

And the principle is needed as much to-day as ever before. Put yourself into your work, whether that work be in the store or study, in private or public enterprise, for home or church, and you will have at least a measurable degree of success. How much of yourself are you really putting into your League?

"He Never Laughed"

At an evening meeting in one of our Eastern churches, when everybody seemed to be having a good time (the speaker included), we noticed one man in the audience who sat stolid and solemn-visaged during the address. We tried to evoke a smile, but he listened unmoved to our very best jokes and sallies at wit. Everyone else apparently enjoyed what was being said; but all our efforts to make that stern-faced brother unbend and relax his facial muscles even for a moment were utterly fruitless. So after repeated and ineffectual attempts, we gave the effort up. After the meeting, we asked the pastor: "What kind of a man was that who took the collection in the left aisle to-night?" The reply was not the man's name, but the observation, "Oh! that man was never known to laugh. I saw you looking his way often, but I knew you couldn't make him smile. Nobody ever did. He never laughed." Poor man! What he has missed! And what a dreadful task a minister would have if all his congregations were like him. We felt sorry for the man, but when it came to thinking of his wife and family, dear me, what a sorry time they must have. Spare us, please, the company of a man who never laughs. There is only one person more to be avoided than such a man, and that is a woman who can laugh, but—won't. We are thankful that there are very few of either kind. May their numbers entirely cease.

Whistle or Sing!

In the pastoral relation, we once knew a man whose presence about the farm was invariably demonstrated by a cheery whistle or a happy song. He was a hard worker, too. Morning to night found Brother John hard at it. But it wasn't so hard after all. He had learned the secret of making hard work easy. Even the weather seemed to have no depressing effect on him. And as at his daily toil, so in his labors for God, J. M. was always in a happy mood—apparently. We know he had trials many and temptations not a few, but he met them with a cheery face and buoyant, hopeful, resolute spirit. The contagion of his good cheer was great. It was hard to feel dumpish when in his company. Many an old-time "bee" was enlivened by his wholesome gaiety, and in social gatherings his presence was as the tonic sunshine. We have often thought of him, and on occasion have wished his disposition might have been introduced into some other lives, that they might know the inoculation of his cheerful and hearty spirit.

And why not "whistle or sing"? Carlyle expressed it perfectly when he said, "Give us, oh give us a man who sings at his work! He will do more in the same time—he will do it better—he will persevere longer. One is scarcely sensible to fatigue whilst he marches to music. . . . Wondrous is the strength of cheerfulness, altogether past calculation its power to endurance. Efforts to be permanently useful must be uniformly joyous, a spirit all sunshine, graceful from very gladness, beautiful because bright."

Would you make your League, your home, your store, your office, a happy place? Keep yourself joyous. Disseminate good cheer, and if you can neither "whistle or sing," or if it would be inappropriate to do either, just observe the sign we saw recently outside a boot-black artist's industrial emporium, "Shine Inside."

A Financial Conscience

In a beautiful Newfoundland outpost, romantically situated on a magnificent cove that formed an expansive harbor, and surrounded by frowning hills of stone, we greatly enjoyed some Sabbath services one ideal Sunday last summer. The heat was tempered by the delightfully cool and refreshing breeze right off the sea. The congregations were alert and receptive, and evidently appreciated our poor effort to edify and help them. The day was one of blessing to all. Many phases of life were manifested; but one which we commend to our young people was shown by a youth who was among the most attentive listeners of the day's congregations. He had no knowledge of any collection at the morning service. He came, therefore, without any money in his pockets. But he found a solution, all right. On an odd piece of paper he wrote the significant letters, "I. O. U.," and added the sum, "5 cts." With his signature attached, the promise to pay was complete, and among the contents of the collection box we found this duly authenticated piece of business paper. Later in the day he redeemed his note and was once more straight with himself and his duty. Perhaps you smile at this incident and may call it trivial. But underlying it is a great, grand principle, and if in all our congregations there existed, and was in operation, a conscience for the proper use of God's money such as this lad in Newfoundland showed, there would be no lack of funds to carry forward the work of the Kingdom. That boy we found to be a hard plodding student, devoted to a high purpose, with a resolute will to do his best with his life. And we believe he has a noble future before him. May he ever be true to what too many of us undervalue because we say, "It is a little thing."

Too Much Endurance

"What cannot be cured must be endured" is too often an excuse for a state of affairs both unnecessary and unsatisfactory. Judgment is hastily given, and an incurable condition is invited and encouraged by a thoughtless verdict. We have known both leagues and leaguers in this condition. We suggest a change that will tend to hopefulness and indomitable effort, by the statement,—What can be cured ought not to be endured. And who dare say "cannot" when so many apparently impossible results have been achieved as the fruit of protracted study and persistent endeavor? There is a science of Epworth League management as well as of mechanics or medicine. To master it and apply its principles in working out the various problems that confront us, whether in city or country churches, is essential to success. Violation of the laws of mental or moral health will produce disease as truly as trespass against the body will provoke physical disaster. Many Epworth Leagues are being conducted most unscientifically. Every law necessary to league success is broken with impunity, and a state of things induced that brings the society into a condition of ill-health that grows into "galloping consumption," and terminates in the death of a charter. We have seen in our travels not a few such dead charters (dis-)gracing the walls of both churches and schoolrooms and all because someone sometime consented to lie down and die under the incubus and fatality of the totally erroneous idea that there was no cure. Is your life or your league being devitalized by a spirit of hopelessness and indifference? Wake up, find the cure, apply the remedy, don't think it heroic to endure in any such circumstances. It is not,—it is cowardly. Both organizations and persons deserve to die who will not pay the price of healthy, growing, active life.

Whatever you are by nature, keep to it; never desert your own line of talent. Be what nature intended you for, and you will succeed; be anything else and you will be ten thousand times worse than nothing.—Sidney Smith.

The next International Epworth League Convention will meet at Seattle, July 7-11, 1909.