

The Sunday School

Singing Books.

Don't provide singing books for the primary class. The little ones can't find the places, or read the hymns when found for them, but will want books if others have them, and the older scholars will look at the books to the neglect of the leader. Black lettering on white cloth, conspicuously displayed before the scholars, is better and equally cheap. Be sure to explain the meaning of the words.—*Quarterly Bulletin*.

The Bible in the Opening Exercises.

Every Sunday School ought to be provided with Bibles, but this is often not the case. A superintendent in Illinois tried many methods to secure the introduction and use of the good book in his school, but in vain, until he adopted responsive scripture reading in the opening exercise. The Psalms were used for this purpose, and, as those without Bibles could not take part, it was not long before the number of Bibles was doubled, and even quadrupled.—*Sunday School Magazine*.

Dismissal Methods.

In his admirable article upon "Conducting a Sunday School Session," Dr. Stone lays a proper emphasis upon perfect order in dismissal, and suggests as a *desideratum* that "the classes pass out one by one." But why such a formality in the school any more than in the church services? Suppose the preacher, after the benediction, should say, "Pews number forty to fifty will retire"; then after a brief pause, "Pews number twenty to thirty," and so on. The mere mention shows the absurdity of such procedure. No; let the school be taught to close its session as it is begun, in a true spirit of reverence, and to pass out, as the congregation does, quietly and orderly, without special formality.—*Baptist Superintendent*.

Important Rules.

Use few signals. Let those who have be simple, and be sure that they are definitely understood. Avoid noise, never snap your fingers, clap your hands, or stamp your feet as a signal for order. Do not hit the table as a signal for rising; better quietly take your hand. Do not screech out "Sit" as a signal for them to be seated; far better raise or lower your hand. Do not ring the bell for order; for a bell rung in the attempt to secure order is spoiled, and the quicker it is thrown away the better. Use the bell as the signal for the close of some class exercises; just one gentle little tap. If these signals are not sufficient, you may feel confident that a little drill of perhaps two minutes for three or four Sabbaths would be beneficial. Whatever is done in the primary class, as well as elsewhere, should be done "decently and in order." A number of years' experience as teacher in the public schools has convinced me that children love order; they love to move all together; they love to keep step in marching. This may seem strange, but it is nevertheless true. Get every child in the class to stand at the same instant, and see what a happy looking class you will have. Its effect will remain during the whole session.—*From the Primary Sabbath School Teacher*.

A Practical Ideal.

In character the superintendent should be:

1. A first-class Christian.
2. Abundant in patience.
3. Fond of work.
4. Feel himself divinely called to work in season, out of season, for the school.
5. In prosecuting his duties:
 1. Present on time, or rather ahead of time.
 2. Studies the lesson more than if he was a teacher.
 3. He should not teach if he can possibly fill all the classes.
 4. In every way he will impress the scholars with the value of the Christian life.—*E. B. Selig*.

Advantages.

In discussing the Home Department work, W. K. Woodbury, Esq., gave numerous reasons for the existence of this department, told how it was organized, how it worked, and then gave the following advantages to be derived from a department of this kind:

1. It increases the study of the word among adults.
2. It adds to the active membership of the school.
3. It tends to secure a study of the lesson in the home between parent and child.
4. It tends to rekindle the family altar.
5. It helps the shut-in members of the congregation.
6. It solves the visiting problem, as the visitor is bound to visit the members four times a year.
7. It brings a fresh and interesting periodical into the family.
8. It interests the older people in the work of the school, as a member of the Home Department has all the privileges of the library, picnics, Christmas festivals, etc.
9. It adds to the missionary offering of the school. The collection from this department will more than pay for the periodicals used in it. We turn the collection from this department into the general fund of the school, two Sabbaths in each month being devoted to missions and the remainder to the general expenses of the school.
10. By this system a systematic canvass of the congregation may be made.—*The Pennsylvania Herald*.

Order in the Primary Class.

The condition of the teacher has very much to do with the order of the class; she needs to look within. A cheerful and self-possessed spirit is soon felt in the class. A gloomy and discontented teacher has no right to teach little children. If a teacher easily gives way to her temper, can she expect less of the children, who are the best of imitators? Rule well your own spirit before you try to rule others.

To have good order, the teacher needs to observe the following suggestions, which I have gathered from many teachers: (1) Keep in good health and spirits. (2) Reach the room before the children; do not allow them to make a playground of this part of the church and thus become excited before the session begins. (3) Have plenty of pure air in the room. (4) Do not begin until order is obtained. (5) Do not use a bell; it is conducive to disorder; quiet is needed, not noise. (6) Use the hands in giving orders for the changes in the services. (7) When teaching the lesson, do not stop to call a child to order, as this breaks the line of thought and often causes more disorder in the whole class. (8) Do not be suspicious of the children. (9) Do not watch them too closely. (10) Show confidence in them. (11) Make a distinction between viciousness and weakness. (12) Exercise self-control. (13) Avoid coming in

direct opposition to a child's will. (14) Show no favoritism. (15) Lead rather than command. (16) Keep pupils busy. (17) Encourage self-respect. (18) Avoid a monitor system.—*Israel P. Block*, in "Practical Primary Plans."

Without Bibles.

The other day a resident of a specially intelligent suburban town near Philadelphia told us they had lately found three families in it without a Bible in their possession. They were Protestants too. A house-to-house canvass in any district might result in like discoveries. It is a matter in which Christian workers should so interest themselves that no family in their community might be without a Bible. How many families there are practically without Bibles it is difficult to compute. They have Bibles, but as they are never opened, practically they are without them. Our boast is that this is a reading age, which, however, is not saying that the best of all books is read.—*Augsburg Sunday School Teacher*.

Absentees From the Teachers' Meeting.

While Marion Lawrence, now field secretary of the International Sunday School Association, was superintendent of the Washington Street, Toledo, Ohio, Congregational Sunday School, he sent the following card to absentees from the teachers' meeting:

DEAR TEACHER—We shall never be able to do perfect work in our Sunday School. As Christian workers, we seldom, if ever, feel that we have even done the best we could. This, however, should not discourage us, but rather make us more zealous and devoted. The arrow may not hit the mark, but it goes higher for having been aimed high.

As Sunday School workers, we should, first of all, seek that "heart preparation" which is the ground-work of success; then we should prepare the lesson at home as thoroughly as our time and opportunity will permit; and then we should not fail to attend the teachers' meeting, where "intellect whets intellect," and each gets the benefit of the others' study. No agency, it seems to me, would be so potent in causing our school to fulfill its proper mission as to have every officer and every teacher present at every teachers' meeting.

For this we are working; for this we are praying. The object of this card is to assure you that we missed you from the last teachers' meeting, and to express the hope that you may be regularly with us in the future. May God bless you in your work in your class! Affectionately,

MARION LAWRENCE.

Reviews.

We learn by repetition. A new idea or a fresh fact has to be drilled into our memories unless it is something very striking. Success in teaching comes largely from stating the thing to be taught over and over again, not monotonously, in the same words, but turning it around so that it can be seen from different sides and under new light. In this is the value of the review, it helps to fix the lesson in the memory. If, after the lesson is taught in the class, it is reviewed by the superintendent, the scholars will be twice as likely to remember it. If that same lesson is frequently referred to in the quarter by the teacher and the superintendent, each reference will deepen the impression until it can never be obliterated. Reviewing, therefore, becomes the most important part of teaching, and it is this part which is most neglected.—*Pilgrim Teacher*.