

What "Religious Education" Means

BY REV. W. W. PECK, M.A.

May I briefly outline what is meant to-day by the evangelical denominations when they use the term "Religious Education?"

They mean that the facts of the religious life should be so presented to the children and young people at each period of growth, that there shall be a religious experience normal to that age, so that loyalty to and love for the master shall be continuous, and that it shall become the fixed habit of life to have God in the consciousness, God directing and strengthening the life.

To accomplish this, our leaders hold that we ought to employ every legitimate means, and that always the equipment shall be adequate. A new or old church building constructed so that the Sabbath School is held in the cellar, or whose equipment for the Sabbath School consists, for the most part, of a few tattered and torn hymn books is, in these days, a crime against childhood. Verily such builders and workers do not discern the signs of the times, and know not the psychology of those who attend the "movies."

Then to-day, our leaders, whilst ever thankful for assistance from any, yet constantly ask for teachers possessing, not only thorough Christian character and magnetic personality, but also careful intellectual preparation. They believe that teachers who know the characteristics of their pupils, and who have been taught the method of approach to the age they will teach, will do more effective work than those who have not been so taught.

And they believe that the literature used should be adapted to the age being taught, that is, they believe in a series of graded Lessons.

In the Public Schools, we recognize that the child of six and the lad of sixteen are at different stages of intellectual growth, and

we adapt their studies to their capacity. So it must be in religious education, if it is to be most effective.

Then, our leaders believe that instruction in worship and the cultivation of habits of worship are most fundamental to life. They believe that worship ought to be graded, that there should be an adaptation of song, of prayer, and of the exercises that are used to induce the spirit of worship, so that, as far as possible, the child may understand as well as absorb.

They believe, also, that there is a special period of life when great decisions are made, the greatest of which is made in reference to the Christian life. Experience shows that if circumstances are favorable, not a few make this decision at nine or ten years of age, and that the high tide of conversion occurs between the ages of twelve and sixteen. And they know as surely as anything can be known that life begins to crystalize about the age of twenty-five.

So, to-day, the problem of religious education is the scientific problem of understanding the mental attitude of the child, the boy and girl, the young man and woman, those physically mature, and of adapting material to the point of development of each. The modern Sunday School is no longer merely for the children, but for all who attend the church, and it has a thoroughly correlated Sunday School curriculum for every period of growth. The training of our children and members, young and old, their intellectual and spiritual development need not be a haphazard thing. It is the great work of every minister, Sunday School superintendent and teacher who is taking seriously the master's command: "Shepherd my lambs; feed my sheep."

Kar-loops, B.C.

Eye Teaching in the Sunday School

BY THOMAS B. SMITH

In our work as Sunday School teachers, there are two main avenues by which we may approach the minds of our scholars. These are: eye gate and ear gate.

In our childhood, the things that attracted us most were the things we saw; the story books we will never forget are those that were illustrated.

We may forget the exact words the writer used in telling the story, but we see the picture of David slaying Goliath just as clearly to-day

as we did twenty or thirty years ago.

Scientific and mechanical journals recognize the fact that a quarter page illustration will give a far better idea of a piece of machinery than a whole page of letter press information.

All religious teachers ought to make more use of eye teaching than they do.

The fundamental principle in all object teaching is the likeness that exists between things spiritual and things material.

There is an analogy in some points between