

It is not, perhaps, too much to say that in general the attempts at crayon pictures result in mere caricatures, whose influence really perverts the truth and distorts a child's idea of men and things as presented in the Divine Word. Familiar things scarcely need to be drawn in detail, in the illustration of a lesson. It is better to let the imagination work, with such aid as a thoughtful superintendent can easily give. A good picture, or a caricature, may excite curiosity, but not more than a word or letter will, if skilfully used. And as to attention—why it must not only be gained, but held without a break.

Because artists are comparatively few, and time is not often at command if ability is not wanting, and because the great mass of superintendents can readily use word outlines, and word pictures, we generally prefer them. We go even further, and suggest that letters representing words, will, as a rule, fully meet the case. A somewhat extended experience has proven that children or adults will, with a little drilling, more perfectly remember an outline or blackboard exercise presented solely by letters, than they will any picture illustration that can be prepared.

But it is not intended that superintendents shall simply copy our plans. They are meant to be suggestive and capable of development. If a suitable device, or a different arrangement will help, it is very easy to add or make a change. Our columns are open for further discussion of the question.—*Baptist Superintendent.*

Sunday-School Gimcracks.

Gimcracks is a work that has attained the dignity of insertion in the most fastidious of the great dictionaries, Worcester's, and may be considered therefore as having the right of entrance into good society. Its composition and sound intimate its meaning. It refers to something light and trifling, as having pretence without worth and substance. But what are Sunday-school gimcracks? Why, things of pretence without substance that enter into the work of the Sunday-school. For instance, we heard a primary class teacher in a Sunday-school in one of our large cities talking about the paraphernalia that she used in teaching her class. She had crowns made out of gilt paper, and a staircase of the same material to represent the "golden stair" that figures in some remarkable hymns; and a gilt harp and a quantity of other trash that illustrated her "goody-goody" talks to the unfortunate youngsters committed to her charge. No matter what the lesson, it soon ran into angels and harps and crowns and golden stairs, as, of course, it must, in order to fit the *gimcracks*. We have seen superintendents with the most elaborate nothings upon the board, the chalk being used, not to illustrate some point in the lesson, but to show one's skill in drawing, or to air one's pretty conceits which are warranted to fit any lesson under

consideration; and these fancy doings on the board are simply *gimcracks*. We have known some officers of the school who were silent upon the lesson in their closing remarks, but diffuse and eloquent upon some exhibition to be given; and it looked as if they were more intent upon *gimcracks* than the precious truth of Christ and the saving of souls. There be some who are great on little things, but little on the great things which are the very life of the school. When we see men who are enthusiastic over running the machinery of the Sunday-school, constantly introducing new cog-wheels and bands, fertile in every kind of temporary expedients which make a show, but wanting in spiritual life, and in the power to teach and impress the Word, we have a specimen of those who may be said to be spending their time and energies on *gimcracks*.—*Sunday-School Superintendent.*

Securing Attention.

A TEACHER sat down as a stranger before a class of untraffed and fun-loving little roughs, in a city mission-school. The lesson for the day was in the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah—that most wonderful of all the Messianic prophecies. But the last thing in the world that had those boys' attention was the study of prophecy. Their attention was on the living present. They were quick-witted and wide-awake. They had their eyes on each other, on the teacher, and on the classes about them, with some fun-poking at each object of their attention in its turn, in rapid succession. But the lesson—that was something which they hadn't given attention to, and which they didn't propose to look at seriously. One plan after another to get their attention to that lesson, and to his words about it, was tried by the teacher, without success. Finally he spoke up quickly, and with a show of real interest in the question: "Boys! did any one of you ever see a sheep-shearing?" It was a question at a venture in a city school; but one of the boys answered exultantly: "Yes, I did once, when I was out in the country." That boy was interested. Now, to interest the others. "Boys!" again spoke up the teacher. "Boys! just listen, all of you. Billy, here, is going to tell you about a sheep-shearing he saw out in the country." That caught the attention of all, and they bent forward in curious interest. "Now, how was it done, Billy?" "Why, one old fellow just caught hold of the sheep and sat down on his head, and another one cut his wool off." Explicit, graphic, and intelligible that! The narrator had conscious pride in his results of travel. The listeners were attent at the recital of something quite outside of their range of observation. "How much noise did the sheep make about being sheared?" "He didn't bleat a bit." "Well, now, how does that story agree with what the Bible says about sheep-shearing? Just look at this lesson, all of you, and see what it does say. There, in the