

How a Record Attendance Was Reached

[The average attendance at the Sunday School of Clifton Street Presbyterian Church, Winnipeg, for 1914, was 85½ per cent. of the enrolment. The following article by Rev. J. B. Clyde, B.A., until recently minister of the church and now of Pilot Mound, was written in reply to a request of the Editors for an account of the methods which had accomplished so remarkable a result.]

The record percentage of attendance in Clifton Street Sunday School, Winnipeg, for 1914, was due in one word to efficient teaching and good generalship.

The attendance at the School, which meets in a one-roomed building, altogether inadequate, situated in the new residential west end part of Winnipeg, would, under ordinary circumstances be very unstable, owing to the character of the building and the fact that about one third of the scholars come from homes attached as yet to the older down town churches. Yet efficient organization, careful grading, enthusiasm and persistence won the day. Inside of a year after grading, the membership doubled.

The methods devised for keeping up the attendance and preventing lapsing were numerous. To overcome the difficulty, under the graded system, of providing substitute teachers, special official effort was exerted to secure additional teachers of at least some experience, and these were recorded as members of the regular staff.

The older boys and girls, under the system were organized with greater freedom in whatever separate space we could provide, and eight of the senior girls' class of twelve joined on profession last communion. Several young men, of the age when they frequently leave the Sunday School, were installed as monitors to aid officers in distributing cards, our Sunday School papers, class books, etc. A birthday box was installed, and wall texts were given when scholars came up with their offering, to mark the event.

Picture pasting work was fully explained to each class by one lady teacher of great resource, who is partially freed from other duties. The Cradle Roll work was kept up to date and immediately on the fourth birthday the Primary superintendent, who had a separate School in an adjoining workshop, was notified.

The chief factor in the keeping up of the attendance was the persistent and careful attention paid to the absentee scholars. Each teacher was given their envelope with card for each scholar. The absent one, if any, was taken out, given to a monitor and the secretary saw that a "We Miss You" illustrated card (supplied by the PRESBYTERIAN PUBLICATIONS at \$1.00 a hundred) was sent, and frequently a visit was paid the scholar's home that week by either the superintendent or the class teacher.

The minister was a constant visitor and keen on new methods of work, but until he got the right head and line up of officers and teachers, he could do little. To the workers finally obtained he attributes the phenomenal success under great difficulties of the School. The superintendent knows even the youngest child by name, pays strict attention to discipline and special care to new scholars,—in fact the Sunday School is a passion with him, and the whole School is bubbling over with enthusiasm.

The I. B. R. A. Readings

The International Bible Reading Association was founded in 1882, by the late Mr. Charles Waters of London, England. The Association now has members in ninety different countries, and its list of Daily Readings is issued in forty languages. A million readers, scattered over the whole world, banded together for the study of the scriptures in these two score languages,—this is a fine record of growth for thirty odd years. It is an inspiring picture that these figures call up before the imagination of this great multitude of earnest and reverent Bible readers.

For many years the teachers and scholars, who use our Lesson Helps have enjoyed the benefit of these Readings, and through the courtesy of the Association that advantage will be continued during 1916, and the attention of all users of these Helps is specially called to this as one of their important features.

The Readings, as is well known, follow very closely the line of the International Sunday