

## The Writing Epworth League Secretary

MISS BEATRICE BRIDGEN, BRANDON, MAN.

(The following is the substance of an excellent ten-minute address given by the Secretary of the Brandon, Deloraine and Souris District Epworth League at the last District Convention, held in Brandon.—Ed.)

If you are a Secretary who is a writing Secretary the minutes of your meetings will be carefully entered in the Secretary's book, ready for reference at any time. When the President asks for the minutes of the meeting he will not find them on a soiled and crumpled bit of paper, nor find that the soiled and crumpled bit of paper was accidentally lost on the way down, or, that the soiled and crumpled bit of paper reposed on the dresser at home, or, worse still, that the soiled and crumpled paper never saw the minutes—which are somewhere in the back of the Secretary's head—usually so far back they are never found. That kind of a minute book is absolutely useless.

Then be careful about letting your local newspapers know about your meetings. Let them know you have a meeting. Let them know you have a meeting worth while. If you are a writing Secretary, why not be a talking Secretary? Tell your friends; get them interested and they will come out. That is the way to manage the history of your community.

The Secretary is the medium of communication with the outside world. In the nervous system of the District Organization—if you will permit the illustration—the local Secretaries represent those bundles of highly sensitive little nerve fibres, which receive the impulse and pass it along to the muscle fibres—resulting in action. You will readily see that the nerve fibres are strong and healthy will the impulse be received and passed along strongly. Yours should be the finger on the pulse at the centre, the finger sensitive to every pulsation that may benefit the home league.

We have spoken so far of the Secretary's duties at home. "Charity begun at home," but for the sake of the District Organization I beg of you don't keep it there. It would be very funny were it not so pathetic, the way in which some of the local Leagues withhold information about themselves. They guard their interests with their very lives—certainly often with the life of the League. The executive gets such a grip on their League that before long they find they have squeezed the poor thing to death.

The District Secretary hears of a new League, the District Vice-Presidents are notified immediately, letters are sent to that League: "How can we help you? What do you need most? Send us the names of your officers. What is your weakest point? What your strongest?" But no answer comes. The stealth, the craft, the detective skill, of some local leaguers would put to shame any European secret service man, in a story; in fact they are

much worse, for in the stories the villain has to appear some time.

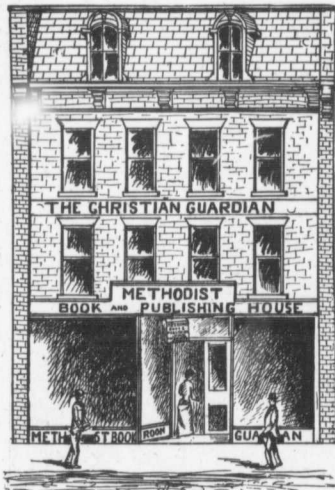
We maintain it is positively criminal for the local leagues to withhold information about themselves, for that is the meat and drink upon which the District organization lives. If you will pause for a moment and think of the letters your league has received this year from the District League and then think of the letters you have returned, and then try to imagine the state of robust health enjoyed by the District Organization during the last year; if the district officers are not particularly enamoured in appearance just now it is because a few cooling drops have rebounded from the deluge of letters poured upon you. Go home, you writing Secretary, write those letters and keep those records as you ought, adding your little best to "better service," expected of you. Oh, this is not a plea for the District Organization. Our work is too small for consideration compared with Him who gave a life-time and finally His life to the service of humanity.

### When the Older Members Quit

"How shall we get back our older members as they drop out?" "How old are the members who are left?" "From eighteen to twenty." "Don't try to get them back. Work the folks you have. You have an ideal opportunity." This was at a recent conference.

No other church work is like young people's work. In Sunday School the material upon which we work is constantly changing, but the workers are not subject to similar changes. But not only are the young people for whom we are working rapidly changing, but the workers are similarly changing and need to be replaced every few years. It is no easy matter adjusting one's thinking to a situation when we train workers to a proficiency only to pass them on and begin all over again with untried folks. Truly the young people's society is dying to live.

In the selection of officers and naming of committees this fact must be kept in mind. It is a great mistake to keep one person in office year after year, saying there is nobody as efficient. That may be true, but the folks that need training will not get it as long as the responsibility is kept from them. You must try



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When a ten-minute talk on the Secretary's work was suggested to me, there flashed before my mind's eye a great number of mental images or mental pictures, called up by that word Secretary. Three of these mental pictures stood out most prominently.

1. A Secretary may be a piece of furniture; something wooden, dull, more or less ornamental.

2. A Secretary may be an officer. Now there are officers and officers. That you are an officer is not a guarantee that you are good for anything. You may be merely an officer.

3. A Secretary may be a writer. The first two Secretaries may be passed along without further notice; the Secretary that is wooden, dull, uninterested, more or less ornamental; the Secretary who is merely an officer. The Secretary whom we want to talk about is the Secretary who is a writer.

Perhaps some Secretary is saying, "I don't like writing letters, particularly to people I don't know." Come to the Convention, go to Summer School, attend the Epworth League institutes. Get acquainted with the District officers. Make them your friends. We don't mind writing to our friends do we? So that difficulty is bridged.

But if you are a writing Secretary, you are more than merely a writer of letters to unknown people. You are in a true sense of the word an Historian, for if you are live enough to be a writing Secretary you are probably but the epitome of your League, i.e., your League is live enough to make the history of your community what they wish, and the writing Secretary is the recorder, the Historian. Isn't that romantic? Does that not smack of adventure?

This may certify that the bearer, Rev. Egbert Ryerson, is appointed Agent for procuring a printing establishment, and he is hereby commended to the Christian people of all, on whom he may have occasion to call for advice and assistance for the above purpose.  
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