

THE MODEL SUNDAY-SCHOOL.

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THE ideas of excellence entertained by different people in different parts of the country are so numerous, and so curious, that the task of finding a Sunday-school which everybody would accept as a model, would be a hopeless one. And yet we may all, according to our various preferences and experiences, select some standard which seems more to our liking than any other, and adopt it as our model. Any Sunday-school which should have the presumption to set up for a model school would, in all probability, soon expose the emptiness of its pretensions by making a sorry failure.

The school which may safely serve as a model for our imitation—if we must imitate—is not necessarily the largest school; nor the most elegantly furnished; nor the most beautifully located; nor the school with the loudest music, the most gaudily-dressed children, the most inviting picnics, the most gorgeous processions, or the most intricate exercises.

The Model Sunday-school is a cheerful place. It is not held in a mouldy cellar, with dampness trickling over the walls, decayed floor-boards yielding beneath the feet, and musty odours greeting the nostrils. Recognising sunshine and pure air as among the good gifts of God, its arrangements are such as to afford a hearty welcome to all who enter its doors. Its windows give ample light, and are not obscured by dirt and cobwebs. Its provisions for ventilation secure a sufficient change of air to meet the wants of the lungs of the worshippers and students who assemble there. Pleasant pictures and maps adorn the walls, interspersed here and there with neatly-embellished texts of Scripture. The seats are so placed that the scholars can look at the superintendent as he opens and closes the school, and are of such a shape as not to remind those who sit on them of the tortures of the Inquisition.

The infant department is separated from the rest of the school by sliding doors, or other conveniences, so as to keep the little folks and the larger ones from annoying each other by the diverse styles of their exercises. Ample room and good ventilation are allowed the little ones. Though the infants sit on raised seats, after the manner of steps, the ceiling is of sufficient height to avoid crowding the heads of the topmost row of children against it. The senior classes, who need separate accommodations, are provided for, either in rooms which communicate with the main school, or, if that is not practicable, in some other parts of the building. They are present with the rest of the scholars at the opening and closing exercises, so that all may join in prayer and praise, and that they may see and help each other.

The model Sunday-school has a neat bolt on the door of entrance, which is fastened, at the beginning of the opening exercises, so as to keep the late people in the vestibule, where they will not disturb those who have come in time. When the opening exercises are over, the late folks, if there are any, are allowed to march in, and the other people gaze at them.

The opening services are devotional, spirited, and brief. The music rings out with hearty utterance of sacred song—no drawing, no dragging, no whining, no singing of ridiculous rubbish to dance-house jungles. The study-hour is sacredly devoted to the study of the lesson. One lesson is provided for the whole school. The study-meeting, held during the week, has given the teachers a stock of information on the passage of Scripture, which enables them to occupy the whole time in the work of teaching. Even if twenty-five peripatetic Sunday-school orators wander in to make speeches, no matter how distinguished they may be, no speech-making is allowed until the teaching is over. Then, if any one who is present has an earnest word to say in connection with what has been taught, opportunity is allowed him. The empty speaker, who, having nothing to say, wants to make a speech, is allowed the golden opportunity of remaining silent. The superintendent closes with a few words of application of the lesson, using blackboard and maps, if the lesson is one requiring them. Sometimes the pastor adds his voice to that of the superintendent; and, at stated times, his sermon to the children commands their attention and engages their interest.

The great object of Sunday-school teaching is clearly and constantly borne in mind by all connected with the model Sunday-school. Pastor, superintendent, and teachers all aim to show their pupils, whether old or young, their need of salvation, the all-sufficiency of Jesus as their Saviour, and the

blessedness of growing in grace and knowledge when they have found Him and professed His name. A genial, joyful spirit of Christian welcome pervades the whole school. The comfort and the joy of continual success animates all concerned with a holy ambition. The constant enjoyment of God's blessing produces a continuous condition of revival; and the work which is done in such a school is all light, is all a pleasure, for it is always accomplishing the happiest results.

MAGIC GLASSES.

"I WISH we lived in fairy times," said Florry Hay, suddenly, as she sat looking through her mamma's birthday gift, a new opera-glass; "I know what I would wish for."

"Why, what would that be—a glass like mine?" asks mamma, smiling.

"Well, not exactly; I should want one that showed me, instead of things, what people's thoughts were like, then I should always know exactly who was good or who was greedy, or silly, or —."

"I am very glad my little girl has no such treasure, that she might go spying about at other people's faults, and getting herself hated; but wait, I remember an old story that has a moral you will soon find out, I think, on this very subject."

"Once upon a time, a man had a pair of green magic glasses, such as you are wishing for, and on putting them on he found he could not take them off again, although they made him very miserable, for far beyond the kind eyes of even his most tried friends he saw into their hearts, and in all were some faults and failings, which these glasses magnified so much that the kind and tender feelings hidden in the same heart could not be seen at all—the rims blotted them out; and so he lost all faith in those that were dearest to him, and they, feeling his coolness, wondered and grieved, and finally left him, and he sat alone, feeling that it was a bad world, and he the only good man in it. Oh, that death might come and free him!"

"But instead there came a little elvin child, with pure blue eyes and soft voice, saying, 'I am Love, and the Master has sent me to comfort thee; look, now, into thine own breast, and then seek a faultless man if thou darest.' It touched those glasses, and the man saw his own heart. What a black heart it was, on which was written ingratitude, envy, untruth, worse than that of his neighbours, and he shrank back in horror, crying, 'I too, am a sinner!' and the glasses fell shattered at his feet."

"You will need them no more," said the elvin visitor, "for you know now that there is no faultless man. I will touch your eyes with the waters of brotherly love, and you will be happy."

"Oh!" cried the man, rapturously, "what is this that makes all things so fair? Let me go and tell others of this great bliss!"

"So he went forth, leaving the glasses of selfishness and want of love for ever broken."

"Do you understand my fable, Beatrice? and are you not content to see people's faces through my opera-glass, and to leave their hearts alone?"

[The above is from the new volume of "Little Folks," published by Messrs. Cassell. All who can should get this book; it is a complete storehouse of instruction and amusement.]

God can make you happy in the world, or without the world; but never expect that anything, or anyone, can make you happy but the Lord.

As a cold stone, by lying three or four hours in the warm sun, gathereth heat, so the love of God shining upon our souls ought to kindle us to love Him, and all men for His sake.

'HEATING THE DEVIL.—A member of a coloured church was, the other evening, conversing with an acquaintance, and seeking to have him change into better paths, but the friend said he was too often tempted to permit him to become a Christian. "What's yer backbone, dat ye can't rose up and stand temptation?" exclaimed the good man. "I was dat way myself once. Right in dis yer town I had a chance to steal a pa'r o' boots—mighty nice ones, too. Nobody was dar to see me, and I reached out my hand, and de debil said, 'Take 'em. Den a good spirit whispered fur me to let dem boots alone.'" "An' you didn't take 'em?" "No, sah—not much. I took a pa'r o' cheap shoes off de shelf, an' left dem boots alone!"