League Convention at Woodstock.
- APRIL 27-30.—International Sunday School Convention at Atlanta, Ga.
- JULY 5-10.—Christian Endeavor International Convention at Detroit, Mich.
- JULY 20-23.—Epworth League International Convention at Indianapolis.

NO CONVENTION THIS YEAR.

The Executive of the Toronto Conference League have decided not to hold any convention this year, but every effort will be made to have a large and successful gathering during the next fall.

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