

of the Church; (c) insistence upon church membership as a condition of active membership in the League, and the importance of a clearly defined religious experience as essential to the growth and expansion of Christian character.

4. I believe that if the officers and members will cultivate unreserved consecration to God, a single eye for his glory, and faithful, unselfish work for the good of others, the Epworth League will grow into a most potent instrumentality for the progress of our young Methodists' manhood "for Christ and the Church."

REV. JOHN KAY,
Oakville, Ont.

"IN A MOST ENCOURAGING MEASURE."

1. I believe it has. In answering thus I assume that the expectation of the League was the increase of fellowship, co-operation, enthusiasm, and effort for Christ on the part of the young people. This certainly has been secured, not in the largest sense, but in a most encouraging measure.

2. In individual cases the weaknesses doubtless are: (a) *A tendency to form.* The desire to fulfil the pledge, which is exceedingly binding, may tend to routine, by which the mere letter of the pledge is met and conscience satisfied, and a formal and superficial life may be developed instead of the experimental. This needs to be guarded. "Confessing Christ" should be a willing act, the prompting of the heart and not a constraint. (b) *A tendency to exclusiveness.* Young people becoming content with their League service and neglecting other means of grace. Then a marked separation would arise between the older and younger elements in the church. I rejoice in saying that I have not found that in my relation to the young people; yet in every convention and gathering of Leagues we have the word of lament over this tendency. Such conditions would be fatal to success. (c) *A tendency to mere routine.* Pleasant gatherings, abundance of song, plenty of machinery, but little done. No report of progress—nothing aggressive for Christ. Pastors and Leagues need to ask the cause. (d) *A tendency to preferences that might result injuriously.* In the councils of the Church the young people are having increased voice and power. We hail this with satisfaction and pleasure. If, however, it should result in prejudice or injury to any brother in our ministerial ranks simply on the ground of years, it would become a serious wrong. Preferences based on age are not always the safest and wisest. It is *soul that tells.* Some are miserably old and tame at thirty, and some are delightfully young and vigorous at fifty-six and even seventy.

3. Strong points are: (a) Cultivating fellowship among the Christian young people of the same church. (b) Developing the "witnessing" spirit for Christ. (c) Intensifying personal effort for souls. (d) Deepening zeal in missionary and temperance work. (e) Uniting the forces of young Methodism in any aggressive movement for the well-being of the Church or state.

4. Attention should be given: (a) To the Forward Movement in zeal,

consecration, and systematic giving to missions and missionary support. (b) To the "Evangelistic Movement" in deeper personal piety, more careful and consecutive study of the Word of God, and increased devotion to soul-saving. (c) To the "Reading Course," furnishing the mind through this source, and developing its powers by such literary work as may be wisely arranged in the League programmes. I fear this is overlooked. (d) *To developing a true connexional spirit among the Leagues.* Too many live within themselves and have but little sympathy with connexional movements. (e) *To reaching the young people yet outside.* The greater number of youth in many churches are as yet untouched by the League. Let the next decade witness a great victory here; it can be secured by piety, consistency, and fidelity. The life of a faithful and bright young Christian will win for the Cross. (f) To the circulation of the CANADIAN EPWORTH ERA, a paper worthy of all commendation, and which should find a place in every Canadian home where there are young people. It will educate in patriotism, Christian intelligence, and spiritual zeal. Let the next decade roll up a circulation proportionate to the number of Epworth League members, and immense good in every way will follow!

The Epworth League movement is of God. It has proved the divinity of its origin, and the Christlike character of its purpose. Its glorious mission has but begun.

REV. J. PHILP, D.D.,
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"DEVELOP THE MISSIONARY SPIRIT."

A prominent pastor in one of our Conferences writes as follows:—"Has the League fulfilled the expectations of the Church? That of course depends on what the Church expected. No one will question the great work it has done, in bringing in and developing many workers, in giving an increased incentive to Bible study, and thus leading many into a higher life. But for the number of societies, for the efforts put forth, for the place given it in our church work, the results are, so far as can be seen, very meagre indeed.

A few have taken part in active work, and have accordingly been helped, but there is a great lack of development in the younger and weaker members. The mass come and go without taking any part or doing any work. Unless these younger and weaker members are in training how can we expect them to grow up to be perfect men and women in Christ Jesus. If they are allowed to remain passive they become simply parasites—always taking but never giving. If these younger and weaker ones were receiving the training any place else, say in the class meeting, it would not be so bad; but in many cases the attendance at League is as near the class as they get. The League has to them taken the place of the class.

The principal weaknesses, I think are: (a) A want of recognition that the work is entirely of God—that it is for soul culture—that its object is entirely religious—that no matter what the meeting—literary, social, or Christian Endeavor—

the one object is, the salvation of souls and the development of Christian life. (b) Too much attention has been given to the social life of the League, some leagues going so far as to take from five to ten minutes intermission for social chatting each evening. I have known even the consecration service broken into for this purpose. The league has not shown that there is a higher social life, a sweeter communion than the world can provide. Instead of doing this, it has, in many instances, aped the light, degenerating methods of the world, and signally failed in the copy. Growing out of the above is a lack of reverence—sitting and looking around in prayer, talking during service, and a general lack of devotion in all the meetings.

The strongest points are: (a) The opportunity it affords for direct Christian work and worship, the many departments giving all a chance to find his or her special field. It is not the fault of the machinery (although I think there is too much) but the failure to work it, that is responsible for many of the weaknesses. (b) Another strong point in the League is that it brings our young people together under the best and purest associations.

To what line of effort should our young people direct their attention? I would by all means say, to the development of the missionary spirit. To that work the Church received her great impetus at Pentecost, and when the Pentecost comes to us as young people this will be our work. For this purpose more than any other God has raised us up, and as we move towards it God will equip us for the work. As an educative force in the League there is nothing to be compared to missionary effort. The hope of the world and the Church lies in obedience to the command—"Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature."

"TO SAVE SOULS."

1. A few doubtless saw the danger of a new organization, and thinking of it as somewhat separate from the Church itself, feared a dividing line, which might possibly in time widen, and thus present a problem in the future difficult to solve. To such the expectation of fear has not been realized, for in the Church to-day there are not more loyal members than are the Epworth Leaguers. To others the vision, perhaps, came of a great host of young Christians united in a fellowship of holier service. To these the reality is perhaps not what it might have been. We confess we see our own failures, and yet we feel, with grateful hearts, that the vision is not all spoiled. We can rejoice because, by the grace of God, we, in some measure, see our hopes attained.

2. (a) The failure which always comes of resting too much upon organization. The organization can only be perfect as the individual membership is consecrated. (b) The ease, in programme making, with which so many will accept the service of others, declining responsibilities themselves. The League is not merely for our gratification and help, it is also for service. (c) The monotony which comes of running in ruts—this makes that merely formal which should be accompanied