

merely ornamental. There is no place for drones in the hive, and better have a numerically small league composed of workers than a large company who are inactive. If we were in such a case as our correspondent we would study to find something that the idle ones could do, ought to do, and would like to do, and from that lead them on to something else that in our judgment was more imperative that they should do.

A Rather Queer Notion.

"Our League cannot be called a Young People's Society as all the working members are the older people, and our greatest problem is to get the young people interested in church work. We cannot very well do this until we get their souls saved."

There are two mistakes in our judgment, in this quotation. The first is in having the working members all older people. How can we expect the young people to do anything if their elders do it for them? Better divide up, and let at least some of the young ones become shareholders or partners in the business. And we think it a mistaken idea that young people cannot be interested in Church work until their souls are saved. Their very interest may lead, as it has in many cases, to their salvation. We want all our young people saved; but we must not forget that the machinery and activities of the League may be grandly used to this very end.

A Good Reputation to Have!

"Our league has quite a reputation for tenacity of purpose."—"This we say is good, but the observation was made under circumstances that we do not appreciate. Said the writer: "For five years, 1903-08, we were handicapped by having to hoe the row without any pastoral aid. The minister on the circuit during that period had not much use for young people or societies, and reacted quite differently to their united efforts. The league held up wonderfully well until the last year when we lost three of the most valued of our senior members. Then things began to drift somewhat until July, 1909. At this time the pastor became our pastor and he has brought the decline to an end, so that we are looking up, lifting up."

We have given this lengthy extract simply to add that it is sad to think that some young people have to succeed not by their pastor's counsel and aid, but in spite of his indifference, which is often worse than opposition. Only young people with "tenacity of purpose" can succeed under such distressing circumstances. We believe that the number of such pastors(?) is comparatively small. We hope for the speedy extinction of the whole class. But perhaps their conversion would be the better plan to secure the "extinction" hoped for.

Wanted

A revival in every congregation. Leaguers who will help in the meetings. Church members who will encourage such workers.

Pastors who will train their Leaguers in evangelism.

Quarterly Boards that study the League problems.

Official members who are not everlastingly criticizing the young people.

A local League Executive that will give strict attention to systematic work in the various departments.

Ten thousand girls and boys to commence their apprenticeship in Christian service in our Junior Leagues this winter.

How far can you help supply these wants?



Practical League Problems



Some Difficulties of Country Leagues

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(A paper read at the Barrie District E. L. Convention, at Elmvale.)

This paper is given entirely from the standpoint of the rural League, as the existing conditions of the town or city League are different from those of the country and I have had experience only in League work in the country.

1. The first difficulty we have to meet is lack of young people of ability or education to fill the different offices to advantage.

The League President, for instance, should be a "specialist." In one League I heard of, the president teaches a class in S. S., leads the singing in the choir, helps in the Ladies' Aid socials, and walks two miles to League. Yet people wonder why the League hasn't more snap and life. If you consider the question, need you wonder?

In the town this is not the case, as the educated young people from the country are filling the town Leagues and can use their capabilities in the different departments of League work, and there are enough individuals to place every one in a different office. So they can say with Paul, "This one thing I do." Then it is apt to be done well and not half done as the work is sure to be, where the forces are scattered in several different lines of Christian effort.

If we expect good results we must do our best work, and how can a president do this if other lines of work take the time and divide the interest.

Again, some of the vice-presidents perhaps are not at all fitted for their work, but are elected either to keep them in association with the League or because they are special favorites of the voters.

The secretary's office is a most important one, but sometimes a secretary-elect doesn't realize the importance of his responsibility, and where there is a poor secretary the League is sure to decline.

Perhaps he is careless and forgets to give the pastor a notice of the week-night meeting, or he comes to League on Consecration night without the Roll and the pastor, in charge, has to stumble through the pledge as best he can, or ask for voluntary testimony and be met with a disheartening silence.

2. Punctuality is often a forgotten virtue. We try to be in time for S.S., we must be in time for church, but we come to League at any time that is most convenient. If it rains we stay at home. If there happens to be a social in the neighborhood on League night, we forget our promise to be conscientious in attendance at League and go to the social instead. This is another difficulty that is not so prominent in the town, as at a social gathering there is not of such rare occurrence as in the country, and even if part of the members go to the social there are enough left to have a prayer meeting.

3. Another difficulty is lack of preparation. This may arise from limited time, or from the ignorance of the value of home preparation, or from timidity in delivering the thoughts after they are prepared. Sometimes inexperienced leaders get impatient if they fail in leading the meeting to their own satisfaction, become discouraged, and all future efforts are

abandoned. This is a very real difficulty in the country League, as our young men especially seem to be more backward and difficult to encourage to another trial if the first one resulted in seeming failure.

4. Then there is difficulty in getting the young people to testify to the consecration service, or to lead audibly in prayer. This is a decided detriment not only to the spirit of the prayer service but also a great hindrance to the higher life of the individual.

In the Consecration service the response to the Roll Call is often a verse of scripture read or repeated perhaps thoughtlessly. There is danger of our young people becoming formal and cold in this service which should be the most inspiring of all. Our Consecration should be definite. Surely there is no room for carelessness either in thought or conduct.

5. The indifferent member is perhaps the most formidable difficulty which we have to meet. This member thinks the League is a useless piece of machinery anyway, and we wonder why he ever joined its ranks.

If he is asked to help in some enterprise to further the success of the League he questions—"What's the use?"

Direct opposition could be borne, perhaps overcome, but the most enthusiastic efforts are rendered futile when the attitude of chilling indifference takes possession of a member and we are led to ask with Paul, "Who is sufficient for these things?"

6. Then the missionary support is difficult where the young people have not been taught in the home the duty of giving or the value or right methods.

There are divided opinions in regard to missionary effort. Where the parents are not properly informed regarding the needs of the work, or the young people do not fully appreciate the privilege which is theirs, the funds in the treasury may be low, not because of poverty or unwillingness to give but because of lack of knowledge of the real needs of the situation.

7. It is difficult to get the committees to give reports of their work at the Business meeting. We do not like to think that this is because they haven't been working and have no report to give, but we are afraid this is often the case.

8. We have difficulty in persuading associate members to take the active pledge. Usually the reason given is a feeling of personal unfitness to assume the duties expected of an active member.

9. Another difficulty is in getting up socials for the benefit of the Epworth League. So often there is good talent outside the League which is not hard to secure for a secular entertainment, but who will not respond when it is only the League that wants their help. This is a real difficulty where the talent in the League is scarce or undeveloped.

10. A great difficulty which is hard to overcome is where the older members from mistaken enthusiasm, or because they feel that their way is best, do all the work of the League themselves.

This is a great mistake. Even if the young people do not do the work as well as could be done, they should be allowed and even urged to undertake it.

The League is essentially a young people's meeting, and when older members do the work we cannot find fault if the young lose interest and easily get excuses for absenting themselves.

"Many a good intention dies from inattention."