

unsatisfactory decision. A time limit will prevent the privilege of speaking being abused, and a subject of common interest will usually provide people with something to say.

Heads of departments in arranging their programmes should have in mind the primary importance of interest. This does not mean that they must pander to popular weaknesses. Demagogues and parties are not the only things which interest people. They are interested in everything which affects their life, and what affects the life of the people cannot be a matter of indifference to an organization of Christians—not even politics or business methods. In some departments of the League it is harder to find interesting subjects than in others. For instance, it is a matter of great difficulty to get many people concerned about the conditions of life prevailing in non-Christian lands. Perhaps one of the best ways to awaken them would be to deal first with the Chinese and Japanese who are in their midst; to consider the effect upon missionary work and the impression of our Christian civilization, which these people must inevitably obtain. They do not see the best side of our life. If we could prevent them from writing home and telling their friends about us, a great handicap to the work of the missionaries would be removed.

The Citizenship department has the greatest variety of interesting subjects from which to select. It has to deal with life as it is lived here and now. The Discipline suggests that it should teach patriotism. The only way it can do so, is by endeavoring to make Canada a good place to live in. All the problems of land, industry, housing, the administration of municipal, civic and provincial affairs, are peculiarly the things with which it ought to deal. Of what vital interest is the question of land to people living in an agricultural country? Here in Canada, we are confronting a truly amazing situation. We live in a country of vast extent; the greater part of it uninhabited until a few years ago, the present population only seven or eight and a half millions of people, and the majority of them living in Ontario and Quebec. The West, with its tremendous areas, is still practically uninhabited. And yet, it is almost impossible for the people who vitally need land to buy it, a situation equally as bad, though not so excusable, as that prevailing in the small crowded countries of Europe. The ethics, and probable effects upon the future prosperity of the country of real estate business and speculation; of the exploitation of natural resources, of the private ownership of public utilities, and of the exploitation of the lives of immigrants by powerful business interests, are subjects of paramount importance and vital interest. The League will not be in any real sense a social centre, if it ignores these things. On the other hand it will attain a real success and attract people hard to be attracted by the discussion of them.

But the mere discussion of vital topics will not make the League the social centre that it should be. There must be an adequate social motive which will result in a unity of purpose and endeavor. There must be a social ideal big enough to stimulate to action—a conception of life which will appeal to all and draw out the best in all. The League must not be self-centred. It ought to be something more than a mutual improvement society. If it simply tends to increase the membership of the church, or in any way proves a source of strength to the church, it is by all means worth while. But its objective must not be church. Rather the people whom the church does not reach. The end to be attained is the good of the

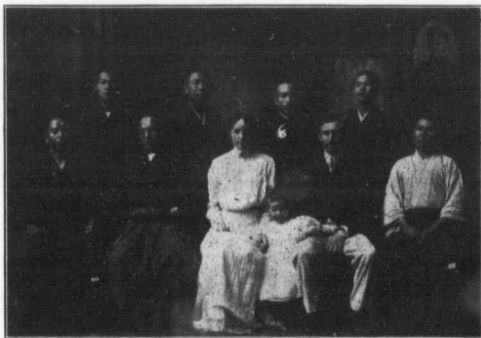
entire community. In seeking this end, the best interests of the church will be served. The only adequate social motive and bond of social union, is to be found in the teaching of Jesus—in the conception of life as He intended it should be. The theme of our Lord's teaching and preaching is The Kingdom of God. Whatever else the phrase may mean, it certainly means a right order of society, a condition of things in which God's will is done on earth, in which wrong is overthrown, and justice and love triumphed. If the members of the League become seized with this ideal of life, and with the possibility of its realization, they will by the very force of the conception be impelled to engage in the social work which the needs of the time so clamorously demand. To be saved from the canker of self-interest, the League must be a centre of social activities. The nature of these activities will vary according to the different situation of each society. In every organization, the members should engage in doing what is possible to help the people in their immediate neighbourhood. The needs of the particular district must be carefully studied. Efforts which would be wise in the town, might be utterly ridiculous in the country. Careful and earnest study is essential. We cannot better the conditions of life until we have an intelligent understanding of their environments and of the forces which have made them. Perhaps this seems to imply more thorough study than the average League member can find time to do. But what one member cannot do, the League as a whole may do. There are assured results of social investigation as well as of biblical criticism; and these results provide a basis for action.

The policy of the League, however, must be to do the nearest duty. Through

English. The members of the League are just the very people to teach him. And they would be benefited in the work of teaching, equally as much as the foreigner in the labor of learning. When once the language is taught, further opportunities of helping the same people naturally arise. Our immigration problem is not going to be solved so long as we hold ourselves aloof from the immigrant.

Various channels of activity suggest themselves by which the League might do much to bring about a better social life. Every now and again, communities have to settle some great moral question. In a temperance campaign, the obvious duty of an organization of Christian young men and women, is to help to win the fight for temperance. Those in charge of the campaign would have no difficulty in setting the Leaguers to work, and their aid might prove the deciding factor in winning the contest. Saloon visitation might also be carried on with good results. There are usually a crowd of men hanging about the saloon, particularly so in our Western towns. Many of these are there simply because they have nowhere else to go. They are seeking to satisfy their social instincts. In their hearts their hearts they don't like the saloon, and would rather not be there. What more natural than for the young men in connection with the League to visit these places and invite their weaker or less fortunate brothers to the League meetings, or the church services? They would meet with some rebuffs, but could not fail to do good. The same kind of work could be done in the pool room. Men animated by a good purpose will be in no danger of contamination from these places.

Many of the methods proved to be so successful in Institutional Church work



PREPARING FOR SERVICE. MR. AND MRS. CONNOLLY AND THEIR BIBLE CLASS.

the doing of this, the next will become clearer. In a country district, where there are large numbers of hired men and of bachelors living lonely lives in miserable shacks, the immediate problem of the League is to reach these men; to discover their interests to enrich and brighten their lives. They may profess to have no use for religion, and may not have attended a church service for years. All the more reason why the utmost should be done to help them.

In some districts, there are a great number of foreigners; the majority of them with little or no knowledge of the English language. Here is an opportunity for the League which it should not be slow to seize. It is, in most cases possible to start a language class. The average foreigner is desirous of speaking

and in Social Settlement work, might well be tried by the League. Some of these do not require any special equipment. All that is necessary is a band of people who are prepared to serve their fellows. The Epworth League should stand for service.

General Count Von Haeseler, of the German army, where many exhaustive and scientific tests have been made of temperate as against intemperate soldiers, says that "the abstaining soldier is altogether the best man; he accomplishes more, marches better, and is a more efficient soldier than the man who drinks even moderately." General Haeseler considers beer next to brandy as an alcoholic poison.—Ez.