

their giving and seem to appreciate the interest taken in them. They have a special session after church in the evening, in addition to the regular session on Sunday afternoon.

By these means the idea of the big work to be done in the mission field and the opportunity for each to serve by doing or giving are kept before our School. Other Schools doubt-

less carry on along the same lines more or less. It would be rather difficult to pick out any one or two features as being especially productive of good results, but it seems to require them all working together; and there is always room for improvement and something new.

Brockville, Ont.

## Keeping the Library Up to Date

By W. J. CUNNINGHAM

In a good many instances the Sunday School library is a sink hole for money. The writer has known of schools which have periodically or spasmodically invested fairly large sums of money in new libraries. The ambitious purchasing committees were out for bargains. In effect the demand made on the booksellers was: "How many books will you give us for so much cash?" In other words quantity, not quality, was the primary consideration. As a rule they got what they wanted, namely, cheap books, and the shrewd booksellers ridded their shelves of some undesirable stock. Unfortunately, books of somewhat questionable character thus received the endorsement of these Sunday Schools through being circulated from their libraries. Such methods of purchase are atrocious.

It seems to be the opinion of authorities in this subject, that, in communities where good public libraries are available, Sunday School libraries for *scholars* are quite unnecessary. Many public libraries have juvenile departments well stocked with wholesome literature, and where such service is lacking by a library board it can usually be secured through an interview or appeal by a deputation of local educationists or others interested in the sound development of the child mind and character. A questionnaire was recently circulated amongst the Sunday Schools of one of our large Ontario cities, and it was discovered that almost every School whose community was adjacent to the public library, was experiencing a steadily decreasing patronage for its own bookshelves. Only those Schools located in remote districts reported real interest in their own libraries.\*

Every Sunday School should have a library of its own, however, but the books should be selected for the help of teachers and teacher training students. If half the money which has been wasted on libraries had been expended on books of this nature; and on maps, charts, blackboards and other useful equipment, our Schools could boast of a much

higher grade of religious intelligence and teaching ability.

For keeping any type of Sunday School library up to date, the following methods are suggested:

A definite sum should be provided annually in the School budget for the purchase of books. This amount may be augmented from other sources occasionally when special urgency exists, but it is surprising how a small steady addition to a library will maintain interest. Books ought not to be placed in a library in large quantities at a time. In the average Sunday School of two to three hundred members, one new book a week will keep the library alive indefinitely. A small standing committee composed of the best available local literary authorities, should be appointed to be on the lookout constantly for new and suitable books, and to cooperate with the librarian in the choice and purchase of new books. When a new book is desired, it should first be read or passed upon by every member of this committee before being placed in the library. Sunday Schools cannot be too particular on this point. The new book should then be advertised from the platform by the librarian or superintendent.

As soon as books become worn they should either be repaired, replaced by new copies, or discarded. To continue to circulate dilapidated books is to discount your library, and give the impression that it is not of much value. Books returned from homes where infectious diseases are known to prevail, should be promptly fumigated or destroyed.

Many valuable books have been lost to Sunday School Libraries through faulty systems of accounting, or indifferent supervision. Each patron should have two library cards, showing name, address, class number, etc. The original is given out with the book, and shows the catalogue number of the volume accompanying it, and date of loan. The duplicate, when similarly marked, is placed in the pigeon hole vacated by the book just loaned, so that the librarian can tell instantly who has the missing book. A roll book should also be kept charging patrons

\*It will be noted that, in this paragraph the writer of the article is expressing his own views. Many others hold a different opinion.—EDDONS.