

4. By means of speakers representing these institutions, and excursions to them, get the pupils thoroughly informed regarding the people they are going to assist.

The important thing in social service in the Sunday School is, that the pupils get into sympathy with those who are the objects of their benevolence. They must be trained to help those in need because they are their brothers and sisters. Any tendency towards a patronizing spirit should be promptly checked. Anything that would tend to stimulate, on the part of the pupils, a feeling of superiority over those whom they are trying to help is fatal to the aim of the School. Pupils must be trained to go forth to the assistance of their fellow men in the spirit of brotherly love.

University of Chicago



Some Problems of the Small School

By Rev. John Mutch, B.D.

*III. THE CHILDREN AT CHURCH

The small church has its problem of the attendance of the children at the service. Indeed, one almost wonders whether the difficulty is not more acute there than in the large congregation.

The other day, after having preached about, and urged in one way and another, the attendance of the children, I was greatly surprised to have a faithful, Christian worker tell me that she told her boys that they must not remain after Sunday School as she was afraid they would get together and disturb the worship. Such a difficulty can be met by seeing that the children sit with their parents, where they ought to be, by trying to make the service interesting to them, and by older persons not being peeved at their natural restlessness.

There are two natural ways of approaching the whole question. One is through the parents. Wherever the parents are aware of the importance of the presence of their children with themselves at public worship, the children will be there. This can be brought home by the pastor and members of his congregation who are interested.

Occasionally a sermon may be preached bearing upon the whole subject. Occasionally, or even persistently, the matter may be mentioned from the pulpit. Often a word may be spoken in private to the delinquent parent by pastor or teacher, and perhaps this last method is the best to use with the church member.

The other way of approach is through the child himself. A word spoken to him in

private about his duty of attending church, and the desire of the teacher, pastor and the whole church to see him there, is not always without avail. The need of reverence and good behaviour can be impressed in the same way. The service can be made of interest to him by a special hymn for the young; by having occasionally a children's choir, or a child's solo or reading; by a five-minute sermonette; by illustrations chosen for the sermon with the children in mind; and, if the minister has the power, by following the example of one great preacher who, when asked how he managed to make his sermons so interesting, replied, that he always had his eye upon a certain boy to whom he preached, and as soon as he saw the boy was not following him he knew that he was becoming uninteresting to everybody.

Besides, there are the regular Sabbath School methods of an attendance mark in the class-register, of the pink envelope to be given at the regular service, marking both attendance and contribution on the part of the children, of the punched card or other attendance record taken at the door, and the award of a certificate or other prize for being present a certain number of Sundays in the year.

The contagion of interest among children must ever be borne in mind. There are no recruiters like interested children.



Decision Day : An Experience

By Rev. J. A. Pue-Gilchrist, B.A.

The 27th of May last was observed as Decision Day in Knox Church, Bracebridge, Ont., with the result that 40 signed Decision Cards, and 35 united with the church, most of these being from the minister's Bible Class. The following is a brief account of the plans carried out.

1. An unannounced series of preparatory sermons was preached during the preceding three months on the great gospel themes displaying man's need and God's remedy, culminating on Decision Day in a sermon to church members in the morning on Ezek. 33: 7, 8, and in the evening a message to the unsaved on Acts 16: 30.

2. In the Bible Class, a half year's teaching of the lessons from John's Gospel always kept prominent the writer's own declared aim (see John 20: 31).

3. There was earnest and long continued prayer both public and private for the salvation of souls.

4. The Session committed itself to the policy of holding Decision Day. The date was publicly announced and kept before the congregation for their prayers and cooperation.

* The first two articles in this series, *The Absent Minister* and *The Hour of Meeting* appeared in the *TEACHERS MONTHLY* for July and August respectively.