



THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

"The Bible Studying Service of the Church."



Secrets of Success

BY R. J. ROBINSON, EDMONTON, ALTA.

First let me mention some of the qualifications and duties of a successful Sabbath School Superintendent. He should be a wholesome Christian, enthusiastic and in earnest; faithful, systematic, tactful; clean, using neither tobacco or liquor, a strong disciplinarian, and yet able to rule by kindness, with a determination to make his school the best. He should have a love for the work and the ability to lead and to get others working.

WHAT ARE SOME OF HIS DUTIES.

To be always in his place at least twenty minutes before the time of starting the school. Thirty minutes is better, especially in large towns or cities.

To come prepared: to have the hymns selected, the announcements ready, his remarks thought out, especially if he conducts the opening exercises himself.

He should have this twenty minutes to advise or help teachers or scholars; to welcome strangers, and see that they are conducted to suitable classes.

With the assistance of the secretary he should keep track of all new scholars, getting their name and address, and as soon as possible give this information to the pastor. Here is a splendid opportunity to place the pastor in a position to give valuable aid by early visits to the new comer.

He should have an Assistant Superintendent, to whom is given a fair share of the work. He should also have a number of assistant teachers whom he could call upon to fill vacancies and if possible have all vacancies filled before the school opens.

He should keep in close touch with the boys and girls and try to be able to recognize them when he meets them during the week. If it is possible, he should also get acquainted with the parents of his scholars.

Have regular teachers' meetings, and discuss with them the needs of the school. Make them feel their responsibility not only to the Sunday School and the church, but to God. Have prayer-meetings as often as possible. The pastor might help the work along by taking the Sunday School lesson as his topic at the midweek prayer-meeting.

Try and get the scholars interested in some form of Christian work; if nothing else, to bring back the Sunday School papers to be sent to some other school which cannot afford to buy them.

Encourage missionary givings. Have regular dates when the collections are to go to missions. Instead of giving gifts at Christmas or anniversary seasons, encourage the scholars to contribute clothing, food or other things to the poor. This has been found to work well. Most children fully believe in that beautiful motto, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

Stimulate a desire on the part of every scholar for regular attendance. Make the motto "Every teacher, every scholar present every Sunday."

I have found the Star Class system to be a valuable aid to accomplish this end.

Impress the scholars with the fact that they have an important part in the school, and that it cannot do its best work without them. Do not bribe children to come to the school, but enthrust them.

Where possible have the Senior classes organized.

Vary the methods of opening and closing the school. Have an occasional solo, duet, or other music.

I would not advise any Superintendent to conduct all the opening or closing exercises. Put part of the work on the Assistant or get teachers to help. This will help educate others to do the work.

I would strongly advise the Superintendent to keep a Roll Book of his own, and thus be informed as to who are attending and who are not.

Have suitable postcards printed for the different grades. When a scholar has missed two Sundays at most, send him a postcard. This will help the teachers who are supposed to have visited the absentees.

Observe Rally Day, and let people know you are going to do so. Invite the parents and friends of the scholars to be present. Don't be afraid to spend a few dollars on printing. Send out invitations. Get the people and scholars talking about it. Have a good programme and success is yours.

Don't forget to have a rousing Temperance Sunday occasionally. Vary your programme and have nothing lack.

Decision Day is the most important of them all. Have a teachers' meeting some weeks before the date. Make it a matter of earnest prayer. Have the pastor explain to the parents and guardians what it means. Have the teachers explain to the scholars what joining the church means, and if possible, speak to the parents about it.

A pastoral letter to each teacher will be a great service to help reap the harvest of souls for the Master as the result of the seed-sowing.

THE TEACHERS.

Now, as to the teachers—great care should be taken in their selection as far as possible. Have male teachers for the young men and senior boys, and female teachers for the girls whenever possible. Sometimes you will get a class that this rule will not work well at first. Good, earnest, Christian parents make good teachers, but in selecting them be sure that they are a success in managing their own families. Paul, in writing to Timothy, said: "If a man know not how to rule his own house, how can he teach the children of God?"

Insist on the teachers being at time of the place ten minutes before time of opening the school. These ten minutes are very valuable; they can have a few minutes' conversation with their scholars. Most children like to tell their teacher about their joys and pleasures, and sometimes the troubles they have had during the week. Then, again, the teacher gets the start. Show me a teacher that is mostly late and I will show in most cases a noisy class. Show me a teacher who does not study his or her lesson thoroughly, and that has to read the question out of the "help," and I will show you a teacher that is not a success. He or she cannot keep the attention of a class of lively boys. In a very short time the class gets a bad name, when it is not the fault of the boys, but of the teacher. They tell us that even the lion can be made to sink away by the steady gaze, and the lion eyes; so also the teacher who has the lesson prepared and goes before the class with the open Bible in hand, perhaps a few notes only thereon, can look

straight at the boy, and ask him a question, and, if no one in the class can answer it, can (without looking at the book) give the class the answer. With teachers of this stamp we will seldom hear of the bad boys' class.

Then, again, there is the careless teacher, who prepares the lesson fairly well. He comes about the hour of opening, occasionally misses a Sunday, has not much of an excuse, does not think it worth while to notify the Superintendent—the less said about them the better.

The teacher should have the name and address of each scholar, and when a new one comes to the class, should immediately notify the Superintendent or Secretary. He should as soon as possible get acquainted with the parents of each scholar. Should any of their class be absent, he may visit them at their home, but, if that is not possible, write them a letter.

No teacher should be personally absent from the class without giving the Superintendent due notice, where possible. Such excuses as "I had a friend call," or "Mr. So-and-So was giving a lecture that Sunday afternoon and I wanted to hear him," or "the Salvation Army Band was going to parade that afternoon, and I do so love music"; none of these things constitute a sufficient reason for a teacher being absent from the class.

I fear many of us do not realize our responsibility before God. Are we not in many cases the only medium between heaven and hell with some of our boys and girls? So many of our scholars come from homes where they know not God, where the Bible is an unused book, and the knee is never bent in supplication to Him. The successful teacher in the Sunday School is the one who thinks of these things, who before leaving home gets on his knees in prayer and pleads in earnest and with faith for God's blessing on the class; never for a moment forgetting that we are part of God's great army, whose duty it is to carry on His work here, just where we are.

The greatest care should be taken in selecting teachers for the Primary classes. Get some lady who knows something about pedagogy and teaching and make her responsible for the rest.

Do not make the classes too large. Groups of eight or ten each are much better than larger numbers.

Have something special occasionally at the regular sessions. Invite the parents to be present. Have the pastor present.

Perhaps some little ones to baptize will help to create a greater interest. A good way to interest the parents is to be at home to the parents and scholars of the department occasionally some weekday in the afternoon.

Our Teachers' Leaflet

We have received numerous letters of appreciation of the Leaflet issued some time ago. We regret that there were any of our Superintendents who failed to take advantage of our offer. Over 16,000 leaflets were mailed from our office. The following extract from a letter written by Mr. J. H. Rush, Superintendent of Tillsonburg Sunday School, voices the general opinion well, and we appreciate it highly. He says:

"These leaflets should be productive of great good. To me, the excellent thoughts put forth have already been of benefit. I was much impressed with Mr. Addison's talk on the preparation of the lesson, and the facts produced on page eleven regarding our knowledge of men of the Bible was quite an inspiration to me. So much so, that I immediately arranged with six of our young men of fifteen to seventeen years to each

"They that govern the most make the least noise."