

of the Bible. But, after all, the conscientious teacher must feel that purely intellectual progress, while important in its own place, is not the highest object, and that the main purpose of the Sunday School is to develop the moral side of character. Here, however, results are harder to measure. Moral development is a slow process, and from Sabbath to Sabbath it is difficult to see any definite change in the conduct and ideals of our pupils.

But though we cannot definitely measure results, we can make sure of moral development, by observing the proper conditions. In the first place, in order to secure the best conduct on the part of the pupil, we must see that his attention is directed to the best things. Attention, of course, depends upon interest. Healthy interests find their outlet in healthy action. If a boy's interests are in dime novel exploits, they will hold his attention, to the exclusion of better things, and will find their expression in unhealthy activities. It is the duty of the teacher to try in every possible way to substitute higher interests for the lower, and to fix the attention upon higher ideals of conduct. In the stories of scripture heroes, in their successes and failures alike, and preeminently in the life of Christ, we meet with these higher ideals at every turn,—in the opportunities and failures of Saul, in the heroic exploits of David, in the wisdom of Solomon, as well as in the self-sacrificing spirit of the great missionary Paul. If the teacher is to succeed, he must aim to awaken such an interest in these great scripture heroes, that the pupil will seek to identify himself with what is best, and avoid what is unworthy in their lives.

In the second place, it must not be forgotten that, unless an idea finds expression in action, it does not enter into the moral life of the child. Mere sentiment, which is not followed by an effort to realize itself in better conduct, is worse than wasted. One good action is worth a thousand good resolutions.

"Be good, dear child, and let who will, be clever ;

Do noble things, not *dream* them all day long."

The doing is in reality the only thing worth while. It is, no doubt, difficult for the Sunday School teacher to provide the proper

outlet in action, for a class that is with him for only an hour per week ; but in some fashion the outlet must be provided, if the moral progress is to follow. A healthy will implies not only an interest in right things, but also an opportunity for attention and interest to crystalize themselves in healthy action.

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Music in the Sabbath School

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VI. TEACHING THROUGH HYMNS

Melody and metre are mighty ministers to memory. They waken and open energies and entrances of the mental world ; they hang sweet bells on the truths they help us to acquire ; and when, in the jostle of after life, the bell is touched, the truth confronts us with an offer of help. Some day-school teachers put the alphabet and the arithmetical numbers into a rhyme, and borrowing a tune, get their slow-witted pupils to learn them set to music. Patriotism is effectively inculcated by a national anthem. The Marseillaise, the Jacobite songs, and others of their ilk, were used, with overwhelming effect, to rouse the patriotism that would dare anything. Every great movement among men, in which a strong sentiment and courageous conviction are desired, employs the hymn or the ode or the anthem.

"Of all the arts, great music is the art

To raise the soul above all earthly storms."

The sediment of instruction deposited in the mind of the young singers of the Sabbath School songs is a precious quantity. Poetry teaches indirectly, and because of this, its message finds an open door, when the bold, direct statement of prose is challenged. Add to this the singing of the poetry, and the door is wider open.

"... The longing soul goes out

On wing of song its good to find,

And flying far o'er flood and doubt,

Its ark of bondage leaves behind."

A glance at the subject divisions of the Hymns for the Young in our Book of Praise will show how it was in the mind of the compilers to make them vehicles of doctrinal truth and poetical ideas. There are twelve