

For the 1918 Budget, December 1917 is the time to plan. The goodly ship should be launched with the New Year. But everything should be in readiness.

The church's Board of Finance and the church's Sunday School Board have in print full information and excellent plans and suggestions. A post card to either or both of these Boards (address Confederation Life Building, Toronto) will bring the required literature. It will be worth the while of the superintendent and teachers and officers of every School to send for this literature, and carefully to work out the method that will best suit their School.

The church never needed more than this coming year its whole Budget; and the School assumes a serious responsibility that shuts its scholars off from giving their share, or fails to plan that they shall do this in the fullest measure and according to the best methods.

### Interest and Effort

*By Professor O. J. Stevenson, D.Pæd.*

When I was a boy of ten, hoeing potatoes or weeding in the garden did not possess any attractions for me. Since the task was not of my own choosing, boylike I cared little whether it was done well or ill or ever done at all. But up in one corner of the regular garden I had a little garden plot of my very own, where I grew beans and beets and carrots and citrons and melons and cucumbers just for the love of growing them. Needless to say, I was more proud of those beets and cucumbers than of the best vegetables that grew in the whole garden. I needed no urging to hoe and weed and water them in time of drought. I was eager to make an effort because I was interested.

It is the same with all tasks. Where the element of interest is lacking it is drudgery; where interest is present the effort is soul made. I know a small girl who hates dish-washing; but she will wash and wipe with evident pleasure when she is trying to surprise her mother by her speed or when there is a good-natured contest to see who will be done with her task first.

One of the great differences between the modern school and the old-fashioned one is that the present-day teacher is generally alive to the value of interest in stimulating the efforts of her pupils. The lesson, as we shall see later, is planned and developed with a view to arousing interest, and devices of all sorts are employed to make the lesson more interesting. There are a class of educators, to be sure, who hold that it is a mistake to try to make the work of the class-room interesting and who claim that "there is so much frosting on the cake and so many raisins and currants within that there is very little real nourishment in it." Hard work and disagreeable effort is good for a boy or girl, they argue, and this hard moral discipline, from their point of view, is the best thing a child gets out of education. There are those, on the other

hand, who hold that we cannot make the work of the school too easy for the child and that it is only when work is interesting that the child really gets good from it.

They are both right and both wrong. Effort, we must agree, is necessary for vigorous growth; but hard work and earnest effort need not be disagreeable. The contrary indeed is true; for work that calls for the greatest amount of mental and physical energy is often the most agreeable. It must be admitted that there are certain tasks, practising scales on the piano, for example, or removing ashes from the furnace, which are unpleasant or monotonous; but I have never heard it argued that tasks that are pure drudgery are a necessary moral discipline. And in the work of the School, I venture to say, there are few tasks where effort and interest cannot be made to go hand in hand.

The mistake that some teachers make is that they do not seek for sources of interest in the task itself but try to create an artificial interest by means of what are rightly spoken of as "devices." The "soft pedagogy" of modern times attempts to teach addition, subtraction and multiplication by means of games, but personally I have more faith in the sound drill and the wholesome rivalry of the old-fashioned arithmetic class. The danger of the modern methods of sugar-coating is that the child is likely to remember the game but forget the facts involved in it. Interest without effort is just as dangerous, and in the long run as deadening, as effort without interest. It is a good thing to use blackboards and colored crayons; but the illustrations should help to impress the teaching of the lesson rather than detract from it. It is a good thing to use games; but the facts themselves must afterwards be drilled home. It is a good thing to use the story method to awaken interest, but everything that is worth while in the lesson must in the end be developed in the class as a result of the child's own effort. Do not take all the stones out of the child's