

3. A ruling maxim in the class-room should be not to teach too much or too little.

Both are pernicious errors which should be carefully avoided. By teaching too much the pupil is relieved of the very exercise and activity by which his mental and spiritual growth may be promoted, or he suffers grievous injury by having forced upon him far more information and truth than he can assimilate. On the other hand, when we teach too little, the learner is left to struggle with difficulties which should be removed at once. To escape both evils the skilful teacher will begin the lesson by questioning his pupil to ascertain what he already knows and the defects and inaccuracies of his knowledge; for it is only upon the points where ignorance and error are discovered that teaching is needed.

Besides, a wise and searching process of questioning at the outset exerts a most wholesome influence in dissipating the conceit of the learner, which is one of the deadliest foes to real progress. Fancied knowledge is an almost insurmountable obstacle to the attainment of what is real. When the scholar is emptied of vanity, convinced of his own ignorance—and this is more easily done by questions than by argument—he is then in a receptive state, and the teacher's work with him may become exceedingly fruitful.

4. In order to success, the teacher in his class must secure absolute attention.

This is the opposite of distraction, and distraction comes through divided mental activity, the attempt to be occupied with several or many things at the same time. To secure attention the teacher should establish the proper local relation between himself and his pupils and between the pupils themselves. In some cases the principle of isolation may be followed with advantage. Those who readily unite in promoting disorder may be separated and placed at a distance from one another. The eye of the teacher should be upon every member of the class. Restless ones can be thus easily controlled. So responsive are they to this method of government that they actually think the teacher can see what is in their minds as well as in their pockets. But if he is unable to govern he cannot at the same time have his eye on his notes looking for something to tell them—something which has not been thought of by himself, but has been picked up in the printed "Helps" or at the Saturday afternoon talk to teachers.

The voice is a marvellous instrument in managing pupils. It can, with considerable precision, express all the passions of the soul—pity, joy, sorrow, indignation, etc. Questions are potent for educative and disciplinary purposes. The restless pupil and the sluggish, dreamy one should be vigorously assailed with questions. Their classmates of the better sort will witness the training given by this method with profit and profound attention.

Recapitulation during the progress of the lesson and at the end of it serves many good purposes. The pupil should be asked to do this work, and so to give back what he has been taught. He will thus disclose his imperfect apprehension of what has been presented and give his instructor the opportunity of making corrections and a final review of the whole subject.

In offering these suggestions I am fully persuaded that the conditions as to class-room accommodation and the time at their disposal under which most Sunday School teachers are obliged to do their work make it impossible for them to follow the best pedagogic methods, and so long as this continues to be the case the value of this great department of Church work viewed from the educational and spiritual standpoint must be seriously impaired.

Montreal

## THE HOME DEPARTMENT

Our Sabbath School workers in the Synod of British Columbia are seeking to organize the Home Department wherever possible. There is need and room, especially in the newer settlements. Indeed, in some localities, no other sort of Sabbath School instruction is possible. Here and there also, in other portions of the Church, the scheme has been taken up, and with vigor and promise of success. If carried out heartily, the Home Department cannot fail to help in reviving the good old habit of family instruction, and there would seem to be room for it, in some simple form, in even the smallest congregation.

Inquiries have been addressed to us from various quarters as to what is meant by the Home Department, and how it is to be carried on. We gladly give the information as follows, mostly in the words of the Committee of the Southern Presbyterian Church, whose General Assembly has recommended its general adoption.