

the Era increasingly useful in training our young people for efficient service in the Kingdom of God.

S. T. BARTLETT.

Remember, that a second batch of these letters was sent through the mails to our responsible leaders in January, 1912. What are the results? As we stated in our last issue, which was in the printers' hands when the Book Committee met, it is the "old, old story" of thirteen years' repetition, and the Book Steward is rightly tired of it: "The Epworth Era is not paying its way, and it looks as if it never would do so." Whether or not the paper should be self-supporting may be a debatable question in some minds. As set forth in "Plain Talk" above, the Editor has no doubt on the subject himself, and thinks that it should. But here are the facts regarding our past.

The paper was first issued in January, 1899. It was not expected to meet expenses for three or four years, so we will say nothing about the initial cost or the legitimate deficiencies of the first five years, which were naturally but preparatory ones and the losses presumably but temporary. But in 1904, after five years of natural infancy, it was thought that the circulation should have been sufficient to meet expenses, and the next five years became healthy ones for the Book Room. But from 1904 to 1908 inclusive there was an average annual deficit of \$958 in the publication of the paper. It was in the face of this unpleasant situation that Dr. Crews, in the issue of December, 1908, made the statements already quoted in "Plain Talk." The present editor commenced work with the number for January, 1909, and has consistently endeavored to bring the paper into a position of self-support, but has not succeeded. From 1909 to 1913, the second quinquennial period of our calculation, the average annual loss in publishing the paper has been \$660. Altogether this paper has cost the Book and Publishing Committee \$8,094 since the first issue of 1904, when it might reasonably have been expected to begin to bring in at least some revenue.

There is the situation as it relates to the finances. Ought we not to improve it? Can we not? Will we not? If we do not, should we expect the Book Committee to continue the paper at such a financial loss? These are questions for our Epworth League leaders to carefully ponder. Mark, our position is no worse than it has been before. But year after year the Book Steward has looked for improvement, and has looked in vain. Can we blame him if he advises the discontinuance of the paper under such circumstances?

The average yearly paid-up subscriptions from 1904 to 1908 numbered 5,957. From 1909 to 1913 they were 5,632. The "leanest" year was in 1907, when the net loss of publication was \$1,195. In 1908 it was \$1,157. In 1913 it was \$1,125. If such a record is not to continue we must have more subscribers, and the only way to get them is for our Leaguers and young people generally to send them in. If this is done the future will be assured. If it is not—frankly, we see no future. If the present disposition of the Book Committee seems to be to give the paper one more chance, and then—

WHAT DO YOU SAY ABOUT IT?

### "Such a Cheerful Place!"

"If we noticed little pleasures

As we notice little pains,

If we quite forgot our losses

And remembered all our gains,

If we looked for people's virtues

And their faults refused to see,

What a comfortable, happy,

Cheerful place this world would be!"

## THE LEAGUE FORUM

### THE PASTOR.

An ever recurring question in connection with League work is what to do with the pastor. Well, he is not to be a figurehead; and he is not to do all the work. He ought always to be on hand, or generally, and should never be in the way. He is the General Superintendent of affairs, and is the man that in the long run both Circuit and Conference hold responsible for the success of the League. But a leader is not a man who is always to the front fussing about things; a leader is generally out of sight directing movements from the rear, and sure that he has his hand and eye on every officer and movement.

Some Presidents are sensitive as photographic plates and can scarcely take a suggestion from a pastor at all. In some Leagues they make a convenience of the pastor to do hack work. They open like this: "After singing Hymn \_\_\_\_\_ the pastor will lead us in prayer." (15 minutes later.) "After singing Hymn \_\_\_\_\_ the pastor will give us a talk, as our Literary Committee failed to provide a programme for to-night." So it goes, the pastor is virtually president, executive, lookout committee, programme, and *esprit de corps* of the society; and yet his hands are tied from doing effective work because of a lot of figurehead officers.

The best plan is to get together and have a talk over the situation. Let each officer understand what his or her duties are. Let the pastor's relation to the Church and League be explained to all. Let everyone be taken into conference in these important things. The responsibility should be properly distributed.

### RIGHTS AND DUTIES.

Every member, every officer, in the League has rights, and also duties. Their duties are to acquaint themselves with the constitution, to attend regularly, to make the most of themselves and the opportunity given them. Then it is their duty to get in touch with conventions, methods, and workers, that they may be inspired and become more effective workers. The "rights" of officers, especially, is to have the support of the members. Members, too, should attend regularly, should do what they are asked by the officer, or at least make an attempt at it. Co-operation is the word that means success in this work—officers and members working together.

### SUCCESS AND EFFORT.

Some members wonder why their League is not a greater success. If they would spend some of the brain force they have, wondering in planning and working they would not need to wonder so much. Some farmers wonder why they do not have better crops. Well, their neighbors could tell them if they would ask—they do not ask for advice, not that kind. Their neighbors would say, "Why, he doesn't know how to farm, and he doesn't work. He puts in poor seed. He does not cultivate his crops and get the weeds out of the way. He does not take a farm paper. He is about fifty years behind the times." (See his photograph in Proverbs 24: 30-34.)

Well, that is the way with some Leagues. A young people's society on the other side of the street that is half alive could walk right around them. This is the strenuous age, and a successful age

is always that. Can and Can't are two engines. "Can" puffs, blows, and scrapes, tugs, and gets ahead, reaches the top of the grade and goes singing down the other side—so on across the continent. "Can't" is a handsome looking piece of machinery; the engineer is a splendid looking fellow (reminds me of the President of an Epworth League I knew once), the engine puffs and blows, its wheels thunder a little, it tries once or twice to make a run up hill but soon gives it up. The company decide to use it for a local yard engine. Did you ever see success won without effort—hard work, self-denial, sacrifice, blood?

Always try, you may fail to accomplish what you set out for, but you learn something by trying.

### LEAGUE IN HOT WEATHER.

"Shall we keep the League running in warm weather?" Let us hear from the members: First member speaks—"It is too hard work to keep it going. Several of our officers are out of the town on a vacation, and it is hard to get programmes. I move we adjourn for a few weeks." You notice this member is so anxious to drop the League that she wants to discourage further discussion if possible. Second member speaks: He does not expect to get out of town. The League is the one bright spot in his life; he likes the meetings; in fact, no church service helps and inspires him as much as that. He wants to see it kept open; knows a number that will come. An other thinks they ought to keep it open; hotels are open, bars are open, shops are open, factories are open, business is rushing faster than ever on all sides. Still another thinks they ought to keep going every week. It is true some will be away, but there are others who will take their places. They were not depending on two or three persons to run the League surely. Others would have a chance to take part now.

In the end they decided to keep the League going right through the hot weather, but to vary the programme to suit the season, have out-door seasons, take a run out in the country somewhere for a picnic, take singing books along and have a good sing, have baseball, football, drop the handkerchief, and so forth.

The League that goes on in that way will have an idea will do more good in summer than in winter. Keep a-going! "All at it and always at it."

"A man is 'lost' when he has no purpose in life; he does not know where he is going.

Faith is the sense that responds to the unseen realities.

The first step toward imperial unity is the recognition of the rights of others.

The solution of the problem of social injustice is for the strong to help the weak.

### HITCHING ON TO LIVE ISSUES.

Below is a letter from one of the correspondents to whom I submitted a question regarding the effectiveness of the League and its departments. You see, there is an impression in some minds that the League is not a great force. We must justify ourselves in order to command respect. Wisdom, you know, must be justified of her children. Read and consider. Our aim ought to be higher