

the best kind of a chum?" "Should or should not a Christian vote? Why?" "Which does the most good a farmer or a store-keeper? Why?"—would not his interest in preparation be aroused?

If scholars are expected only to read over and "learn" a lesson which the teacher is

going to rehearse in class, they are not keen on preparation. Can they be blamed? If they are given a responsible, original, interesting part in the actual teaching, they must prepare before they can teach. The second way means far greater effort and pains on the part of the teacher. It is cheap at the price.

The Home Department in a Rural Community

By REV. GEORGE ROWLAND

The Home Department has been well described as "the Sunday School's extension plan, providing home lesson work for those who cannot attend its sessions." That there is a growing army of young people in the rural communities, who, for various reasons, are finding it increasingly difficult to attend our Sunday Schools, particularly where the session is held in the morning before the church service, is generally recognized.

Of the reasons for this non-attendance, space will not permit us to write at length. Suffice it to say that to the long list of sins for which the automobile is responsible, if an automobile can be conceived of as responsible at all, we feel impelled to add this also. A majority of the farmers in my own community are in the dairy business, and with the exception of a few very early risers, are seldom through with their morning chores in time to reach the Sunday School at 10 a.m.

While the horse and buggy remained the means of transit, and every farmer with a family had two such outfits, the younger members were able to leave home at an earlier hour leaving the second outfit to bring their parents to church. With the advent of the automobile, the driving outfits are usually disposed of, and the family, if they go at all, are forced to go together. The result, in this community at any rate, is that attendance at the church service has increased at the expense of the Sunday School.

It was to meet the situation thus created and bring the home lesson work of the School to those who were unable to attend its sessions that we decided, in the spring of 1915, to organize a Home Department.

With the object of securing the names of all within our congregation who were prepared to undertake the study of the Sunday School lesson at home, the plan was fully explained from the pulpit, and the members of the Y.P.S. enlisted to make a thorough canvass of all the families. The result was most gratifying. One hundred and two individuals representing over 60 per cent. of the families, signed the Application Cards.

The next step was to organize the Department, and enlist the services of a sufficient

number of men and women to carry on the work. This was a more difficult task than we had anticipated. Failing to secure any one willing to assume the superintendency of the Department, the writer consented to do so in the hope that some one could be induced to take hold of the work later. It is a matter of regret until now that some one had not been forthcoming.

The Secretary-Treasurer of the Sunday School is the Secretary-Treasurer of the Home Department.

After conference with the Session, only one member of which had formerly taken an active interest in the work of the Sunday School, it was unanimously agreed that the Home Department districts be made to coincide with the elders' districts, and that each elder would hold himself responsible for the quarterly distribution of lesson helps to the members of the Department within his district. The Session have been assisted during the last two years by lady visitors, on whose shoulders, unless they object very strenuously, we hope ultimately to place full responsibility for the conduct of the Department. We have used the *QUARTERLIES* of the Uniform Series from the outset, and have found them admirably suited to the purposes of the Home Department.

If there is one thing more than another to which we attribute the moderate measure of success we have had, it is to the persistency with which the Department has been kept before the minds of the people. Reports are seldom handed to the visitors at the end of the quarter. They are usually placed on the collection plate at the regular church service. Members who are unable, for any reason, to attend church regularly, have been known to hand in their reports as many as eight weeks after the close of the quarter. We have turned what might thus appear to be a deplorable condition of affairs to good account by using every one of the eight Sundays to ask for reports, at the same time urging the claims of the Department on the entire congregation.

The majority of the members never visit the School. Others, for various reasons, are