

devotional singing, which the great apostle recommends. (4) That portion of the Sabbath-school work which is capable of deeper and more lasting effects than any other, the embalming and consecrating of Christian sentiment in song, now so wholly without supervision, and subject to such damaging abuses, would be recovered to the place in the system it should occupy.—*Sunday School World*.

Prayer in the Infant Class.

WHILE in our Sabbath-schools we are striving by methods of all kinds, careful study and illustrations without number, to help the little ones understand and love God's word, do we not forget, often, when we lift our voices in prayer, that they cannot join us? Our wants are not theirs; our very words and forms of expression are far beyond their comprehension; and so the moments which should mean so much to them, are passed in restlessness or open indifference.

While this is true in regard to all the smaller scholars in our Sabbath-schools, it is especially true of those in the Infant Class. When the rooms are thrown together during the opening and closing exercises, the one who leads in prayer is often at such a distance that his very words are not heard, or, if heard, he speaks in an unknown tongue as far as they are concerned; so, folding the hands and closing the eyes becomes a mere matter of form to the little ones, and their teachers dread that exercise as they do no other.

And so our word to-day is especially to the Infant Class teachers. When the doors are closed and you have the children alone for a precious half-hour, do you realize what a golden opportunity is granted you for teaching them to pray, even as our Lord taught His disciples? Perhaps not by repeating the Lord's Prayer always, but by some simple and earnest petitions touching the child's every day life and wants.

Their eyes are sparkling with joy; their limbs active; so many things for which to thank God, if you only hint it to them. Draw out from them, briefly, what things

they wish most of all to thank him for; varying the questions, at different times, so they shall not always ask for the same things. Then in simple words, and short sentences, let them repeat after you their own prayer, and if your manner is solemn and earnest they cannot fail to be impressed.

But we have thought, prayer with the little ones means most to them and to us at the close of the lesson. When the children have been quiet and attentive, it seems to be the most natural thing to say, "Now let us ask God to help us remember these things." But when they are restless, and every effort to instruct or interest them fails, then, disappointed and faint-hearted, when we have lifted up our hearts with theirs in simple petitions, we have felt our own burdens roll away, and peace and content fill our hearts,—content to fail in our efforts, or to seem to fail, for God sees not as we see! And the children themselves have seemed hushed and quieted, and who can tell what God's Spirit had been whispering to them!

"It is not what you say or do that the little ones remember the longest," said a friend to us, in a moment of discouragement, "it is the impression you make upon them." And believing this, these few moments of prayer may be more precious than any others, for if we can but lead them to lift their hearts to Him, will not the Great Teacher do the rest,—seeing He has promised that wherever two or three are gathered together in His name, that there He would be in the midst of them, to "bless them, and to do them good?"

We know it is not an easy matter for some of us to lead the little ones in prayer; our voices frighten us, or the presence of others troubles us, till it seems to ourselves that our best endeavours are but lip-service. Yet God looks deeper, and knows how much it costs us to bring even so incomplete an offering to Him; or, as George Herbert quaintly says:

"When the heart, sighing to be approved,
Whispers, 'Oh, could I love!
God writes it, 'loved!'"

F. H. M'C.

—*Sunday School World*.