

THE POSSIBILITIES OF THE SUMMER OUTING

By Harald S. Patton, B.A.

What is the idea, anyway, of a Sunday School picnic? Is it just a custom that has to be repeated every year? Is it a free entertainment given as an inducement for Sunday School attendance? Is it a benefit arranged by the teachers for the scholars? Or is it an affair of the School by the School for the School?

If the summer picnic is to mean the most to the School, it must surely emphasize loyalty to the School and the class, and must bring a certain responsibility as well as a good time, to the older pupils at least.

Very often the summer outing is almost dreaded by the teachers and officers because of the work and worry and detail involved. Why not relieve the teachers and interest the scholars by sharing up responsibility? Why not give the Young Ladies' Bible Class, or the senior girls' classes, a share at least in the commissariat arrangements? Why not have representatives from each of the older classes to serve on the Sports or Grounds Committees under the leadership of an enthusiastic teacher? To be appointed as a representative of his class would be considered a distinct honor by the boy so chosen. In committees so composed, moreover, ideas would be suggested, and events arranged, which would probably never occur to an adult committee; and a distribution of work effected which would relieve the adult and delight the child.

In arranging sports, the classes of entries are usually determined according to arbitrary age divisions. Why not emphasize class and division loyalty by classifying the events as Beginners, Primary, Intermediate, Senior and Adult, and by having the entries made not by individuals but by classes? By this plan points could be counted, and point championship pennants awarded to the winning boys' and girls' classes in each division. The best athletes might be chosen to represent the School at a subsequent city, town or township inter-Sunday School Field Day.

Just watch the beginners aroused by a relay race between two secondary division classes, or the excitement when a class challenges the

rest of the School to a ball game, or the hilarity when the married and single teachers pull against each other in a tug-of-war!

There are other features, too, that might be introduced. The picnic is often held at a lake or by a river. Why not put on some swimming or diving events, or even a canoe-tilting contest? Just announce the events and watch the boys bring their bathing suits! The younger scholars have frequently given drills and tableaux at Sunday School entertainments. Why not have these same boys and girls put on an open-air pageant or folk dance, such as are finding so much favor in public playgrounds and summer schools?

After the afternoon's events, and the wonderful supper, and before starting for home, is the time to forget all about classes and divisions and bring the whole School together. The scholars are tired of running around. Let them mass together now, and join in singing in the twilight some of the old favorite hymns and patriotic songs, under a compelling leader. The School lantern might be brought along, and some open-air pictures shown on a screen suspended from the trees. Perhaps even a movie machine might be secured. If the excursion involves a boat trip home, this same vocal and picture programme can be carried out on the deck.

A day so spent means a tired child at the end, but it means one also in which he has not only had a great time, but helped to make it a great time. And somehow that Sunday School and that class of his mean a lot more than they ever did before.

Toronto

A One-Teacher School : A Puzzle

HOW CAN IT BE GRADED?

Here is a problem "put up" to us by a lady in Saskatchewan. She says:

"I like the Graded Lessons. I think them very good, but it is very difficult for me to know which Department's Lessons are the best for my little School. I am the only