

"He draws no sharp line between the animate and the inanimate."

One night after tea I was going to tell the wee boy a story. Before I began he went to the woodbox and took out every stick and every split log, and stood them in a row against the fender. "They want to hear, too," he said, with a bright little nod in the direction of the sticks, "don't you?"

He often kisses the door-knobs, on his way to bed. "They like it better than being shaken hands with," he says.—The Pilgrim Elementary Teacher

### Boosting a Sunday School by Mail

The problem of looking after absentees in a Sunday School is a very serious one. So many plans have been tried and so little success obtained by them that most people are in despair over the matter.

Undoubtedly the best plan is for the teacher to look after his or her own absentees by means of a telephone call, a letter, or a personal call. Sacrifice must be made on the part of some one in order to get the desired results, and it is better that this sacrifice should be distributed among all the teachers of the School rather than left with the superintendent or secretary to communicate with the total number absent.

We have just read of a superintendent whose heart is so deeply in his work that he undertakes to communicate personally with every absentee. Very few people can do this, for the sacrifice is great, but nevertheless it is possible and it brings results. An absentee secretary might look after this, or an assistant superintendent appointed for the purpose. At any rate, we are going to give the experience of this one man in order to show the possibilities in the case:

"For the past few years the attendance of our School has averaged from 60 to 70, varying with the season. Sometimes on rare occasions a record of 100 for the day has been scored. The first quarter of last year averaged 68; the second quarter slumped for the summer to 61. There are 98 families in the congregation and 156 names on the church roll.

"My plan was to imitate the business men who write personal letters to the prospective customers. However, I did not care to have my letters lost in the flood of circulars that commercial firms send out broadcast. Instead of using common large-sized note heads, I bought extra small envelopes, two by four and one-half inches, for which I had paper cut eight and one-half inches by three and three-fourths inches. This makes an inexpensive stock, and being of the party acceptance or invitation type is very personal.

"I use a printed letter head done in small type. Every Sunday afternoon I write a brief personal note to every member of the School who was present the week before and absent that day. This way no one receives two letters in succession. Usually it is enough to say, 'We missed you at Sunday School to-day.'

"Some Sundays I have thirty letters to write; commonly there are more than a dozen. Besides the regular 'Missed You' letters I have written special invitations to every family for Mother's Day, Children's Day, Patriotic Day, and the picnic. In six months I have used over 1,000 envelopes.

"The desired effect was realized at once. It seems that cooperation is to be had for the asking. The average attendance jumped from 62 the preceding quarter to 89. The average for the summer quarter has been 92—a fifty per cent gain over a year ago. In accomplishing this the two former superintendents have done much of the committee work.

"When I was elected superintendent last March, I realized that my problem was to give the School a boost while carrying out a war emergency programme on my farm. During the spring season, I sometimes do not leave the farm from Sunday to Sunday."—New Church Messenger

### Lord Roberts and Family Prayers

A letter written by Lord Roberts to Lord Curzon was read in the House of Lords in England, November 18, 1914. It said: "We have had family prayers for fifty-five years. Our chief reason is that they bring the household together in a way that nothing else can. Then it ensures the servants and others who may be in the house joining in prayers which for one reason or another they may have omitted by themselves. Since the War began we usually read prayers, and when anything important has occurred, I tell those present about it. In this way I have found all the household are taking an interest in what is going on in France. We have never given an order about prayers; attendance is quite optional; but as a rule all the household come, men and women, on hearing the bell ring."

From the example of this valiant, admired, and beloved leader in the British army it is proposed in England that as a memorial to him a general restoration of family prayers be brought about. We need an army of "reserves" from homes of prayer to meet the moral conflict of right against wrong, never so intense, never so vitally near as to-day.—The Home Department Quarterly