

THE LEAGUE FORUM

What Is a League?

Have you ever tried to define what is meant by a League? Is it an organization or just a disease? Is it an end in itself, or a means to an end? Is it a living or a dead language? Is it a machine or an organism? Well, all depends on the kind of people in it. If they are "sticks" then it is likely you have good order and a "machine" that seldom runs. Nothing is done. Some things are talked about, but nobody is alarmed or inspired. An Epworth League is an organization of wide awake Christian young people banded together to encourage one another to love and good works; and for the purpose of carrying on an aggressive war against the devil's kingdom and establishing the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. Our Leagues, we fear, too often degenerate into mutual good wish clubs. They are non-militant. They compromise with Apollyon's forces, and say, "You lead us along any way you like alone." Christians are soldiers, and they are to conquer the world for Christ.

Read League Literature

If we are going to do good work in our League we need to take the League paper—THE EPWORTH ERA. And we will need to keep in touch with other workers. This is a day of knowledge and knowledge is power. The man who had charge of the "field of the slothful" probably never took a paper on farming. Read up, and apply good things when you read them.

Be Generous

Some Leagues are notoriously ungenerous. They pauperize themselves. They are all the time getting, and giving little out. They assume that the church was built for their comfort; so they enjoy the warmth, the light, the seats, listen to the instruction, and never ask what they may do towards helping support the Church. In fact they seem surprised to think that anything so sacred as a church needs to be supported. "Missions needing money, too?" Why yes, most surely, what is money for? "Always asking for money?" Again, yes, because we are alive and need it just as we need food every day. Be generous. Be a Christian, not a pagan. Ask what you can do to help somebody or something. Make your League programme for local work and Missions so warm that you will melt all the "tight wads" into generous givers. "Hard times?" Not a bit of it; people never spent so much money for that which was not bread as they do to-day. We should keep our meanness for the kind of thing, and show our best hand to the interests of God's kingdom.

Always Late

How long would a business firm keep its head above water if they never opened at the advertised time. "They always start late," is a remark too commonly made. Start on time, and close on time if there is nothing doing. I have known Leagues go a little over time for some good purpose, but be sure that it is a good purpose before you run overtime very often. We know of a minister saying to his folks, "Our anniversary concert will begin at 8 p.m."

They drew their breath, and said in a most knowing kind of way, "Why we never began it at 8 o'clock yet." "Well," he replied, "we will this year. We have to make a beginning you know." Result: The people were there at 8 o'clock, (even ahead of the minister, for his watch happened to be slow). Respect your word, your society, your church, and your work enough to impress upon the members the need of being on time. It is not fair to others to keep them waiting on you. Dr. Adam Clarke was a hard worker and an early riser. A young preacher asked him how he managed the early rising. "Do you pray about it?" he enquired. "No," said Dr. Clarke, "I get up." Get to your League on time and pray afterwards.

The Opportunity of To-Morrow

"The caring for the future," says Bishop Quayle, "is the wisdom of the world." He adds further that the church is a statesman, and as such ought to care for the future. It is well to remind ourselves that there is a "tomorrow." God is a God of the fathers—the past, He is a God of the present, and also of the future. That, too, is His vineyard. We ought to make plans accordingly. What shall the future be? Some turn the question aside as if it were impossible to answer. But

nineteen of Christian history challenges our faith as well as our admiration. Great has been the past of the world; to-morrow will be greater. Moses never dreamed of a prospect in his Canaan as attractive, as full of possibilities as the vistas now opening before the young life of to-day. To-morrow—all time—all the world—think of it!

The Junk Heap

You will always see a pile of old iron and scrap of various sorts around a busy mill or farm. These are things that have served their usefulness and been cast aside. Better machinery has been put in place of these things. A friend of mine visited his old home in Ireland last summer and found there still running a wind mill that his father had used more than half a century ago. The present owner was complaining about the hard ways of the world. Do you see the point? There are some Leagues trying to run worn out machinery. They need a good scrap pile around there. They are using methods that long since proved ineffective. Isn't it about time the Executive of your particular League met and discussed plans for better work in your community? Go at this work to win. This is a good country for business, and this is a good world in which to do work for God.

"By This Sign Conquer"

Buttons and banners are being quite prominently displayed these days with the inscription as above on them. There is an interesting history connected with the formation of this particular motto.



4. Laborers unloading sulphite at the Ontario Paper Mills. This group shows clearly the kind of men coming in thousands every year into Canada, and requiring careful training to become good citizens of our country.

after all the past, present and future are vitally related to each other. For the future of the river mark how it turns at "The Great Divide." For the character of the next generation look at the ideals of the present one. According to Plato, society is the individual writ large, so the future is the present in larger letters on the scroll of time. To-morrow connotes great things, and it will do us good to let our imaginations roam a little over larger areas. Think of it—the to-morrow of the world! The to-morrow that rests on such centuries as the first

but behind that there is a deep spiritual significance to the words. For the story of it look up some Church History, or Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, chapter XX. The significance of it is that the way of sacrifice and self denial is the way of victory. The old prophets divined that the world was to be saved by the Messiah, that is, one who suffers. The Church, which is the body of Christ, is to fill out the sufferings of Christ—share in them. "No cross, no crown," is a familiar quotation. Any ideal of suc-