

## Practical League Problems

### A Spiritual Force

"How Can We Make Our Executive Committee a Spiritual Force in Our League?"

This is a question that has been on the mind of a young president very much since his election. It is a very important one, and shows that in his plan for it the executive is to be something more than a business meeting to direct the ordinary routine of league life. We suggest, in answer to the query:

1. The persons composing the executive should individually realize the possibilities of their several offices.
2. Each officer should be spiritually alive and actively concerned for the spiritual welfare of the whole league membership.
3. Every executive meeting should be conducted throughout in the spirit and atmosphere of prayer.
4. The religious condition of the membership should be the subject of frequent conference by the executive.
5. The mutual counsel and co-operation of pastor and league officials should constantly be engaged, in order to ensure proper pastoral care of the young.
6. The executive should especially encourage the Lookout and Evangelistic Committees to do systematic and regular work.
7. Greater attention might be given to personal work among the young people of the congregation, in order to win them to faith in Christ and confession thereof.
8. In every devotional meeting each member of the executive should stand committed to take ready and prompt part, that the exercises may not drag.
9. At every consecration meeting opportunity should be given for some explanation of the active members' pledge, and associate members should be expected to take it.
10. By such a spirit and purpose in the hearts of the executive officers, by planning in prayer, and practising in united and hearty endeavor, the committee will prove itself a source and centre of spiritual enthusiasm that will gloriously advance the main purpose of the league—to win souls to Christ and train them in efficient Christian service.

### The Business Meeting

A league officer states that regular business meetings have never been held in his society, and asks for suggestions as to their value.

A monthly business meeting is necessary for the efficient management of an Epworth League. One of the chief requisites in any co-operative concern is counsel of the various departments regarding the whole in general, and the different sections in particular. The Epworth League president is the supreme executive officer. Each vice-president is head of a department. Every committee chairman is responsible for the work allotted thereto. At the business meeting a written report of these several departments should be formally presented every month, and thus a clear and comprehensive view of the work done or attempted by the whole organized staff be obtained. This can be gained in no other way. Carelessness on the part of sub-officers is encouraged by indifference by the president. Every league president, therefore, should insist on a written report from every department under his supervision. If this were done, much more real effort would be put forth by the several committees. To have a number of such that exist only on paper is damaging to the league. But if each chairman is expected to give a detailed written report monthly of the committee under his charge, something is very likely to be really undertaken. Otherwise the infidelity of the chairman to his trust will be exposed, and the inefficiency of the committee made manifest. By all means have a regular business meeting of your league every month, and let it be a time of honest reporting, that the stock-taking of the league, thus enforced, may show you just where you stand.

### Midsummer Meetings

"How can we make our meetings both attractive and profitable through the hot months of summer?"

The editor congratulates you on your evident intention to continue your meetings throughout the heated term. He has no sympathy with the course of some in closing up business for eight or ten meeting nights during July and August.

Midsummer presents varied opportunities for making sociability prominent in your gatherings. So we advise you to give extra thought and care to the social element, as an active factor in brightening up your services.

The open-air meeting is possible in the summer as at no other season. In the country there are spacious fields, delightful groves, and beautiful lawns where the young people may be assembled for exercises that will cultivate sociability, provide attractive physical enjoyment, and unite in a

wholesome manner both pleasure and profit. There is no reason why, after an hour in the early evening, spent in healthful and recreative sports of varied character, in which all may participate, another hour may not profitably follow in study and worship, still in the open air.

While we advise that always the weekly topic be the subject of study, the midsummer meeting should have more than the usual hymn-singing in its exercise of praise. Arrange for extra musical numbers. The use of a phonograph will add brightness to your open-air meeting, and this instrument is well adapted to this purpose. Doubtless you have boys and young men who can play various instruments. Employ them. We have heard really good music on country roads from mouth-organs played by lads returning from league meetings. Why not utilize their talent in the league? The suggestion is sufficient to set you thinking and planning. Two hours in the open will pass more quickly, and be more thoroughly enjoyed, than half that time in some basement, room, or church, that perhaps is so "stuffy" in its atmosphere that it puts one to sleep, even against one's inclination or desire.

### Young Converts

"A number of young converts have recently joined our Church, and the older league members want to help them. What can we do more than ordinary?"

Perhaps the first and most important help your older members can give these new converts is that of their own personal living example of a Christian life actively employed for God. Don't preach to them. Show them the what and how of Christian service. Let them see you busily engaged.

Then the league instruction will be influential, because backed up by actual practice, and prompted by personal sincerity and integrity. Your young members should be taught, both by oral lessons and practical examples, in the art of doing good.

Give them fellowship. They need a sense of comradeship that will help them over the hard places that are sure to come in their subsequent Christian experiences. This is the supreme element in the class-meeting, and if your church does not afford it, your league must. The old-time class-meeting methods may become obsolete, but the fraternal fellowship for mutual help in Christian living must never pass out of Methodist practice. See to it that your young members do not suffer from a sense of coldness and estrangement. Give them a home.

Remember, too, that they need to be fed. "Feed the flock of God." If you would have them live, grow, become strong, and act usefully, make sure provision for their spiritual diet as far as your league can. The study of God's Word is absolutely essential for this, and we shall have more virile and aggressive leaguers when we have a better Bible-studying league.

Provide these young Christians with wise leadership in the activities of your league. Your older members ought to be able, from their experience, to act as guides in the details of practical work. The young are inexperienced, and must be tutored by their elders. Give them such exercises as they can perform. Share the meeting with them. Encourage them to do something harder by commencing with something that is comparatively easy. The fear of many young members is that they cannot do as well as others, and consequent dread of criticism follows. They need encouragement, never dictation.

In these ways your league ought to be a training ground for personal growth of character and the development of native energy for service.

Rally around your young converts, and by the warmth of loving fellowship and the spirit of fraternal co-operation make them in every sense one with you in all the life of your league.

### Small Leagues

"Thanks for the help you are giving to the smaller leagues."

This is one of several similar expressions we have recently received, and we are encouraged by them. The majority of our leagues are numerically small and the sphere of their local work is limited, but we cannot be too insistent or emphatic in our reminder that Epworth League success is not determined primarily by numbers. The glorification of the many is not good. We want all the members we can enlist, but the matter of quality is of greater importance than quantity. A band of twenty young leaguers who are in earnest, who work in unity, and make a business of their league will prove a spiritual power in any community. We have the greatest reward for the smaller leagues whose activities are maintained by members living at considerable distances from one another and from the place of meeting, and if this department of our paper can be of material assistance to them we shall be very thankful for the privilege of giving counsel at any time. So we invite your correspondence. Send in your problems and we will try to help you solve them.