

ductory outline study of the man and his work by a competent person—teacher or professional man; two or three selected readings from his writings; a list of choice quotations; a solo "Crossing the Bar."

If enthusiastic and interested persons take up such a programme it cannot be uninteresting. The work of the greater poets is age-long and imperishable, and if a materialistic and sordid generation seem to neglect or spurn the old masters, they are being led by them nevertheless. 2. Three months with the Church Fathers or leaders in church history may profitably follow in April, May and June. If one of these leaders be under consideration for each month great profit will accrue. A study of the life work of such as St. Paul, Origen, Augustine, Luther, Knox or Wesley can be made interesting if the pastor and his Literary Committee co-operate. And surely our young people need such inspiration sorely in order to avoid the subtle and clamorous appeals of a host of religious fakirs abroad in our land.

3. And, lastly, a profitable and helpful series for the autumn meetings, or from September to December, may be arranged, following the line of the study of the Bible as literature. The historic character and literary excellence of one of the books of the Bible might be attempted each month. If it be desirable to select from the Old Testament, a night spent in studying, respectively, Genesis, Ruth, Psalms, Amos, as representing history, poetry and prophecy. Or if the New Testament seems more desirable, then let such books as Luke, Acts, 1 Corinthians and James be chosen.

As a variation of this plan, a book of the Bible was studied by the Epworth League in a country church for six consecutive meetings for a period of about forty-five minutes each evening, the pastor leading. At the close of the course all were invited to write on an examination, and eight persons did so. The questions asked and answered by nearly all were—on First Corinthians:—

- (1) Describe the ancient city of Corinth and its people.
- (2) Name the factions into which the Corinthian Church was divided: What advice did St. Paul give them?
- (3) Give St. Paul's advice to women concerning their conduct in the church.
- (4) Name the chief spiritual gifts mentioned in the Epistle.
- (5) What did the Corinthians believe concerning the resurrection?
- (6) Quote Chapter 13.

The eight candidates who wrote averaged seventy per cent. in their answers, a very good showing when it is remembered that none had ever passed beyond a Public School course of training.

A constructive culture programme is not easy to work out, since it requires that leaders steer a somewhat even course between those pious souls who, if allowed to do so, will confine the Epworth League wholly to the routine of a prayer-meeting on the one hand, and those pleasure-loving, intellectually-inclined persons who would make it exclusively a social function or a literary and debating club, on the other. But the best type of League will include both tendencies and more. St. Paul said, "I will pray with the spirit and I will pray with the understanding also; I will sing with the spirit and I will sing with the understanding also." If he were living in our day and working in an Epworth League, he would say, "I will direct the League with the spirit and I will direct it with the understanding also."

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LANTERN LEAFLET.

A Play and Recreation Programme for the Epworth League

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THE problem of play and recreation is one that calls for increasing study, not only on the part of the young people, but also the whole church. The problem has its roots in human experience. We all have played; we all do play. We play spontaneously. It is a God-given and not a devil-given instinct. If we let our mind go back to childhood we can think of ourselves always at play—horse, train, rolling the hoop, building blocks, keeping store, making snow men and snow castles, pomp-pump-away, pussy wants a corner, gathering nuts, May, paper chase, leapfrog, crack-the-whip, running, jumping, swimming, and such like. Later there came the outdoor team games, baseball, football, lacrosse, shinny, and on the other hand the indoor evening parties, forfeits, clap-in and clap-out, clothes-plins, kingdoms, the Virginia reel and a hundred and one indoor games and exercises. And then of course there were the family excursions, Sunday-school picnics, corn-roasts, sugaring-offs, flax-bees, and so on and so on. Thus throughout the years we have had a variety of recreation, and even to-day the desire and need of play are strong within us.

The purpose of this paper is to draft some suggestive play and recreation programme through which each and every member of the community may come naturally into a fuller and more abundant life as citizens of the Kingdom. Yes, we speak of play, as having to do some thing with the Kingdom. We are surely passing through days of change. I remember only a few years ago hearing in an annual conference one of the then prominent ministers denouncing play as of the devil and calling upon his brother ministers to keep away from it. But the days are coming to associate very closely together such activities as business, prayer-meeting, the different vocations, play, politics, personal work, social life, testimony, missionary service. We are coming more and more to see that Christ has redeemed all things. He has spiritualized all worth-while things. He does not restrict and limit, but He makes full and sets free and leads up to the highest levels where we see the abundance of the life which may be ours with Christ in God. What kind of a play and recreation programme, therefore, might be helpful in the development of this all-round, four-fold Christian life?

In the first place in building up a programme of play we should have regard for certain fundamental principles which might be summed up as follows:

1. A recreation programme should be for all members of the community. Both for purposes of recreation and education this is desirable. Children, young people, middle-aged people and older folk, from the standpoint of their respective activities and vocations, should be fully and sympathetically considered.

2. The programme should be graded. It goes without saying that graded play is as essential and fundamental as graded instruction. The play of children differs from the play of youth and this again from the play of adults. In general there may be five distinctive series of activities corresponding to the five distinctive periods of life, namely: Childhood up to twelve years of age, which may be subdivided into earlier and later childhood; early youth from twelve to sixteen or seventeen years; later youth from seventeen to twenty-four or twenty-five years; early and middle adult from twenty-five

and thirty to fifty years; later life from fifty to seventy years. The form of play will be individual or group or team, indoor or outdoor, strenuous or mild, in harmony with these respective periods.

3. The programme should be adapted to neighborhood conditions. Types of people, national characteristics, geographical locations, topographical phenomena (such as lakes and rivers, hills and valleys, woods and open prairies, heat and cold), vocational life, hours of labor—all these should be fully considered in the formulating of a community programme of recreation.

4. Each item in the programme should be as far as possible re-recreational. To recreate is to create anew, to build up, to prepare for further service. The old Latin expression, "*pro patria est, dum ludere videmus*," while we seem to play it is for the sake of our country—gives us the cue. One of the best tests of legitimate recreation is this: Will it clear one's mind, brighten the eye, strengthen the will and fit one for better service on the morrow, or will it becloud one's mind, dim the eye, weaken the will and render one a prey to temptation and so make his service on the morrow below the mark? If a certain form of play does the former, cut it out, but if the latter then indulge in it. Certainly our programme should be made up of recreational activities.

5. Recreation should to some extent be educational as well as recreational. It should seek to draw out and develop all the possibilities of life—mental, physical, spiritual and social. This educational principle should not be over-emphasized, for there are certain forms of activities we may designate pure fun and only recreational. And yet even these in their reflex influence on the widening social and social life may be said to be truly educational. But, moreover, there are certain forms of play in which the natural instincts and characteristics may find expression. Competition, for instance, and co-operation, curiosity, the desire to excel, the love of nature, art, astronomy, music, the ability to make things (craftsmanship)—all such like should be utilized in the evolving of a satisfactory recreation programme.

6. The forms of play and recreation chosen should be, as may be reasonable, adapted for out-of-doors. Recreation is an admirable address not long ago made the statement that a business man in his preparation for his week's work required on Sunday not fresh air but religion. I am sure that the speaker in question did not mean all his statement to be taken literally. Certainly a man needs religion to give him optimism, courage and to face his week's work. But he also needs fresh air—religion and fresh air—or if his religion includes fresh air, then he needs of course only his religion. Let our games be as far as possible out-of-doors. Of course there are circumstances which may necessitate games and religion forms of recreation indoors. But multiply again and again and again the recreational activities in the open air.

7. The programme should be practical—small in its beginnings, but comprehensive in its outlook and added to from time to time. This will put such a program in the reach of the smallest community and the smallest young people's organization.

Given and applying these seven principles, a committee of young people who have caught the vision of what might be