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*Sunday-School
Organization
and Methods*

CHAS. ROADS

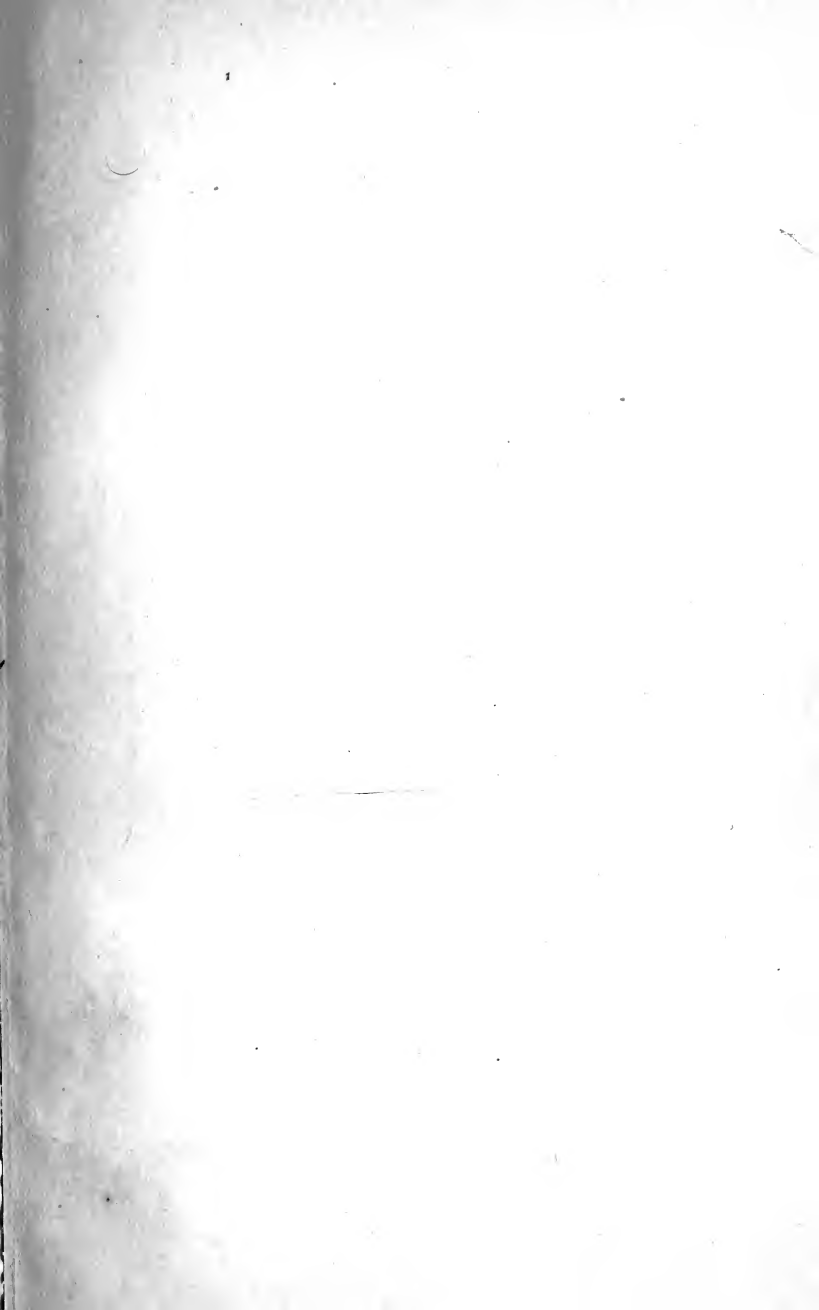


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Sunday-School Organization and Methods

By

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Association, and General Field Worker of the Sunday-school
Union of the Methodist Episcopal Church

Author of

“TEACHER-TRAINING FOR THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL,” “THE FIFTH
GOSPEL, BY PAUL,” “CHRIST ENTHRONED IN THE INDUS-
TRIAL WORLD,” “LITTLE CHILDREN IN THE CHURCH
OF CHRIST,” “MANUAL FOR GRADING”

INTRODUCTION

By

REV. CHARLES J. LITTLE, A. M.

President Garrett Biblical Institute



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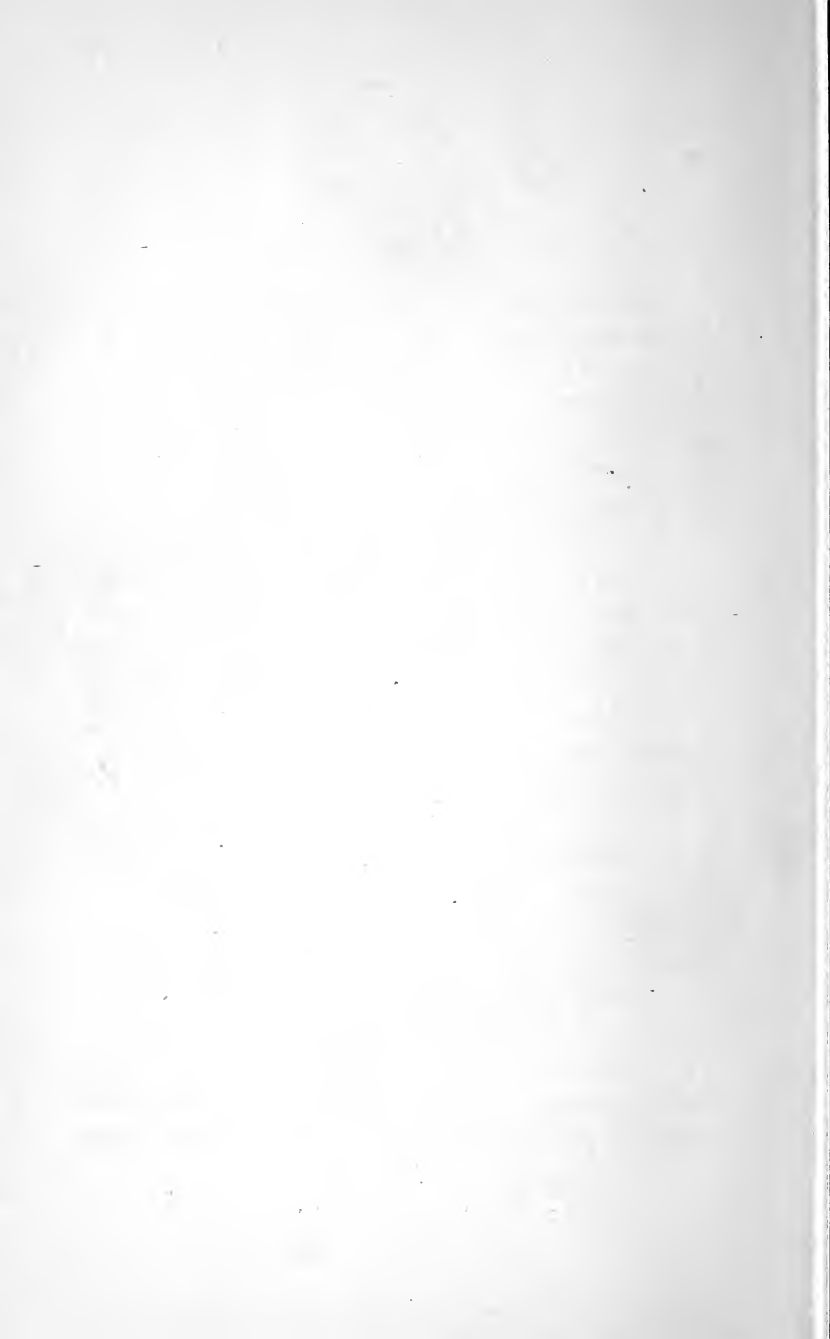
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PREFACE.



THE substance of this discussion of Sunday-school organization and methods was given in courses of lectures to the theological students of Garrett Biblical Institute and of the Boston School of Theology, to Sunday-school teachers and superintendents in several Chautauquas, and in many Institutes in twenty or more States of the Union. Many requests for the publication of these suggestions and descriptions of actual results achieved have come from the persons who heard them from the platform. The Dean of the Boston University School of Theology writes of the lectures he heard, now given in a form more suitable for reading and reference, in the following appreciation :

“In the spring of 1904 a course of lectures was delivered by Dr. Roads before the student body of the School of Theology of Boston University on Sunday-school Methods. It was felt that the increased stress which is being placed in the Church at large upon the function of religious training would make a fundamental and suggestive treatment of such a theme exceedingly valuable to those in preparation for the responsible office of pastors and teachers. The lectures were

found to correspond to the demands of the highly important theme, and were listened to with great interest and satisfaction.

“A noticeable feature was the amount of concrete illustration and proof which was brought to the support of the theories that were given favorable consideration. It is to be esteemed a matter for sincere congratulation to the great company of Sunday-school workers that an opportunity to peruse these lectures is now afforded.

“HENRY C. SHELDON.”

The students of Garrett Biblical Institute, at Evanston, Illinois, at the close of the week's course of Sunday-school lectures, took for them the unusual action of presenting resolutions of thanks. They are so discriminating as to be worthy of record:

We, the students of Garrett Biblical Institute, having heard with much pleasure and great profit the series of lectures given in this school by Dr. Chas. Roads, Field Secretary for the Sunday-school Union of the Methodist Episcopal Church, desire to express by resolution our hearty appreciation of his earnestness, his comprehensive view of the problems of the Sunday-school, and the thoroughly practical nature of his suggestions toward improvement in methods and work.

It is confidently hoped, because this book is so largely a record of actual achievements by many workers in the Sunday-school field, that it will prove helpful and inspiring to many more.

NEW YORK, January, 1905.

C. R.

INTRODUCTION.



THE lectures that formed the basis of this brief book were first heard by me at a Sunday-school Assembly in South Dakota. Their sanity and simplicity, their lucidity and intelligence so delighted me that I urged Dr. Roads to deliver them to the students of Garrett. This he did to the great advantage and satisfaction of the Seminary.

The author unites the experience of a very skillful and successful teacher with that of a large-minded and consecrated pastor; he knows a model school when he sees one, and also a model Church; hence the reports of his observations and his comments upon them carry unusual weight. He has more than experience; he has a trained intelligence. Without ostentation of expert knowledge, or obtrusive repetition of undried theories, or theories of any kind, he reveals in every chapter the thoughtful and independent student of psychology, especially in its application to the art of teaching. And he has, moreover, the large view of the pastoral calling which makes him an inspiring guide for the ministers of the twentieth century.

There is nothing new in the vaunted discovery that youth is the accepted time for religious instruction; this is a very old and a very obvious truth. Moses charged Joshua "that the children which had not known should hear the words of the law and learn to fear the Lord their God." The rite of confirmation in Catholic and many Protestant Churches has borne witness for centuries to the same belief in the largest sections of Christendom. There is something grotesque in the proclamation as a discovery of "the new psychology" that adolescence is the epoch of decision. Moses and Plato, Luther and Loyola, Rousseau and Wesley assumed this as an axiom of education.

But how to guide the child or the adolescent to right and wise decision is a problem older than the Choice of Hercules or the Choice of Moses. In other words, the serious task is to determine the range and the limits and the proper methods of moral and religious instruction.

The Sunday-school has been left to develop itself; there has been all too little consideration of its problems and its possibilities. The individual Churches have been sinfully slow to appreciate the importance, the difficulties, the perils of Sunday-school work, and the grandeur of its promise to consecrated and energetic intelligence. There have been indeed, as Dr. Roads points out,

some splendid exceptions; but these reveal, by glaring contrast, the inadequate methods and the intellectual poverty of the great majority. And it can not be pleaded that this lack of method and this mental weakness are atoned for by superabundant spiritual power, for it is not so. There is a vast difference between the terms spiritually-minded and mentally slothful; the former serve and love God with all the mind and are eager to discover the best methods of doing His work.

Methodists surely should not rebel at the suggestion of better methods; the revival, from which they derive their name and their organizations, was notable for its methods of religious training. Its great leader differed from Whitefield and other contemporaries because he deserved and glorified by his intelligent operations the name that his enemies fastened upon him as a reproach. He was always sure of his goal; and always hunting for the fittest and promptest means to reach it. Dr. Roads's ideal of the Sunday-school is not vague and nebulous; he would strengthen and enlarge its spiritual influence; but he would enlarge its scope also, making it both evangelistic and ethical, a place of decision and a place of development, a place where Christ is accepted, and a place where the mind of Christ is studied in its many applications to modern conditions.

Here as elsewhere a vital and inevitable ques-

tion is HOW, and Dr. Roads strengthens his reply by showing that what he suggests has been already achieved.

There be many that love routine, not to say ruts. They waste much energy in defending poor habits and resisting all improvements as departures from "the old paths." They love the cheap and hate the costly, and by their niggardly provisions defeat the purpose of the institutions that they control. Managers like these in charge of Sunday-schools will not like this book.

There be those also who are enamored of the newest newnesses and who would transform the Sunday-school into a tumbling ground for religious and moral acrobats, into an exhibition of all sorts of theological and ethical novelties. These will have no pleasure in Dr. Roads.

There are, however, earnest spiritual minds that recognize the gravity and the majesty of the Sunday-school problem, and who are eager to attack it with intelligence and patience; these are reading with sane and docile minds whatever is written seriously by "those that know," "proving all things" as they read and "holding fast to that which is good." There are, I feel sure, enough of them to give Dr. Roads a fit audience and a large one.

CHARLES J. LITTLE.

GARRETT BIBLICAL INSTITUTE,

February 18, 1905.

CHAPTER I.

PROBLEMS AND POSSIBILITIES.

THE Sunday-school in every denomination of Christendom is becoming the next great enthusiasm of the Church. Educational leaders and pastors are discussing courses of Bible study for it, and Sunday-school workers are manifesting a responsibility and desire for larger results in Bible knowledge and character. Probably no movement of the Church presents so many problems, and all of them fundamental. We first discuss eight or ten of these problems in brief suggestiveness for a comprehensive view.

I. *First, the Problem of Sunday-school Architecture.*

What kind of a building will now adequately serve our organized Sunday-school? Shall we accept as the final model the "easy separateness" and "ready togetherness" of the well-known and widely adopted Akron plan? Or is it desirable to have entire separation of all the departments for the whole session, so that we shall have a group of schools wholly distinct? Many interesting experiments are now projected and in operation; and, serving you rather as reporter than

theorist, let me briefly outline a few of the types of buildings.

The Akron scheme is that of a large single room with folding-door class apartments, usually in two tiers on the sides and rear. Two of these apartments usually are larger than the rest, and are occupied respectively by the Primary and the next higher departments. The central body of the main room is given to the boys and girls, divided into small classes, and the rear and the side apartments remaining to young men, young women, and adult classes. Opening exercises are common to the whole school with every room open. The teaching is separate, and is followed by review and closing exercises in common.

The Separated Primary Department is the next type of building. Here the little children are entirely apart from the rest during the whole session. They have their opening worship specially adapted to childhood, and all their work more strictly graded. In the main school this makes possible a more dignified and enriched worship for opening and closing, which will hold the ambitious boy and youth.

The Departmental Sunday-school Building is a still further evolution of the strict grading and adaptation of teaching. In this type there are entirely separate rooms for the smallest children called Beginners, for the Primary from about six to eight years of age, for the boys from eight to

thirteen, and for the girls of that period; separate rooms for young men's and young women's classes, and an assembly room for the advanced classes; usually four or five large rooms and very many smaller subdivisions. In such schools there are really distinct organizations for each department, though under one general management, and specialized work for each grade most fully developed.

2. *The next Problem is that of the Sunday-school Field.*

Who are to be included in the school? For what classes shall we plan, and how far shall our efforts at ingathering extend? We have long ago passed the conception of the Sunday-school as a meeting for children, though the unfortunate phrase, "the nursery of the Church," will probably long be used by belated convention speakers, and the good visitor begin his address, "Dear children!" The Sunday-school is the most comprehensive of all Church services. All the Church is to be in the Sunday-school, and then it will be comparatively easy to have all the Sunday-school in the Church services. The ideal is reached in some Churches where the Sunday-school is "the Bible studying service of the Church," and is ranked with morning preaching and worship. Its comprehensiveness is shown as it begins with the Cradle Roll for the infants as soon as their names can be secured, making the real "Infant Class"

of those as yet unable to attend; then the "Beginners," from three to six years of age; the Primary, to nine years; the next department to thirteen; the youths to sixteen; and the adults beyond to include every member of the Church and every man and woman in the community. The ingathering is now prosecuted by house-to-house visiting, which plans not to miss a single person, or, better still, by an organized occupation of the entire field, divided into blocks in continuous charge of earnest workers, and regularly visited and watched. Only such a complete searching of every home and every street and road in city and country reaches Christ's command to take His Gospel to every creature, and to teach them all things He commanded. The value of it is shown by a story related by an old lady who felt moved in her early Christian life to visit the Smith family in Palmyra, New York, but who timidly postponed doing it, and finally neglected it. She says, "One of the family was Joseph Smith, then a little child, afterward the founder of Mormonism." That young woman had the whole Mormon question in her hand, and might have saved this country the awful stench and evils of Mormonism. And Joseph Smith, saved, might have become an earlier Moody or a John Wesley. Think of the greatness of our Sunday-school's yet unoccupied field! Only 17 per cent of the population of America are yet enrolled in all its

Sunday-schools; yet some States, like Pennsylvania, have 24 per cent, though others, like Massachusetts, only 12 per cent. Some counties, like Snyder, Union, Northumberland, and others in Pennsylvania, have 60, 50, nearly 40 per cent of their population; some towns have 80 per cent.

3. *The third Problem I mention is the Relation of the Sunday-school to the Church's Sunday services.*

The Sunday-school may be held before the morning preaching service, as it is in many Churches, from 9.30 o'clock to 10.30 or 10.45 o'clock, the preaching service beginning at 11 o'clock. This is better than to crowd it into that part of an hour between the close of the morning service and one o'clock afternoon. But Sunday morning is not the best time in which to build up a great and worthy Sunday-school. This hour before Church service excludes most of the mothers from the school, because they are unable to complete the round of household duties in time. The morning hour will secure very few of the working men or the hard-driven merchants or professional men. They will not rise on Sunday as early as usual, and will not in any large numbers get ready for service by 9 o'clock. The hour is also objectionable because it crowds the preaching service, and constitutes, in connection with that, a very long, continuous service, which many will not attend from first to last. Besides, it pre-

cludes all after services of the school, either as conferences of teachers for some pressing subject or as evangelistic services for the scholars. Still more objectionable is the Sunday-school immediately following the morning preaching. The great body of the school does not come in time for the preaching, but gathers as the first service nears its close, and in turn the attendants on the first service will not tarry for the Sunday-school. The sad sight which is witnessed in Churches where the Sunday-school is held before preaching of a great procession of children turning down the street instead of into the preaching, has its counterpart where schools are held after preaching in great crowds of fathers and mothers turning down the street instead of into the Sunday-school. Which is the worse for the present or for the future, who can tell?

No one can question that the earnest purpose of the great body of Sunday-school workers of the land is to give the Sunday-school the best opportunity for its work; hence the fundamental importance of its adjustment to all the Sunday services of the Church.

In practical experience the best time for the Sunday-school is from 2 o'clock or 2.30 in the afternoon to 4 o'clock. It is true there are great and growing Sunday-schools, not a large number, however, which meet in the early morning, and we know of admirable and successful schools

meeting at the noon hour. In small country schools, and under other peculiar circumstances, there is no other time available than that in connection with the preaching service.

But in the Sunday-schools of villages, towns, and of cities especially, there is no time which furnishes the opportunity that the middle of Sunday afternoon does. Then, after a leisurely noon meal, the whole family can attend; then the school may begin with a full attendance and without crowding any other service; may, when special interest renders it desirable, prolong the session ten or fifteen minutes; then the Bible-school will stand out as a great service of the Lord's-day and not as the prelude or afterlude of another service which it crowds into too great brevity or renders wearisome by its previous interest.

The three Sunday services, then, would stand out in distinctness and remain uncrowded; the morning worship and preaching from 10.30 to 12 o'clock having full time for orderly and restful worship and a reasonable time for the Gospel message. How unseemly the rush of this service if pressed into the hour or a little more between eleven and noon! Then, too, the entire family, after a longer rest than on week-days, and a social, unhurried breakfast and home worship, can repair to the morning preaching. This stands apart as the only morning service, and at its close the whole family returns to the home, the noon

lunch is prepared and enjoyed, and time enough to do all housework by the family without hurry, before 2.30, when all can attend the Sunday-school; then returning home for evening meal and the Young People's service and Church worship of the evening.

This gives the home as much time for its social fellowship on the Sabbath-day as any other arrangement. It gives the long morning hours until 10.30. It allows the leisurely noon meal and over two hours intermission, and it gives about three hours after the school, even if all the family return to the evening service.

Objection is urged on behalf of the Junior League, usually held in the afternoon, when the Sunday-school convenes in the morning. But practical experience once more shows that the children, also, should have a mid-week religious service, and the Junior meeting after day-school in the week has a value beyond what is possible on Sunday.

The Sunday afternoon Sunday-school is the rule in Pennsylvania and other States which have by far the largest percentage of their population enrolled in the Sunday-school. Taking only the States which contain about the same proportion of Protestant element for our comparison, we find that where the early morning schools are the rule the enrollment is from 15 to 18 per cent of the population; in States where the noon hour school

prevails, it ranges from 12 per cent or less to 15 per cent of population; while in the States in which the afternoon session is the rule the enrollment rises to 22, 23, or 24 per cent for whole Commonwealths.

Will the Sunday-school people attend the Church services as well under the afternoon arrangement? They do attend in larger numbers where any effort is made to secure their presence. Is it wise at once to change from morning school to afternoon? By no means. There must be sufficient discussion to show some of the real advantages of the change; there should, if possible, be a united change of all the schools of the place, and a practical unanimity for it by your Sunday-school.

4. *This discussion of the best hour suggests our next Problem, which is the Relation of the Sunday-school to the Home.*

It is significant of the real progress the Sunday-school is now making that this difficult phase is receiving fully as large attention as any other. The duty of parental religious instruction is enforced from the pulpit and in our periodicals more fully, the co-operation of the home with the Sunday-school lessons is systematically sought, and at least two Providential Sunday-school movements, the Home Department and the Cradle Roll, bear directly upon this need. Inadvertently and unintentionally, but none the less really, the

✓ Sunday-school has done damage to home religious teaching. It has relieved thoughtless parents of their sense of responsibility, and concentrates greatest attention upon the school. An investigation in many Sunday-school Conventions shows that very few teachers—about three to six out of ✓ four hundred—ever have parents of their scholars express any appreciation of the work they are doing, or ever have any encouragement from them; that many parents do not acquaint themselves with the teacher who is doing about all the religious teaching their children are getting, and that, in most cases, these parents strenuously object when the good teacher has brought their children to know Christ and to be ready to join His Church. The relation of the average parent, even though a professing Christian, to the real work of saving his child and training in godly character as the Sunday-school plans to do, is that of strange want of intelligent co-operation, if not of stupid indifference or hindrance. I declare this as the result of wide investigation in field work among Sunday-school teachers and officers in twenty different States of the Union. ✓

When right relations are restored, it will be the parent who becomes the religious teacher primarily of the child. The Sunday-school teacher will be the intimate fellow teacher, whose work will be reviewed every Sunday when the child comes home, and whose services to the child will

be recognized and highly appreciated. By the Home Department all the parents who can not attend the session of the school will study the Uniform Lesson, and Home Study Circles on the lesson are forming; and by the Cradle Roll the mother heart is most fully reached and stirred in spiritual care of her infant. And think of Home Departments five hundred strong in a single school, and Cradle Rolls of three hundred!

5. *The Problem of the Curriculum of the Sunday-school we discuss more fully later.* It is sufficient here to say that it is at the center of things which make for effectiveness. Let us say, rather, that courses of study for any one series of lessons can not cover the needs of the Sunday-school. The best schools are giving both a topical and an expository lesson every Sunday; the topical to accomplish the education in Bible facts and history, and the expository or Uniform International Lesson to present the moral and spiritual message from God. There are now many such Sunday-schools, and they produce real Bible students in the English Bible with thoroughness and readiness in wide information concerning its contents.

6. *What is the Best Possible Organization Educationally of the Bible-school of the Church?*

We can only solve this problem when we thoroughly recognize the unique character and place of the Sunday-school, its peculiar and difficult

text-book the Bible, its untrained volunteer teaching force, and its brief once-a-week session. Yet an organization of remarkable helpfulness has been perfected in many schools fully adapted to Sunday-school needs. This also will require a fuller discussion. I mention it here simply for the sake of a complete outline view. Grading belongs to the educational organization, but is a large subject. What is the best basis upon which to grade the Sunday-school, and how thoroughly and definitely can the grades be maintained?

7. *What can the Sunday-school do in Ethical Teaching for the training of moral character?*

In a large and systematic sense this question is quite recent, though from the first, to be sure, the Sunday-school aimed at character and life. Indirect effort, however, or such development of morals as will come incidentally with religious teaching, is now felt to be insufficient. From the long confusion upon this subject some principles are emerging into distinctness. In the first place, we now know that moral traits must be cultivated one by one, each distinctly understood, defined, and uniquely strengthened. Secondly, we know that it is by action and exercise that moral traits are developed. Thirdly, we distinguish training from teaching. Training is to signify the actual production of the character desired by that combining of instruction, influencing, stimu-

lating to action by the pupil's personal initiative, and that gentle overseeing and guidance which is effective but not subversive of the pupil's full freedom and responsibility.

Here is the teacher's larger work which overflows into the whole week. By seeking such contact at every convenient time with the pupil as will intensify and extend the influence of the Sunday's work and lessons this training is to be accomplished. It is being accomplished, as I am glad to be able to report, by many individual teachers, and in not a few great schools almost by every teacher. How blessed will be the Sunday-school when everywhere, in a systematic and, may we not hope, a scientific way, the scholars will be trained to be truthful, honest, faithful to every trust, industrious, gentle, forgiving, and in every relation of life to be sanely and strictly conscientious!

8. Closely related to the Ethical Problem is that other endeavor now being developed in many schools, the training of the scholars to be Church workers.

Some one has humorously divided the average Church into workers, shirkers, and jerkers. About one-tenth may, by some stretch of charity, be called workers; but this one-tenth will include all the trustees, class-leaders, officers of Missionary Societies, and teachers of the Sunday-school in most Churches. Think of an organization with

a sublime purpose like the Church of Christ, and only one-tenth of it working at all! What army could win battles with only one-tenth armed and fighting? What factory could prevent bankruptcy with nine-tenths standing about and looking on the one-tenth at work? Yet there are wise, owlishly wise pastors, who think the Church is overorganized! If the absolutely idling nine-tenths of their Church should come in a body to the parsonage and ask to be directed to some definite work for Christ and the Church, what would this pastor give them to do? What work, not simply individual, but in connection with the Church?

There are not quite nine-tenths of the average Church among the shirkers, for there are a few jerkers. These last the pastor must have in mind, and he tries to provide for them of necessity to his and the Church's peace; but the shirkers should appeal no less to his earnest soul.

These shirkers are a great concern to progressive Sunday-school teachers, and they are planning to add no more to their number, but to send from the Sunday-school into the Church a great company of intelligent, eager-to-work, and trained-to-work Church members. So they are being taught the history and doctrines of the Church, the benevolent organizations and movements of the Church, and a real Christian life. Scholars are trained to habits of Church attend-

ance, habits of systematic giving, and to intelligent hearing of sermons. As your reporter, I must say we are only in the beginnings of this movement; but it is spreading rapidly, and is no longer a theory, but a practical condition of things in some schools.

9. *The Sunday-school is the greatest evangelistic agency of the Church of Christ.*

How to have this opportunity appreciated, and how to utilize it richly, are problems well advanced to solution. Let us see at least five, a handful of peculiar advantages for winning to Christ found in the Sunday-school. (1) It is usually that meeting of the Church which has the largest attendance. (2) It has the largest number of unsaved people. (3) It gathers the children and young people who are easiest to be reached. It is the Church's largest and ripest harvest-field. (4) It is that meeting which has the largest number of personal workers, these workers best related to the unsaved, and all using the Word of God, which is the Holy Spirit's material for the conviction and conversion of men. (5) It is the meeting of the Church which can be most easily and largely increased. By a little enthusiasm, by much house-to-house visiting, by occupying the whole field, and by wise new plans great Sunday-schools have been grown. One school numbers over three thousand, and added seven hundred and fifty in a year; five others over

two thousand, some of these adding three to six hundred during the year; about forty others in the Methodist Episcopal Church number more than a thousand each. Much of this great increase came in two years as the result of one movement of the Sunday-school Union. The plans for actually harvesting these vast fields are no longer spasmodic. Decision-day is not sprung upon the school and only disappointing results secured, but it is prepared for wisely during many weeks before. Every teacher's deep interest is awakened and intensified; every parent is sought to be reached and intelligently prepared to cooperate; every scholar is designated, and after weeks of meetings by teachers and parents of this character, the result usually follows that almost every unsaved scholar deliberately decides to follow Christ. After this general effort, personal work continues. Many teachers now plan to present Christ upon the first day a new scholar attends. They find there is no better time. The new scholar expects it. Usually he will yield at once, and begin a Christian life.

Plans for the little ones of the Beginners and of the Primary Department are another problem still more fully solved. Nothing is more beautiful in Sunday-school work to-day than the simple, sweet, and helpful way in which Jesus is presented to very little children; except the still sweeter and artless way these little ones understand the Savior and receive Him.

10. But among the many Problems of the Bible-school *the one at the heart of its power is that of teacher supply and teacher training.* It may be regarded as too optimistic to say that, speaking once more as a reporter, this also is nearing solution; but I hope to show that there is no need of pessimism concerning it. It is the most important of all. As is the teacher so is the school. The teacher is the school, its atmosphere, its attraction if it has any, its mightiest influence, its most impressive lesson. What we put into the teacher grows like leaven to fill the entire school.

Of special problems of the organized Sunday-school there are many like the Boy Problem, how to get him and how to hold him; the question of men's classes, now so splendidly successful where the schools are planned to give them a fair opportunity; the Bible in the school, which is vital to best work; the business organization, which is delightful to inspect in many schools; the utilizing of special days; and the matter of the pastoral leadership of the school. Especially upon this last question there has been remarkable progress. But upon all of them a simple review of the leading Sunday-schools in all the Churches will be inspiring.

CHAPTER II.

EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL.

THE true conception of the place and purpose of the Sunday-school constitutes it both a religious meeting and a real school. It is twofold in scope and purpose. It should always maintain a religious atmosphere and be a time for prayer and worship. Any educational development which will eliminate the devotional wholly will do harm in the end. But, on the other hand, the Sunday-school which is only another spiritual service, chiefly singing, prayer, and exhortation in the class, and review, fails to reach lasting results.

We begin the better Sunday-school when we specialize to reach both of these results. This requires two series of lessons for each session. For the spiritual purpose of the school we use the Uniform International Lesson. It is an expository treatment of a brief passage as nearly as possible a unit of truth. And expository or exegetical study of the Scriptures is most helpful to spiritual needs. The deeply spiritual of the Church in all ages have preferred expository sermonizing.

They follow such preaching to-day in greatest crowds. Any arrangement of Bible lessons specializing for spiritual helpfulness will naturally fall into such a system as the International series.

But the International Uniform Lessons are not the best for the educational purpose. They do not present the contents of the successive books of the Bible helpfully for thorough study and mastery, nor its history systematically, nor its range of doctrines according to well-known pedagogical principles. So that for the educational work of the Sunday-school there must be arranged another series of Bible lessons on a workable and effective method. This method must be topical, not textual or expository; for the topical is the logical order, and the plan of psychological growth of knowledge.

Our Sunday-school becomes a school when we have a second series of lessons about the Bible and its contents in a topical form. We can arrange many topics for a six or eight years' course to embrace the books of the Bible, classified, analyzed, logically developed, and memorized; to teach the history in course, the biography, geography, ethics, and religious system; and to give in forms to be remembered and used the facts and truths of the whole Bible. For educational work, all this should be done just as schools and colleges do such work. If it be thought possible to mix religious application and exhortation all along

such lessons, and thus to dispense with the expository lesson, it is enough to report that, from wide experience, we do not get the educational results, and it is not the best way to get the spiritual results. As a reporter, I could describe nearly a dozen Sunday-schools which for years have worked the two-lesson system with great success. They get the educational result of scholars familiar with the history and contents of the Bible and able to pass creditable examinations upon them, and by continuing the Uniform Expository Lessons they also secure the spiritual results.

Then must be added a system of real recitations by the pupils. Expression by the pupil is necessary to complete the impression made by the teacher. Expression is an intense form of mental activity, far more so than mere attention. An old-time teacher said to his boys, "I will *learn* you these lessons." But even the dictionary could have shown him that he could never learn another anything. He might *teach*, but learning is the result of self-activity by the student. Hence, the day when the Sunday-school introduces real recitation of lessons marks the beginning of genuine education there. The recitation, also, is a test of the teacher's work. It exhibits the scholar's measure of understanding and retention. This is strikingly shown in a little book humorously commended by Mark Twain as the funniest book in the English language. It is the collection of ex-

aminations and recitations made by a New York schoolteacher during many years. How do the boys and girls understand the new truths and statements we so carefully give to them in public school and in Sunday-school? Hear them in the public school after very careful instruction by this teacher:

What is Congress? "Congress is composed of civilized, half-civilized, and savage."

What is a demagogue? "A vessel filled with beer, whisky, and other liquors."

What are the parts of the human system? "The head, the thorax, and the bowels, and the bowels are a, e, i, o, u, and sometimes w and y."

Here are some sentences and definitions:

"The men sent by the Gas Company go round and speculate the meter."

"They had a strawberry vestibule."

"There are a good many donkeys in the theological gardens."

"Mercenary, one who feels for another."

"Alias, a good man in the Bible."

"Ipecac, a man who likes a good dinner."

"A circle is a round straight line with a hole in the middle."

"Climate lasts all the time, and weather only a few days."

There are a hundred pages of this sort of ridiculous mistakes, declared to be *bona fide* by the good teacher, Miss Le Row, in that bright

book, "English as She is Taught." They illustrate the way children understand, or misunderstand, new lessons given to them and the importance of having them expressed in recitations so that they may be corrected, systematized, and fully memorized.

In precisely the same way our Sunday-school instruction is misunderstood. When we think of the strange names of men and places, the extraordinary events and facts, and the strange surroundings of **Oriental** lands and ancient times, the wonder is that so much is really understood in Sunday-school teaching. We are now having parents question their children when they return from the Sunday-school, and here are some results gathered by a few workers:

Golden Texts recited by children upon their return from Sunday-school:

"It is awful to be good on Sunday."

"Hold a grater to Solomon's ear." (Behold a greater than Solomon is here.)

"Strong drink is rising, wine in a monkey."

"He hath made us to be meat and potatoes to the saints." (He hath made us meet to be partakers with the inheritance of the saints.)

It was an older scholar who was surprised to learn in a sermon that Sodom and Gomorrah were not man and wife as he had long supposed. The examination of some college men, who were also Sunday-school scholars, is a remarkable proof

of how little Sunday-school teaching has meant without recitations. Out of thirty-four, nine did not know what the crown of thorns means; sixteen were ignorant of the significance of striking the rock; sixteen knew nothing of Jacob's wrestling angel; thirty-two had never heard of the shadow upon Hezekiah's dial; twenty-six did not know of Joshua's moon; twenty-five did not know the fate of Lot's wife; twenty-three did not understand "Arimathean Joseph," and so on.

In another examination of Sunday-school pupils, out of forty-two, not one could name the three sons of Adam; no one could correctly name the three sons of Noah, and twenty-seven did not try; only one correctly named the three patriarchs from whom the Jews descended; only three could tell who led the Israelites into Canaan, though twenty-five knew it was Moses led them out of Egypt; only seventeen gave the first four books of the New Testament correctly; and individual answers to well-known questions were as amusing in ignorance as those of Miss Le Row's little book.

Acting again as reporter for you, I can give remarkable instances of what a few years of recitations in Sunday-schools will achieve. I visited a Sunday-school where an examination of three classes of boys, twelve years of age, in Old Testament history was so surprising for accuracy and readiness that it is doubtful whether an equal

number of preachers could do as well. In another school a class of young ladies, sixteen in number and about sixteen years of age, drew a complete map of Paul's missionary journeys, giving outline and details of each province visited and complete itinerary, each student doing it in turn. Their proficiency in the Life of Christ and in Old Testament eras was equally remarkable. In another school, where recitations were regular, but quarterly and annual examinations optional, every scholar of the five hundred regularly asked for the examination without fail. This was for a period of five years, and, in addition, every pupil volunteered some extra memorizing to secure stars and seals on the diplomas given. These are simply specimens, which could be indefinitely extended.

For the topical lessons little booklets are usually provided, and these are studied during the week and recited first in the school session. The spiritual lesson has the longer time, and is given last. In many cases the first lesson has eight or ten minutes; the second, twenty-five or thirty minutes. Judge Hitchhock, of Chicopee Falls, Mass., has issued a series of these General Lessons; Prof. Henry A. Strong, of Erie, Pa., another; and there are others like Dr. Hurlbut's excellent "Supplemental Lessons" in single volumes, which have been used. A large and practical series of these lessons is being prepared.

The boys and girls will not object to this real school-work if it is wisely presented. The teachers who are lazy and object should be left behind while the procession moves on. But there should be wisdom and time given for introducing the general lessons and the recitations into any particular school.

Charts, blackboard lessons, graphic reviews, concert memorizing whenever possible, and all other educational devices and helps, are used in these advanced schools during the period of the General Lessons. Bible analysis, eras of Bible history, geography of Bible lands, all lend themselves easily to graphic review and presentation, and no studies of any sort are so abounding in interest as these Bible lessons.

The general organization of the Sunday-school must be adapted to this richer educational work. One fine Sunday-school has a "principal" in every department, in addition to the superintendent, who is the executive. The principal is specially in charge of this work. He coaches the teachers, examines the pupils for promotion, and develops further lessons. In other cases an assistant superintendent leads in educational plans and in complete grading of the school.

This brings us to the problem of a simple and thoroughly adapted grading of the Sunday-school. We will consider that later, but mention it now as fundamental to the school work.

Periodical examinations, at least quarterly and annually, will be provided for; but at the beginning it is well to make these optional with the pupils. Let your plan be to promote on term work in recitations Sunday after Sunday, but upon examinations asked for by the scholar to grant a certificate showing the percentage attained. At the promotion to another department, grant a diploma of tasteful design.

The school year is essential to the best work. Let the General Lessons begin in September, and run for a term of twelve or thirteen weeks. Intermit for Christmas holidays. Then begin the second term in January, and continue to Easter-tide; and have the last term close with Children's-day or the last of June. Promotions may be designated after the June term, but to take effect on the first Sunday of September.

Special provision ought to be made in cities for the summer months; one Sunday-school organized for a distinct summer school, with special exercises and lessons in addition to the Uniform International Lesson. The pupils were specially enrolled for this summer school, and the officers report the plan a success. It is not well, however, to attempt the large educational work in cities in the summer months, and by the plan of a school year it can be done with no break nor confusion.

CHAPTER III.

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL BASIS OF GRADING.

It was Horace Mann who fought the battle for grading in the public schools. It is interesting to observe that about the same arguments were used against him that are so familiar to Sunday-school people to-day, and it is well to remember that many of these arguments have much of truth and force. Grading, either in the public schools or as it is proposed for the Sunday-school, is not a perfect device by any means. It is simply the best possible for the great majority of pupils.

Horace Mann met the objection that the ungraded school was the natural arrangement for the helpful influencing of the older pupils by the smallest children, and the smallest ones by the oldest. In many of the ungraded country schools the little children listened to the recitations day after day of the older classes, and picked up a helpful amount of knowledge before they reached those classes. The atmosphere of such a mixed school-room might be far more stimulating than that of the average primary school, where only

little ones are found, and lessons are all in their beginnings. But this real advantage of the ungraded school is more than offset, is offset many times over, by the specialized ability of the teacher confined to one grade, and by the specialized appliances for teaching each grade.

Objections on part of the teacher, that grading would deprive of the pleasant variety of many different classes which the ungraded school furnishes, had a real basis of truth. Any one who, like the writer, has had actual experience of both a large ungraded country school in teaching, and then of a strictly graded primary, and afterward a grammar school in a large city, knows how natural and varied the ungraded school, and how artificial seems the graded grammar or primary school. How pleasant to change from a class of very little ones to the advanced work, and *vice versa!* But such an experience is needed to confirm the pedagogical wisdom of the strictest grading, for the work at best in the one school is lamentably fragmentary, and in the graded school it is comprehensive, exact, and logically progressive.

There are arguments on both sides of the grading question in the Sunday-school, but the better way is along the strictest grading and classification. The little children may prefer to have opening and closing exercises with the main school, and some of the older scholars want the

children in sight. But to hold and to help in the best way the boy and the ambitious young man, we must have every part of the work where they are specially adapted to them; and none the less in the case of the girl and the young lady, though these are not so difficult to hold. And for the smallest child, all the exercises must be childish to a degree which older pupils would resent.

What, then, is the wise system and basis for Sunday-school grading? It can not be a simple intellectual test in Bible knowledge. The purpose of the Sunday-school is to build character or to create a new moral and spiritual nature. We require a deeper basis than the mental life, and without any one's invention we have come to the simplest and deepest one.

It is the psychological basis, or the division into the stages of a human life. Into these grades the schools naturally fall. The child, the boy or girl, the youth, and adult manhood, are these stages whose names are probably in almost every language and known from earliest ages. We have learned, in this day, when there is a discriminating empirical psychological study of man, not so much by a "new psychology," that these divisions are strictly scientific, and that upon them we form our organized Sunday-schools. Infancy is also in the Sunday-school plan, though not in the school itself. It is placed upon the Cradle Roll, which is conspicuous in many Primary Depart-

ments, and remembered by a special prayer in the session.

First grade is childhood for the Primary Department. In age lines it extends from three to about eight or nine years. It has unique characteristics, which we will give later.

Second grade is boyhood and girlhood from about nine years to thirteen years, for the next department variously called Secondary, Junior, and Intermediate. Secondary would probably be the best name for this grade.

Third grade is youth from thirteen to sixteen or seventeen years. We shall see how well defined is this stage also, and how important to give to it special treatment.

Following this are the adult or advanced grades, the Normal or Teacher-training Department, and the assembly of Bible-studying men and women. Whether we have the one room to house all these, or the Akron plan, the separated primary plan of building, or the separate department rooms, we may very fully develop this grading. In the one room imaginary lines may be the divisions, and these designated by placards on the walls or upon the seats. With the modern building better work may be done, but it is well worth grading strictly in the one-room Sunday-school, and many fine Sunday-schools of the best sort are housed in a single room.

Let us take, now, the three most distinctive

grades—the child, the boy or girl, and the youth—and contrast their characteristics of nature. The child is dependent upon others absolutely; but its unique characteristic is, that it enjoys being dependent. It gladly acknowledges it by the clinging hand as parent and child walk along the street. Would you know when the boy period has come? Hold fast the hand while you walk with him, and he pulls away. Take his hand again, and after a moment he will resolutely withdraw it. He struts ahead, and does not want to be seen holding fast to any one's hand. The boy is independent in social attitude. Now go to the youth, and you will see that, unlike the child, he does not like to be dependent, nor, like the boy, to be independent, but he holds out his arm for some one else to lean upon it; for his sister, or, preferably, for some one else's sister, to lean upon him.

Take another point of comparison. The child is unconscious of sex. He plays with little boys or girls equally with pleasure; he wears dresses in childhood, and curls down his shoulders, if his mother can make curls out of his straight hair, which she usually does. Thus throughout childhood; but when boyhood comes he demands that curls come off and dresses go, and is very proud of being a boy. He despises girls. One such boy wrote the universal boyish estimate of girls in his composition: "Girls are always sick. They are funny and make fun of boys' hands, and say,

'How dirty!' They can't play marbles. I pity them, poor things!" And the girls at this period return the boys' contempt. The very terms are significant of this sex consciousness. We have a common term, child, for male or female, in that stage; we have a common name, youth, for the next period; but here it is sharply defined by sex—a male, boy; a female, girl—and there is no common term for this period of life. In youth, again, sexes become mutually attractive.

Once more, see the difference in self-consciousness. The child is self-unconscious, as we see so often in his easy, unembarrassed recitation in our Sunday-school entertainments. One little child sang the "Holy City" with sweet grace and composure. She tripped to the platform, waited patiently for the organist to find her piece of music, smiled at friends she recognized during the four or five minutes she waited, and then sang clearly and with not the slightest embarrassment. If a young lady had been in her place, how she would have trembled during that awful waiting time; how the piece of music, the "Holy City," would have wavered and almost tumbled over before she began to sing!

The boy has the beginnings of self-consciousness, but not so much as to make him careful about personal appearance or to be self-conceited. This comes in youth, when complete individuality asserts itself and a great sense of self-importance is developed.

Taking central characteristics only, the child is all faith, the boy is all impulsive activity, and the youth is all aspiration. But were there time it would be easy to develop six, or even ten, lines of clear contrast between the child, the boy and girl, and the youth.

If we study each separately, we see the child in mentality with active but untrained perceptions, with very vivid imagination, with no ability to reason; in moral character, with every trait and habit yet to be formed; but, spiritually, with beautiful faith, attitude of dependence, frankness, religiousness. This is the material upon which we work in the Primary Department. The teachers of little people are becoming specialists by their thorough child study, and their lessons more and more reach perfect adaptation to the child mind and soul.

We see the boy or girl reaching out to self-dependence, irrepressibly active in mind, eager to learn. Perceptions are now more accurate, memory is most active, and there is some reasoning, but not skillful. It is the habit-forming period, because the soul takes clear self-initiative. Socially there are no close ties nor single friends. It is the time for gangs of boys or sets of girls, many equally liked. Its greatest characteristic is phenomenal activity of body, mind, and soul. "The insatiable hunger physically is only an indication of a similar hunger in the mind, and the

same hunger in the soul." It will take very much in every realm to feed and satisfy. This period is the richest for teaching and moral effort in the whole life. Teachers of boys must be specialists, or they fail altogether; and it is worth a lifetime of study and endeavor to teach boys and girls so as to hold and to help them.

Let us now study the youth. He or she is then in full personality by self-consciousness. It is an awful and perilous time; a time of stress and storm, of physical and moral changes amounting to the revolutionary. The new sense of personal power and of dazzling possibility is overwhelming. But there are deeper tides of moral and spiritual life. It is the day of ideals and lofty plans. It is possible to win to Christ and to noble living then as never afterward. There is no more delicate or difficult spiritual task than to teach this stage of life, and the teachers of youth must have warm sympathy, intimate knowledge of this phase of human nature, a fine character to arouse genuine admiration, and genuine ability in Bible teaching.

On these stages we are now grading the Sunday-school, and the simplicity of the scheme makes it adaptable everywhere. In the smallest school there are children, boys, and youth, and these need the specialized care as much, if there are only five of grade, as if there are five hundred of each. Our work is to make character; so it is

the material of real nature which we must understand and work upon. It is this fact that gives the chief excellence to this wise grading.

Mature manhood or womanhood is fully individualized. We must study each by himself or herself for our best work. The advanced classes, therefore, constitute a problem by themselves, and must be set off into a special department. There has been extraordinary progress in men's and women's Sunday-school classes. The Baraca movement, the great single classes everywhere, the union of such classes for general helpfulness, constitutes a new and wonderful growth of the Sunday-school. Its significance in the conquest of the world for Christ is very encouraging.

CHAPTER IV.

TEACHER TRAINING MADE PRACTICAL.

THERE is a strange and persistent fallacy among Sunday-school workers that earnestness is a substitute for knowledge. "What if the teacher does not know all the books of the Bible, nor even all the details of the life of Christ; if he is deeply earnest he will make an impression!" Certainly! but not such an impression as he would like to make. In these days of greatly improved teaching in the public school and the college the bright boy or girl is keen to recognize ignorance and incapacity. Earnestness is essential as the right arm of power, but knowledge is the other arm whose loss is serious and irreparable. Two bright American boys in a little Sunday-school were listening to one of the traveling Sunday-school speakers of the former days, a man who was ignorant but earnest, and who rattled on dreary commonplaces of exhortation until he had worked himself to tears. The boys watched the performance with little interest until one of them said to his companion, "Say, Jim, what is that old fellow crying about?" "Now, you be quiet!

If you had to stand up there and make a speech, and had nothing more to say than he has, you'd cry too!"

In every other sort of teaching nothing would be accepted but knowledge of the subject. Surely in the teaching which purposes to make character and life we need the supreme teaching power. The text-book, the Bible, is the material the Holy Spirit uses to convict and convert men, and it is a difficult text-book. The time for teaching is a half-hour a week, requiring intensity of touch and interest to produce a lasting impression. The increasing pressure and rush of modern life necessitates greater power to give the Bible a place and to hold its place. All this bears down heavily upon the teacher's responsibility and requires him to be trained and prepared.

I. What course of training is practicable?

We have made real progress in defining such a course. It would be easy enough to arrange a list of pedagogical works desirable to study by every teacher for ideal preparation; and add to it a list of Biblical helps equally important; and an original Bible study, analytical and synthetic, which is of greatest value; with other lines of training. But the great body of Sunday-school teachers could not prosecute such a course, and the few who have the time to do it would not. So that it is necessary to prescribe what will be taken.

Practical experience has long ago proven that

each Sunday-school must provide its own teaching force and train it. The necessity of training it by each school is now being realized; for we can not find an adequate number of good teachers ready in any Church, however cultured the Church may be, or however numerous among its people are college graduates or professional men. These educated people are not often well informed in the Bible nor skilled teachers. They will be benefited by a Teacher-training Department more richly than others. And such a department in every school is as important as the normal schools of the State are to the public-school system. Who does not remember the days before the normal schools when all sorts of teachers were accepted for public schools? The inspiration and uplift of the normal school is felt in every school-room, and no colleges or seminaries could maintain the present standard of public-school teaching by their graduates if the normal schools were closed.

Acting again as your reporter, I could describe Sunday-schools where a thoroughly organized Normal Department of several years' standing produces more than the required number of teachers. In one school every teacher now in the service, about fifty-two, is a graduate of the three years' normal course; in another school they are able to make it a requirement to be a graduate before electing any one to teach; in one school there were so many additional graduates that an

assistant teacher was assigned to every class to act as class secretary, assistant visitor, and substitute teacher. The Normal Department is an undoubted success in providing teachers, sufficient in numbers and greatly improved in teaching power.

Remember, also, that the work of training teachers for the Sunday-school is not to furnish a complete education. We begin with well-educated material as a rule. The men and the women selected to take the course or volunteering to do so are intelligent, eager to study and knowing how to study in most cases, and they need little more than suggestions. It is surprising how much can be done for prospective teachers in a single year's normal study.

The course of study embraces five subjects, and all will be recognized as essential.

I. Comprehensive Bible Study. The Bible is taken as a whole, and its units, which are single books, not chapters (except in the Psalms) nor verses. These books are classified in a general way, and their contents analyzed so that the teacher shall have a reasonable command of the whole. This is followed by synthetic study of the Bible, which takes great subjects like the history of the Old Testament, biographical studies, the life of Christ, and a score of such topics in fullest outline. Next comes a literary study of the Bible, carefully noting the variety of literary

forms in which the message of God is recorded, the significance of these forms, their beauty and value, and the laws of interpretation for them. Logically following this is expository study, which takes words and phrases in carefully-guarded examination, and seeks for the exact meaning of God's Word. All this, duly emphasizing the need of sincerity and spiritual purpose in all the study, is a bare outline of comprehensive Bible study for normal training.

2. Next comes a knowledge of Biblical literature and helps. The teacher needs to know the use of Bible concordances, dictionaries, Bible geography, manners and customs, archæology, commentaries, and the vast library of Biblical appliances for investigation. Some guidance may be given to the best books upon all these subjects.

3. A study of some of the Laws of Teaching as applied to Bible work. To be sure, it is possible to give only the most elementary course in pedagogy; but when given in a richly suggestive form to eager and intelligent minds, enough is secured to be of real value. How to approach the mind, how to intensify interest, how to illustrate, how to question, and the laws of memory, imagination, reasoning, and conscience, are discussed and reviewed.

4. In the same outline form we study human nature in untechnical, psychological suggestions; the characteristics of the child, the boy or girl,

the youth, individuality, heredity, environment, and other formative forces. To many students it has become the taste, leading to larger psychological studies of values. Let no one think this is mere dabbling into science. It is immensely helpful, and it is accurate so far as it goes.

5. Lastly, it is important to exhibit the Sunday-school organization in its modern development and possibilities. This includes the business organization of the school, departmental divisions, grading, courses of studies, Home Department, Cradle Roll, house-to-house visitation, Decision-days, denominational and State and International Associations.

This is the ground now staked out and sought to be covered in the teacher-training classes of our best Sunday-schools.

II. How is the Teacher-training Class or Department started and organized?

Usually it is found possible to transform an interesting adult class into the first teacher-training class of the school. Invite into it all persons in the Church who desire to fit themselves for teaching and for larger Christian service. Make it one of the standing invitations and announcements from the pulpit to call attention to teacher-training. At the end of the first year let this original class take up a second year's studies and organize another class for the first year. So, also, advance each class and organize another at the

end of the second year. It will not be easy to inaugurate, but it is essential to the best work of the Sunday-school, and it can be done by earnest effort anywhere, and the teachers secured for three years' classes. Then you will have your teacher-training department.

For the teachers in actual service when the department is begun there will probably come a demand for normal training. It is usually the better way to stir up an interest in them for their training. For these teachers there is organized the Church Bible Institute during the week. The same course of studies is pursued, and some little time is given to the study of the current Uniform Lesson. The division of time in both the Teacher-training Department meeting during the Sunday-school session and the Institute during the week, should be carefully observed. The best in our practical experience is about one-third for the International Lesson and two-thirds for the Normal Lesson.

Where there are several Churches in a town developing teacher-training a Union Institute may be formed. Meeting monthly with larger numbers, it has been found possible to arrange for lectures by expert Sunday-school leaders and upon Biblical studies of great inspiration and value. The Sunday-school Union, also, is a correspondence school for all these Institutes. It answers all questions, arranges for examinations upon the course, and directs further study.

The Church Bible Institute is designed for larger service in training all Christian workers in the Church. It will help the interest of its specialty for Sunday-school teachers to plan the extended work. The lamentable need of workers in the preaching and evangelistic meetings, in the young people's meetings, in class-leading of a better sort, in parental teaching, and in personal work for Christ day by day, renders such a training-school an imperative need.

The ideal teacher is Christ. He is the perfect example of the teacher of religious truth. In the thoroughness of His preparation, in His enthusiasm for Bible study, in His holy character, and in every qualification which makes for power in teaching, He is supreme. In particular instances of teaching, like His lesson at Jacob's well, His instruction in Messianic prophecy on the way to Emmaus, and His great parables, He shows Himself a master in the teaching art. These and other examples furnish the finest illustrations of pedagogical principles. Best of all, He exhibits the power of the personal factor in all teaching, especially in moral and religious instruction. He is Himself His own richest Gospel, and He reveals more of God the Father in His spirit and acts and character than in all His sayings. He is the Light worth most of all for its shining when to-day it penetrates into our inmost souls, but valuable beyond measure as an example for those who also are a light to the world.

CHAPTER V.

THE LESSON COURSES FOR THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL.

WE come last to what all recent discussions of the Sunday-school have placed first. But lesson courses are both first and last in the Bible-school; they are unquestionably at least among the first things in importance, though not more so than is teacher-training or grading or relation to the home; they are last in order of organization. We do not select lesson courses first, and then select pupils these courses will suit and teachers who can teach them. We determine who are the legitimate students to be gathered into our Bible-school; we next study the nature of these students, and classify them wisely, and then survey our supply of teachers to know what they may be expected to do. Further, we decide upon what we really purpose to accomplish in the Sunday-school, how much is intellectual and educational, and how much spiritual and training. And after all this development, and only then, we are ready to select and adapt Bible lessons for the Sunday-school.

I. What are the fundamental methods of treating Bible material for lessons?

They are two; the same for Sunday-school lessons as preachers have found Bible material for sermonizing. One is the topical method, which uses the Bible passage or text as suggestive of the truth or declarative of one or more general truths; or which collates several passages suggestive or illustrative of the truth to be preached. Then the preacher or teacher develops it logically or rhetorically, to produce the impression desired. Topical preaching is a proper and helpful method of proclaiming the Gospel.

The other method of treating Bible material is the expository, exegetical, or textual. I need not explain that, by this method, the preacher or teacher seeks absolutely to follow the exact thought of the passage in hand, both in discriminating expression and in the very way it is developed or illustrated in that particular passage.

Both of these methods are used in the pulpit, and both are necessary to successful lesson courses in the Sunday-school. Each method has its advantages, the topical giving the breadth and comprehensiveness of Scripture truth; the expository or textual, the exact message and its depth; so that we may see that topical and textual methods are not antagonistic, but complementary. The complete view comes by using both thoroughly and with specialized ability.

Another survey of these methods shows that the topical is educational, and the textual is more directly inspirational or spiritual; but here again we see that we need both methods, for we are seeking both of these results in the Bible-school.

The International Uniform Lessons are expository in their treatment of the text. They follow somewhat loosely a course of topics, but not so fully nor in any sense exhaustively so as to change their character from the strictly expository or textual of certain selected passages, ten to fifteen verses in length, of the Bible. This is no well-grounded objection to these lessons as one course for the Sunday-school. Such a series is an essential part of a complete Bible study, and the selections of the Uniform series are, on the whole, as carefully made as any can be. Given a purpose to treat the Bible for spiritual helpfulness and to get the exact character and depth of the Divine message, and taking the Bible just as it is, a miscellaneous collection of historical, biographical, ethical, and spiritual writings, any body of discriminating Bible teachers would select just about such a series of passages for study as the International Lesson Committee have given to us. It is not strange to spiritually-minded people that these lessons have acquired so powerful a permanent hold upon the Christian world. They are based upon a sound philosophy.

But, once more, considering the Bible as the

peculiarly constructed book it is, we can never acquire a broad education in its history, its contents, its facts and complete system of truth, by exposition of small sections in detail. We must study it comprehensively in topics arranged in logical order as we gather facts from the whole Bible. For the education of our scholars in the history and contents of the Bible we arrange a series of lessons in various courses of a topical character.

As we argued previously from the standpoint of the purposes of the Sunday-school, that two courses of lessons are necessary, and as a reporter gave instances of how completely these purposes are achieved by the two lessons a day, so now from the standpoint of the nature of the Bible and the two methods of treating its material of truth, we reach the same conclusion that two lessons are needed.

II. The Two Lessons at every session of the Sunday-school.

The arrangement practically adopted by many schools which, for six, ten, and fifteen years, have worked the two lessons, is to give the topical or General Bible Lesson first in the session for eight or ten minutes, and then turn to the International Lesson for twenty, twenty-five, or thirty minutes, as the length of the session might permit. Their experience shows that the General Lesson grows in interest steadily, and requires longer time after

a while, though the expository lesson demands ever more time also.

III. The Bible as a Text-book.

The discriminating and trained teacher will see, as he takes up his Bible before the class, that it is not in the ordinary text-book form. There is no advance from the simple to the complex in its progress, no orderly sequence in successive books, and no easy arrangement for its study or recitation. It is a book of marvelous unity and harmony, but in its structure it is really a collection of many pamphlets or smaller books. It is not so difficult, with such a text-book, to select a series of brief passages as the International Uniform textual lessons do; but the difficulty becomes very great when topical comprehensive lessons are to be planned.

Holding the Bible in hand, what kind of a book to teach is it?

First, it is really a library of sacred literature. We must therefore study it book by book, taking the literary form of each book, its place in the sacred history, its peculiar contribution of religious truths and revelation to the whole, and its geography, manners, and circumstances.

Secondly, we must remember that the Bible is an ancient and an Oriental book. The first line of it was written over three thousand years ago, the last line eighteen hundred years ago. Much of it is plain to the most unlettered, notwithstanding this; but to get the full force of some of its

great and beautiful passages we must reconstruct the ancient times in which it was given, and also reconstruct the place and environment of its giving.

Thirdly, we must ever bear in mind that the Bible is God's message to men now and here as truly as it was His message to men at any time and anywhere. It is a present-day book, a book of modern life and power.

Our series of General Lessons, therefore, if they are to be most helpful, should cover the contents of the Bible, and also the geography of Bible lands, the manners and customs, the archæology, the ethnology, and related subjects, in helpful outline.

There must also be ethical lessons for present moral development of character. Out of the Bible we must teach every cardinal virtue, truth-telling, honesty, purity, hospitality, fidelity, courage, kindness, love. The training of childhood in character is the supreme object of Sunday-school work, and teachers everywhere are asking how it can be done successfully. Surely it can not be done by haphazard or left to the chance of incidental teaching in connection with other lessons. It should be planned for specifically, virtue by virtue taught, trained by stimulating the right action, and strengthened against temptation. To train is to get the actual result, and only this will be sufficient.

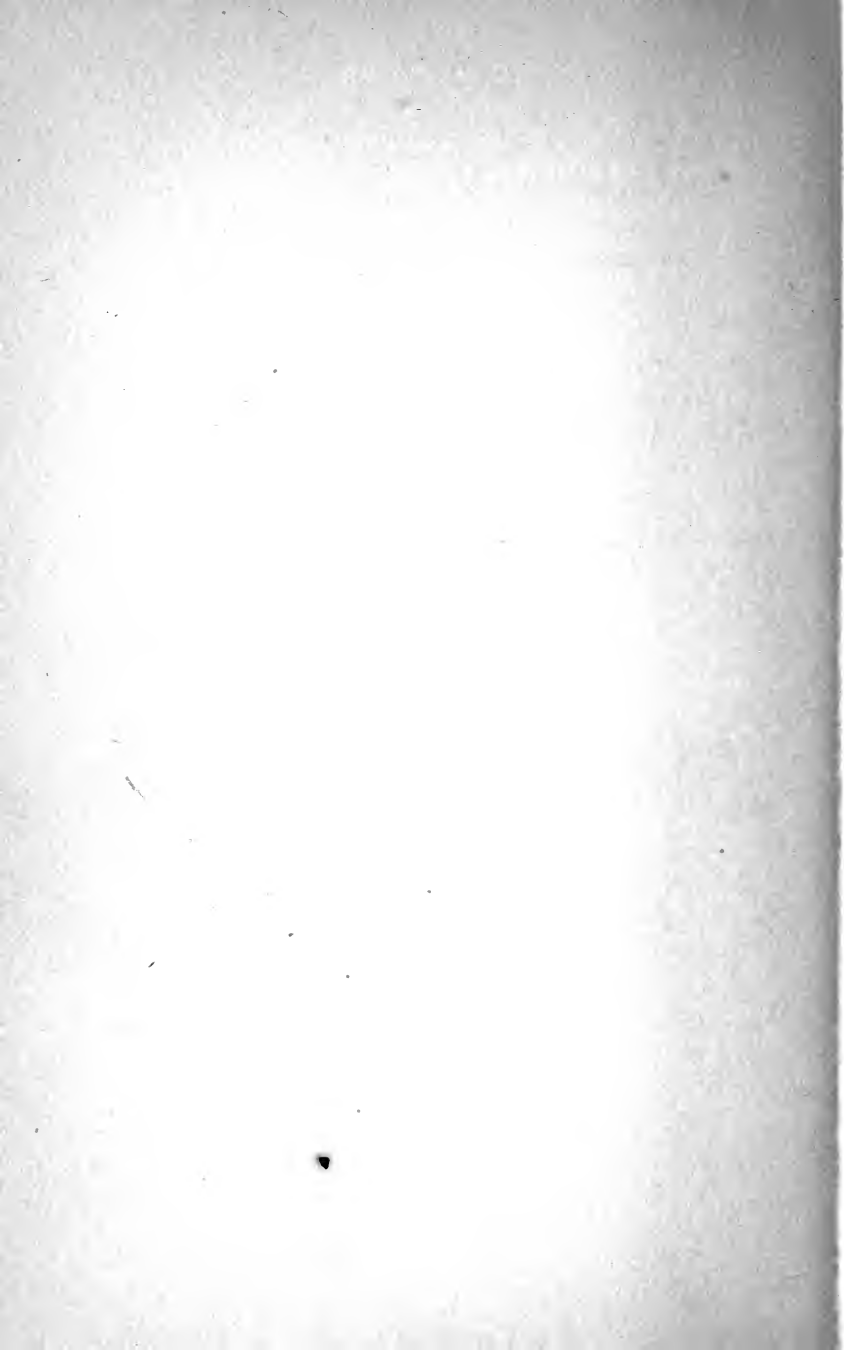
Another important topic of the General Lessons will be Church History Lessons. The Church of Christ is the richest fruit of Bible revelation, and we can get new light upon the Bible by searching into the movements of the Church, her struggles, her successive conquests, her sad yielding to worldliness and sin, her reformation and growth in holiness and power. The Church in the eighteen centuries is full of glorious inspiration for young and old in the Sunday-school, and it is our duty to put them in touch with these inspiring events and characters. The Church in the nineteenth century, with its wonderful growth, its many movements, its unprecedented development of organization, and its world-wide spread, has leaders, events, successes, and inspirations that should be studied by all. The Sunday-school is making Church members for to-morrow, and whatever we want in the Church member then, we must put into the scholar to-day. So we must teach habits of Church attendance, of systematic giving, of private and public prayer, of intelligent work in the Church.

Can all this be done in the brief hour of the regular Sunday-school session? It is being done in large measure in many schools. But it requires intensified teaching. Eyes and ears both must be used. By objects and blackboard, candles, colors, and all possible skill, let the heart and the mind be opened and the truth given with

power. Charts, pictures, stereopticon, intensified interest and attention, are now being used in our Sunday-schools, and in five minutes, in one minute, lessons are presented which last for eternity.

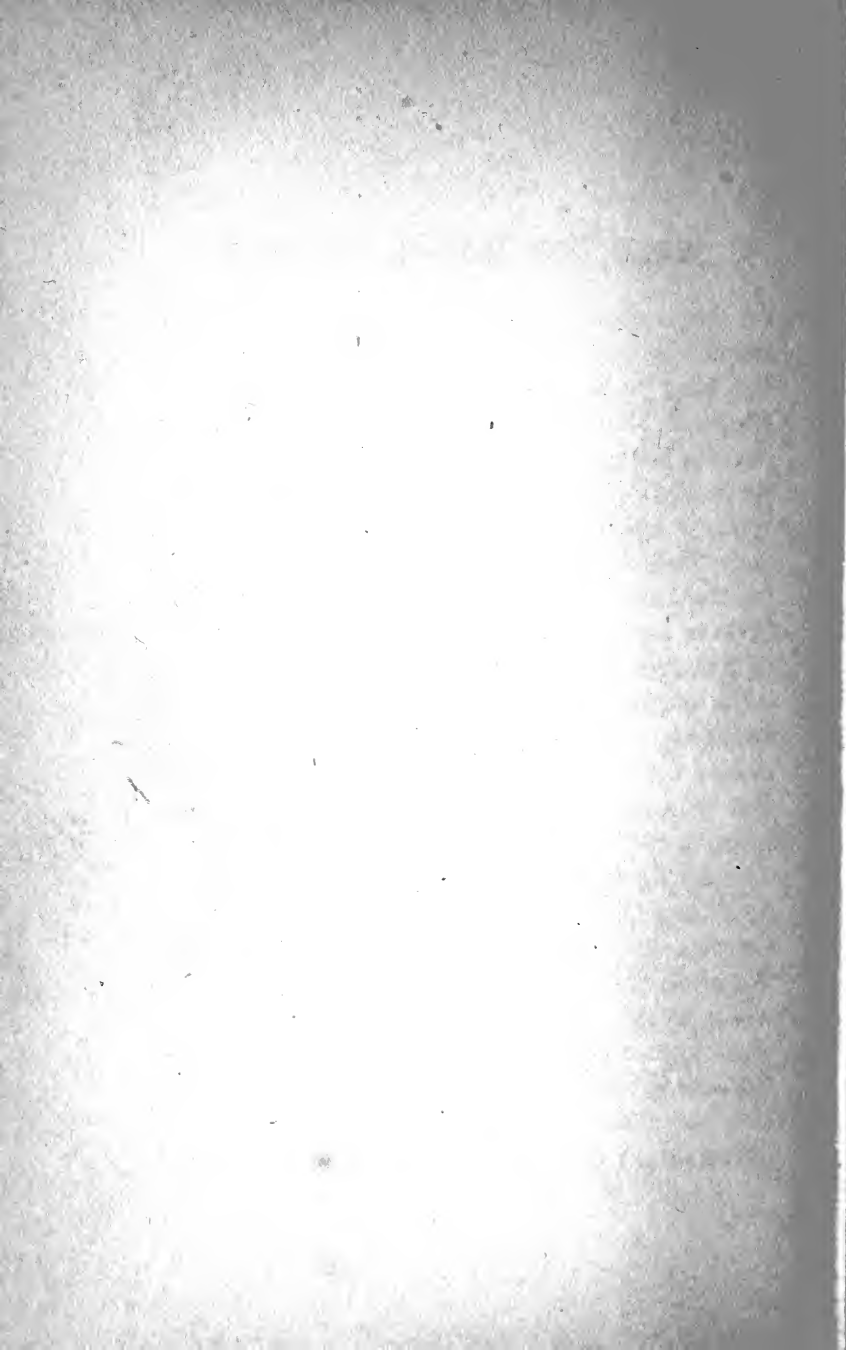
The General or Topical Lessons admit of the closest grading. An eight-years' course can be planned which begins with the simple easy history or story lessons of the Primary Department. Then, taking hero lessons for boys and girls, and other curious and extremely interesting topics for that period of life, we provide for that grade. And in similar adaptation for the following departments a large scope of study is covered. Side by side with these is the graded treatment for each of the International Lessons.

I have acted largely as reporter of things actually done in our best Sunday-schools, and I am glad to close with the statement that this curriculum here described is actually in use, more or less fully, in quite a number of them. It has solved the problem of the best Bible course for the Sunday-school. It creates enthusiasm for the Bible, it makes students of it who pass creditable examinations upon its history and contents, and it develops the school atmosphere and yet the profoundly religious feeling which we desire for the Church school of the Bible.



APPENDIX.

Illustrative Studies.



JESUS THE MODEL TEACHER.

As A teacher Jesus Christ won remarkable tributes in His ministry. The two men who, on the long walk to Emmaus, received His exposition of Messianic prophecy, declared that their "hearts burned within them while He talked with them and opened to them the Scriptures." The soldiers whom the Pharisees sent to arrest Him were themselves captured by the power of His instruction, and came back without Him, saying, "Never man spake like this Man." The woman of Samaria who heard His story alone on Jacob's well forgot her waterpot and ran into the city, shouting, "Come see a Man who told me all things that ever I did. Is not this the Christ?" But who can forget the great multitude of men, women, and children, five to ten thousand strong, who for three days hung upon His words, forgetting home and everything else that they might not lose one utterance from those gracious lips? We read His teachings and our hearts burn. The whole world crowns Him the Prince of all teachers. The world will not yet call Him Savior, nor yet bow in submission to Him as Lord and King. Not yet Priest nor King over all, but He is the universal Prophet of all thoughtful and serious

humanity. Into that crown let us put a star, humbly to indicate the five points in which he is our model Teacher of religious truth.

I. In the Fullness and Accuracy of His Knowledge of the Scriptures.

He was the wonder of the Jewish rabbis at twelve years of age, Luke tells us. And these rabbis were no mean Bible students. Of the letter, to be sure, but they studied little else, and could not easily be led into such admiration of Bible attainments unless there was unusual general knowledge and remarkable penetration. His answer to His mother's reproach shows that He expected her to have remembered that His enthusiasm for the Scriptures would take Him there and keep Him there rather than anywhere else. His answer may be rendered: "How is it that ye sought Me anywhere else? Wist ye not that I must be found in My Father's house?"

Christ's discourses everywhere show His intimate knowledge of the Old Testament. His quotations are not literal and usually from the Septuagint version, but He knows the law and the prophets thoroughly. Without a roll at hand, on the way to Emmaus, He began with Moses and showed in all the prophets the things concerning Himself. The men to whom He talked were probably devout Jews, well read in the Word, and their testimony is strong.

There is no point of Christ's example more

important than His enthusiasm for the Bible. How can the teacher who dislikes reading the Bible inspire any love for it in his scholars? How can ignorance of the Scriptures, joined to indifference, awaken relish for it? And if it be true that the Scriptures are the material the Holy Spirit uses in convicting and converting sinners, how can that teacher who knows very little of the Scriptures, and that little in a slovenly inaccuracy, co-operate with the Spirit? There is no escape from it,—we must learn to love the Bible, we must acquire enthusiasm for it, to be really helpful Sunday-school teachers.

II. Christ's Unique and Original Method and Manner of Teaching.

He seems thoroughly to have appreciated the importance of how to express a truth. It is the literary form of an utterance which preserves it for immortality, and all of Christ's words had a perfection of form in every variety of literary expression He used. There was nothing extemporaneous, nothing slipshod, but all thoroughly matured and beyond any improvement in all the ages. Who can improve the Lord's Prayer? Who can add anything that will make it more comprehensive, or omit anything that will not sadly mar it? It is a perfect prayer. So simple a composition as the Parable of the Sower is beyond all praise for its marvelous simplicity and yet penetration into human nature. Charles

Dickens is quoted as saying that the Parable of the Prodigal Son is the finest story of all literature, and Edmund Kean that Christ's sayings are deepest of all utterances in pathos. Who can ever measure the beneficence inspired by that one matchless story of the Good Samaritan? Every touch of it is sublime in literary art and finish. May it not be that during the eighteen years from His visit to Jerusalem until His public ministry He went over and over His messages, perfecting their form and manner, so that when He uttered them in such beauty and variety all the nation stood still to listen?

Here, again, is a most vital factor in teaching success. "How" is equally important with "what," we say. Many teachers simply gather much material, and do not organize it nor form a plan of teaching. They wonder why they fail to interest their scholars, but the point of gaining attention is always in the manner and form of our utterance. Teachers, to be powerful, must put truth into attractive dress and give it wings of best possible expression.

III. Christ was the Model Teacher in His Intuition of Principles and Laws of the Teaching Process.

His teaching is admired beyond all praise by scientific pedagogy to-day as furnishing the finest illustrations of its principles. He knows how to gain access to minds with infinite skill; He illus-

trates with perfection from commonest objects of every-day life; He can question most keenly, striking confusion into cavilers and illuminating the perplexed; and there is not a law of teaching which He does not use and illustrate. Froebel declares that he learned his profound principles from Jesus of Nazareth! His lesson to the woman of Samaria is a remarkable model of how to approach a soul, how to open into spiritual truth, how to meet objections and to win conviction. His conversation with Nicodemus is equally skillful to pedagogic critical view, and His conversation with the two men on the way to Emmaus is the delight of the scientific professor of pedagogy.

IV. Christ's Holy and Heroic Character is the fourth point of our star of perfection.

He was the truth incarnate, the way to the Father in living reality. He was a greater Gospel than any He ever spoke. That Man behind the word not only gave it power, but a dazzling illumination and a heavenly sweetness. Who can ever describe the character power of that Teacher? His love was a passion for humanity, His purity was radiant, His indignation against selfishness terrific, His pity for sinners a wonder, His breadth of sympathy immeasurable!

The personal factor in teaching is paramount. The Word of God must again be made flesh and dwell among men if it is to save and to uplift.

"How can I hear what you say when what you are thunders in my ears?" said Emerson in his startling and characteristic way. Let our Sunday-school teachers learn that it is not enough to be negatively good. Their goodness must be radiant, electric, leavening the class. There are teachers who complain of the shortness of the time in teaching, "only half an hour a week out of one hundred and sixty-eight hours." But if behind the half-hour is a holy and heroic character, that half-hour is the sharp end of a wedge of which the larger end is the mighty influence of goodness and earnestness, which drives the wedge into the life, and splits off indifference, and opens a way for Christ! Five minutes is long enough to transform eternity when a Christlike man uses it.

So Christ's lessons were perfect. It is a very good lesson which is easy to remember; but Christ's lessons are impossible to forget, and this is a perfect lesson.

V. Our fifth point of the Star of Christ's Power as a Teacher is His Intimate Knowledge of Human Nature.

Froebel says that no one ever knew childhood as Christ did. How far behind His teachings of the spiritual status of the child are the plans and conceptions of the Church! A generation of close study of Matthew's eighteenth chapter would yield the richest harvest of Church members the

Church ever gathered, and would advance Christ's final triumph perhaps a thousand years. How well Christ saw the vile woman and the hardened sinner, and what depths of psychologic study are in His parables!

He knew what was in man. Here, too, He has become an inspiring model to the multitudes who now are child-study observers, and who take the "New Psychology" as one part of their teacher-training.

This is the star we humbly place in His crown of supremacy as a teacher. Greater than all before Him or since is He among all who ever opened their mouths to instruct in righteousness. I went up Pike's Peak with a great company of young Christians. As we ascended, the landscape broadened, and to the eastward and westward a wonderful panorama of God's handiwork spread out, so that with awe we joined in the song, "Nearer, my God, to Thee!" and seemed to be lifted to stand beside Him and gaze upon His works. But more wonderful was my lesson about Christ. I saw great mountains as we began our ascent, and I asked, "Which of these is Pike's Peak?" "None of them!" said the guide; "they are only foothills." A few miles farther I saw other lofty mountains. "Which of these is the Peak?" "None!" scornfully; "they also are only foothills." Again we ascend mile after mile until at length there rises that gigantic pile of granite,

bare on his crown, with a dash here and there of snow, and we all knew it was Pike's Peak. So we study the wondrous men of the Bible. Is Abraham the Pike's Peak of the Bible? Is Moses or Isaiah? No! they are only foothills, grand and lofty as they are. Are John and Paul the Pike's Peak? No! they also are foothills. But now we have reached that awe-inspiring height, and it is Jesus, the summit of all ages and all men. He is the Pike's Peak of the Bible.

HOW TO PRESENT THE CHRIST TO A BIGOTED AND SINFUL HEART.

A PEDAGOGIC STUDY OF CHRIST TEACHING AT
JACOB'S WELL.

(John iv, 4-42.)

ONE pupil only is in the class, and there is only one lesson. The meeting was accidental, as men would view it, and intense bigotry separates pupil from teacher. A very wicked life also, still continued, seems an insuperable barrier to any good result. But really wonderful results follow the lesson; the one scholar is not only saved, but made a missionary and saves many others.

How is it done? From a teacher's critical view, what are the steps of the instruction the great Teacher gives?

I. He asks the pupil to do him a favor.

It is the ready entrance to any heart to request a small but important service. It is more blessed to give than to receive. It puts the pupil into the pleasant attitude of a benefactor at a trifling cost of effort. Teachers less familiar with human nature think they can win by themselves doing a favor to their pupils; but this, while pleasing to the teacher, is uncomfortable to the other. It

was the genius of Jesus which put the pleasant feeling on the other side.

The wise teacher continues to put himself under obligations to his class by asking ever larger favors, but still not irksome nor too difficult to grant. He thus intensifies the pleasant feeling with which the class, as benefactors to him, will ever regard him.

Why is there so much complaint among us of base ingratitude of those we have helped and loaded with benefits? Why do we wonder that they turn from us so readily; that they say so little about our many gifts and favors? Saddest of all is it to see the children of aged parents turn from them, though those parents poured good things upon them from childhood, never wanted anything in return, and were always giving, giving! Do we not see that those who receive are made uncomfortable, that they feel humiliated, and that to them it is almost a necessity for self-respect to forget the gifts? Christ's first act of teaching was to get His pupil into a delighted attitude to Him.

II. He grants a still more pleasant opportunity to give to the pupil.

This is intellectual outgiving. By so much as the mind is loftier and more wonderful than material things, by so much is giving information to another more delightful than giving money or other things. So He who could speak as never

man spake, and who could make men's hearts burn within them at His words, now permitted the woman to talk, to ask questions, to interrupt with self-important assertions. But all this opened her heart and mind to what He had to say to her. And it gave Him the measure of her mind and of her spiritual nature. To let her talk was making the diagnosis of her religious condition for Him. But, above all, it kept her in the pleasant attitude so vital to a reception of the truth He had for her.

The pleasure of giving in contrast with receiving is intensified many-fold in the realm of the intellectual life. The good preacher enjoys giving an hour and a half's discourse; indeed, every gesture and every tone of his voice shows how highly he enjoys it; but his audience may have enough with half an hour. What is a popular definition of "bore?" One who loves to talk about himself to you when you would like to talk to him about yourself.

III. Christ took what interested her rather than what might more especially interest Him.

She seemed to lead the conversation. He brought His Gospel into her world; but how wonderfully at every point He easily brought it in! He asks for the material water, but he offers the living and everlasting draught of spiritual refreshing. He hears her flippant question, answers it with a flood of light into her soul, then

helps her out of her guilty confusion so kindly. See the skill of leading this darkened and sinful soul back and forth, then deeper and deeper into the truth, until He had brought that profound longing down in her nature, beneath all its depravity, for the Messiah into expression. Then, in what must have been a moment never to be forgotten by her, He looked at her with ineffable kindness, and with thrilling and all-convincing directness He said, "I that speak unto thee am He."

IV. We may not overlook the teaching value of getting expression of her religious longings from her own lips.

Christ puts unusual value upon expression by man. "For this saying"—or, as we would phrase it, "for saying this"—He told the Syrophenician woman He would heal her daughter. Because she confessed Him before the disciples as the object of her remarkable faith, He gave her what she wanted. Jesus hinges His acknowledgment of us before the Father upon our confession of Him before men. We may believe this is not an arbitrary requirement, but a psychological and spiritual necessity to real fitness for heaven. Every teacher knows that expression by the pupil is necessary to complete impression by the teacher, and who can tell but that expression of our faith before men, and confession of our love to Christ in public, are essential to the maturing of that

faith and love? In experience every soul knows what a strange forward leap is made when the confession or the profession of faith is out.

V. Christ's first contact with a Samaritan.

We have, therefore, also an illustration of how He could penetrate national and religious prejudices. The bitterness of these feelings between Jews and Samaritans is well known. How did Jesus overcome the woman's hatred and suspicion of the Jew, and open her mind and heart to His message? The point of vital difference between the two religions is stated by her to be what it truly was, a contention as to whether Mount Gerizim or Jerusalem was the real place of worship or of Divine manifestation. Now, if Jesus had maintained the Jewish side, "Jerusalem and Jerusalem only," the woman would have stood immovably for Mt. Gerizim. But He gave up Jerusalem, and revealed God as manifesting Himself in spirit and in truth; that is, everywhere. The prejudices she supposed Him to hold went down, and hers fell at once. The principle of action is that when we can find the higher common religious ground, prejudices vanish and all faiths are one. By this method of Christ we can open the hearts of Roman Catholics. Accentuate the deep Christian truth we hold in common with them, and they are attentive and open-hearted. In the same way the wise missionary finds beneath the follies and depravities of paganism a common

spiritual truth, and immediately all hearts are accessible.

First, then, discover our own prejudices. We cling to some as Protestants, as Methodists, as Americans. Down with all of these, and the prejudices of the other side collapse. There is no sacrifice of truth by the great Teacher, but the discovery of a deeper truth, in this method.

Jesus knew the Samaritan as a type of character, but He knew also the force of individuality. But the type is larger than individuality in most people, and it is safe to approach a soul always from the side of its well-known type. Then we may, as Christ did, diagnose for the individual traits and temperament. First the racial, the sectional, or the sectarian must be met.

VI. We see Christ reaching the unknown by the known.

In this law of teaching He is supreme. It is proof of the thoroughness of His knowledge of the spiritual that He so confidently uses the natural to teach it. Water leads to spiritual grace, the running, bubbling spring to the living inner supply, and so throughout all His conversation. It is a prerequisite to power in teaching by illustration from nature that we know the spiritual truth very definitely and fully. Then we shall know what it is like in material things.

VII. Christ shows the power of a few well-chosen words.

At every point He had just the penetrating and comprehensive utterance that sent the truth home. Here is the touch of the Master teacher throughout, and the value of discriminating, accurate, and graphic expression of truth.

VIII. He uses the element of surprise effectively.

Surprise has real teaching value to old and young. The statements Jesus made about what He could give the woman if she asked Him were in the realm of the marvelous, and as she questioned further He deepened the mystery. Then, when she apparently sneered at it, He showed a greater wonder in His intimate knowledge of her guilty life. Wonder upon wonder rolled upon her until it was all explained in the revelation of His Messiahship.

The Sunday-school teacher should not fear to excite wonder. Show the wonders of God's works in nature, the wonders of man's own nature, the world upon world of wonders in which we live! Lead from these, as Jesus did, to the mysteries of grace and salvation. A mind and heart is open-eyed when wonderful things are set forth.

Thus the model Teacher knocked at the door of a bigoted and sinful heart. Thus He gained admission, and, entering, put His own passion for souls into the new disciple. For she left her water-pot and ran into the city preaching the

new-found Messiah to all the people; and they filled the valley, as they came to Him, until, after a few days, they also believed, not only because of her word, but because they had heard and seen Him themselves, and knew indeed that He was the Christ, the Savior of the world.

HOW TO CLEAR UP THE TRUTH TO PERPLEXED AND DOUBTING DISCIPLES.

A PEDAGOGIC STUDY OF CHRIST TEACHING ON THE WAY TO EMMMAUS.

(Luke xxiv, 13-32.)

FROM Christ's position as Teacher there were two questions to be settled to determine the precise method of teaching. First, who were these persons walking to Emmaus, or what was their attitude to His Gospel? What was their spiritual condition? If they were bigoted and sinful like the woman of Samaria, there would have been one method of reaching them; as disciples already, but perplexed and in despair, a very different method is necessary.

Secondly, what purpose had Christ in this lesson He gave to them? It was not primarily to present His Gospel or Himself to them. They were believers, or had been until the strange events of His crucifixion had swept with overwhelming doubts over them. His purpose, therefore, unquestionably was to explain these events, and clear away their doubt and despair. Not so much to present salvation to them, nor to reveal

Himself, but to present the truth of His sacrificial death and glorious resurrection.

I. It was necessary to conceal His personality.

This was a situation in which the Word of God must become central and unobstructed. It must come as God's message only, with an insistent "Thus saith the Lord." This sort of teaching should be the rule with believers. Not what I, the teacher, think or say; not my appeal to be holy or full of faith; not my experience now of these matters; but, entirely hiding myself, the Lord's message, His appeal, and the power of His Word.

A teacher of little skill, coming into the place Christ then occupied as He met these sorrowing men, would instantly have relieved their trouble by joyously declaring, "I am Jesus! I have really risen from the dead!" But He would have missed forever that unequaled opportunity of exalting the ancient Scriptures. After revealing Himself anything He might say about the prophets or the law would have seemed tame. It must not make any difference *who* it is that is now teaching the Word. The Word only must be studied. So always where a great truth is paramount. It is impertinent to intrude the teacher's or the preacher's personality or to exploit his notions.

II. But, then, above all is shown the power of a knowledge of the Scriptures.

Beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He

expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. He traversed the whole course of Messianic prophecy, beginning doubtless with that germ of the whole Gospel, the promise in Eden, and giving expositions and fulfillment step by step. How wonderful the flow of that thought which had burned in Christ's heart from His boyhood, and now burned in the hearts of the men slowly walking, one on each side, with Him to the little village! We do not have that discourse preserved to us, nor any considerable portion of Christ's thinking upon Messianic prophecy. But so powerfully did the teaching set forth the Scriptures that never once did they think about the Teacher. It was as if an impersonal voice, or the voice of one wholly invisible, were speaking to them the words of God. This required marvelous self-control by the Teacher, and a rich and accurate knowledge of the Bible, so that, without hesitating a moment for the next step, and without feeling for a moment a personal pride in His superior knowledge—for either of these would have drawn attention to Himself—He proceeded to the door of the house they were about to enter.

There they looked at Him for a moment, but only to beg He would abide with them, and they saw Him only dimly under the powerful spell of the vision of God's truth He had unrolled before them.

III. Like the perfect Teacher He is, He wisely mingled their recitation with His instruction.

They, and not He, related the events which had just happened. He questioned them fully concerning their sorrow, and into His evidently sympathetic ear they poured the wonderful story. He seemed to be a stranger in Jerusalem, and wholly unacquainted with these events, so they told Him everything in fullest details.

What was His purpose as a Teacher in securing this recital by them? To make it stand out in utmost clearness, as it would to them if they exerted themselves mentally to conceive it most definitely and to express it to one knowing nothing of these things. He could have told it to them immeasurably better, but the mental activity of giving attention is far less than that required to express the same thing. So, as a Teacher, He put their minds into most intense activity. They recited their lesson to Him, aroused by Him in a most skillful way.

Then to this course of events they gave Him, He fitted the prophecies which these events fulfilled. Thus He exhibits the due balance of recitation and instruction which produces the best result.

IV. Psychologically He awaited the awakening interest in them which would afford the best opportunity for His teaching.

He planned to have them review the whole

matter to Him, to awaken within them a sort of interest they then lacked. Their sorrow and despair had become deadening to higher thought. They would have listened quite differently to His lesson of prophecy if He had at once started upon it. It was when He listened to all their recital without at all feeling their sorrow, and aroused them to give every shocking or despairing circumstance, and yet saw nothing to be discouraged, that they opened their eyes in wonder and their hearts very eagerly to follow His triumphant march through the Scriptures.

So many of us teachers prepare ourselves, but we forget that it is equally important to prepare our scholars before we give the truth. We pour it in upon unawakened souls, rattle away warmly because it interests us, but we have done nothing to make it interest our scholars.

V. But now the time had come when He might add the personal factor to the lesson.

The truth had been nailed fast, and it would be clinched by revealing Himself. But note how it was done—in the act of breaking bread, which, perhaps, He did and had always done in a peculiarly beautiful way, they saw their Master for a moment, and then He vanished away. His way of breaking bread, how it would recall a multitude of wonderful events, all of them strengthening the impression His teaching had made! It

was a way of adding His personality to His lesson as remarkable as anything that had occurred.

The counterpart of this revelation of Christ after His Bible lesson is in our addition of personal experience to the exposition of the truth. Let it be done with brevity, skill, and concentrated power, in a flash if possible, as Christ revealed Himself at that humble supper table in Emmaus.

PSYCHOLOGY IN THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER.

A STUDY OF MATTHEW XIII.

THE human nature which is included in the Parable of the Sower is all under the Gospel; let us say, all more or less in attendants upon the Church and the Sunday-school. Indeed, the whole parable may not unfairly describe a real Sunday-school class and the results of the teacher's sowing and cultivating.

Those unreached by the Word, those opposed to the Gospel, and the utterly unbelieving are the tares of the next parable; but here we are looking through Christ's eyes entirely upon hearers of the Word. This constitutes a study of human nature of vital importance.

I. We can not hold, as is usually done, that these classes of hearers are unalterably fixed in the conditions described.

Character tends to a fixed condition; but it is a hope everywhere inspired by the Gospel that the power of the Holy Spirit can break to pieces the hardest nature and transform the worst heart. The wayside is trodden very hard, but there are plowshares of truth or of Providence that cut

through it and make it fertile once more; the stone beneath the thin soil is great and hard, but not impossible to blast to pieces or to remove; the thorn-crowded part of the field is not hopeless, for God has many workers with willing hands to remove the thorns, or, more strictly, He can bring to bear many influences that will make room for the truth. Doubtless these kinds of soil will become permanent if left alone, but Sunday-school teachers are set apart not to let things alone. The good teacher sees in the hard path, the shallow soil, the thorny part, an exhortation to use more skillful means, more powerful agencies, to break up and clear away obstacles to the truth.

II. We have then, more probably, an exhibit of the character of the obstacles to the truth.

Not insuperable obstacles, but very real and to be provided for in our methods of work in teaching the Word of God.

These obstacles here mentioned are wholly in the scholar. All obstacles finally lodge there, of course. But the very character of these descriptions shows that the source of many of them may be the teacher who is unfaithful or careless. He may contribute to the procession which tramples down the tenderness the heart had in childhood. He may be responsible for the hardening from beneath which produces the sadly superficial soul. He may sow some of the thorns which crowd out the wheat he also tries to sow.

However, this story Jesus gives us shows that finally all obstacles get into the scholar's heart, whatever their origin. And it is there we now study them.

III. First, the unresponsive scholar.

He is outwardly hardened to the truth. He is not moved by it in any perceptible way, does not manifest any conviction or sympathy, nor show signs of yielding to it. He is often deeply interested intellectually, and may be quite regular in attendance. But a procession of evil thoughts, sinful plans and purposes, Satanic impulses, throng his soul. Vile companionships, all the more hardening because some of them are outwardly respectable, vile books, vile pictures and theatricals, and foul ideals trample, trample, trample every inch of tenderness out of the nature.

And there are things hardening which are not so bad morally. That merciless selfishness which is so sadly common, that unholy ambition for mere power, that insatiable throng of thoughts and feelings entirely without God, will destroy receptivity for the Gospel.

Fortunately the wayside does not harden down very deeply. Just beneath may be rich soil, and this is the teacher's problem. How to strike into the depths beneath the hard crust; what organizing of the lesson truth will surprise, cut into more deeply, tear up the hard-beaten nature.

Let us observe the keenness of Christ's knowl-

edge of human nature here. This is a soul not hardened from within so much as from without. It is a type easily recognized. Perhaps in environment which trampled all the tenderness down. Hardened, not because He willed and planned, but because He was wronged thus by others.

IV. Secondly, the superficial nature.

He also is hardened, but it is from beneath, from within. Probably the history of this nature is that He ceased to use the depths of His motives and purposes, and these depths atrophied. Dealing with trivialities, He ruffled only the surface of things, and His nature became superficial. The profound feelings which characterize the childhood give way to petty foibles, little and shallow emotions, and all becomes shallow. This nature is easily moved. A slight inconvenience makes Him very unhappy, and a petty pleasure gives Him great delight.

How perplexing to the Teacher is such a member of His class! What can be done? Again, let us note the keenness of Christ's insight. It is a stony depth. Only the most heroic and almost terrific measures will accomplish any change. How wise in the Master not to permit us to be misled by the easy-going acceptance of the truth by these shallow souls! Almost immediately they respond, but how small are the opposing forces which overthrow these souls! Here are the chronic backsliders and seekers over and over.

For these we need not tenderness, but very heroic measures, while always manifestly loving them.

V. Thirdly, the preoccupied soul.

Even the young people of our Sunday-school classes are "very busy," "have too many engagements to come to Church meetings," "can not really find time for Christian work." As life becomes more strenuous, these thorn-crowded natures become more numerous, and are found at younger stages of life. What are these cares and riches of life? Crowding, ambitious business cares, large plans for accumulating money, social engagements, sports, pleasures of life.

Why call all these thorns? Business and certain social engagements are not sinful in themselves; but when apart from serving God and crowding upon God's service, they are thorns, thorns! They have no outcome of real joy or satisfaction, nor of lasting good.

VI. Comprehensive classification of hindrances.

These three, hardened from without, atrophied from beneath, overcrowded with cares, comprise all the types of human nature who do not profit by the Gospel. They are the unresponsive, the fickle, the purely worldly scholars. To ordinary effort these will not yield any fruit. But they are the opportunity for the specially trained teacher; for the man of power in the Scriptures; for the teacher filled with the Spirit, the genuine lover of

men. To him some of these unfavorable characters will yield, and be regenerated and reconstructed.

The good soil varies in fruitfulness, some thirty, some sixty, and some an hundred fold. These degrees of fruitfulness may, at least in part, be due to the more or less absence of the hindrances of hardening, thinness of soil, or overcrowding; in some part, to the skill and power of the teacher. The seed is the Word of God, and is always perfect; but it is the province of the teacher to select how much and what of that seed to plant in a particular soil, and by the wisdom of this selection come greater and greater results.

DIAGRAM OF THE GRADED SUNDAY-SCHOOL.

The Primary Department	{	1ST SECTION— <i>The Cradle Roll</i> —Under three years of age. 2d SECTION— <i>The Beginners</i> —From three to six years of age. 3d SECTION— <i>The Upper Primary</i> —From six to eight or nine years of age.	
The Main School	{	1ST GRADE* { <i>Secondary Boys and Girls Junior</i> } 2d GRADE { <i>Intermediate Young People or Youth.</i> } 3d GRADE { <i>Senior</i> }	From about nine (or eight) to twelve years of age. From about twelve to about fifteen years of age. From about fifteen years of age upward.
The Advanced School	{	1ST DIVISION— <i>Adult Department</i> 2d DIVISION— <i>Normal Department</i>	Adults studying the regular Uniform Lessons, with advanced treatment, and General Parallel Lessons for adults. Studying regular Uniform Lessons, and also a Normal Course. Department composed of adults, but bright young people of eighteen may be admitted if they agree to pursue the Normal Course, say of three years. Department may be subdivided into three sections—1st year, 2d year, 3d year.
<i>(Both divisions of the Advanced School meet during the regular session of the Sunday-school.)</i>			
The Home Department	{	Composed of those who can not or will not attend the regular sessions of the Sunday-school, but who will give thirty minutes a week to the study of the regular Uniform Lessons.	
The Church Bible Institute or Teacher-Training Institute	{	Meeting some day or evening during the week. Composed of all who will attend or will pursue the course of study. The course of study should include general Biblical study, the principles of pedagogy, and other matters that may be specially valuable to those who are or may become Sunday-school teachers.	

* If desired, and convenient arrangements can be made, this grade may be made a separate department. In such a case the main school would have two grades—the First, or Junior, Grade; and the Second, or Senior, Grade.

A STUDY IN STATISTICS OF ONE GREAT DENOMINATION.

[From the Sunday-school Union Manual.]

A Grand Army.—The grand total of Methodist Episcopal Sunday-schools for 1903 reaches 32,706½ schools, 354,720 officers and teachers, 2,806,337 scholars—a vast army of 3,161,057.

Increase.—This is a gratifying increase of 316 schools, 3,318 officers and teachers, 47,908 scholars. In the Home Department there was an extraordinary increase of nearly 18 per cent, or 18,138 new readers of the Sunday-school lessons in the Home.

Conversions.—A great number of conversions is reported, 127,386. The record upon this subject, the central purpose of the Sunday-school, is full of inspiration for the past four years: Conversions in 1900, 123,735; in 1901, 127,540; in 1902, 130,729; in 1903, 127,386. This brings us to a wonderful total of 509,390, or more than half a million souls brought to Christ from our Sunday-schools during the quadrennium.

Average Attendance.—The average attendance of the Sunday-school is a test of its efficiency and general attractiveness. It is very encouraging, therefore, to see that the increase in average

attendance is 61,834, which is considerably greater than the increase in total membership, which is 51,226. The percentage of average attendance is about 55. This ought to be and could be raised to 75 per cent by a strenuous following up of absentees. Visits and letters do it in many schools, and who can measure the increase in usefulness and power of our Sunday-schools if this larger attendance became general? It would mean half a million more people in the school every Sunday.

Compared with the Sunday-school World.—The total Protestant Church membership in the United States is now about 19,250,000; the total Sunday-school enrollment is about 14,000,000. This gives the Sunday-school about 73 per cent as many as the Church membership. In the Methodist Episcopal Church we have 3,161,057 Sunday-school people to 3,029,560 Church members, making the proportion in favor of the Sunday-school of 104 per cent as against 73 per cent, the average of Protestant Churches as a whole. We have thus a little less than one-fourth of the total Sunday-school enrollment, though we have less than one-sixth of the Church membership of Protestantism in America.

What in Some Conferences.—This is encouraging, but the achievements of some single Conferences show how much better is possible. The Newark Conference has 106 per cent compared with its Church membership; the New Jersey,

110; New England, 111; Central Pennsylvania, 113; Wilmington, 119; California, 121; Genesee, 123; Baltimore, 123; Philadelphia, 127; Colorado, 128; Rock River, 128; Detroit, 130; Northern Minnesota, 137; East Maine, 141; East German, 145; Puget Sound, 148; and Dakota, 151. Switzerland is still far ahead, with 21,851 Sunday-school people to 9,000 Church members, a proportion of 241 per cent!

The Field Outside.—Only 18 per cent or less of the population of the United States is yet in the Sunday-school. Some entire States have reached nearly 25 per cent, some counties 60 per cent, and some towns as high as 80 per cent of their population in their Sunday-schools. By a general movement to increase our members, with some of the energy certain schools show, we could add one million new scholars in a year. If every three now enrolled would only bring one in the whole year this could be done.

Marvels of Growth.—There were twenty-eight Sunday-schools in the Church, with more than a thousand total membership each, in 1901; there were thirty-five such large schools in the Church in 1902; and the number has now increased to forty-five schools of more than one thousand. The growth of many of these great schools is equally remarkable. Think of adding 325, 365, 442, 450, 651, 750 in a single year, as six of these schools respectively have done! Of these thou-

sand membership schools eight are in Philadelphia; seven in Brooklyn, a gain of one; four in Chicago, a gain of one; one in New York; three in Camden, N. J., a gain of one. The rest are in smaller cities. Two schools are beyond two thousand, and one beyond three thousand enrollment. Two of these large schools—Bainbridge Street, Philadelphia, and Sharp Street, Baltimore—are among the colored people. The detailed report for the present year will be found specially interesting.

Christlike Ideal for Growth.—Some of these great Sunday-schools are working to reach every man, woman, and child in their field; not so much to increase numbers by several hundred, but to be sure that not one soul is passed by without the Gospel, not one little one neglected. They have very thorough plans for going out into every street and into every home with earnest effort to bring them in, thus realizing the Christlike ideal to "Go preach My Gospel to every creature, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you."

There is a great surprise in our foreign mission Sunday-schools. Their growth during the past few years has been remarkable. Here is a list of the largest Methodist Episcopal Sunday-schools in our missions:

First Church, Kristiania, Norway.....	850	enrolled.
Vejle, Denmark.....	696	"
Emanuel, Gothenburg, Sweden.....	661	"

St. Paul, Stockholm, Sweden.....	586	enrolled.
Bethel, Norkoping, Sweden.....	582	“
Foochow, China	540	“
Second Church, Berlin, Germany.....	460	“
Valparaiso, Chili	441	“
Calcutta (English), India	391	“
Upsala, Sweden, two schools together,.....	875	“

In Frederickstadt, Norway, there is a Home Department numbering 145 members.

Our Largest Home Department.—The most rapid growth in Sunday-school work continues to be in that providential extension of Bible study into the home, the Home Department. Surely nowhere else can the Sunday-school do a work so far-reaching! A Home Department numbering one hundred and fifty readers, and vigorously maintained, is a notable achievement in any Church. It will promote home co-operation with Sunday-school work in many ways. From Conference statistics and later direct reports we have the following of one hundred and seventy-five or over: Central, Wilkesbarre, 536; Bushwick Avenue, Brooklyn, 525; First Church, Los Angeles, 426; Lakeville, N. Y., 403; Washington, Ia., 360; Brazil, Ind., 300; Motleys, Va., 300; Wells Island, N. Y., 285; West Washington, Pa., 274; Park Avenue, Somerville, Mass., 262; Fremont Street, Gloversville, N. Y., 258; Marietta, O., 245; Boyle Heights, Los Angeles, Cal., 235; Elm Park, Scranton, 230; First Church, Sharon, Pa., 228; St. Paul's, Cedar Rapids, Ia., 225; Richmond

Avenue, Buffalo, 225; South Park Avenue, Chicago, 220; Tabernacle, Binghamton, N. Y., 212; First Church, Hutchinson, Kan., 210; First Church, Rock Island, Ill., 200; Factoryville, Pa., 200; Sayre, Pa., 200; First Church, Burlington, Ia., 200; Hanson Place, Brooklyn, 190; First Church, Warren, O., 189; Carbondale, Pa., 186; First Church, Xenia, O., 185; Grove City, Pa., 185; St. John's, Brooklyn, 185; Philmont, N. Y., 181; Mason City, Ia., 181; Grace Church, Denver, Colo., 180; Epworth, New Castle, Pa., 180; Independence Avenue, Kansas City, Mo., 175; Newton, N. J., 175; Simpson Memorial, Philadelphia, 175.

Great Cradle Rolls.—The Cradle Roll is not yet officially reported in the Conference Minutes. We have, therefore, a very imperfect list; but by direct report to the Sunday-school Union we know of many very large rolls of these “least ones” now recognized as belonging to Christ’s flock. This is the true “Infant Class” now, and the shepherding of the smallest children goes on with blessed results both to the home and to the Sunday-school. Every Sunday-school ought at once, whether large or small, to take care of the babies in its field of work. Here are the largest Cradle Rolls we know about by correspondence:

First, Brazil, Ind.	286	infants	enrolled.
Central, Wilkesbarre, Pa.	265	“	“
Bushwick Avenue, Brooklyn, N. Y.	235	“	“
Fremont Street, Gloversville, N. Y.	150	“	“

Bainbridge Street, Philadelphia, Pa	150	infants enrolled.
First Church, Los Angeles, Cal	150	“ “
Siloam, Philadelphia, Pa.	148	“ “
Elm Park, Scranton, Pa.	135	“ “
Simpson Memorial, Philadelphia, Pa. . .	125	“ “
Centenary, Newark, N. J.	101	“ “
First Church, Canton, O.	100	“ “
Kensington, Philadelphia, Pa.	91	“ “
Hanson Place, Brooklyn, N. Y	90	“ “
Halsted Street, Chicago, Ill.	87	“ “
First Church, Huntington, Ind.	75	“ “
Epworth, Marion, O.	75	“ “
First Church, Elgin, Ill	70	“ “
First Church, Englewood, Chicago, Ill. .	66	“ “
Asbury, Wilmington, Del	62	“ “
St. James, Chicago, Ill	60	“ “
North Avenue, Allegheny, Pa	54	“ “
First Church, Rochester, N. Y.	53	“ “
St. John's, Brooklyn, N. Y.	51	“ “
Janes, Brooklyn, N. Y.	50	“ “

SUNDAY-SCHOOL MEMBERSHIP IN PROPORTION TO POPULATION.

[Report to Denver Convention, 1902.]

IN A FEW GREAT STATES.

IN California and Kentucky, 8 per cent; in Minnesota, 11 per cent; Massachusetts, 12; Georgia, 13; Colorado, New Hampshire, 14; Illinois, Michigan, New York, 17; Iowa, Nebraska, 18; New Jersey, Vermont, 19; Maryland, Kansas, 20; North Carolina, Ohio, Virginia, 21; Indiana, Mississippi, 22; Oregon, Pennsylvania, 23; Delaware, 25.

SUNDAY-SCHOOLS IN THE WORLD, 1902.

252,510 Sunday-schools; 2,388,449 teachers, 23,049,009 scholars, a total of over 25,000,000. Great Britain has 53,590 schools, 704,955 teachers, 7,875,748 scholars; Germany has 7,131 schools, 39,872 teachers, 814,175 scholars; Australia, 7,458 schools, 54,670 teachers, 595,031 scholars; India has 5,578 schools, 13,937 teachers, 247,400 scholars.

THE LARGEST SUNDAY-SCHOOLS IN THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

Rank No.	NAME AND LOCATION OF SUNDAY-SCHOOL.	1901.	1902.	1903 in Detail.			
		Total Enrollment.	Total Enrollment.	Cradle Roll.	Home Department.	All in School Session.	Total Enrollment.
1	Bushwick Avenue, Brooklyn, N. Y.	1,948	2,355	235	525	2,345	3,105
2	Broadway, Camden, N. J.	2,010	2,229	30	90	1,971	2,091
3	Siloam, Philadelphia.	1,802	2,006	148	...	1,925	2,073
4	Central, Wilkesbarre, Pa.	...	1,440	265	480	1,217	1,962
5	First, Brazil, Ind.	1,156	1,230	286	300	1,295	1,881
6	First, Los Angeles, Cal.	1,092	1,419	150	426	1,285	1,861
7	Elm Park, Scranton, Pa.	1,128	1,636	135	230	1,366	1,731
8	Hanson Place, Brooklyn, N. Y.	1,537	1,843	90	190	1,438	1,718
9	Janes, Brooklyn, N. Y.	1,514	1,624	50	123	1,491	1,664
10	Twenty-ninth Street, Philadelphia.	1,359	1,557	36	35	1,583	1,654
11	Halsted Street, Chicago	1,256	1,256	87	30	1,453	1,570
12	First, Rochester, N. Y.	...	1,200	53	105	1,407	1,505
13	First, Englewood, Chicago.	...	1,211	66	146	1,330	1,542
14	Fourth Avenue, Brooklyn, N. Y.	1,412	1,421	...	105	1,383	1,488
15	Richmond Avenue, Buffalo, N. Y.	1,200	1,318	36	225	1,204	1,465
16	Fremont Street, Gloversville, N. Y.	...	1,174	150	258	1,047	1,455
17	Calvary, New York.	1,400	1,409	...	...	1,427	1,427
18	First, Huntington, Ind.	1,052	1,370	75	50	1,275	1,400
19	Eighteenth Street, Brooklyn, N. Y.	...	...	...	80	1,311	1,391
20	Broadway, Cleveland, O.	1,379	1,375	...	...	...	...
21	Centenary, Newark, N. J.	1,203	1,303	101	124	1,147	1,372
22	North Avenue, Allegheny, Pa.	1,241	1,256	54	117	1,185	1,356

Rank No.:	NAME AND LOCATION OF SUNDAY-SCHOOL.	1903 in Detail.				1902.	1901.
		Cradle Roll.	Home Department.	All in School Session.	Total Enrollment.		
23	Simpson Memorial, Philadelphia.....	125	70	1,150	1,205	.....
24	Kensington, Philadelphia.....	91	33	1,217	1,016	1,016	
25	Bainbridge Street, Philadelphia (colored)	150	75	1,075	.....	.....
26	St. James, Chicago.....	60	50	1,125	1,181	1,175	
27	Columbia Avenue, Philadelphia.....	30	.....	1,185	1,310	1,303
28	Johnstown, N. Y.....	.....	.....	.....	1,212	1,179
29	First, Elgin, Ill.....	70	82	.....	.....	.....
30	Trinity, Chester, Pa.....	.....	.....	1,031	.....	.....
31	Epworth, Marion, O.....	75	60	1,172	1,263	1,262	
32	Monroe Avenue, Rochester, N. Y.....	64	145	935	.....	.....
33	First, Canton, O.....	100	110	916	.....	.....
34	Fairhill, Philadelphia.....	.....	.....	1,102	1,125	1,040
35	Sharp Street, Baltimore, Md.....	.....	.....	1,004	.....	.....
36	Nostrand Avenue, Brooklyn, N. Y.....	23	100	974	1,239	1,169	
37	First, Camden, N. J.....	.....	.....	1,068	.....	.....
38	Union, Camden, N. J.....	35	35	935	1,177	1,175	
39	Asbury, Wilmington, Del.....	62	63	917	.....	.....
40	Western Avenue, Chicago.....	40	.....	1,000	.....	.....
41	St. John's, Brooklyn, N. Y.....	51	135	782	1,011	.....
42	First, Mount Vernon, Ill.....	.....	245	766	.....	.....
43	Chestnut Street, Portland, Me.....	65	113	852	1,008	1,041	
44	Eden, Philadelphia.....	.....	.....	.....	1,033	.....
45	Madison Street, Chester, Pa.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1,230

THE SUCCESS OF SOME GREAT SUNDAY-SCHOOLS.

OF the thirty-two thousand superintendents of Methodist Episcopal Sunday-schools more than a thousand are men of unusual ability, and these thousand leaders are experimenting with the best plans for a Sunday-school successful in the best sense in its important mission in the Church. Some of these superintendents are men of remarkable administrative power, trained in great mercantile or manufacturing enterprises; others are men of rich culture received in colleges; some of them professional teachers, who bring to the Bible-school their fine pedagogical skill; nearly all of them men of deep spirituality and evangelistic zeal. We may expect some valuable suggestions in methods from these schools as the field workers gather them. We here formulate a few of these helpful points:

Exalting the Bible.—There are many Sunday-schools which have a Bible in every scholar's and teacher's hands every Sunday. To induce the boys to carry Bibles in one school the mothers sew a "Bible pocket" inside their coats large enough for the thin, neat edition of the Bible that school has adopted. Another school urges

the mother or father to present the Bible to the boy or girl. Another has persuaded the scholars themselves to buy and own their Bibles. One school records in the teacher's report the fact of having a Bible, and the secretary's report sums up this item. Many schools have a show of Bible at the opening of the session. No mutilated or unattractive copies of the Bible should be used.

Enlarging the Membership.—Sunday-schools now feel their responsibility to get in every person in their whole parish. One great school divides its field among seventy-five men and women, and makes each person permanently responsible for his or her "block." Each investigates first for all Methodist families or those inclined to Methodist Churches; lays siege to secure every person in these families for the school; and calls to his aid the pastor, the deaconess, and the superintendent, to win these persons. That school grows by from fifty to one hundred members a month. Another school in a town of ten thousand has nearly two thousand in membership, with 278 babies on its Cradle Roll. Many schools, already large in numbers, have grown wonderfully in two years. Two years ago there were 28 schools in the Methodist Episcopal Church, with more than one thousand enrolled, last year there were 35 such schools, and this year [1903] 45.

Educational Development.—Many of our Sunday-schools have used the two lessons each Sun-

day for many years. The General Bible Lessons have been an inspiration to them. Some of their classes, twelve years of age, pass examinations upon Bible history and the Methodist Discipline "that would do credit to preachers." In other schools there is an eight, in some a ten years' course, of General Lessons with graduation. Examinations are held quarterly and yearly. In one school there is a "principal" in each department who has special charge of the teaching and lesson development. The superintendent in that school is busy with enlarged administrative work. One school, having a large supply of normal trained teachers, tried the plan of having two teachers in every class, the second to act as secretary, as assistant visitor, and as substitute when the main teacher was absent. And so fine is the sense of personal responsibility in that school that no teacher took advantage of having an assistant to shirk any duty.

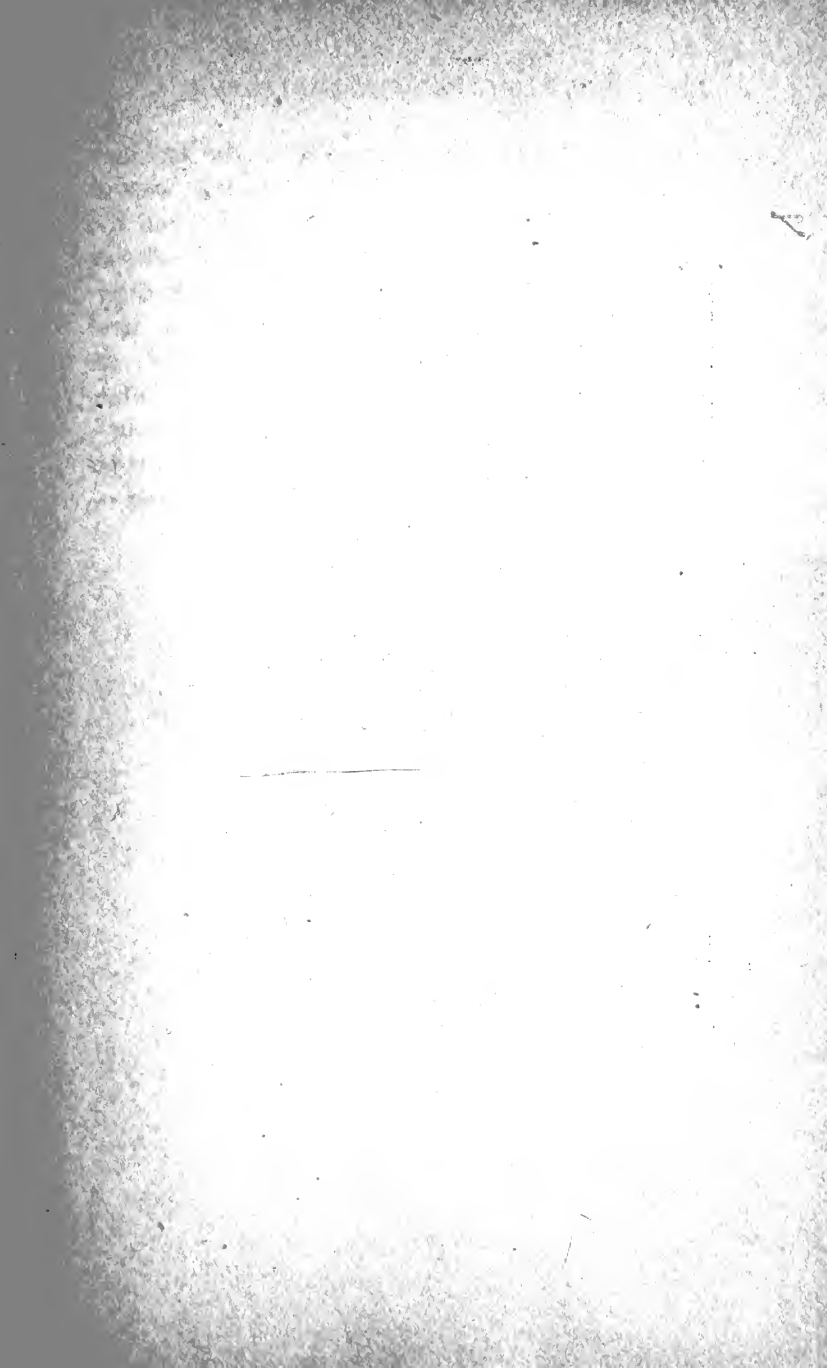
Training the Teachers.—Two great schools, at least, have their entire teaching force to consist of normal trained teachers. In one case the local Normal Department covers three years, with strict examinations, and this school has an over-supply of teachers. The most successful plan now divides into two normal classes; the one meeting during the week to improve the present teaching force by our Bible Institute or some other course of study; and the other a well-developed Normal

Department for future teachers, meeting during the Sunday-school hour. This department is frequently started by using some young people's Bible class, or adult class, as the nucleus, and then inviting earnest people from the Church to join it or to form a second normal class in the department.

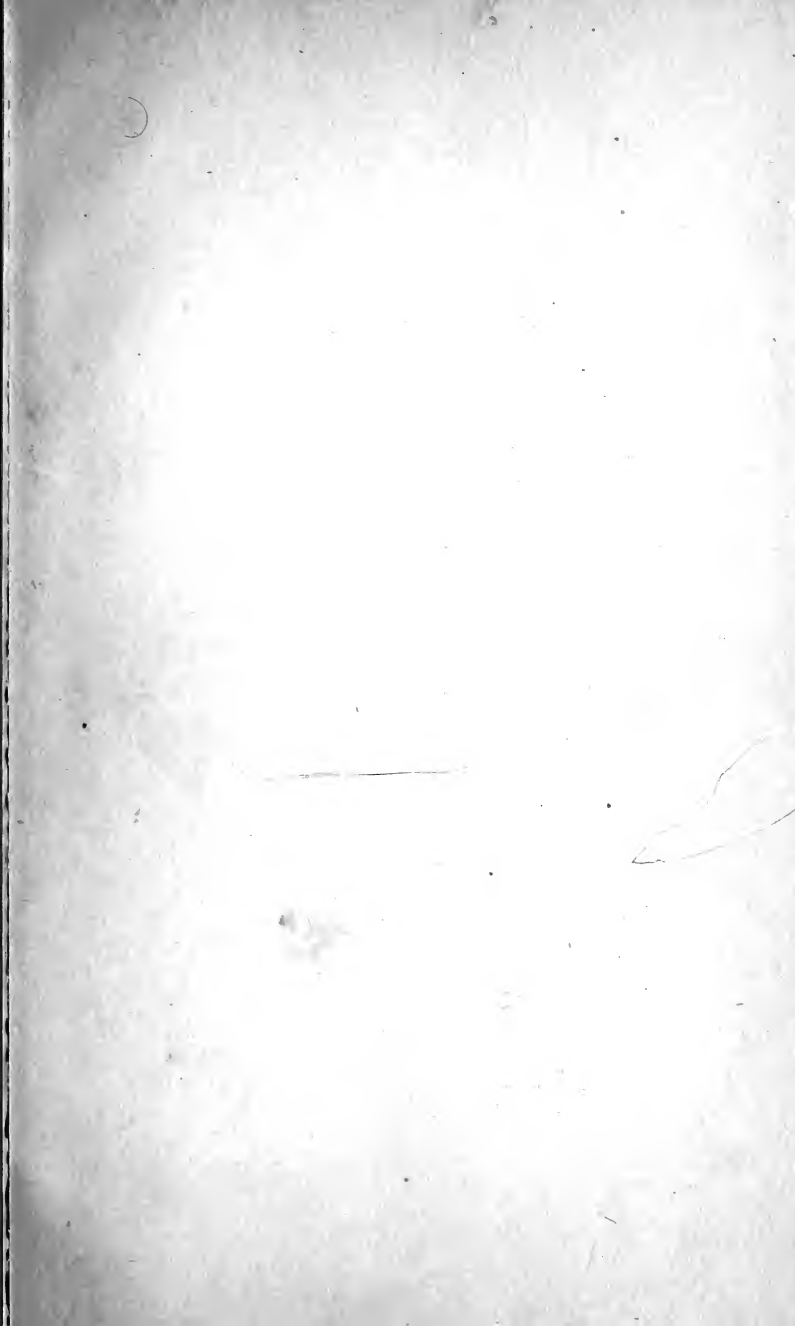
Securing Home Co-operation.—The Home Department and the Cradle Roll are of phenomenal growth, and serve as a vital bond with the home. Plans of visitation are adopted by some schools with success; writing of letters is systematically done in others. A reception by the teachers and officers to all the parents is very successful. One school laid plans far in advance, determined to have every parent present, sent written invitations to all, sent messages by the children, and made personal calls upon doubtful ones to insure their presence. They had a surprising attendance, served light refreshments, presented the plans of the school, and the points where they desired parents to co-operate. It was "the best thing they ever did for their school." Their attendance was larger and more regular, lessons were studied at home, and children were led to Christ in large numbers.

Evangelistic Success.—One school has reaping days twice a year. The earnest superintendent notes the new scholars and reaches every one of them. Another school worked for several

weeks up to Decision-day, calling the teachers together for prayer until every teacher was in line, then bringing in the parents; and when the public effort was made, every unsaved scholar present to the number of about two hundred accepted Christ. Some are meeting every new scholar on the first Sunday he comes with an appeal to come to Christ. In the present enthusiasm for better educational work in the Sunday-school it is inspiring to note everywhere an even more earnest effort to have every one saved.—*Sunday-school Union Manual.*







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