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the opportunities are greater and more numerous than on the home field. There is the great fact facing the churches and workers at home that the time allotted to the Sunday school is not sufficient to do the work that needs to be done. There is, consequently, the need and the problem of working out systems of week-day schools of religious education, where the regular educational system is beyond the reach of the churches for any effective work. On the other hand, on many of the mission fields, the very educational systems are very largely in the hands of the churches. Numerous and large Day Schools and Boarding Schools are to be found almost everywhere, on the mission fields. In these, one does not have to be content with getting the children for an hour a week. The work is carried on in connection with the regular school-work, and almost the entire time and life of the children are within the control of missionary forces. It is easy to see what large possibilities are involved when this is the case, and the encouraging results that naturally come when the work is at all well done.

Young People and Church School

HERBERT W. BLASHFIELD*

Among those who work with young people is a growing conviction that there should be but one central organization through which all activities for Christian development would be promoted. One unified plan is to be desired because of the oneness or unity of our mental and spiritual natures and resulting expressive life. We are constantly discovering that character grows best when religious instruction, spiritual quickening, and training in service and leadership are combined in one program of training. Whenever several organizations exist for the same fundamental purpose, there results a great deal of overlapping of effort and a waste of time. Over organization generally causes a confusion in our minds as to the goals to be reached and produces inadequate methods of procedure. There was a time when we considered that the Sunday-school was only for instruction in the Bible, but with such a limited program a well-rounded life was an impossible product. It was the deficiencies in our Sunday-school program that gave our leaders the incentive for organizing Young Peoples' Societies. Today we are impressed with the fact that if the school of the church is to develop the Christian character necessary for the needs of the world, the total nature of our young life must be cultivated. Those who are most interested in seeing developed an adequate program of religious education for the local church believe that all phases of approach to the ideal life must be united in the program of the church school.

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An attempt along this line is being tried out in First Methodist Episcopal Church at Decatur, Illinois, under the guidance of the Director of Religious Education. The Decatur plan is now in its second year of trial and gives evidence of having some merit which may be of use to other churches. Like all departures from the former ways of church work, it will take time to work the plan out to a place where it will be perfectly satisfactory, especially for small churches where there are not enough young people in the Sunday school to form a working group. But there is no reason why the average church school that is trying to do creditable work in character building should hesitate in attempting a similar plan; providing it has the leadership and sufficient young life that will stay on the job until the new plan is as natural as the old one with its several organizations. The Decatur church is very fortunate in having an unusually large number of young people which makes it especially easy to try out an experiment of this kind. In the Senior Department of the school, which is composed of pupils fifteen to seventeen years of age, and mostly from the last three years of High School, there are about one hundred and thirty-five boys and girls. About an equal number of young men and women are in the Young Peoples' Department, which is made up of those who are out of High School and eighteen to twenty-four years of age. For some time both departments have had fairly strong student organizations, which, with the assistance of the department advisers, have promoted all the Sunday-school activities for these two groups. Prior to the autumn of 1918 there was one Epworth League organization made up largely of members from these two Sunday-school departments. However, only about 50 per cent of those who came to Sunday school were members of the Epworth League, and many young people in the church were never influenced by the League program of work. About half of those who attended the Sunday evening meetings were from the Senior Department. These boys and girls as a rule were only spectators, and they seldom took part except in the singing.

The first step in the formation of the new plan was to have several meetings of the Epworth League Cabinet with the officers of the involved Sunday-school departments. Gradually an organization was worked out and one set of officers was finally elected in each of the two departments of the Sunday school to promote both Epworth League and Sunday-school activities with the Sunday-school as the center of work. Instead of having one Epworth League service on Sunday evening, devotional meetings were started in both departments. These meetings are held at the same hour and are called the Senior League meeting and the Young Peoples' League Meeting. Of course, there were members of the Epworth League that thought the new plan had caused the League to be abolished, but that is not the case. More Epworth League work is being done and in an easier manner than ever before, and it is the policy of the two organizations to keep in close touch with the district work. Now that the Sunday school has become the center of work, the classes form the nat-

ural units of work, and every boy and girl and young person between the ages of 15 and 24 has a part in the program of work. For instance, at Thanksgiving time the service chairmen of the two departments called together the service chairmen of all the classes and proposed that each class give a basket to some family on Thanksgiving day. On the following Sunday this was taken up in the classes with the result that there were a dozen or more baskets taken out. Over 150 young people had a part in this practical piece of service work, which is a far greater number than would have assisted if only the League had promoted the work a year before. Each department has a budget made up of all the causes to which the young people must give, as the Sunday school, missions, special Epworth League causes, social functions, etc. Each member makes a pledge which is partly paid in each Sunday morning at Sunday school. This year the combined budgets of the two departments is nearly \$1000.

In order that all the members may know just how the organizations function, and that it will be easier to make improvement as time goes on, the following outline of organization and activities has recently been gotten out:

PLAN OF ORGANIZATION AND WORK IN THE FEDERATIONS OF THE SENIOR AND YOUNG PEOPLES' DEPARTMENTS OF FIRST M. E. CHURCH, DECATUR, ILL.

(Senior Federation—ages 15-17)
(Young Peoples' Federation—18-24)

PURPOSE OF ORGANIZATION

Our purpose is to develop a well-rounded Christian life by means of the activities usually promoted by the Sunday-school as study classes, worship, service activities, and recreation, and by means of the activities emphasized by the Epworth League as the Sunday evening devotional meeting, campaigns such as Christian Stewardship and Winmy-chum Week, and by Young Peoples' conferences and conventions. We are organized as an Epworth League as well as a Sunday-school Department. One set of officers now does what two cabinets formerly did.

MEMBERSHIP

All who enroll as members of the Sunday-school are considered members of the department and share in all privileges, but in stating the number of members of the Epworth League to the District and Central offices, only those who pay League dues, either directly or through the department budget, and attend the Sunday evening meetings as often as possible, are considered members of the Epworth League.

OFFICERS AND THEIR DUTIES

President: All work is under the direction of the president, but that of the Sunday-school on Sunday is particularly the work of this officer.

First Vice President: This officer has charge of the spiritual welfare of the members, especially as promoted by the central office of the League, such as Win-my-chum campaigns, morning watch enrollments, and the devotional meetings held Sunday evenings.

Second-Third Vice President (combined): This officer has charge of all benevolent causes of group. The service work in the church, community, and world which include all missionary activities are under her direction as well as Christian stewardship and tithing campaigns.

Fourth Vice President: This officer is responsible for all social life.

Secretary: The secretary has charge of the entire enrollment of the Sunday-school classes, and is secretary of all cabinet and department work.

Treasurer: This officer has charge of all financial work, including the raising of budget and all expenditures.

UNITS OF WORK

The Sunday-school classes which are organized on a similar basis are the units of work. Each officer has a committee made up of representatives from all the classes. Thus the social chairman of a class not only promotes the class functions but assists on department affairs. (The officers of the department make up the Cabinet, and this body, together with the presidents of all classes and the teachers, make up the Council.)

PROGRAM OF ACTIVITIES FOR YOUR SUPPORT

Study classes in Bible, social service, and missions. Helpful devotional meetings every Sunday evening. Campaigns for stewardship, Chums for Christ, life service and the *Epworth Herald* and morning watch. Every group or class doing some kind of service work every month for the Church, for the community, or for foreign missionary lands. A social or party every month by the department and as often as possible by the classes. For all this we need your financial and personal support.