

If We Knew.

If we knew, when walking thoughtless
In the noisy, crowded way,
That some pearl of wondrous whiteness
Close beside our pathway lay,
We would pause where now we hasten,
We would often look around,
Lest our careless feet should trample
Some rare jewel to the ground.

If we knew what forms were fainting
For the shade that we should fling;
If we knew what lips are parching
For the water we could bring,
We would haste with eager footsteps,
We would work with willing hands,
Bearing cups of cooling water,
Planting rows of shading palms.

If we knew, when friends around us
Closely press to say good-by,
Which among the lips that kissed us
First would 'neath the daisies lie,
We would clasp our arms around them,
Looking on them through our tears;
Tender words of love eternal
We would whisper in their ears.

If we knew what lives are darkened
By some thoughtless word of ours,
Which had ever lain among them
Like the frost among the flowers;
Oh, with what sincere repenting,
With what anguish of regret,
While our eyes were overflowing,
We would cry, "Forgive! forget!"

If we knew! Alas! and we
Ever care or seek to know
Whether bitter herbs or roses
In our neighbour's garden grow?
God forgive us! lest hereafter
Our hearts break to hear him say:
"Careless child, I never knew you,
From my presence flee away."

Teachers' Department.

Opening and Closing Exercises.

BY L. W. HAWLEY.

It is a painful fact that there are schools where the session is robbed of vitality and attractiveness because neither in the opening nor the closing exercises is there apparent the slightest forethought on the part of the superintendent.

Perhaps the doxology is sung at the opening; but if so, it is selected for its noise rather than its grand sentiment of praise. At the close of the verse, perhaps some one offers a conventional prayer, without any reference to the lesson of the day or the experience of the past week, but simply as a bridge from the singing to the lesson.

What is the proper course to pursue? I suggest: 1. Scour the town, if necessary, for an organ. 2. Get a piano also, if you can. 3. Scour the town again for a cornet player, or a flute, or a clarinet, or a violinist, or a double bass—any or all of these. But what would people say? They would say, "Well, I guess the Methodists are waking up and going to do something." And they would be right, too.

Of course, I do not mean to put a full-fledged orchestra into the school all at once; but would get them in gradually—adding first one instrument and then another. 4. Use live gospel music—words and tunes. 5. Put the best person forward as a leader; the man or woman best fitted for the place. 6. If you are not at all gifted in a musical line, then talk over the selection of the hymns with your leader. Don't have them singing hymns or tunes without regard to their fitness for the occasion. 7. Arrange a new and definite programme for each session. Novelty and freshness have the

effect to keep the school on the *qui vive*, and there is gained a unity and enthusiasm not otherwise attainable. The superintendent should spend from a half-hour to a whole evening every week in arranging the most effective programme possible.

Don't let anything get into a rut. Open one Sunday with singing; sing two or three pieces if there is time—one right after the other. The next Sunday open with prayer. If you do not offer the prayer yourself, and there is anything special that you wish a brother to pray for, tell him of it beforehand.

The following Sunday may have a lesson that is covered or touched upon in several places in the Bible. Read with the school some of these passages at the opening. This necessitates their bringing Bibles, which, of course, they ought to do.

But do not attempt to do any of these in order to bring the school to order. Have the order first—by the sound of the organ; by the tap of the bell, by the tap of the pencil, or by simply folding your hands and standing still; any way you choose; but before you give out the hymn, or the reading, wait for *silence*. You can easily have it, if you manage right, and keep yourself in order, with a sweet and quiet spirit.

Let the opening service always lead up to the lesson, and be an inspiration to all. Our work is, by personal magnetism and oversight, by wise self-sacrificing, planning and leading, to so surround the lesson as to afford the teachers every aid in our power.

Then give them at least thirty minutes. Don't rob them in order to carry out some pet plan of your own. They may have prepared their lesson with thirty minutes in mind, and you have no right to a moment of that time. Keep secretary, treasurer, librarian, pastor, or visiting brother away from the classes during the lesson. By bell or organ give the school a signal five minutes before closing the lesson.

At the close of the lesson, if you think you can add anything valuable to what the teachers have said, do it briefly, tersely, and in a way to rivet the truth already taught. Then sing a verse or two, give a signal to the librarians to do their work swiftly and quietly, and dismiss, with the prayer that the lesson for that day may "be lived out" during the coming week.

The Wingless Bird.

ONE of the chief wonders of the world of ornithology is the Apteryx, a bird which is found only in New Zealand, and even there is rapidly becoming extinct. It is a creature so strange that no imagination could have fancied a bird without wings or tail, with robust legs, and with claws which are suited for digging, and are actually used in forming excavations, in which this singular bird lays its eggs and hatches its young. If the Apteryx were to become extinct, and all that remained of it, after the lapse of one or two centuries, for the scrutiny of the naturalist, were a foot in one museum and a head in another, with a few conflicting figures of its external form, the real nature and affinities of this most remarkable species would be involved in as much obscurity and doubt, and become the subject of as many conflicting opinions among the ornithologists of that period, as are those of the Dodo in the present day.

The Apteryx is not larger than a full-grown fowl, and has only a rudimentary wing, so covered with the body of feathers as to be concealed; the terminating slender claw may, however, be discerned on examination.

The bill is long and slightly curved, having the nostrils at the extremity; its feathers, the sides of

which are uniform in structure, do not exceed four and a half inches in length, and are much prized as material for mantles or cloaks by the chiefs. It is a nocturnal bird, using its long bill in search of worms, upon which it principally feeds; it kicks with great power, and burrows at the root of the rata, at the base of which tree is also found the extraordinary *Sphaeria Robertsia*, a species of vegetating caterpillar. Retaining the form of the caterpillar, the fungus pervades the whole body, and shoots up a small stem above the surface of the ground, the body of the caterpillar being below the earth in an erect position. The Apteryx frequently leans with its bill upon the earth—one of its chief characteristics—and thus, when viewed from a distance, appears to be standing on three legs.

By the natives of New Zealand these birds are called Kiwis, from the cry they utter, and they are frequently caught by a cunning imitator of their tone, who, when they approach, dazzles and frightens them with a light previously concealed, and, throwing his blanket over them, thus secures them.

Retaliation.

JOHN IMBIE.

Oh, Canada! arise in thy young strength,
And prove thyself a nation of the earth,
Whose veins are filled with blood of noble birth,
That shall be honoured, known and felt at length!
Think not of war!—but all that makes for peace
Be thine; thy aim—advancement and increase
In all that tends to make a nation great,
And thus be trained to cope with any fate!
O, may thy brother, "cross the lines," be such
As brother ought to be to sister fair—
Two of one family. Ask we thus too much
That God's free gifts they each alike should share?
Then should a foe our continent invade,
Brother and sister join in mutual aid!

The Peg Left Out.

THERE is a light to-night in the room of the dusty old machine shop. In his chair, near the bench supporting that lamp, sits the old watchman. Now and then he stirs about and sees that everything is safe—no burglars in the counting-room, no fire in the shop. At the close of every quarter of an hour he steps away to that big clock standing in the corner. A dial is there, punched with holes corresponding to the quarters of every hour. If prompt the old watchman will drive a peg in one of those empty holes. If he be tardy, he has lost the chance. In the morning that empty hole, like a troublesome mouth, will proclaim: "This watchman did not do his duty. He got asleep. He napped beyond the opportunity to plug me. During his nap a burglar entered—a fire broke out. I report Sir Watchman was asleep at his post."

You will find people in adult life who show that some peg was left out in their training when boys or girls. It may be an ungrammatical, or, still worse, an irreverent speech. "Peg left out!" you say.

There may be a slovenliness about the dress, or what is worse, one may be a sloven in keeping his word. How happened it? There was neglect in youth. "Peg left out!"

One in after years may show little skill in any special employment. He is a shuttlecock, helplessly battered from one misfortune to another. "Poor fellow!" people pityingly say. Yes! and he was a neglectful fellow also when a youth. He slighted his opportunities to learn a business, or a trade. "Peg left out!"

In many ways—as life sweeps over its circuit—opportunity comes only once. If your chance be now, do not throw it away!