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Editorial Notes and Comment



RALLY DAY plans no doubt were seriously interfered with by the closing of many churches on October 6th by order of health departments all over the country. This will prove a serious matter to the Sunday-school Extension work of our Church, unless the schools take hold of the matter in real earnest. If the Rally Day exercises were held and the attendance was small, the school ought to take steps to increase its collection. If they had to be postponed, everything possible should be done to sustain interest in the plans, and the exercises should be held as soon as the school is in satisfactory operation again.

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FOOD has been saved in large quantities in this country during the past year, and the economies practiced by our people, allowed food enough to be sent to our allies to enable them to carry on the war. If we could not have sent this food our allies could not have kept up the war and Germany would have been victorious. Now that our army is over there, we must ship much more during the coming year than we did in past years. These figures tell the tale. During the three years preceding our entrance into the war the average shipment of foodstuffs was 5,533,000 tons. Last year we sent 11,820,000 tons. During the next year we must send not less than 17,550,000 tons. This is an increase for the year of 5,730,000 tons. It can be done, but it will require increasing economies. We have been a wasteful nation, but the lessons we are learning will make us far more careful in the future. When we save we have that which will enable us to do something for the welfare of the world. Let us not be selfish in our saving.

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GENERAL FOCH, it is reported, very frequently says: "The battle is won the day before." By this he means that the condition of the soldiers the day before will decide how they will fight on the day of the battle. The government and the Y. M. C. A. and other organizations are doing fine work in making and keeping our soldiers fit "the day before," and it is for this reason largely that our men are proving to be such splendid soldiers. This "day before" preparation is just what is needed here at home. In the home, the church, the Sunday-school, the day school, the college, wherever the young are trained, there is opportunity to do fine work in fitting them for the battles of life. It will depend largely upon the physical mental and spiritual training which they receive whether they shall be victorious or go down in defeat. Parents, pastors, teachers and friends of to-day will largely be responsible for the results of the battles of to-morrow.

SUBSCRIBERS in considerable numbers have been helping us very materially by paying up their subscriptions. We hope many others will follow their examples. It is a pity to be compelled in these days to use labor, paper and postage in sending out bills, when each subscriber can see what he is due by looking at the label on his paper. Look at yours. A word to the considerate is sufficient.

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CHURCHES everywhere are trying to solve the problem as to why they do not grow faster. Rev. A. N. Perryman, of Keyser, W. Va., says in the Bulletin of his church: "There are three distinct barriers that are found to retard the progress in a large degree to every local church, and when operating together they have been known to play havoc with the growth and development of the Church for years at a time. These elements of character are Indifference, Lack of Initiative and Prejudice. The first is a barrier to Christian forces that is noticed everywhere. Under the spell of indifference literally thousands of church members are entirely without interest in the life and welfare of their own Church, and find any occupation more pleasant and amusing than that of keeping their covenant vows. Many have largely forgotten that such vows were ever taken. Loyalty to spiritual obligation, and constant application in that direction, is the highest form of service, and marks that faithfulness commended by the Master. Lack of Initiative is the need of power to give tangible form to worthy ideas and develop well-organized plans. Many a fine church member burns out a premature zeal, and fritters out a good conscience for a worthy purpose for lack of the quality to put the same in operation for the large accomplishments of the things of which he dreams. Our churches are full of those who have landed as solid and silent as a 'Dud' never to be heard again except when dead freight is to be handled. Or else after a premature explosion to the injury of themselves and others they have become as silent as the tomb.

Prejudice plays its parts in church life as a barrier to progress, in the form of personal likes and dislikes, and operates at the expense of the development of spiritual life and Christian usefulness of man an otherwise fine church member. Petty jealousies and defying personalities guard the ways of many an aspirant church member to sphere of usefulness in church life. Attitude of another has much to do with making a comfortable atmosphere for the church member who is willing to develop the one talent he or she may possess. Whatever may be its spiritual force, "each preferring the other in honor" is a fundamental church axiom."

INFLUENZA or grippe, or whatever it may be called, has laid hold upon this country as probably no other disease ever has done. There are several things that every one should do. He should take care of his own health in order that he may do his work faithfully, and if possible help some one else to do his work. He should do what he can to help those who have the disease. Hospitals are being overrun with patients. The ranks of doctors and nurses have been depleted by the calls of the war. Of those who are left many are sick. The remainder are not able to meet the calls made upon them. Let every one do what he can to aid them in every way possible.

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THE WAR is held responsible for a good many things. Sometimes it is just an excuse, sometimes it is a reason. The secular press publishes a news item from Elmira, N. Y., giving the recent action of a Presbytery of the Northern Presbyterian Church. Our readers may judge whether it is a reason or an excuse. They may also decide whether it is right to do evil in the hope that good may come. They may also consider the question as to whether they would be willing for our Church to take similar action. This is the report: "Mrs. William H. Chapman, of this city, has just been licensed to preach by the Chemung Presbytery, after a lengthy discussion and some opposition. The issuing of a license to a woman to preach is said to overturn all precedent of the Presbyterian Church in the United States and to be a violation of the rules of the Presbyterian General Assembly. The action is taken here as a war time measure. The one dissenting member of the Chemung Presbytery announced that he will appeal to the General Assembly. The Rev. Mrs. Chapman has been filling the pulpit of the North Presbyterian church here while the pastor is engaged in Y. M. C. A. war work in France. She was a high school teacher here. Her husband is the Protestant chaplain at the New York State reformatory here."

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TEN subscriptions sent in at one time is not a very common experience with Church papers. We have just had that number sent us by a man who has reached his ninety-third year. He is already paying for several other copies of the paper, but he feels that there are ten other families in his church who ought to have it, who are not taking it. He will in this way be preaching the gospel in each of these families every week. No Christian family can read a Church paper every week without having their interest in the Church and its work increased. May there be many others to follow the example of this good man.