

5. Other ways of increasing the interest will suggest themselves to teachers, according to local conditions.

The blessings of the Cradle Roll may be summed up, as has been done by Joseph Clark in ten good things it does:

Catches the babies.
Reaches the parents.
Attracts to the church.
Delights the children.
Looks toward the future.
Engenders a missionary spirit.

Recruits the Sunday-school.
Operates successfully.
Lays foundations.
Leads to salvation.

Toronto, Ont.

ORDER IN THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL—WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?

BY A PASTOR'S WIFE.

ONE day, when making pastoral calls, I learned a lesson about Sunday-school work that I have never since forgotten. Being so sure that Mrs. Raymond, an earnest Christian mother, would have her only son, Herbert, a lad of eight years, attending Sunday-school, I merely inquired, by way of conversation, in whose class he was.

She replied, "We do not send our boy to Sunday-school. I took him one Sunday, and after seeing the object lessons he learned on that occasion I concluded it was better for him to remain home."

In amazement I remarked, "We have one of the best Sunday-schools in the city. We have one hundred more on our roll than any other school, and the superintendent is a first-rate fellow."

She responded, "What you say is very true, but there are little things allowed, and neglected, that are detrimental to the best developments of the highest types of manhood and womanhood, which seem to me the most important of all teaching."

"From the earliest infancy of our boy, we have endeavored to imbue his whole life with habits of promptness. On that afternoon the superintendent did not announce the opening hymn until five minutes past the hour for opening, thus teaching Herbert his first lesson in tardiness."

"One of the boys in the class, seated just in front of us, seized the back of one of the hymn books, tore it asunder, and cast it upon the floor, teaching our son his first lesson in wanton destruction and wastefulness."

"A class of girls to our right kept up a continuous giggle and whisper during the singing of the first hymn and prayer. This was a first lesson of irreverence."

"Next came the teaching of the lesson. Not one of the class of boys had his own Bible with him, but when the Bibles of the school were distributed, one of them drew a lead pencil from his pocket and spent the half hour sketching rude pictures on the fly-leaf of his Bible. Some questioning thoughts must have passed through our son's mind while this lesson of disregard for the old Book was being taught."

"A stroke of the bell, as a signal for rising to sing the last hymn, was obeyed

by all, except one class, whose indifference to the signal was a lesson of direct disobedience to the laws of the school.

"As soon as 'Amen' of the benediction was pronounced, several of the stronger boys made a bolt for the door, with less order than one would have expected if a cry of 'Fire' had been made. With such an exhibition of rudeness I could not understand how the lesson taught that day on 'The Gentleness of Jesus,' had made any impression."

"As we wended our way home, it was with a saddened heart that I concluded it was best to teach Herbert the Sunday-school lessons myself, and a peculiar sense of pity went out to the other boys and girls, upon whose lives would be seen blotches of human hands, for God's hands never make blotches—when I thought of these young lives being hampered by the chains of evil habits, and taught in Sunday-schools."

"I felt as though I wanted to make a clarion call into the ears of every Sunday-school teacher to insist on *punctuality, obedience, reverence, courtesy, and kindness*, and not only insist on those principles, but practice them. If the life is rooted and grounded in love, the lessons can be easily taught."

The lesson I learned that day, while making that pastoral call, has been such a helpful lesson to me that I venture to pass it on, that others may profit by it, and would like to add that character is perfected by little touches—it can never be what it would have been if you allow the touches of evil habits to be painted upon it. Remember, "the bird with the broken pinions never soared so high again."

Toronto, Ont.

THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL LIBRARY.

BY MR. E. COATSWORTH,

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THE child character is very largely formed by associations and reading. Give good books and Christian associations in childhood and youth and you are certain to have the best results in the formation of character. A large part of youthful reading is obtained from the Sunday-school library. It is, therefore, of the utmost importance that every book in the Sunday-school library should be beyond reproach in language and thought. Besides this, the book should always possess an element of attractiveness, otherwise the scholar will not want to take it out. An ideal Sunday-school library book is one which is sufficiently interesting to make it sought after by the scholars, and is free from objection of any kind, and also is such as will inspire noble motives, or supply useful information. There is ordinarily less than the necessary care taken about what is read by boys and girls. This arises partly from lack of knowledge of books, to some extent from indifference, and in a certain degree from not understanding what is requisite.

Imagine a mother giving a boy 10 or 12 years old "Gulliver's Travels" to read. This satire can only be comprehended by mature minds. Boys or girls should not be given books to read which are beyond

their capabilities or they cannot understand. Too much care cannot be used in the selection of children's books. As a matter of fact, Sunday-school library books are usually selected after a very haphazard fashion. Volumes find their way into the library before being thoroughly investigated. This, in a measure, arises from large numbers being bought at one time, and also from those in charge not having the necessary time to consider them. There is no source or book-room to which we can go and choose indiscriminately. In the United States the selection of Sunday-school library books has been the subject of more care than in Canada, and with satisfactory results.

There is in Cambridge, Mass., what is known as "The Church Library Association." This consists of about forty ladies and gentlemen, communicants of the Church. The object is to secure the best possible catalogue of library books for school and church. The Association is subdivided into committees of not less than eight members each. Every book presented for consideration is read by each member of one of the committees, who must give a written opinion regarding it. If a majority of these opinions are favorable, the book is brought before the monthly meeting of the Association. The opinions are read and a discussion is held upon the merits of the work. A vote is then taken, and if one-fourth of the members present object to the book it fails to be placed upon the list. It has been found practically that only about one-third of the books examined are approved finally.

This is a system that commands our respect, and goes to show that our neighbors are more keenly alive on this subject than we have yet become. At the last Toronto Conference a committee was appointed to select a catalogue of books, and this committee is now at work, and it is to be hoped that their labors will result in a catalogue to which librarians may resort with perfect confidence, both as to the superior quality and interesting character of the books. There are plenty of good books to be had. It is only a matter of collecting them together, sorting them out, and making a list of the best. As to some, though very few, authors, all their books are safe and good. Other authors have to be entirely rejected. Others have written one or more good and useful books.

We desire the very cream of literature for our children. We do not want what have been termed "goody-goody" books; there is too much of the milk and water about them. We need a book, even for the youngest child, that has real life depicted in it—noble examples of what has been and may be done.

We must have real, genuine thought, where the writer lays himself right into the heart and life, and is replete with suggestiveness. There is a large mass of literary chaff, but also golden wheat which we must carefully separate and retain in our garner. Two or three rules may be useful to librarians as long as they have to decide for themselves.

First, let every book stand upon its own merits. Do not take it because of its author. Second, never buy more than one book at a time. Do not buy