

(1) *More efficient schools* can greatly lessen the amount of retardation. The worst of the systems studied had but twelve per cent. of its thirteen year old boys where they ought to be, in the seventh grade or higher; the best had seventy-seven per cent. there.

(2) *Vocational education* can be provided for boys and girls between fourteen and sixteen. They are not profitable workers; they ought still to be learners. But they can be learning trades, and fitting themselves to work with some degree of intelligence and skill. The old apprenticeship system has practically passed; the state must provide a system of vocational education in its place.

(3) *Vocational guidance* can help the boy to choose his occupation wisely, in view both of his own abilities and of conditions and opportunities within the occupation. Systems of vocational guidance that are especially

worthy of study are those of Birmingham, England; Edinburgh, Scotland; and Boston, Mass.

(4) *Follow-up protection* can be given to the young workers for the first two or three years of their employment. The public school should not cease to be interested in its pupils when the first work-certificate is granted. It could aid them greatly by a system of registration and follow-up service which would not leave them at the mercy of chance employers, "Help Wanted" advertisements, or commercial labor bureaus\*.

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\*NOTE: Those interested to go further into this problem should read Meyer Bloomfield's *Youth, School and Vocation*, and his splendid collection of papers and studies entitled *Readings in Vocational Guidance*. J. B. Davis' *Vocational and Moral Guidance* is very suggestive.

## What Learning Means

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"Learning is a process; knowledge is the result." So says the dictionary, which also says that to learn is "to acquire knowledge of or skill in by observation, study or instruction; become informed about, receive and fix in the mind." The dictionary goes on to say that "learning is never a passive but always a more or less active psychophysical process."

Now let us apply this to our Sunday School lessons. Learning implies, evidently, a teacher, a learner, a cooperation between the two, and a definite result. Working this out farther, we get our factors resolved as follows: (1) The teacher must have some lesson to teach. (2) He must have prepared himself as thoroughly as possible so that he is informed of the facts and the truths of the lesson. (3) He must know his work thoroughly, allowing nothing to interfere with his mastery of the lesson, until, when he steps before the class, he is a workman not needing to be ashamed, but one who is prepared, ready, alert, keen, purposeful and glad to have the opportunity to bring the knowledge and the message that the lesson contains.

The learner may not be at the outset at all keen about learning the lesson of the day. He may be hostile or inert or very much interested in many things other than the lesson. But during the teaching, his attention is focussed on the lesson, being drawn away from other things. When the lesson is over, he is informed as to the facts of the lesson and the applications of it to his life. These are lodged in his memory to some extent at least. And

in a Sunday School lesson these have made some lodgment in his heart also, and awakened some purpose to translate them into his life.

All this has been accomplished by cooperative effort of teacher and learner. It is utterly impossible for one to do it alone. The listless, inattentive pupil is not learning the Sunday School lesson, although he may be learning many other things during that half hour. So with the restless boy or girl busy with many activities other than attending to the teacher. Unless the mind of the teacher and the mind of the learner are in active cooperation, there is a wastage of time and labor, and disappointment to the teacher, and little or no learning of the lesson.

The definite result is what is lodged in the mind and heart of the learner. Facts, truths, impulses,—all are shaded here, and it is difficult to measure this result. What has been said so far in this article applies only to the lesson as a matter of teaching. Other learning processes are going on of which both teacher and pupil may be quite unconscious. The teacher's dress, manner of speech, deportment, self-possession, attitude towards those around him or her, and many other things are making some impression on the pupil; in fact, in many cases the pupil is learning more from these than from the lesson that is being taught. Hence the importance of the teacher's general preparation of mind and heart and life as well as the special preparation of the day's lesson.

What learning means is, therefore, not easy to state. How much the pupil learns is ex-

\*How to Ferguson, THIRIAN P. Toronto.