

School I saw," etc. You may have gone out of your way to see it, but the children need not know that; or, "May told me she has a new brother;" or, "I am sure you all saw the soldiers last week." It does not matter particularly just how you open so long as what you say will lead naturally to the thought for the day.

The Circle Talk embraces nearly all the exercises of the hour. The Lesson and Closing Exercises and a rest period (which is really a period of activity that rests the little bodies which easily tire of keeping still) take up the remainder of the time.

Let there be plenty of singing of well selected, short hymns which develop naturally out of the conversation and from each other. The prayer or prayers should be spontaneous and practical, the class usually repeating short clauses after the teacher.

The Cradle Roll and birthday exercises are included in the talk.

The general programme for the hour is: (1) Circle Talk. (2) Rest Exercise. (3) Lesson. (4) Closing Exercises. Having these in regular order continually, gives definiteness to the proceedings; but the order of the exercises in the Talk, should vary from day to day.

The teacher will have a definite plan in mind for the Talk but it will not be so hard and fast that it cannot be changed if occasion arises.

One afternoon the windows were all open in a certain class-room. A sudden storm arose. The pictures, lightly pinned to the board for the day's use, caught by the strong breeze, created great disturbance, some coming off altogether. Such an event could not be passed over. The class was familiar with the verse from Rosetti's little song:

"Who has seen the wind?

Neither you nor I;

But when the trees hang trembling,

The wind is passing by."

The teacher changed her plan to include this song and also changed the words of the latter part to:

"But when the pictures blow about,

The wind is passing by."

This made the song an especial favorite for some time to come, and also caused to make the little commotion among the children cease in a pleasurable manner.

The rest exercises should not be boisterous, and should be always connected with high thought. The Departmental Helps show how to do this, so that they form a legitimate part of the lessons to be impressed.

The children should not be expected to listen to a lesson story of ten or fifteen minutes

without physical movement and visible illustration, so be sure to plan for this.

Let the Closing Exercises be short and right to the point. If the lesson closes with a prayer, just sing a goodby hymn.

A not unimportant part of a class session is the motherly oversight which must be given to the little ones. See that the temperature and air of the room are what they should be and be sure that the wraps are properly put on in cold weather.

The last thing before dismissing, give out the papers containing the lesson just taught. These may be referred to during the lesson and shown to be of interest, but let the children expect to receive them only on going out.



The Religion of a Primary Child

When is a child religious? What should be expected of a child of seven in the way of Christian attitude? What should be his reactions to certain situations as the results of his Christian training?

A child is religious in "so far as he is capable of organizing his whole life around what is conceived by him to be of most worth." To be sure, his life is more limited, his experience more circumscribed than that of the adult. But his problems are real, quite real; and his acts are Christian in so far as they are determined and controlled by values and ideas that are Christian.

But, perchance, we can make this more clear by concrete illustration. A little six-year-old in a certain school of religion was returning to her class-room after the usual morning service of worship in the chapel. She had heard at that service the familiar old hymn "God is my strong salvation," and its meaning was very clear to her. As she and her classmates were going to their room, the elevator in which they stood suddenly stopped. It was apparent something was wrong. Some of the children were frightened, but this little girl of six stood calm and said:

"God is my strong salvation;

What foe have I to fear?"

Was not this a true exhibition of faith, and that under circumstances which might have tested a "grown-up?"

When should the child begin to pray? Should he learn formal prayers to "say," or should the prayer be the spontaneous expression of the child's joy over the good things that the day has brought, of love and good will toward family and friends and helpers, and of communion with God concerning any and all of the little affairs of his daily experience? Should the child be compelled to "say his prayers" at stated times, even though the programme may prove distasteful