

Sunday Schools and Bible classes, if they scrupulously avoid them, and, yet, are had in honor—looked up to as the buttresses if not the pillars of the church, as indispensable to her very existence and progress, why should not young men who are hopeful some day of becoming merchant princes, bank managers, presidents, and millionaires, do the same? It is the most natural and easy thing to do; and they do it.

Then there is undeniably an intensely utilitarian and secular spirit abroad which controls multitudes. Spiritual and Biblical exercises and attainments yield no money, and do not open the way to the coveted place in the so-called upper circles of society. Indeed, as things now go, they are a drawback for this purpose. Piety is not an aid to promotion. Young people recognize these facts and act accordingly, the persuasions of teachers notwithstanding.

Again, athletics and public contests in outdoor sports are often cultivated to excess—time and money and health are consumed upon them—and they are carried on usually on Saturday afternoons with such fervor and violence as to unfit thousands for the Christian exercises of the Lord's day. To excel in these games is more earnestly coveted by not a few than to become mighty in the Scriptures. It may be thought that the evils referred to, as well as others that spring from intemperance, theatre-going, and the current rage for euchre parties and such like, are peculiar to great cities. This is by no means the case, and besides other malign forces, which we have no space to describe, are at work everywhere.

It seems to me obvious, therefore, that the whole responsibility of non-attendance or irregular attendance of scholars should not be laid on the shoulders of the teacher. Let him, by all means, bear his own share, and let him do what he can to minimize the evil in such ways as the following:

1. By truly deserving the respect and confidence of his class. This is the great essential. It covers everything. It includes character, piety, prayerfulness, temper, attainments, preparation of lessons, and skill and enthusiasm in teaching them. The young people of to-day cannot be controlled by pious twaddle—why should they? It only breeds contempt of the truth and unbelief in their hearts.

2. By convincing his scholars that he is their truest and best friend. There is mighty power in real friendship, and it can be formed between teacher and pupil only upon the basis of transparent integrity and the utmost open-hearted frankness on the part of the teacher. There is nothing that the average school boy more quickly detects and more intensely despises than pretence or sham of any sort in his instructor. Senior boys have no toleration for pomposity or hypocrisy.

3. By recognizing the ability and all the commendable qualities of his pupils. This is the reverse of perpetual faultfinding, which wears out the patience even of saints. By the opposite course, and without any flattery, the judicious teacher soon attaches scholars to himself in a wonderful degree. And then they love to meet one who understands them and gives them credit for what they feel conscious of, the power of thinking nimbly and vigorously and of successfully grasping a thousand things. One of the commonest and most injurious errors is to underestimate the mental capacity and activity of the young.

4. By judiciously guiding the reading and recreations of his pupils. This should be done by private intercourse with each in his home and occasionally by correspondence. A boy is sure to be pleased to receive the visit or the letter of one he counts his friend. Such intercourse, wisely carried on, will above all things convince him that his teacher has a heartfelt rational interest in him and in everything that concerns his welfare. It will draw him regularly to his class and relieve his mind of the too common impression that pious people are necessarily enveloped in a chilling atmosphere, and that godliness is synonymous with gloominess.

Montreal



I feel conscious that I have derived from the Lord Jesus Christ every thought that makes heaven a reality to me, and every thought that paves the road that lies between me and heaven. All my conceptions of the progress of grace in the soul; all the steps by which the divine life is evolved; all the ideals that overhang the blessed sphere which awaits us beyond this world—these are derived from the Saviour. The life that I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God.—*Drummond.*