

The Evangelistic Forward Movement has been growing in strength every year, and the indications are that it will be taken up more vigorously than ever.

My conclusion of the whole matter is, that if we are to judge of the influence of the Epworth League, viz., the work being done, and not mere membership, then the movement was never in a better condition than at the present. However, if we would retain our vitality I think fresh material should be continually introduced. The present generation of young people has been pretty well canvassed, but another is coming up and, to prevent loss of influence and power in the older societies, more work should be done among the juniors. Trained as juniors, they make the very best workers in the older society when they graduate into it.

There must be the continual impartation of new life, and from the intermediate classes of our Sunday school, we may gather in many who, in a few years, will be strong and devoted workers in the churches.

Prescott, Ont.

UPHOLDING THE PASTOR'S HANDS.

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THE necessity of this is too evident to need any remarks, for without the loyal and hearty support of the congregation, a minister's labors will be of little value. The Epworth League is a staunch ally of the pastor in all his work, and it has filled a place in our church life, which we could ill afford to do without. The question in the League's mind is, "How can we best help the pastor in the work of the church."

There are some burdens of the church which should be taken off his shoulders, or at least should be very generously shared. A minister's work is especially spiritual in its character, and it stands to reason that if he has to grapple with the financial and other temporal affairs of the church, that he will have less energy, and less spirit to put into his more proper work. Therefore lift these responsibilities from his shoulders, and when churches are to be built or improved, or parsonages furnished, let the laymen give their brains and business ability to these works. They are probably better able to do them than the minister, for if a man does not give his attention pretty closely to business, he is not apt to be a good financier or business man. This is one of the most important ways in which you can uphold the pastor's hands. And the principle should apply to the raising of various funds of the church, and the conducting of anniversaries, socials and picnics. Of course I do not mean that the minister should have nothing at all to do with such things, but the heavy end of the burden should not be left upon him so as to crush and dishearten him. A pastor must know all the members of his congregation and therefore must see them in their homes. The object of pastoral visitation is not merely social, nor is it altogether religious. It is a mixture of both. Of course he will try to interest the people whom he meets in the work and services of the church, and seek to in-

duce them to attend the various means of grace. But it seems to me the greatest of all objects is to come into such a sympathetic relationship with every member of his congregation, as to make himself their confidant and friend. The pastor wants to arouse such confidence in himself, that the people will come to him in their difficulties and troubles. To make friends, and establish mutual confidence is the supreme end of pastoral visiting, with the ultimate end in view of being at some time able to lead them to the One, who can comfort their hearts in sorrow, and sustain and support, when all other helpers fail. A pastor does not want to be a mere clerical figure-head but a true-hearted man and brother among his people. Now this creates corresponding

the church, and hangs like a night-mare upon the pastor. Speak well of your pastor, whenever you can, and if you cannot approve of his conduct or teaching do not expose his folly or weakness to the world at large. That will at once destroy his influence over those to whom you talk. A little hint of suspicion is enough to close many a man's heart against a preacher. It would be a great kindness to tell a minister about his failings and if this is done in a kindly spirit it will not only produce an improvement in him, but will nine times out of ten produce a better feeling between you and him.

Talk to your pastor about the different departments of your church work, and show that you are interested by offering suggestions and plans. Get the minister's advice, but do your own work.

There are many little ways in which you can greatly help in the pastor's work, and it is the multitude of these little things which if faithfully done make success. If you know of any who have been neglected in the pastoral visitation, or of any who are in trouble, or in sickness, tell the pastor. The probability is that he knows nothing about it.

Try to bring those to church and under the influences of Christianity whom you can reach. There are, no doubt, some whom you can reach. There are, no doubt, some whom you can influence, whom the pastor cannot touch. Some are prejudiced against a preacher, and are always misinterpreting his actions, and imputing wrong motives. You can bring them to church, and make them feel at home when they are there. Perhaps you could arrange to have them meet the pastor somewhere in a social kind of way, so that there might be an opportunity to create confidence.

It is a very important thing that those who seldom come to church should be warmly welcomed when they do come, and invited to return. Always

be sociable and friendly to strangers. Show them to a good pew, and treat them as you would like to be treated if you were a stranger. You may also do some visiting in the interest of the church, or Sunday-school or League, and always act as if the well-being of the church depended upon your faithfulness, and you cannot help being a great support to the pastor. And now, finally, never cease to pray for him and for the church. This is by no means the least way of upholding his hands. The benefit of prayer is two-fold; like mercy, "It is twice blessed—it blesseth him that gives, and him that takes." It acts upon the preacher, making his heart richer and more fruitful in the experience of the divine goodness. It will make the public services more helpful and encouraging,



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obligations upon the members of the congregation. Give him a chance to know you, and make it as easy as possible for acquaintanceship to ripen into a true friendship. Tell him your thoughts and your difficulties. If he is a man of experience he will be able to give you good counsel, but if he is unable to advise it will still do you good to talk things over with a friend. It is a very great source of strength to a minister when he feels that people trust him, and that he can rely upon their sympathy and support in his work. Be loyal to the plans of the majority. It is quite right for a man to oppose any plan of work which does not commend itself to his judgment, but if the majority have decided in favor of it, then fall in with them, and try to make it a success. What we call a "kicker" hinders the work of