



## How to Organize an Epworth League



**I**F the number of inquiries for information on "How to Organize an Epworth League," is any indication of the new Leagues that will be started this winter, then the prospect is good for a fine increase in our membership. In view of the fact that the little leaflet on this subject is entirely out of print, we think it wise to publish in this paper some suggestions that may prove to be helpful in launching new societies. We hope to hear of many of these within the next few weeks.

### THE PASTOR AND THE LEAGUE.

To be successful the League needs the enthusiastic, intelligent, and persistent support of the pastor, and it will pay him to give this. His most important work is among the young people, who should not only be taught, but trained, as well, in Christian service.

The Sunday-school is not enough. The motto of the school is "teach," and here our young folks get the truth, while in the Epworth League that truth becomes active, and is translated into actual service. If our church is to have a useful and active membership, it must be developed out of the youthful material now at hand. The Epworth League is the religious gymnasium in which young Christians are drilled for service in the field, and the aim is to make them brave, active, and strong.

Most of our live pastors recognize this, and afford valuable help to their young people in the great work they have undertaken. A few are indifferent, and occasionally one will be found who actually blocks the way of progress, but the great majority are in full tide of sympathy with the League movement. No pastor can afford to be indifferent. If he does he will surely be relegated to the rear, and will have no one to blame but himself.

When a young man at a Southern Methodist Conference reported "No League," a thoughtful layman shook his head significantly and said, "Back number." But he was not yet a "back number." He was a bright, earnest, hopeful young fellow who would probably soon have his eyes opened to one of the greatest opportunities of his ministry.

### AN ASSISTANT PASTOR.

Only a few of our larger churches can afford to employ an assistant pastor, but a robust, healthy, active Epworth League may become a most valuable helper to the minister. Its members look after masses of poverty and afford relief; they visit strangers and invite outsiders to the services; they send flowers to the sick; they look after those who have become careless and have strayed away from the fold; they help to create a warm social atmosphere in the church, in which new-comers will feel at home; they assist in evangelistic services, and in many other ways stand by their chief officer, the pastor. In fact, there would scarcely seem to be any limit to the good work that may be done by a band of devoted and enthusiastic young people.

### TALK IT UP.

When a minister recognizes this, he will, in most cases, find some way to organize his young people into a League. It is very important that he should go about it in a thorough and intelligent way. A mistake is often made by rushing into organization too hurriedly. It takes a little time to arouse enthusiasm, if that enthusiasm is to be lasting.

The wise pastor will preach and will present the subject publicly and privately to his people, for weeks, before he says a word about organization. He will preach a sermon on "The Privileges and Responsibilities of Youth," and another on "The Joy of Christian Service." In other sermons and in private conversation he will frequently refer to the Epworth League and the good work it is doing in other places, until the people will fairly clamor for organization.

### A PUBLIC MEETING.

When the right time comes, the pastor will call a public meeting of the young people of the congregation, explaining that there is a place for all either in the active or associate member's list. After devotional exercises it will be well for the pastor or some other competent person to explain the working of the League.

Reading the constitution without comment will probably be considered rather tedious. A better plan is for the pastor to thoroughly master the constitution before going

to the meeting, and then give the young people a general idea of its contents with interesting illustrations. After doing this, allow a little time for those present to ask questions, so that every one will thoroughly understand what is expected of a League member. This method will be found much more effective than the mere reading of the constitution.

### LARGE NUMBERS NOT IMPORTANT.

The next thing to do is to take the names of those who are willing to join. Do not be discouraged if only a few are obtained at first. It is not numbers that make success. Half a dozen really earnest, consecrated young people may carry on most effective work, and their numbers are sure to increase. In some cases where the society is likely to be small for some time, very pleasant meetings are held in the homes of the members.

### EXPLAIN THE PLEDGE.

It is well to take a little time in explaining the pledge, and showing its reasonableness. Sometimes it happens that there is some prejudice against it, which may be removed by judicious treatment at the beginning.

Tell the people that there is nothing in the active member's pledge that is not already binding on every professed Christian, and the associate member's pledge does not call for anything that a moral, well-disposed young person ought to hesitate for one moment in rendering.

Be patient with those who will not sign at once. They may do so later on. Do not say that those who are not willing to sign the pledge are not Christians. Scolding never wins people. Members of the church should not be allowed to join as associate members.

### ELECTION OF OFFICERS.

You are now in a position to proceed to the election of officers as provided by the constitution.

The president may be a gentleman or lady, but must be a member of the Methodist Church. It would be well for the pastor, before the election, to explain the duties of the officers, calling attention especially to the fact that the four vice-presidents are chairmen of their respective departments, and are expected to be responsible for programmes of meetings held under the auspices of their department. At a subsequent meeting it can be arranged what portion of time will be allotted to each department.

As a rule, it is well to hold the consecration meeting on the first week of each month, allowing other evenings to be taken up by missionary, literary, social, temperance, and business meetings. In electing officers great care should be taken to select as president one who will take an active interest in the society, and give some time to its work. After the League is in running order, new officers should be elected a month before they assume their duties in order that they may become familiar with the work to be done.

### DO WHAT YOU CAN.

The constitution states that the League may be organized in the Christian Endeavor department alone if deemed advisable. If the membership is small, and they feel that it would be a burden for them to assume the responsibility of carrying on all the departments, let them start with one, and then take up the others as soon as they can see their way clear. As a rule, the members will, of their own accord, take hold of the departmental work as soon as they have had an opportunity of looking into it a little.

Do not be discouraged from starting because you cannot work all the machinery at once. Very interesting and helpful meetings can be held when the Scripture topic only is taken up. Where literary, missionary, and social meetings are held the topic should always have a place on the programme, even if it occupies only five minutes.

### THE COMMITTEES.

The Executive Committee, which consists of the pastor and the elected officers, had better meet privately, and after looking over the list of members, assign each one to some department and committee. The object should be to give each member of the society some work to do.

If the committees are formed on the spur of the moment, at the opening meeting, mistakes are likely to occur.

As  
Secret  
Wesley  
officer  
by the  
obtain  
This s

Wh  
energy  
memb  
mach  
There  
ticular

"T  
wheels  
and b  
metho  
and m  
doing  
cessful  
young

A  
has be  
and le  
and co

M  
most f

"W  
puff o  
till the  
societ  
less if  
What  
long w  
What  
themse  
from h  
memb  
gation  
remain  
memb  
minds,  
they b  
formin  
mature  
mature  
exper

Pas  
people  
ago, w  
tunity  
young  
church  
and st  
and in  
becom  
gotten  
in the  
the ol  
fresh  
of sci  
radium  
scope

W  
I can  
so larg  
as the  
large