

Section of Social Service

"Look Up, Lift Up."

The Secret of a Social Evening

BY THE EDITOR.

The chief element in a real social evening is the spirit of at-home-ness that prevails. The company may be large or small, the time, summer or winter, the quarters a restricted room or bounded by all-out-of-doors; but under any condition or circumstance, the whole assembly must feel a freedom from unnatural restraint that nothing but a "home" sense can impart. Only so can stiffness and formality be dissolved, the warm sunshine of true domestic sociability, diffusing wholesome influences on all around, will clear the atmosphere and dissipate the least and last germ of unfriendliness.

Four simple ingredients, at least, are needed to produce these homelike conditions. They are congenial company, mutual regard, sympathetic co-operation, and healthful exercise. Mixed together in proper proportions, they cannot fail of happy results, and both pleasure and profit will naturally accrue to all who associate together in such a gathering and contribute to its success.

The Third Vice-president, who can so combine these ingredients that they will minister to the delectation of the assembled company, is magnifying this phase of the office, and the programme that most fully utilizes them for the enjoyment of all, is a good one. Such a programme cannot be bought ready-made, it must grow out of some one's fertile brain as the local needs are studied. Naturalness must be aimed at, and adaptability must be the prevailing law in making the selection. A programme quite appropriate in one city might be wholly out of place in the country, and vice versa. Here is where originality in the Vice-president is of great value. The order of exercise must be well thought out and fully mastered by the presiding genius of the occasion. Haste is fatal, and a hurried-up programme is foredoomed to failure.

But, whether the exercises be elaborate or simple, the company must feel at home to enjoy them. That is why we emphasize again this point above all others. It is essential, and without it all else will prove both insufficient and inefficient for best results.

The Purpose of the Social Department

BY MISS I. L. FARRILL.

As in individual life, so in the larger and wider life of the organization in which the individual members, be results arise from having a clearly defined purpose or goal to be reached.

The social department should have a purpose large enough to include all, and one worthy of the time and support of the leaguers. We must remember, however, that it is a deaconess, and that its justification rests upon its ability to serve the larger organization of which it is a part. The purpose of the social department must necessarily be found embodied in the larger purpose of the league itself, and to understand the one we must be familiar with the other.

The ultimate aim of the Epworth League is to develop Christian character, strong, noble and permanent, for upon

such character the world must depend if it is going to be carried higher. In this large purpose to develop noble manhood and beautiful womanhood, to make lives strong, sympathetic, and serviceable, must be found the aim of the social department.

The social work, then, must be given a broad significance, and it is only filling its true place in the life of the league when it puts us in touch with the real human life and conditions thereof all about us in our town, our city, or our nation. No social department is doing its whole duty by merely organizing a social evening. It must do more. Just as the missionary department places before us and inspires the claims of missions, so the social, with that wider view of society, its needs, its sorrows, its sins, its imperfections, its possibilities, must give the leaguers a vision of local and national conditions, for our Christianity is becoming more and more emphatic in its emphasis upon the practical.

The purpose, then, is a two-fold one. 1. There is the inner field of action which consists of work in the league, such as the social handshake, the kindly word, the social evening, the friendly spirit which overcomes all feelings of coldness. What is required here is the actual touch of a personality overflowing with interest in our fellow-beings. By such intercourse the social committee should create an atmosphere of power and inspiration to those who come. Some are tired, away from home, discouraged, and about to fail. They need the strong hand and helpful recognition, and the department gives great opportunity in this respect, since the conventional is largely removed in the hours of its activity.

If our socials are to compete with any degree of success against such secular attractions as the theatre or the ball-room they must have a motive to which these cannot attain—to *serve*. If our socials appeal only to the senses and not to the soul they are not fulfilling their purpose. To make social life effective, every member should feel responsible for the meeting, not leave it to a few appointed ones. If strangers come, do not stand aloof, waiting for a formal introduction, but kindly welcome them and see that they do not feel neglected. Do not, as soon as the last stranger has entered, go back to your intimate friends, but cultivate the habit and manner of genial sociability to all.

Have a good, but short, programme, using the talent of your own league or church. Sometimes a short debate will be very profitable. Coffee and cake may well be served, and while enjoying the refreshments the visitors may be invited to come again or to join the league.

Let the sick be visited. Cast the sunshine to them. Books and magazines are always welcome if adapted to the taste and needs of the patient. Remember that people who are sick do not, as a rule, crave heavy reading. Flowers always bring joy and comfort. Do not neglect the talent for singing. Much good can be conferred by a simple hymn or song, and reading to the aged whose eyes are growing dim will cheer and gladden them greatly.

2. There is the outer field of action.

How often strangers have come to our church uninvited. Let us not fail in our duty to them but be the warm, sympathetic spirit of Christian

brotherhood and sisterhood, hold them to the Church.

The social department should study the questions of reform in which the town's life is involved. We should know the license problem, the conditions of charitable institutions and visit the boarding-houses. We should interest ourselves in local option campaigns, and work for the utter extinction of the drink traffic. We should know these things as well as foreign missions, for is not the upbuilding and ennobling of our homeland of first importance?

If our social department awakens to its privilege it will be more than an amusement provider, and become a mighty force in the Church, and perhaps even in the nation itself. It will bring Christ before the world by its unselfish and prayerful efforts to bring about truer and purer standards of social life. Thus it will become the agent of sympathy and help, the destroyer of cliques and caste, the redresser of wrongs, and the able representative of our Master, fulfilling His sublime purpose in our lives, and achieving the object of the Epworth League in its varied ministries in His name.

Kenilworth, Ont.

Don't Trouble

"There is a saying old and rusty
(But good as any new)
'Tis 'Never trouble trouble
Till trouble troubles you.'

"Don't you borrow sorrow,
You'll surely have your share;
He who dreams of sorrow
Will find that sorrow's there.

"If care you've got to carry,
Wait till 'tis at the door;
For he who runs to meet it
Takes up the load before.

"If minding will not mind it,
Then better not to mind;
The best thing is to end it,
Just leave it all behind.

"Then don't you trouble trouble
Till trouble troubles you,
You'll only double trouble—
And trouble others too."—Sel.

A Lonely Saint

"Please take this home and read it."

The letter was held out to the deaconess as she passed from one to another of the women in the "City Asylum," a new-fashioned name for the poorhouse.

"I've been waiting so long," the old voice quavered on, "and I think you must be the one I wrote the letter to."
That night in her room the deaconess opened the letter.

"Dear Friend: I am lonely here. I am a Christian and love Jesus, but no one comes to talk with me about Him. Won't you send somebody to me to talk about Heaven, for I want to go there very much. I am all alone in the world. All my people have gone on before and it is so lonely. This home is real nice and the housekeeper is kind, but I want to leave it all and go to live with Jesus. Yours in His name,
"E— N—"

The appeal touched the deaconess's heart. The next day she visited several members of the church and Epworth League, and as a result of her work a religious service is now held regularly in the institution. The Sunday School

"Love your neighbor, but do not pull down the hedge."