

School and all of the money given by the children should be devoted to benevolences, the objects to which the money goes being within their understanding and of interest to them. The children should always know to what they are giving and not think that the money goes to "pay the teacher" or to "buy the Quarterlies," as has sometimes happened.

They should be intelligent givers and know why and how to give. It is due to the children also that some report of the result of their help should be given them. Letters from missionaries, pictures of children helped, stories of the work accomplished and the like, are greatly appreciated by the givers.—Lucy Stock Chapin, in *The Westminster Teacher*

Teaching the Boys and Girls to Pray

By REV. ROBERT POGUE

The prayer life of the young is all important. In most Christian homes children get some kind of training in prayer. They are taught at least to "say their prayers," which prayers may be of a very simple and formal character. It is to be feared little is done to train the children in the duty and privilege of prayer. Hence the church, largely through the Sunday School, must supply the lack. Sunday School teachers may not always look upon this as a part of their work. Nevertheless it is, and when they neglect it, they miss a great opportunity.

The habit of prayer should be formed very early. The Sunday School's best work can be done with the Juniors, with the boys and girls from nine to twelve years of age. From nine to fifteen has been spoken of as the "golden memory period," hence the "most glorious period for storing away." The early years of this period are the "habit forming period." Surely there is no more necessary habit to form than the habit of prayer.

The following suggestions are offered for parents and teachers:

1. Secure a copy of a little work arranged by Mrs. W. Dietz, *A Selection of Prayers for Children*, or some such book. Mrs. Dietz' book has prayers suitable for the Beginners, for children from six to nine years of age, as well as for those from nine to twelve. Teachers and parents will find this little book of great help.

2. The study of the lesson should always be preceded by a short prayer. The teacher, when all heads are bowed, could have the class join in concert in a prayer which they had been previously taught. A good plan is to distribute three or four short sentence prayers amongst the pupils and ask them to read these. In time, when they get accustomed to their own voices, they will be able to lead without this aid.

3. A few words should be said on the meaning of prayer from time to time. When children come to see that prayer, in its simplest form, is talking to our heavenly Father about the things we need, and for which we wish to give thanks, it is wonderful how quickly they

will respond when asked to do so. They will take part as readily by praying as by answering questions on the lesson. Great care should be taken to secure a reverent attitude, and absolute quiet, before engaging in prayer in the class. Many superintendents are at fault here and really encourage irreverence by the abruptness with which they begin their prayers in the School. When they say: "Let us pray," they should ask for all heads to be bowed, and they should wait quietly until they see that their request has been complied with.

4. A simple explanation should be occasionally given of the Lord's Prayer. One Junior teacher asked each boy and girl to write the Lord's Prayer, and was astonished at some of the phrases which had been repeated orally: "Give us this day our daily breath,"—etc. After that each week one phrase was explained until the whole prayer was better understood.

5. It helps boys and girls as well as older people to have a definite subject of prayer suggested to them. The lesson will oftentimes suggest subjects. So will birthdays and missionary offerings, or sickness in the class or in the School. A portion of time could be spent in learning short prayers to repeat in concert. Space forbids giving samples of such prayers. A morning prayer which has been used in our own home, and which I do not recall seeing in any collection of prayers, is as follows:

"I thank thee Lord for having kept
My soul and body while I slept.
I pray thee Lord that through this day,
In all I do, and think, and say,
I may be kept from harm and sin,
And made both good and pure within."

6. To help the teacher to know something of the prayer life of her class, a good thing to do would be to give out a simple set of questions to be answered in writing. Mrs. Bryner, the well known Primary specialist, suggests the following list:

1. What was the first prayer that you learned?