

## Our Young People

This department is in the interest of the Free Baptist Young People's Societies.

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### ONE WAY.

As our societies are now settling down after a summer of more or less interruptions to a winter of work, one thing that will be the centre of many earnest thoughts will be the query as to how the League pledge is to be raised. New ideas, although not especially brilliant, or, perhaps, is all respects as good as some well-worn ones, are therefore in requisition, and it is with this thought in mind that the following suggestion is made.

Those who are regular attendants at the League are familiar with the manner in which the society pledges are made, and to them no words of explanation are necessary. If there is anything suggestive or worth trying in the idea, they might with little trouble take a similar mode of raising the society pledge.

In a great many societies, however, would it not be possible for the president, or some other competent worker who has the matter at heart to explain, in the first place, exactly the work the League is to attempt for the coming year,—the support of a home missionary, who will be at the same time a general travelling secretary for the Young People's Societies (this, of course, provided the General Conference decide to approve of the plan), the support of a number of native workers in India, and the swelling of the Student Loan Fund,—so that every one present may know exactly what money is needed for. Then ask the chairman of the different committees to meet their committees during the week, and to come to some decision as to how much of the sum this society has pledged to the League, they will become responsible for it. At the next meeting of the society a roll of the committee might be called, the chairman of each responding with a statement as to how much they have decided they can raise for this work. In many instances the Prayer-meeting Committee, for instance, might feel they could raise by a united effort \$10.00, as they have at least six months to work in, and the whole ground of the church and congregation to canvass. Then, again, with the long list of socials and entertainments at their disposal, it would be possible for some social committees to go as high as \$20.00. A Lookout Committee might make up its mind to look out among all the friends who are interested in aggressive Christian work, and see how many of them would be willing to give a stated sum, such as two cents

a week for the work, and then,—which is of the greatest importance,—to look out that some one, or more, of their number make it their business to collect each week these amounts. It will surprise anyone who has not tried this method how fast the coppers multiply. Then the Missionary Committee might try the time-honored mite-box plan, if nothing better suggests itself, but when three or four earnest young people make up their minds to raise ten or fifteen dollars, plans will not be lacking. Of course the smaller sums will be just as necessary, for the mere fact of the money being raised is not the only thing desirable,—it is very essential that all the members of a society have something to do, and this way of dividing the responsibility, must, it would seem to some, provide this. Nor will it be probable, or ever possible, that in any case committees in any one society will pledge as largely as those we have spoken of here; these are merely used as illustrations, and if the committees in any one society will make a pledge of even half this amount, it will be the means of making the pledge-raising problem no problem at all. At all events, is there not something worth trying in the idea? Perhaps it needs many modifications to suit local conditions, but, at all events, let us each be up and doing.

### HOW TO DO IT.

Dear Fellow Workers,—

As I read the request in a recent issue of this paper for answers from the readers of our Young People's column to the question, "How can we increase the membership of our society," I thought that there could be nothing more helpful than for a large number of those interested in this problem to give us their opinion on it. Then another thought came,—that if I wanted to hear from others, perhaps I had better make myself heard first, and so I write, with some fear and trembling, I confess, my first contribution to this phase of our work.

In the society to which I belong we have had to face this question in earnest, and there have been times when in order to maintain our life as an organization we have had to consider earnestly not only how to get new members, but how to awaken the enthusiasm of those who had apparently lost all they had ever had.

We have found that a good Lookout Committee is the surest means of success along this line. Our committee first got from the secretary's book a list of those who had not been attending the society meetings regularly, and then by dint of much thinking and consultation, added the names of all those in our village whom we thought might become members if they were urged, and convinced that it was a step worth taking. We then divided the committee into twos, and gave each couple a list of names that they were to look after. Our plan was to reserve certain evenings every week to visiting, with this one end in view. When we made a call at any home, we made it clear at once that we were the Lookout Committee on the lookout for new names, or new interest. We kept this up until every member of the committee had called on every one on our first list. Very often, in the case of old members that had ceased to attend, we found that some trifling misunderstanding stood in the way, that it was possible to explain, or condoned away, and by making them understand that we

missed them, their help and their presence, we were in almost every instance able to win them back. There is nothing like making the most unimportant feel they are of some value in society work.

In the case of strangers, we carefully explained what our society stood for, and what we were trying to do, dwelling especially on the work of our League; we told them of the time and place of our meetings, and who the next leader would be, left them a topic and pledge card, and nine times out of ten found them at the next meeting.

At the meeting the members of the committee took particular pains to be friendly, by sitting, when possible, near one of the strangers, seeing they were provided with Bibles and hymn-books, and after the service introducing them to all the workers, and making them sure they were heartily welcome.

It is true none of these things are original, or new in any way, but I rehearse them here because I know from actual experience it is a very sure way of "increasing the membership of our society."

HELEN F. SMITH.

October 12th, 1903.

### The Prayer Meeting Committee—Its Work and Methods.

(A paper read by Miss Hopkins at the annual meeting of the Nova Scotia Free Baptist Young People's Societies).

Our parents and grand-parents have told us of the prayer-meetings they used to have in the good old days when the brothers and sisters were fervent and loud in their rapturous praises and agonizing prayers; when often,—the meeting over,—people have been so impressed that they went into the woods there to cry aloud to God in prayer.

Many of us, perhaps accustomed to the modern prayer-meeting, might not find such a gathering so helpful nor feel at home among them. On the other hand, could the old-time prayer-meeting folk visit us, they might consider it their solemn duty to upbraid us for coldness of heart and lack of Christian experience.

If, indeed, prayer-meeting help has declined in proportion to prayer-meeting emotion, then indeed we may ask for the old paths and sigh for "the good old days." Happily the root of the matter lies deeper. Let us see what the secret is; for the prayer-meeting is, as some one well says, the thermometer of the church. If the members are consecrated and earnest workers for souls, then you have heavenly "sittings together." If half-hearted and careless, hosannas languish on their tongues." Pastor, P. M. Committee member, president of the Christian Endeavor, how does your home church thermometer register? Freezing? Cold? Lukewarm? Hot? Boiling?

What prayer-meetings they had in the days of the early church! You remember on the return of the disciples from the ascension of our Lord, how they went up into the upper room and continued with one accord in prayer and supplication. And was not that series of meetings crowned with such glory as the church looks back to now, through all these years, with wonder and triumphant awe? Was it not to them that came the Holy Spirit—the gift of the Father and the Son? To have been one of that blest assembly! To have known the raptures of that season "when the day of Pentecost was fully come!"

What was the secret? Why those disciples had just been with their Mas-

## STARTLED

By some sudden sound she drops the vase upon the floor. She is nervous and may be told that nervousness is a luxury which only a rich woman can afford to indulge in. Nervousness has cost many a woman her position. Sometimes when women run machinery the price of nervousness is mutilation,—a finger lost or perhaps the whole hand crushed.

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