

"2. The teacher should interest his pupils. Attention needs a motive. No matter how good the intentions of a pupil, or how definite his idea of what is expected of him in class, his mind will wander if the material presented does not engage his interest. This does not mean, be it understood, that the teacher is to "make it interesting" by mere devices of method or by stories that have only a remote relation, if any, to the matter in hand. It means rather that he must seek and find, day after day, the "point of contact," as Patterson DuBois would put it, between the lesson itself and the pupil's real interests and needs.

"3. The teacher should help his pupils to practise attention. That is, he should day after day see that he gets and holds the attention of his pupils, and he should never teach without it. This habit, like any other, develops through practice. The teacher who keeps commanding the attention of his pupils, creates a predisposition in his favor. They thereafter expect to pay attention to him. For the same reason it is a mistake ever to teach without attention. It helps to beget the habit of inattention. The moment your pupil's attention wanders, make it your first concern to win it back, even if you must go far enough afield to break up the strict logic of your presentation.

"4. The teacher should do all that he can to guard against lapses of attention. When the pupil's attention wanders from the lesson,

it is because something else has claimed it. The teacher of foresight and imagination can do much to guard against such lapses by so planning and handling his work as to remove entirely or to minimize those elements of the situation that are apt to compete with him for the pupil's interest and distract his attention. The classroom itself, its furnishings and physical conditions, methods of seating, discipline, and manual routine, the disposal of hats and cloaks, the distribution of books, the making of the offering, interruptions actual and possible—nothing that could contribute to take the pupil's attention away from the lesson itself is too small to be taken account of in this prophylactic way. Do not be content with meeting and remedying inattention when it develops. Keep it from developing at all. Every lapse weakens the habit of attention. It is easy to grow into slipshod ways.

"Of these four principles, the heart of the matter lies, it is clear, with the second. No amount of precept or painstaking, discipline or cooperation, can hold and develop the pupil's attention if the teacher be unable to fill the hour with positive interest. The best established class habit will not long stand up unless the stuff be there to warrant attention. It all comes back, thus, to those two most fundamental of all conditions of effective teaching: the teacher must be master of his material, and he must understand his pupils."

For Better Singing

BY ALFRED WHITE

Superintendent of Education, Brandon, Man.

I fear there are too many of us who have no clear idea why we have singing in Sunday School, that is, what part it has in the training of the child. We all recognize that the Sunday School exists for the education of children in things religious, but we have not taken the trouble to think out just what bearing each part of the service has in this education.

We commonly look upon the Sunday School as a place where children are sent to be taught the Bible. We all agree that it is quite proper to have opening and closing exercises, as they are called, but the value of these exercises in the training of children does not often enter into our thought.

Fortunately the whole question of the place and value of worship in the training of children is receiving very close attention from students of child life and we would do well to consider with them the importance of this part of the Sunday School service.

First let it be clearly understood that the opening and closing exercises of the Sunday School are or should be an expression of worship by the children. They constitute the worship service as distinct from the teaching service of the lesson period. In this worship service, the reading or recitation of scripture, prayer and singing has each its place.

It is necessary, then, in any consideration of singing in the Sunday School to recognize that it is one of the means by which children join in worship. Any factors that take away from the true worship spirit in singing must necessarily be condemned, while any that add strength to the spirit of worship may safely be approved. In connection with this it should be emphasized that we are considering the worship of children and not of adults, two things by no means identical.

With this fundamental condition in mind let us briefly consider how we can have better