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FOUNDATION PRINCIPLES FOR A
CURRICULUM OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
IN THE DEWITT MEMORIAL CHURCH
SCHOOL, 280 RIVINGTON STREET,
NEW YORK CITY.

Submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of
Master of Sacred Theology in The
Biblical Seminary in New York.

By

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March 27, 1930.

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INTRODUCTION.

I. THE STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM.

The writer believes that a survey will reveal the inadequacy of the present curriculum of Christian education, used in the DeWitt Memorial church school, New York City. The problem is to find and study the bases for an improved curriculum of Christian education, adaptable to the religious life and needs of this particular group.

II. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE PROBLEM.

1. The problem is important to the writer for the personal reason that it is involved as an integral part of his life work. As pastor of DeWitt Memorial Church, responsible for the educational activities of the church, responsible to some degree for the spiritual welfare of the church school members, he feels the necessity of re-studying the religious life of the group and seeking curriculum principles which will apply to their specific religious needs. The writer expects to continue living among these people, as he has for almost a decade, endeavoring to help in the solution of their religious problems.

2. This study may be important to the group itself. Any findings which will help to clarify the situation, and which will suggest improvements in the curriculum, will result in practical benefit to the group. This survey is being made, not only to satisfy academic requirements, but also to furnish the basis for more adequate curriculum of Christian education, which may gradually be put into actual operation.

3. The problem has a wider range of importance. It is probably so typical that the general features of the survey might be duplicated in any crowded tenement district where there is a mixed, foreign-born population.

4. This problem should be considered important by those pastors and religious leaders who are attempting to solve somewhat similar problems in Christian education. During the present period of social flux and transition to new standards, constant adjustment of the church's educational program is important for the performance of effective work. To make such adjustments intelligently it is advisable for pastors and leaders in Christian education to study periodically the religious life and needs of their own group.

III. THE MODE OF PROCEDURE.

1. THE SOURCES OF MATERIAL FOR THE STUDY.

(1). The primary sources of material are:

(a). Observations by the writer in direct contact with members of the church school for a period of nine years.

(b). Spoken and written observations by members of the church school staff who also have personal contact with the scholars.

(c). Official records of DeWitt Memorial Church, the church school, and various supplementary organizations centered at the church, and

(d). Records of the New York City Mission Society.

(2). The secondary sources of material are indicated in the bibliography.

2. THE SCOPE OF THE STUDY.

The study is subject to the following limitations:

(1). The survey is limited to the two hundred and sixty-nine children and young people who regularly attend the church school, together with their families and a few additional persons who have had an influence upon the religious life under observation. The group has varying degrees of loyalty and affiliation with the church.

(2). The study is limited to that part of the constituency dwelling in the immediate vicinity of the church.

(3). The data are not, and cannot be, comprehensive, because religious life is too intangible and interwoven with the social fabric to be closely analysed and tabulated in systematic fashion. Since it is impossible to make this survey exhaustive, the facts here given do not yield themselves to dogmatic conclusions. However, it is hoped that the data are of sufficient quantity and quality to indicate the current trend.

(4). Data are selected which seem to be typical. The danger of citing cases is recognized. The unusual attracts attention, and may be unconsciously accepted as typical. In this study the writer has tried to select the facts and cases which best represent the average religious life of the group. The value of certain quoted statements by children is doubtful, because there may have been a tendency for the children to say what they thought the inquirer wished them to say. Often the opinions of recognized authorities are introduced to furnish a background for the individual cases cited and to guide in determining the relative importance of the various phases of the investigation.

3. A SYNOPSIS OF THE PROCEDURE.

(1). The religious life of the church school members is studied empirically in its natural setting, the spiritual environment of the individuals and the social group.

(2). Outstanding Christian needs revealed by this study are briefly stated.

(3). The next logical step is to formulate a statement of those curriculum principles which the writer believes are adaptable to the situation, and which ought to be applied. No a priori position is defended. As far as possible conclusions are based upon the revealed facts. "Thought rather than imitation should be the basis of curriculum making."*1* The problem is so tangled that the threads of thought are difficult to separate and classify.

(4). An attempt is made to set forth the results in such a simple manner that those interested in the church school may -

- (a).Get a comprehensive view of the situation,
- (b).Realize the need for better Christian education,
- (c).Be inspired to active measures for securing better Christian education in the church school, and
- (d).Be guided in using proper methods for selecting and creating more adequate material.

*1*Bobbitt, Franklin, The Curriculum, p.285, Houghton Mifflin, 1918.

CHAPTER TWO

THE HISTORICAL REVIEW OF THE PROBLEM.

I. THE HISTORY OF DEWITT MEMORIAL CHURCH.

"The dedication of DeWitt Memorial Church took place on May 8, 1881. This new church of Christ for the people was built at the sole expense of Mr. Morris K. Jessup, of New York, as a memorial to his father-in-law, the Rev. Dr. Thomas DeWitt". *1*

The New York City Mission Society established in 1827, incorporated in 1866, has always supervised the work of DeWitt Memorial Church. "The objects of the Society are to promote morality and religion among all races of the City of New York, by the employment of missionaries, the diffusion of evangelical truth and the establishment of Mission Churches, Chapels, Mission Sunday Schools, etc." *2*

The Woman's Branch of the New York City Mission Society has the following aim:

First. To carry the Gospel of Christ to all homes in the lower part of the city, irrespective of creed, class or color.

1 Introduction to Visitor's Register, written by Dr. James Marshall, the first pastor of DeWitt Memorial Church.

2 Annual Report, New York City Mission Society, February, 1929, page 3.

Second. To help in their homes the families, by teaching the members those things that will be for their physical, moral and spiritual advantage and prepare them better to fulfil their duties.

Third. To reach the children, and by planting early seeds of industry, honesty, temperance and truth, thus help them to become good men and women.

Fourth. To minister to the sick poor, providing things necessary for their recovery in their homes, or removing them to hospitals if wise.

Many societies search out the worthy, we seek all people in the full belief that the blood of Jesus Christ will cleanse, and the Holy Spirit teach and sanctify." *1*

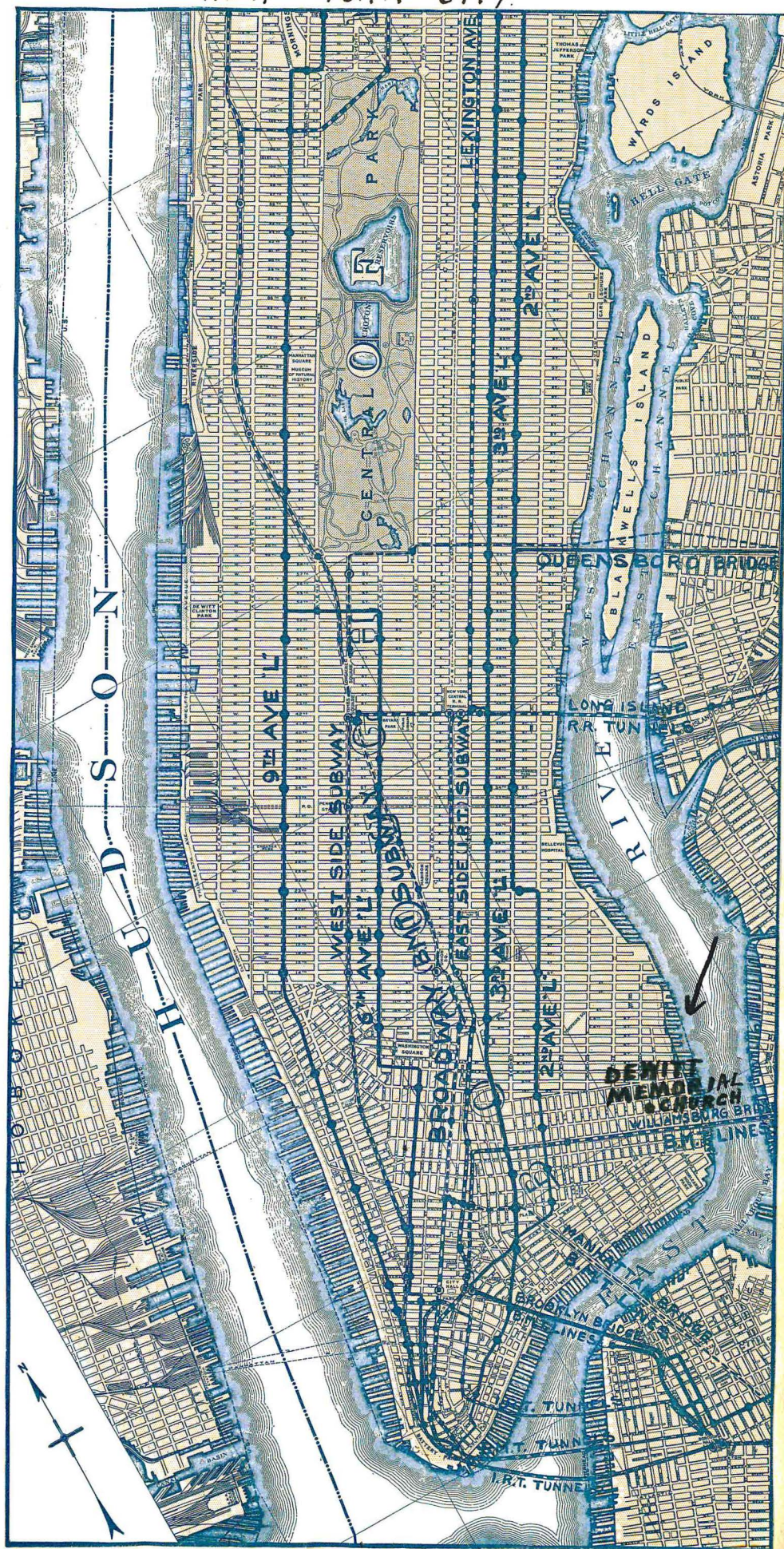
Meetings for all ages are conducted with the use of the English language. Adults who do not clearly understand English may attend services where German, Italian or Russian is spoken.

The present personnel includes a pastor for each language group, three nurses (one giving part-time) and five church visitors. These devoted nurses and church visitors are largely responsible for the successful work of the church.

*1*Ninety-ninth Annual Report, Woman's Branch, New York City Mission Society, 1922, page 3.



DeWitt Memorial Church
280 Rivington St., New York City.



II. THE HISTORY OF THE UNFOLDING PROBLEM.

1. THE NEIGHBORHOOD ENVIRONMENT.

(1). HOUSING CONDITIONS

"The church was built in one of the poorest sections of the city", wrote Dr. William T. Elsing, who was the pastor for thirty-nine years.*1* The neighborhood, located in the heart of Manhattan's lower East Side, may still be classified as one of the poorest sections in New York. (See the map on the preceding page).

Mr. Stephen Lengyel, an architect, and a member of DeWitt Memorial Church, made the following statement on December 11, 1929, in reply to a letter of inquiry about the condition of dwelling places in the neighborhood. "The design of the houses does not permit the introduction of the proper amount of sunlight and air into the rooms, the halls are usually dark and in the interior of the building, the ventilation is poor, the toilets are nearly always located in the public halls, and the sleeping rooms are usually located in the interior of the building with no natural light or ventilation".

Housing conditions were chiefly responsible for a tragedy in the life of eight year old Tessie N. three years ago. In the dark hallway of her home

*1*Elsing, Dr. W. T., "DeWitt Memorial Church", The New York City Mission Monthly, January, 1920.

there were no electric lights and the uncertain gas flame had either not been lighted or had flickered out. So the girl carried a candle. Her nightgown caught on fire, her body was burned, her face was so terribly and permanently disfigured by the loss of her lower lip that children shrink from her. This is an exceptional case, but housing conditions are such that similar or less serious accidents may and do happen to many of the church school members.

There are many vacant houses. The thirty-two family building beside the church has been entirely vacant for a year and a half. The present immigration law cut off the chief source of supply for the lower East Side tenements. In the local public school district, there were 16,862 pupils below Junior High School in September, 1926. In December, 1929, there were 11,481 pupils in the same district, according to the January, 1930, bulletin of the Lower East Side Community Council.

(2). THE STANDARD OF LIVING.

The only families living in the vicinity of the church are those who are too poor to afford a better standard of living, those who are satisfied to live in the midst of filth, and those who have a special attachment or work in the neighborhood.

Pushcarts are parked end to end along the curb of Rivington Street from six o'clock in the morning until eleven at night or later. Among the noises are the strident voices of the peddlers advertising their varied wares, the shrill voices of wrangling purchasers, the cries of children using the street as a playground, the insistent honking of automobile horns, the heavy rumble of trucks.

A lady once told the writer that she could not come to DeWitt Memorial Church because the odor in the street is so offensive. At the foot of Rivington Street is a garbage dump where barges loaded with refuse sometimes lie over the week-end. Decayed fruit and ~~and~~ vegetables are discarded from the pushcarts. The writer has had unpleasant experiences with garbage carelessly thrown from tenement windows. Strong smells emanate from a chicken market and a fish market under Williamsburg Bridge. Some of the church school children live above horse stables. One can hardly walk a block without seeing the street used as a public toilet.

A statement by Ross L. Finney is applicable:
"All this hideousness serves but to thwart the joy of life. Our nerves are spoiled by the roar of trains, the crash and clatter of machinery, the discordant voices of the crowd. The abyss of bare brick walls, the wind-swept expanse of graveled roofs, and the ever-present pall of smoke, make us prematurely old.

How terribly depressing it must be to live always, even in childhood, in an environment of rough pavements, foul smells, harsh, discordant noises, rubbish, smoke, and dust!.*1*

The housing conditions and the standard of living furnish an unwholesome environment for the children of the church school.

2. THE CHURCH CONSTITUENCY.

(1). THE RACIAL ELEMENTS.

The adult population of the neighborhood is predominantly foreign-born. While registering before the last election, the writer observed that all the thirteen persons ahead in the line presented credentials to prove that they were naturalized citizens.

Using the nationality of the parents as a basis, the church school may be divided into three groups. The Slavic group, consisting of Russians, Poles and Ukrainians, numbers one hundred and thirty-one scholars. Seventy-eight have Italian parents. Sixty are in the miscellaneous group. In the total of two hundred and sixty-nine,--not including the Cradle Roll and the Home Department,--it is estimated that there are only thirty-three, both of whose parents were born in the United States.

*1*Finney, Ross L., A Sociological Philosophy of Education, p. 320-321, MacMillan, 1929.

The family names of the officers in five week-day Christian education classes will give a cross-section of the constituency: Amato, Benedisuk, Bury, Crump, Deck, Denny, DeSabato, Deibel, Farish, Gableman, Goldman, Greenwich, Grosholz, Kaplish, Kinch, Kosensky, Kovolsky, Krasnomowitz, Kristick, McMahon, Rabotinsly, Seim, Seyffart, Sudvorik, Woelfel. At the Promotion exercises on Rally Day, September 29, 1929, Katherine Kozeletz, Viola Rabotinsky, Michael Tereletzka, Fred Morofsky, John Dorsch and Raymond White toddled to the platform to receive diplomas of graduation from the Cradle Roll to the Beginners' Department.

English is the language used in the church school, with the exception of the Italian Bible class. There is a remarkable assimilation in the classes of children whose parents have wide national differences. The church school stands with the public school as an important agency in making the city more homogeneous.

(2). THE MOBILITY OF THE CHURCH CONSTITUENCY.

The steady exodus of prospering families has a direct relationship to the problem under consideration. The church records show that one hundred and sixty-five persons were received into the membership of the English Branch of the church during the eight years from January, 1922, to December, 1929. All, except six, were members of the church school, ~~who~~^{and} sought

membership in the church on confession of faith.

At the time of joining, forty-seven were not living in the neighborhood.

The following table shows the exodus of the one hundred and eighteen persons who lived in the neighborhood when they joined the church, and the effect of moving upon their activity in the church.

Year	Number joining	Number now living at a distance	Number now inactive.
1922	26	18	16
1923	10	10	9
1924	8	7	5
1925	9	7	6
1926	14	8	5
1927	8	3	2
1928	20	7	2
1929	<u>23</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
	118	61	46

During the period of eight years, fifty-two percent of those who lived in the vicinity at the time of joining moved to a distance from the church. Of the fifty-three who joined during the first four years, eighty percent have moved away. Of the sixty-five who joined during the second four years, twenty-nine percent have moved away. These statistics indicate that it is normal for at least fifty percent of the active membership to move to a distance within four or five years after joining the church. At the present

time, four out of every five members of the English Branch have to travel from twenty minutes to an hour and a half by subway, trolley, bus or automobile in order to reach the church.

These statistics further suggest the usual effect of moving from the neighborhood upon loyalty to the church as indicated by regular attendance. Seventy-nine percent, or forty-eight of the sixty-one who moved away, became inactive.

Thus, the church constituency is divided into two distinct groups.

First. There are those who have moved to a distance, who are usually inactive in attendance, and who either send their children to a church school near their home or to no church school.

Second. There are the foreign-born parents living in the neighborhood, whose children form the church school. The study of the present problem centers in the latter group.

(3). THE FIRST CONTACT WITH MEMBERS OF THE GROUP.

Since there is a normal mobility of the constituency, it is important to constantly secure replacements. Care is exercised not to use unethical means of proselytism. Contacts are made with those who have no apparent, vital religious faith or church affiliations.

Many come to the church at the personal invitation of some member. Some come because of curiosity. In their healing ministry to the church constituency, the

nurses establish contacts which interest and attract others. Each summer about two hundred and fifty children from the neighborhood are sent to the country for a Fresh Air trip through the courtesy of the New York Tribune. A few of this group become interested in the church school. Some are attracted by the gymnasium and social activities. When they learn that these activities are supplementary to the religious activities, a few join the church school.

The most fruitful contacts are usually made by canvassing. Church visitors enter the houses with parts of the Bible in various languages, tracts, and an invitation to attend any of the thirty-five weekly meetings at the church which seem best adapted to the needs of the situation. Personal relationship with God is discussed, if possible. Practical Christianity is exemplified in meeting rebuffs and in giving help to needy people.

CHAPTER THREE.

THE RELIGIOUS LIFE OF THE GROUP.

I. THE INTELLECTUAL RELIGIOUS LIFE.

1. THE SOURCES OF RELIGIOUS CONCEPTS.

(1). The Home. In few, if any, of the homes is direct, systematic religious instruction given by the parents. But the comments and attitudes of the parents are important in forming the religious concepts of the children.

(2). The Church.

(a). The Church School is the richest source of information about religion. Graded instruction, in Sunday and week-day classes, aims to develop wholesome religious concepts throughout childhood and youth.

(b). The Pastor's Class of Instruction for prospective church members has a usual attendance of twenty-five for a period of three months. Here religious ideas are discussed and formulated.

(c). The preaching services, conducted in English, German, Italian and Russian, are attended by an aggregate of about one hundred children each week.

(d). Clubs and other semi-religious groups directly and indirectly develop religious concepts.

(3). The Public school teachers usually avoid making comments upon religious matters which come before the ~~calas~~^{class}. In a few cases, public school teachers have tried directly to impress their own religious concepts upon the minds of the scholars to the extent of urging them to attend certain churches for religious instruction.

(4). Other sources of religious concepts are private conversations in the home, church or street with companions, school mates, business associates and church visitors, and the use of books, magazines, newspapers, pictures, images, religious symbols, music.

NATURE OF THE INVESTIGATION.

2. ~~**COMPREHENSIVE INVESTIGATION IMPOSSIBLE*~~

The writer regrets his inability to make a comprehensive investigation of the religious concepts which dwell in the minds of all the church school members. He tried to draw out statements, both oral and written, from individuals and groups. A questionnaire for the entire school was considered. But this idea was discarded because of the almost uniform tendency of the scholars to glibly state what they thought the investigator wished them to state. It was felt that such an investigation would yield only a compendium of ~~useless~~ opinions, having little value.

So the writer, drawing upon his experience during nine years of continuous, daily contact with the group, ventures to select certain statements, which were secured under somewhat satisfactory circumstances, and which he deems to be typical.

3. CONCEPTS OF GOD.

(1). THE BEGINNER'S CONCEPT OF GOD.

"The great thing is that the child shall from the first get such a concept of God as will attract him to God, and not make him afraid of God or not interested in Him".*1*

John S. was present when the teacher told the story of Daniel in the lion's den. Months later, the department visited the Bronx Zoo. John was impressed for he had never before seen a real lion. Holding the teacher's hand while he stood beside the cage, he suddenly volunteered a concept of God, "Daniel was in a den of lions like that. But they could not hurt him for he had God in his heart".

On October 20, 1929, the teacher described the flight of Jesus, Mary and Joseph into Egypt.

She showed a large picture of them journeying under the star-lit sky. She asked, "What do you see

*1*Betts, Anna Freeloove, Mother Teacher of Religion, p.42, Abingdon Press, 1922.

when you look up into the sky at night?"

"The boogy-man", said Jennie R.

The teacher tried to correct this idea by substituting a concept of God who gave wonderful nights with the glorious moon and stars, God who takes care of little children all through the night.

But in many homes vivid concepts of the fearful "boogy-man" are emphasized more often than concepts of God. Parents use this means of frightening their children into obedience.

The capable principal of the Beginner's Department states, "The average Beginner thinks of God as Creator, Protector, Giver, Loving Father. It is easy to teach him the love of God because he lives so close to God".

Anna Freelove Betts states that the child should think of "God as loving Father, expecting obedience and trust from his children; God as friendly Protector; God as ever near at hand; God who can understand and sympathize with children and enter into their joys and sorrows; God as Creator; but above all, God filling the heart with love and gladness".*1* "If he is

1 Betts, Anna Freelove, Mother Teacher of Religion, p. 50, Abingdon Press, 1922.

properly instructed as a child when he becomes a man he will have simply to deepen and broaden his knowledge of the Heavenly Father; not to change it".*1*

(2). THE PRIMARY SCHOLAR'S CONCEPT OF GOD.

The following case does not involve members of the DeWitt Primary Department. But it illustrates the deep interest and free use of the imagination in thinking about God, which is characteristic of Primary children.

On the afternoon of October 11, 1929, the writer passed two boys crouched on the dusty sidewalk of East 4th Street near the East River. They were close together leaning against the greasy wall of a garage, unconscious of being observed. A seemed to be about seven years old while B was about six. They were earnestly discussing a phase of their philosophy of life. The writer's attention was arrested by A's remark:

"I'll bet God could make a building four million miles high".

"Inquisitive B asked the profound question, "Where is God?"

"Why God is in Heaven, up in the sky".

"What holds him up there?"

*1*McKinney, A.H., Average Boys and Girls, p. 82-3
Revell, 1925.

"The fairies keep him from falling. But God is here too. I'll bet he is right behind us now".

A drunken man lurched past while B continued his search for information about God, "How do you know?"

"Because God can do anything - only we can't see him. I'll bet God is in that fire (pointing toward an ash can on the outer edge of the sidewalk where rubbish is burning). God is in that truck. And he is in that house".

"Gee, God must be a magician".

"Sure he is. God is the strongest man in the world. Why he could lift all the houses in New York and all the boats out there in the river".

At this juncture, A spied a piece of rope across the street and ran to seize it, followed by B, heedless of the writer's urgent request for an interview. Their conversation showed concepts of God as objective, omnipresent, omnipotent.

During the present season, the handwork in the Primary department has given the scholars an opportunity to express their ideas of God. To them God is the Creator, loving Father, Protector, Giver, Deliverer, Rewarder. He is real, vital, powerful, kindly.

Mary T. Whitley suggests that the Primary child thinks of God as "a Creator, a Giver of life, a Force that makes growth".*1*

(3). THE JUNIOR CHILD'S CONCEPT OF GOD.

A group of Juniors in the church school used the following general terms to describe God, "The Creator", "the Holy Spirit", the loving Father", the One who is all-powerful both in heaven and on earth". They also said, "He is good to everybody", "He helps the sick and the poor", "He loves us", "He is the best leader of all".

The Junior has a deeper and broader knowledge of God than the Primary child. There is usually a keen sense of the presence of God in every-day life and of fellowship with him. Yet the lack of a clear-cut conception of God may be illustrated by Rose Y's remark to the writer, "I don't think there is much difference between God and Jesus Christ. God is the Father and he is a spirit". Juniors are eager to learn more about God from the teacher and from books.

(4). THE ADOLESCENT'S CONCEPT OF GOD.

A class of early adolescent girls was asked to write their ideas of God. Katherine S. wrote, "God is a spirit, he is everywhere. Although we cannot

1 Whitley, Mary Theodora, A Study of the Primary Child, Westminster Press.

see him, he is next to us and watching over us. God has done many things for me".

Louise G. wrote, "God is with us in trouble and when we are happy". Mary P. stated, "He is our Saviour. He is a Holy Ghost". Vera N. said, "I think God is up in the heavens and looks down upon us to bless us".

The adolescent tests and readjusts his ideas about God. It is a time of searching and uncertainty, There may be overemphasis upon certain attributes of God and vague notions about other attributes. Usually his concept of God becomes fixed during later adolescence.

4. CONCEPTS OF JESUS CHRIST.

(1). THE BEGINNER'S CONCEPT OF JESUS CHRIST.

"The concept which the child needs of Christ is of his surpassing goodness, his unselfish courage and his loving service".*1*

The principal of the department said, "They love the Christmas story of Jesus as a baby, and the other stories of his life which reveal him as a friend and helper".

(2). THE PRIMARY CHILD'S CONCEPT OF JESUS CHRIST.

The lesson material for use during the first three months of 1930 is designed to develop concepts

*1*Betts, Anna Frelove, Mother Teacher of Religion, p. 50, Abingdon Press, 1922.

of "Jesus and the Children". Some of the lesson titles are: "Children Coming to See Jesus", "Jesus Making a Sick Boy Well", "Jesus Making a Little Girl Live Again," "Children Singing to Jesus", "Jesus Loving Children A ll Over the World".

The Primary child thinks of Jesus as one who went about doing good, performing miracles, helping people and animals. He is a friend and an example.

(3). THE JUNIOR'S CONCEPT OF JESUS CHRIST.

A group of the church school Juniors said, "Jesus was God's Son", "He was a good man", "He was a sinless man", "He was about the same as God".

Nan F. Weeks, who prepared the lesson text being used during the first three months of 1930, stated in the introduction:

"The lesson stories in this book are about the greatest Hero who ever lived. From them you may learn about the things he did and the places he saw when he was a junior boy. Not only was he brave and fearless, but he was strong and athletic, able to climb rugged mountains and to take long hikes. But he always used his splendid courage and his fine strength to help the weak and the sick and the suffering. Unlike other heroes, this Hero, Jesus of Nazareth, is not only kind and courageous himself, but because he is the Son of God, he is able to help us to be kind and courageous too".*1*

The boyhood of Jesus is appealing. He is the object of hero-worship. Imagination fills in vivid details concerning his life and work. There is admiration for his noble qualities. Curiosity leads

*1*Weeks, Nan F., Course IV, Junior First Year, Part II, p. 7, The Judson Press, 1929.

to many questions about Jesus and to reading about him. He is readily accepted as the Saviour and the Son of God. The Junior period is a precious time for developing proper concepts of Jesus Christ.

"During the literal submissive period of development when many boys and girls are in the Junior Department they should be led to confess Jesus Christ as their Lord and Master and to acknowledge the Heavenly Father as their God".*1*

(4). THE ADOLESCENT'S CONCEPT OF JESUS CHRIST.

Five girls in early adolescence made the following comments about Jesus Christ:

"Jesus Christ was a great teacher. He healed the sick and gave the blind their eyesight".

"I would say that he is the one we can look forward to. Jesus is an example we all try to follow."

"He is the Son of our Father".

"Jesus is our Saviour".

"Jesus Christ is the Son of God. He has helped many people by teaching them about God. He healed the sick. Jesus suffered for us".

Jesus Christ becomes more subjectively personal to the Junior. Dogmatic statements by adults no longer satisfy. The mind is seeking for truth about Christ.

1 McKinney, A.H., Average Boys and Girls, p. 83, Revell, 1925.

Often there is deep love for Christ, personal loyalty to him, a dedication of the life to his cause. The concepts of Christ have broadened. Where there has been intelligent guidance through periods of intellectual doubt, the concepts of Christ stand upon a reasonable and satisfying foundation.

5. CONCEPTS OF THE BIBLE

Beginners do not have an adequate conception of the Bible as the Word of God.

Primary children know that stories about God and Jesus Christ are found in the Bible. They call the Bible the Word of God without having a clear idea of its inspiration and uniqueness.

Juniors have a genuine interest in the Bible. They wish to know its history. During the last quarter of 1929, the Department studied the manner in which the Bible came to us. They develop ability to use it. Each member of the Junior department keeps a notebook in which he writes a summary or paraphrase of the chapters studied in Matthew. Appropriate pictures are inserted. One girl copied sixteen chapters of Matthew in long-hand in three weeks. Juniors and early adolescents easily memorize Bible verses. For Rally Day, 1929, each graduate from the Junior Department memorized John 15:1-17, I Corinthians 13, and Luke 10:27-37.

About forty adolescents belong to the Pocket Testament League, and carry the New Testament or parts of it with them all the time. A few of them made the following statements:

"The Bible is a holy book. It is the only book that has the real truth. The Bible is not of any use to us if we do not know what is in it".

"We should always believe in the Bible because it is God's words".

"The Bible is a book of God".

"We could never be told the truth, if we did not have the Bible. If a man or a woman would tell us something, we would believe what they told us. But if we have a Bible, we could look up and see if this person has told the truth".

The adolescent does not think of the Bible as merely a story book. Although he does not use it much, he believes that it contains truth concerning the complex life problems he is trying to solve. He sometimes asks for the interpretation of a difficult passage. Few of the church school use the Bible systematically. It is seldom used by scholars at home to prepare the church school lesson.

6. CONCLUSION

The concepts of God, Jesus Christ and the Bible which have been set forth are the result of a personal investigation by the writer. It was impossible to conduct a comprehensive study. The principal of the Beginners' department stated a difficulty in studying the intellectual aspect of religious life in her department when she said that only occasionally does she observe a reaction which indicates that a new religious concept has been accepted and taken root in the mind.

The conclusions in this phase of the study are based upon friendly conversations with scholars and evaluation of their spontaneous remarks. It has been learned that their religious concepts are usually hazy, confused, mixed with superstition, and influenced by the Greek Orthodox or Roman Catholic background in the home. The religious life of the group is more emotional than intellectual.

II. THE EMOTIONAL RELIGIOUS LIFE.

1. THE ARTISTIC INTERESTS OF THE GROUP.

"Religion and art spring from the same fount of the personal being, viz., the feelings. Art is the expression of the feelings in the presence of the beautiful or sublime; religion is the expression of the feelings in the presence of the divine. When the divine is considered perfect and beautiful, as well as good and true, then religion and art have in part identical elements. Religion is not primarily what a man thinks; this is dogma, creed, or philosophy. Nor is religion primarily what a man does, for the deeds of man may be done under necessity or from motives of prudence or convention. But religion is primarily what a man is, what he feels, in the presence of the Supreme Person, and then, and then (*italics*), what he thinks and does in consequence of such feeling."*1*

On December 27, 1929, the writer visited eight Slavic and eight Italian homes to study the artistic interests in representative homes where the church school members live.

(1). THE GENERAL APPEARANCE OF THE HOMES.

The general appearance of the homes might be classified as follows:

	Slavic	Italian
Clean	3	4
Untidy	3	3
Dirty	2	1

The untidiness was due to playing children or other circumstances which could not be avoided.

*1*Horne, Herman Harrell, Ph.D., The Philosophy of Education (Revised), p. 123, MacMillan, 1927

The desire to beautify the home was sometimes crudely expressed. The Italian aesthetic taste seemed better than the Slavic. At the only Slavic home where there was a Christmas tree, figures were arranged at the base to represent the Nativity scene. In one home the poverty was such that there were not enough chairs for all the large family to be seated at the same time. The rooms were in semi-darkness because the gas had been turned down for the sake of economy.

(2). PICTURES: in the sixteen homes visited.

	Slavic	Italian
Religious pictures	4	3
Painting by member of family		2
Cheap prints	2	2
Family groups	5	3
Graduation pictures	4	1
Framed diplomas	3	2
Crayon drawings (school work)		1
Gaudy calendars	3	1

The only pictures with artistic merit had religious symbolism. In one Slavic home, four pictures were arranged to be used as icons. Several of these pictures in both Slavic and Italian homes represented Christ's figure with a large, red bleeding heart exposed. Religious pictures have been important factors in the background of both groups.

In one home the only picture^{ture} was the gaudy print on a large calendar. In another home a seventy-seven year old man amuses himself trying to paint pictures. A young ex-soldier has decorated the walls of his home with his own paintings.

(3). MUSIC: in the sixteen homes visited.

	Slavic	Italian
Homes with no music	3	4
Music of some kind	5	4
Musician in the family	3	2
Violin	1	1
Accordion	2	
Piano		1
Banjo		1
Phonograph	2	1
Radio	1	3

The Slavic people showed a deeper appreciation of good music. The church school members who assist by playing musical instruments in any of the church services are all either^{of} Slavic or of American parentage. "No other form of expression can take the place of music in creating a spirit of reverence and devotion or in inspiring religious feeling".*1* Parents usually desire their children to develop musical ability. A unique feature was that in one Slavic home there were singing canaries flying about the room.

1 Betts, George Herbert, How to Teach Religion, p.72
Abingdon Press, 1919.

(4). LITERATURE: in the sixteen homes visited.

	Slavic	Italian
The Bible	8	7
Library books	5	3
School books	8	8
Boy's story books owned	1	3
Girls' story books owned	1	
Nature books		1
Cheap novels	1	

There were school books in every home. All, except a new family in contact with the church for only a short time, had a Bible or part of the Bible. However, the Bible is not frequently used. The best secular literature was that suggested or required in connection with public school work. In all of the homes there were tabloid newspapers. Very few of the magazines cost more than five cents.

2. WORSHIP.

(1). FAMILY WORSHIP.

It is difficult to make an accurate general statement about worship in the home. The writer knows no church school family in the neighborhood where the parents daily read the Bible and pray with the whole family. In a few cases children have used prayers for grace at the table which they had learned in the church school. But the practice usually lasted for only a short time.

There are individuals who daily have private worship. Often there is little privacy at home. Some offer prayers while going to work or to school in the morning, and some seek out quiet places to read their Bibles. In a few homes several of the children worship together. Some of the mothers teach the young children to say a prayer before going to bed at night.

(2). PUBLIC PRAYER IN CHURCH.

The Beginners and Primary ^{pupils} ~~scholars~~ usually offer their prayers in unison, either repeating a prayer previously memorized, or saying phrase by phrase after the teacher. The Juniors repeat memorized prayers and begin to frame their own simple expressions. In all the departments the ^{pupils} ~~scholars~~ are willing to suggest subjects for prayer. At the Intermediate week-day session, requests for prayer are made. Then members of the class volunteer to pray in accord with each of these requests.

3. CONCLUSION.

Before being enrolled as members of the church school most of the group were accustomed to a form of religion in which it was not necessary to make much use of the intellect. They sensed the presence of God.

They have a traditional love for ritual, sacred pictures and music. This is demonstrated by the manner in which they decorate their homes and by their appreciation of ritualistic parts of the church service. The emotions are the chief means by which members of the group approach God.

III. THE VOLITIONAL RELIGIOUS LIFE.

X 1. A GENERAL STATEMENT.

The volitional religious life is the realm in which will is supreme. The volitions of the individual and the group guide the concepts and the emotions to fruition in various forms of expression, action, habits and attitudes.

DeWitt Memorial Church helps many to set a high standard of ideals and habits as they go through the process of readjustment during childhood and youth. In the polyglot neighborhood, volitions are exercised to make adjustments between inherited racial attitudes, imported from various European countries, and the impinging habits of the local group. There is confusion and unrest in the lives of those young people whose parents habitually, or usually, speak a foreign language, eat and dress in European peasant fashion, and worship God in their own traditional manner.

"Although it is not the central function of the church school to promote general culture, it is its province to add whatever values it can to life without militating against the realization of its fundamental aims".*1* In December, a missionary heard a little girl say to her mother, "O mother, that is not the way to decorate a Christmas tree. At the church they

*1*The Indiana Survey of Religious Education, Vol. II, p. 370, George H. Doran, 1924.

trim it this way". And in more serious life situations, the standards of the church have a powerful influence, Many find the church to be second only to their homes as a vital factor in influencing their life habits.

2. DEVOTIONAL HABITS AND ATTITUDES.

Most of the group come from homes where there is a love of ritual, beautiful music, and religious agencies which appeal to the emotions rather than the intellect. Sensing this aesthetic feeling, the auditorium pews, pulpit furniture, altar rail and electric fixtures were recently changed to harmonize more with the architecture of the room. The response in the form of a more reverent attitude was noticeable.

A study of the behavior during prayer shows deep reverence in all cases where there is discipline. Sometimes Juniors and adolescents are tense in their attitude. A girl in early adolescence said, "I really believe in God because when I pray, my prayers are often answered". A few have to endure the persecution of ridicule by members of their family. The effect is either to deepen their earnestness or cause them to stop coming to the church school.

Thanksgiving dinner was about to be served at John's home. As the family gathered at the table John said, "We must thank God for this food". His

mother suggested that he pray. John directed all to bow their heads, and then repeated, "Heavenly Father, we thank thee for this food". Not only had this little boy learned a beautiful~~y~~ lesson, but he had applied it to his life at just the right time and place.

3. MORAL HABITS AND ATTITUDES.

"The volition of the individual in the presence of right and wrong is morality".*1* G. Stanley Hall says: 'So closely bound together are moral and religious training that a discussion of the one without the other would be incomplete'.*2* In the religious training of the church school an effort is made to develop "the volition of the individual in the presence of right and wrong".

Children will thoughtlessly or willfully disobey, and the teacher endeavors to create a desire to do what is right. For instance, at the work table children are not supposed to touch the material until all have received their portion. When a child touches his material before the teacher gives permission, it is taken away until the punishment has been effective.

1 Horne, Herman Harrell, Ph.D., The Philosophy of Education (Revised), p. 140, MacMillan, 1927.

2 Clark, John King, Systematic Moral Education, p. 11, Barnes, 1911.

When the teacher gently but firmly enforces discipline, the child realizes the reason for the correction, and usually reacts by desiring to do what is right. "Children find which actions pay and which do not by the way other people treat them".*1*

Primary girls and boys spend much of their time in the land of "make-believe". Even when they know there is no real Santa Claus, they respond eagerly to stories about him. In their liberal use of imagination the children are not guilty of falsehood. Their moral life cannot be judged by adult standards.

The restless Junior is in the process of rapidly moulding life habits. He has immature, but decided, ideas about right and wrong. His ideas may not be correct, for he will lie in loyalty to his street gang. A dozen of these boys meet at the church as a group of Boy Rangers of America. They use Indian names, sign language, and are potential Indians.

One of the Junior boys asked his mother, "Are we a regular family?"

"Why do you ask"?

"Because father don't smoke or drink, and you don't use lipstick".

Several of the Junior boys begin to smoke and drink. One may hear Juniors tell about drinking wine in their hown homes or at the homes of friends.

*1*Whitley, Mary Theodora, A Study of the Little Child, p. 30, Westminster Press, 1921.

In early adolescence boys and girls assume many new responsibilities. "The mind is beginning to comprehend the meaning of moral principles as distinguished from arbitrary rules, and of absolute as distinguished from relative values. It is in adolescence that the most rapid advances are made toward a real inner interpretation of duty".*1* They are often little mothers for younger brothers and sisters. At the last church school picnic several adolescents were able to come only on condition that they bring infant brothers and sisters with them. It was pathetic to see a fourteen-year old boy rocking the baby to sleep. He was on the verge of tears because he wanted to play ball with the other boys. This was not an exceptional case.

In the Junior and early adolescent period there is much imitation of older people. The scoutmaster exercises a powerful influence in setting an example for his troop. The boys attend the morning church service because he attends. They imitate his mannerisms. He is their hero. The only church school classes which have held together through the adolescent period are those whose teachers have had magnetic personalities. This is the period when a definite allegiance to Christ and the church is most easily cultivated.

1 Tracy, Frederick, The Psychology of Adolescence, p. 163, MacMillan, 1924.

The sex problem arises during the adolescent period. In 1929 the writer held a series of informal Sunday evening meetings with a group of six young men to discuss life problems. As a group and privately, sex relationships were discussed. None of them had ever talked with their parents about the matter. Their chief source of sex information had been the indecent talk of the poolroom and the social club in a hired room. Their ideas had been highly colored by motion picture presentations.

There are wide extremes in the moral life of adolescents. Among the girls there is intolerance for any of their number who have "gone wrong". One young lady, who is engaged to be married, recently told the writer some of ^{her} ideals for a home. She wants her "boy friend" to belong to her church, she wants to have family worship in her home, and she desires to inject spirituality into all the home relationships. Six years ago she was a starved little orphan under the care of a relative. She came through a period of threatened tuberculosis with restored health and a deep spiritual experience. She is a church school teacher. At the church she gained ideals for her home and her life.

At a recent meeting of young people the following expressions were made:

Anna N. said, " Girls expect the fellows to be square with them".

Joseph A., a nineteen-year old boy who provides a home for three younger children because his mother died and his father deserted the children, said, "When a young man picks a wife he is not going to choose the girl who has let him pet her whenever he pleased".

Lawrence D. said, "Young men expect the girls to be on the level with them".

Unfortunately, there is much immorality in the Russian and Polish group. ~~Church~~^{ur} school children are involved in several cases of men who have established homes here although they have wives in Europe. A Russian boy at the church camp heard a chapel speaker urge the boys to love their mothers who had sacrificed so much for them. While walking away he said to a friend, "I wonder what that bird would say if he had a mother like mine". The mother had left home to live with a man who was not her husband. For the past eight years the church school has been a steady influence in this boy's life.

Drinking habits have an unwholesome effect upon the children in the families. For instance, the father of nine church school children, including the Cradle Roll members, celebrated last Christmas by being drunk for almost a week. On the Sunday before Christmas

he stole the phonograph records to pawn. His wife took the children's best clothes to the church so that they might not also be pawned. Such a father is sure to influence the moral habits and attitudes of his children.

4. SOCIAL HABITS AND ATTITUDES.

(1). NATIONAL CUSTOMS.

Many of the social habits are relics of European customs. Although the church school group does not always participate, these customs influence and touch their lives.

The emotional Italian makes a great display when there is a funeral. By paying regularly to a burial association he may have available one or two thousand dollars. He engages an undertaker who advertises the coffins in a window display. His ~~club~~^{club} or lodge will have a holiday to mourn with ~~him~~^{him}. He provides liberal refreshments for a wake on the nights between the time of death and the funeral. A band leads the funeral procession. Before the coffin walk little girls dressed to represent angels, wearing imitation wings. The coffin is carried by six men for several blocks. The mourners follow on foot. ~~The mourners follow on foot.~~

In the Italian colony there is an occasional street celebration in honor of some Roman Catholic

saint. The street will be brilliantly illuminated for at least three blocks. Over the sidewalk will be a large plaster-of-paris representation of the saint with appropriate pictures for a background. Huge candles burn. The people give their money to a treasurer who sits below the saint. Each evening an Italian band will play operas. In spite of the din and roar from neighboring streets, people will stand in rapt attention while the band plays grand opera.

Baptisms and marriages are the occasions for great festivity. The Russian people retain many of the religious customs of the Greek Orthodox church to which they formerly belonged. For instance, many of the church school children have two Christmas celebrations, at the church on December 25th, and the "Russian Christmas" two weeks later.

(2). PLAY GROUNDS.

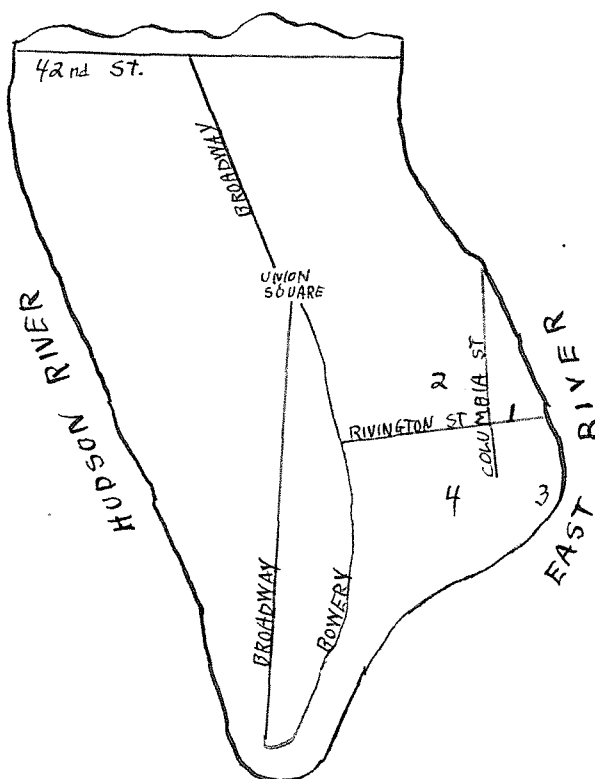
The location of the neighborhood playgrounds with reference to DeWitt Memorial Church is indicated on the map, page 43a.

Corlear's Hook Park, six blocks from the church, has an area of 7.458 acres.*1* About three acres are available for a playground. Here are swings, slides, a merry-go-round and a ball field.

1 Official Directory of the City of New York, 1929, p.140

NEIGHBORHOOD PLAYGROUNDS

SOUTHERN MANHATTAN



1. DEWITT MEMORIAL CHURCH
2. HAMILTON FISH PARK.
3. CORLEAR'S HOOK PARK.
4. HENRY STREET SETTLEMENT.

Hamilton Fish Park, three blocks from the church, has an area of 3.6 acres.*1* There are slides, swings, several basket ball courts, a small gymnasium, and about a half acre which may be flooded to form a shallow pool for bathing or ice skating. Henry Street Settlement, five blocks from the church, has a cemented area one block long and forty feet wide, available for handball courts.

The public schools open their gymnasiums in the summer to be used as playgrounds during certain hours.

Two settlement houses have gymnasiums for a limited number.

Many children use the roofs of houses as playgrounds. While fleeing from imaginary Indians, one of the church school boys stepped off into space and was killed.

Lack of playgrounds is responsible for the streets being so filled with playing children. During the last six months of 1929, this was the direct cause of five people being seriously injured by automobiles at the corner of Rivington and Columbia Streets, near where DeWitt Memorial Church stands.

The environment in which the children play is not only physically dangerous but also morally dangerous. In the street they hear vile language and see filthy words written upon the buildings. Parents have difficulty in selecting proper companions for the boys and girls.

1 Official Directory of the City of New York, 1929, p.140

Gangs of boys and cliques of girls form without proper guidance. "Crap" games on the sidewalk are numerous. Racial antipathy is sometimes openly expressed. On October 20, 1929, at Rivington and Pitt Streets, an Irish policeman yelled at a group of women and children who were Jewish and Italian, "Hurry up, you _ _ dummies". This was doubtless an exceptional case, but it was an open expression of the undercurrent of racial feeling which many people in the neighborhood have.

(3). OTHER RECREATIONS.

Most of the Juniors and adolescents are interested in athletics. They play with or support the two basket ball teams entered in the tournament of the Inter-church Athletic Association.

Each summer from fifty to seventy-five of the church school members go to camps where there is organized recreation. Perhaps a dozen of the young men frequent pool rooms. Some of the adolescents go to public dance halls. The girls are hardly to be blamed for hesitating in some cases to invite boy friends into squalid homes. One may observe many street flirtations and door-step farewells. The tendency is to seek recreation outside of the home.

The cheap motion picture furnishes a common form of amusement. On January 13, 1930, the writer went to the Betsy Ross Theater on Cannon Street. The charge for

admission is five cents in the afternoon and ten cents at night. The seating capacity is 527. Both the exterior and the interior are dingy. One felt as though vermin were crawling over the seats. Men and boys wear their hats while in the building - a Jewish custom. The smell of the place was most unpleasant and the ventilation was poor. The law that little children cannot enter unaccompanied by adults did not seem to be strictly enforced. Venders were going up and down the aisles, selling soda/water, ice cream, candy, chewing gum and potato chips.

The feature picture was "A Million for Love". The leading actors represented a narcotic peddler, a brutal prison warden and an innocent convict who escaped. There was much shooting and rapid action. A child could easily get the impression that might is right, that it is all right to kill if one can only "get away with it".

The comedy picture was "Don't Get Nervous". It concerned a groom's frantic efforts to secure ten dollars so that he could get married. There was much chasing and throwing, to the delight of the audience. "South Sea Rose" was to be shown the next week.

The best part of the entertainment was the music. The pipe organ even played a few classical numbers.

The motion picture "with its appeal to the eye-gate, that surest of all avenues to indelibility, portrayal of adventure and activity, its starring of heroes, and its often crude and unsubtle humor, is pushing out the walls of the child's world on every side. The child of today

(of impression, its suspended excitement, its)

is perfectly familiar with many ideas, many phases of social life, many human emotions, of which the child of ten years ago was utterly unconscious".*1*

5. THE HIATUS BETWEEN RELIGIOUS CONCEPTS AND CONDUCT.


Sabbath observance is emphasized in the church school because there is such a pull toward the European type of a Sunday holiday. But a large proportion of the church school members have two great events scheduled for each Sunday - church in the morning and the sensational movie in the afternoon. Parents will send them to the movies to get rid of them.

Lying, cheating and stealing is sometimes observed. There must be a careful referee at all games played in the gymnasium. All money and valuables must be secured behind locked doors. Many cases have been observed of boys and girls who stole money, scarfs, gloves, hats, coats, etc.

In September, 1929, eight boys in later and middle adolescence purchased a Studebaker automobile for \$75. There was considerable reckless driving, at least one drinking party, and then it developed that only two could pay their share of the original cost and upkeep for the car. It was decided to have a raffle for the announced purpose of purchasing basket ball uniforms to be used while playing on the church team. The real purpose of the raffle was to pay for the car. Two hundred tickets were

1 Powell, Marie Cole, Junior Method In the Church School, p. 25-26, Abingdon Press, 1923.

sold at ~~ten~~ cents each before the writer learned about the affair and discovered that his name was being used to promote the scheme. The gambling features of the plan were pointed out to the boys. They held a conference, and decided to return the money they had already received. They gave the writer all the unused raffle tickets. They had been swept along by group psychology until their conduct was beneath their religious concepts.

961	961
Name..... Address.....	<p style="text-align: center;">DRAWING</p> <p style="text-align: center;">FOR A</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">\$5.00 GOLD PIECE</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">HELD BY THE WALTONS A. C.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">AT THE AVED BOYS CLUB ROOMS</p> <p style="text-align: center;">264 EAST 7TH STREET, NEW YORK</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Monday Eve'g, Nov. 3, 1929</p> <p style="text-align: center;">SHARE 10 CENTS</p> <p style="text-align: center;">COMMENCING AT 9 O'CLOCK</p> <div style="text-align: right;">  </div>

6. CONCLUSION

"That our efforts to teach religion are largely counteracted by the learner's contacts with the life of our time has been lamented by many, but no likely remedy is proposed. The reason why we cannot think of a remedy is that we only half perceive the nature of the problem".*1* And even when people know what is right, and feel themselves under the urge of emotion to do the right, they may still lack sufficient volitional power to make permanent or put into action their good intentions.

This is true in the case of a majority of the church school members. There are conspicuous examples of high grade Christian living. But the moral conduct of the group is usually on a lower plane than the religious knowledge and religious feeling. Often the volitions are not properly cultivated at home because the parents do not understand or do not care. The scholars approach God with the emotions and the intellect, but their religious development is seriously retarded by ~~weak~~ ^{uncultivated} volitions.

1 Coe, George A., What is Christian Education? p.48, Scribners, 1929.

CHAPTER FOUR

OUTSTANDING NEEDS.

Important needs in the field of Christian education have become apparent through this study of the religious life of DeWitt Memorial church school members. ~~These needs are classified in outline form with no attempt at elaboration.~~ This section of the thesis may serve the double purpose of briefly (1) emphasizing outstanding deficiencies in the religious life of the school, and (2) directing attention to the points where curriculum principles are most necessary.

I. THE OBJECTIVES OF THE SCHOOL.

There is no commonly-accepted, clear-cut objective for DeWitt Memorial church school.

Some parents send their children to the school because they feel that the Christian training will be beneficial. Some parents send their children to keep them off the street, or because neighbor children attend, or because the church visitor has urged attendance until a habit has been formed.

The teachers aim "to make good Christians", which may mean much or little. The immediate objective of most of the volunteer teachers is "to teach the lesson", which is outlined for them in a quarterly. There is a dull, monotonous uniformity in the teaching, with no great goal in view.

The objective of some of the children is to earn recognition for faithful attendance. The Cross and Crown pin system is used. ^{Ten percent} ~~A few~~ of the teachers use a system of awards for church school attendance, church attendance, prayer offered in the class and Bible reading. Some pupils have the aim of wishing to know more about God and his will for their lives. There are those, such as Anna K. and Anna S. who have such a high aim in attending the church school that they are faithful in spite of petty persecution by their parents.

DeWitt Memorial church school needs a definite statement of its ultimate objective . Immediate objectives, attainable at successive stages during the course of study, should be ^edefined and arranged in systematic order.

II. THE NEIGHBORHOOD HOMES.

Many of the homes have been transplanted to the lower east side of Manhattan from a peasant community in Sicily or Russia. Older members of the families cling to the European customs. Younger members, among them the church school group, bring American habits into the homes. Usually these families have spent their American sojourn within the limits of their own national colony. Hardly any of the parents or children have ever been entertained in a real American home.

But there is a tendency for the children to become ashamed of their parents.

Most of the parents are handicapped by voluntary and involuntary isolation from American people and customs, by inability to read or write even in their native language, and by low-grade mentality. They cannot teach the Christianity of the Bible to their children because they know little about this form of Christianity. Thus, there is a need for the Christian training of parents, which is a function of the church.

Another need is Christian training by the parents, which is a function of the home. The parents need to understand the school objectives and to cooperate more in reaching toward them. The parents need to realize their tremendous responsibility for the Christian education of their own children. And then they should be given tools, encouragement and guidance for doing this important constructive work.

III. THE POLYGLOT CHURCH.

A majority of the church constituency does not realize the nature of the Christian education problems and opportunities which face the school. An official board of nine elders is elected to represent the English-speaking congregation. Not one of these men lives in the neighborhood or understands the Christian education situation. Six of them never visit in the homes of church school members.. The official board and almost all of the English congre-

gation were once members of the church school, and realize its importance to the church and the community. But they have not kept pace with the changing problems, and are not at present qualified to help intelligently in working out a solution.

The school is so important to DeWitt Memorial Church that the whole church program should be re-organized from the standpoint of Christian education. The future of the church involves the interests of those families which are now unable to enter fully into the duties and privileges of the institution. The major objectives of the school need to be accepted as objectives of the whole church in its polyglot activities. There should be a common focus for all the church activities.

IV. THE UNTRAINED TEACHERS.

There are twenty-four teachers and officers in the church school. Five are paid church visitors. Most of the volunteer teachers have moved all their lives in a very narrow sphere. Their formal education did not usually extend beyond the second year in high school.

These leaders volunteered in response to an urgent appeal by the pastor for church school teachers. The chief qualification was that they have a desire to take an active part in the work of the school.

Little or no preliminary training in pedagogy or in principles and methods of Christian education was required, except in the case of the department principals. When once anchored in a teaching position, most of the teachers got into a rut in their methods.

There are always present on the staff a few teachers who are negligent in attendance, promptness and preparation. They seem to feel that their duty is performed if they are able to rush in before the worship period is over and fill in ~~time~~ during a thirty-minute class period. The carelessness and inefficiency of such teachers seriously handicaps their pupils.

There is a need for a better quality of teaching. If drastic measures were adopted the standards of the present staff could be raised to a much higher level. Perhaps the chief need of the teachers is for a constant deepening and enrichment of Christian spirit and zeal.

V. THE NEGLECTED PUPILS.

There is a need for a better understanding of the life situations of the individual pupils. Many of the teachers never visit the homes of their pupils and have few intimate contacts with them outside of the school sessions. Within the past two years only three teachers have invited their classes to their homes. This leads to the observation that the teachers, except the church visitors, do not know their pupils, and cannot intelligently guide them.

There is a need for more adaptation of curriculum material to the usual biological, physiological, sociological, psychological and philosophical needs of average persons at each age level. At the Sunday sessions, the Beginners and Primary children are taught with the Westminster lesson material, the Juniors have Graded Lessons of the Keystone Series, and the Intermediates and Seniors have the Improved Uniform Series of the International Sunday School Lessons. The principals of each department have a general idea of what lesson material is being used in the other departments. But there is no organized course of study for the whole school which avoids duplications and which aims to cumulatively develop the religious life of the pupils. All the pupils from twelve years of age to twenty-one have the same lesson material.

Hence there is a need for a better understanding of the pupils and for more adaptation of the curriculum material to meet their life situations.

VI. THE INTELLECTUAL NEEDS.

In such a mixed group religious concepts need clarification and organization. Some traditional superstitious ideas must be discarded because they are not founded upon facts. For instance, the use of the novena as a means of invoking divine favor is superfluous. Some primitive concepts need to be developed, "filled full" of meaning. For instance, the

average pupil will readily say that Jesus Christ is the Saviour, without having a clear conception of what that fact means.

There is a need for more intimate contact with Biblical truth. In some of the classes extraneous material is allowed to crowd out the Biblical material. DeWitt Memorial church school needs a transcendent estimate of God as revealed in Jesus Christ.

VI. THE EMOTIONAL NEEDS.

It is normal for the church school members to emphasize the emotional rather than the intellectual aspects of Christianity. The values of the emotional approach to God need to be conserved and directed into wholesome channels of expression. There should be cultivation of proper emotional expression through wise use of religious pictures, music, literature, worship. There is a need for control and motivation of the native emotional capacity toward a regulated, vital experience of fellowship with God.

VII. THE VOLITIONAL NEEDS.

The church school members are exposed to low ideals and attitudes on the neighboring streets, and often in their own homes. The vicinity of the church is a breeding-ground for New York gangsters. The downward pull upon the members of the church school is constant. There is a need for those elements in the curriculum which will strengthen weak volitional powers.

Petty thefts are common. It is not safe to leave any article of value unguarded in the church. Even Bibles have been stolen.

The checking of wrong tendencies must be handled according to the circumstances of individual cases. Temptations should not be placed before the pupils. There is a need for an integration of Christian concepts and emotions into life habits and attitudes. There is need for a concentration of influences which will lead to a definite decision for life commitment to God's service.

CHAPTER FIVE

FOUNDATION CURRICULUM PRINCIPLES.

I. THE IMPORTANCE OF CURRICUL^{UM} PRINCIPLES.

In the DeWitt Memorial church school the curriculum is the sum of all the means applied for the Christian education of the pupils. Betts and Hawthorne say that the curriculum is "all of the educative situations provided by the organized school program".*1* The curriculum is a means to an end.

Curriculum principles are the synthetic statements of pedagogical truth which serve as the foundation for the methods used in education. Construction engineers say that more than one half the cost of a New York building is for the foundation and the steel framework, for that which cannot be seen when the building is completed. All the visible methods of Christian education should rest upon solid underlying principles.

Contemporary life is changing, and the curriculum must keep pace. As society develops, new needs arise to which the school must adjust itself. Methods, which develop rapidly, may be discarded. Principles, which develop slowly, may not be discarded without removing support from beneath the whole educational structure. Christian education is not justified in

1 Betts, George Herbert and Hawthorne, Marion O.,
Method in Teaching Religion, p.117, Abingdon, 1925.

using any method which does not rest upon a sound educational pier. Curriculum principles of Christian education are the propositions which epitomize a practical philosophy of Christian Education.

"The courses of study offered by the school, which men call the curriculum, is neither an invention of some genius nor the discovery of some explorer; it is the accumulated racial experience, the product of human society as a whole living its life in its world".*1* The DeWitt Memorial church school ~~is~~^{is} an important factor in preserving the accumulated Christian experience of the church, and in multiplying personal Christian experience. The principles which determine what shall be taught in the church school are of basic importance to Christian education.

II. PRESUPPOSITIONS.

In formulating a statement of curriculum principles, certain things are taken for granted. A few of these presuppositions are given here.

1. DeWitt Memorial Church is an educational institution.
2. There is a need for better Christian education in the DeWitt Memorial Church school.
3. This need can be met in its outstanding de-

1 Horne, Herman Harrell, The Philosophy of Education, p.145, MacMillan, 1927.

tails by the power of God operating through the perfected school curriculum.

4. Christian education involves integrated physical, intellectual, emotional and volitional life-enrichment and guidance. While the value of the physical aspect is recognized, it is not developed in this study.

5. On the basis of existing facts it is impossible to give final judgment in the realm of what out to exist at DeWitt Memorial Church, but it is possible (1) to present evidence in support of curriculum principles which seem to be foundational in the field of Christian education, (2) and to direct attention toward what seems to be the crux of the problem - the aim.

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE CURRICULUM

1. A GENERAL STATEMENT.

"There is too little consciousness of purpose. Teachers do not know what they are trying to do and therefore do not know whether they are getting it done".*1* While this criticism does not apply to all the teachers of the staff, it is true that the teachers do not have a clearly defined common aim. Christian education should be intensely telic. The whole curriculum should be pointed toward a great major objective.

There is a notion held by many parents and teachers that the aim of the church school is to stuff subject matter, chiefly Biblical knowledge, into the minds of the pupils. The knowledge may or may not be digested and related to life situations.. According to a popular "obsession of the Zeitgeist" (Ross L. Finney's phrase), the application to life will take care of itself if only a group of Bible verses are memorized and a set of axiomatic moral precepts are fixed in the mind.

2. THE ULTIMATE OBJECTIVE.

The ultimate aim of Christian education at DeWitt Memorial church should be to bring pupils into vital, unifying, spiritual fellowship with God the Father

*1*Betts, George Herbert and Hawthorne, Marion O.,
Method in Teaching Religion, p.60, Abingdon, 1925.

as revealed in Jesus Christ. This end must be distinguished from the educational means. Care must constantly be exercised to prevent any of the means, such as "teaching the lesson" or earning a gold pin, from becoming ends in themselves. At all its progressive stages Christian education should provide means for leading these under-privileged pupils toward Jesus Christ.

3. THE IMMEDIATE OBJECTIVES.

"Obviously there can be only one ultimate aim but there are a very great many immediate ones. Efficient education will define these immediate ends precisely and specifically; and will pursue them one at a time, each moment knowing exactly which one is being sought. There is, thus, a whole hierarchy of educational aims, one ultimate, one immediate (at any moment), and many intermediate ones through consideration of which the immediate ones are kept aligned with the ultimate".*1*

"We must study our daily aims with reference to how they fit in with ulterior ones, lest even when attained they should lead us nowhere worth while. Teaching is a means to an end, and, if this end is to be maximally attained, it must be definitely conceived and all materials and all methods chosen with reference to their relation to it. From the first moment available for the work down to the tap of the closing gong, no illustration should be used, no topic introduced, no sentence expressed, even a single word uttered nor gesture indulged in, that is not intended to drive on cummulatively toward the realization

1 Athearn, Walter S., The Indiana Survey of Religious Education, Vol. II, p. 343, Doran, 1924.

of the lesson's aim.... Nothing else compels one to think one's problem through so clearly and so fully as an attempt to reduce one's ideas to writing. It is therefore submitted that the aim of the lesson should be actually stated, stated in writing very carefully, clearly and definitively. When it has been thus stated, one can more objectively consider it as to its legitimacy, its pregnancy, and its attainability. One can also more readily apply it as a test of the relevancy of any material one is tempted to include in the lesson.....

The aim should be shared with the pupils. Teacher and pupils are working together for a common purpose, rather than the teacher alone dragging the ~~public~~ ^{pupils} on toward a culmination that only he has in mind. Pupils will be more interested, will work better, will be able to see in better proportions whatever is presented in the lesson, and thus better understand it, will be able to co-operate better with the teacher in keeping the discussion to the point through having a criterion of relevancy, if they are let into the secret of what the lesson is driving at. A lesson in which the pupils know and share the aim is more democratic, more socializing, and fitted to make a larger contribution to the formation of character, than one that is arbitrarily conducted by the teacher."*1*

Immediate aims differ in emphasis with different age groups. In DeWitt Memorial church school pupils should be assisted to high levels of Christian living at their own age.

For instance, one immediate aim of the Beginners might be to learn a prayer, with the accompaniment of appropriate movements of the hands and head. The use of this prayer at home would be helpful to the older members of the family.

1 Athearn, Walter S., The Indiana Survey of Religious Education, Vol. II, p. 342-4, Doran 1924.

An immediate aim of the Primary department during the past quarter has been to study ways of helping other people. As a direct result of these lessons a German-American child in the department voluntarily began to make a picture scrap book for an Irish-American child who was sick in the hospital. She had the reward of performing service that was appreciated.

One immediate aim of the Junior department might be the memorization of Scripture passages which will work into the fabric of their lives.

IV. THE HOME.

The home is an essential supplementary field for the operation of the school curriculum. But the foreign elements in the church school homes complicate this phase of the problem and limit the efficiency of the homes as teaching agencies.

1. CHRISTIAN EDUCATION OF PARENTS - A FUNCTION OF THE CHURCH.

Parents and guardians must themselves be thoroughly Christian before they can train their children to be Christian. Parents who are not Christian in word and deed are in a position to neutralize the work of the church school. Parents must not only be Christian, but also they must be informed before they can impart Biblical truth to their children. It is a function of the church to help them to receive this information and Christian spirit. But how can this information and Christian spirit be imparted to parents who do not read or write, and who may be careless in church attendance?

In addition to the church services for adults, there should be a home department of the church school, which would furnish parents with a statement of the school objectives, a study manual for guidance in assisting the children with their home work, explanations of the characteristics and needs of the

children, and suggestions for family worship and systematic Bible study. If the parents do not read the English language, in which most of the helpful material is printed, or any other language, pictures may be explained and distributed for home use.

There should be parent-teacher meetings to promote the best interests of the school. Adult Christian education with the use of foreign languages is involved.

2. CHRISTIAN EDUCATION BY PARENTS - A FUNCTION OF THE HOME.

In the administration of baptism to infants at DeWitt Memorial Church, the following questions are addressed to each of the parents:

Question. Do you accept, for yourself and for your child, the covenant of God, and therein consecrate your child to Him?

Answer. I do.

Question. Do you promise to instruct your child in the principles of our holy religion, as contained in the Scriptures, to pray with him, and for him, and to bring him up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord?

Answer. I do.

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Those parents who have made this promise have placed themselves under obligations, before God, to instruct their child in Biblical truth.

1 The Book of Common Worship, p.40-41, Presbyterian Board of Publication and Sabbath-School Work, 1922.

"No child can have a normal spiritual development whose home is not the most important factor in his early religious training".*1* The home cannot delegate to any other institution its responsibility for the child's Christian nurture and guidance. Dr. Herman Harrell Horne states the pithy epigram, "The home can be saved when it becomes a means of saving".

"The younger children in particular learn by absorption. They drink in the spirit of the family and make it their own as naturally and as continuously as they drink the air into their lungs. It would be just as futile to try to give religious instruction and training to children in a home where the atmosphere is unchristian as it would be to try to teach them the laws of health in a dark, damp, and verminous dungeon. A loose-tongued, quarrelsome, greedy family will poison the most regular system of religious instruction. The family life must testify to the same spirit as the family instruction. This is to say that a home atmosphere that is Christian through and through is ~~the~~ only atmosphere in which Christian instruction and Christian training have any chance. Consider the task of the preacher and Sunday-school teacher in their attempt to convince a child that religion is normal and helpful in all life's relationships, practical and necessary for everyday living, when that child comes from a "Christian" home where the Bible is almost never opened in his presence and where God is rarely mentioned except on Sunday".*2*

Several of the children in a large Italian family had been given important parts in the DeWitt Memorial Children's Day program. On Children's Day Sunday the weather was pleasant. The ~~family~~^{father} decided to take the family to Coney Island. When the hour for the program arrived the children were still making

1 Betts, Anna Freelove, Mother Teacher of Religion, p. 11, Abingdon Press, 1922,

2 Bulletin No.3, p.5, Religious Education in the Family, Presbyterian Board of Publication.

merry at Coney Island. The effect of the program was spoiled. The parents had failed to realize their responsibility to their children, to the church and to those who attended the service.

On one occasion an adolescent boy used insolent language to a teacher and kicked her. He was required to apologize. The parents accepted the boy's version of the affair and took him out of the church school.

Christian education of and by DeWitt parents will require understanding, tact, patience, and perseverance. Adaptable tools must be placed in their hands, and they must be trained to use these tools effectively.

V. THE CHURCH.

1. RECOGNITION OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION.

Christian education, the unique business of the church school, is of vital importance to DeWitt Memorial church and to its polyglot neighborhood.

"To teach, and yet to teach, by every possible means, and in every possible way, to teach Christianity to all mankind, is the mission of the Christian Church. The Church is a teaching institution by way of eminence. All other functions or missions of the Christian Church are subsidiary and contributory to this supreme function and mission. A Church which

no longer teaches no longer lives".*1* The church should recognize in concrete terms the dignity and importance of the teacher's work. It is fitting that DeWitt Memorial Church has an annual service in which the congregation pledges its loyal support to the teaching staff of the school

2. REORGANIZATION OF THE CHURCH PROGRAM.

"Unless we proceed to organize the whole church upon an education basis all our efforts to educate the young will be retarded and largely defeated"*2* It is taken for granted that DeWitt Memorial church is an educational institution. It remains to be determined what kind of an educational institution it will become. This will depend upon the official Board, the teaching staff, and those who shape and execute curriculum principles and methods.

Everyone in the church should have the attitude of a learner. The machinery of organization should be cut to a minimum on the theory that the morale and efficiency of the staff will be best promoted by the greatest amount of individual freedom, which does not result in duplication of effort or deviation from the ultimate and immediate objectives. Such organization

1 Bulletin No.1, The Pastor and Christian Education, p. 4, Presbyterian Board of Christian Education, 1924.

2 Coe, George A., What is Christian Education?, p.229, Scribners, 1929.

as is necessary should permit representation of all elements in the school and concentration of executive authority. The executive cannot expect parents, teachers and pupils to accept and work toward an aim which he arbitrarily announces. The wiser course is to insure cooperation by giving those involved an opportunity, under proper guidance, to study the problem and make suggestions. These are problems peculiar to the work of DeWitt Memorial Church, which require particular study. The scope of this thesis does not include a detailed explanation of methods which might be used in organizing and administering the whole church program from the standpoint of Christian education.

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VI. THE TEACHER.

1. A BACKGROUND OF CULTURE.

Culture gives maturity of judgment, a sympathetic and intelligent perspective of life situations in relation to the whole of life. "Educating is the purposeful providing of an environment; at bottom it is personality in and behind the environment that counts most; so educating is really a relation between personalities of different degrees of maturity".*1* The personality and culture of the teacher is a more important factor than the lesson material in the text.

Some of the DeWitt Memorial volunteer teachers do not realize that they lack culture. Their development of greater culture is an individual matter. A desire for improvement might be cultivated by sending them to attend conventions, conferences and social gatherings, sponsored by the New York Federation of Churches, with other church school and public school teachers, and by asking them to read literature which will stress high qualifications for a church school teacher.*(see footnote)*

2. TRAINING IN PEDAGOGY.

Knowledge of pedagogy and ability to apply sound pedagogical principles and methods are

1 Horne, Herman, Harrell, Idealism in Education, p. vii (preface), MacMillan, 1910.

footnote The qualifications of a teacher are outlined by Herman Harrell Horne in chapter 15 of "Jesus

essential for effective work. A pedagogic principle which has been discarded by the public school should not be blindly and tenaciously retained by the church school. The best that is known in pedagogy should be available and used by DeWitt Memorial church school.

Every church school teacher should be trained. Walter E. Bachman states, "A poor teacher can spoil a good lesson, but a good teacher can use a poor lesson". One of the great responsibilities of the pastor and church school superintendent is to provide the best possible training for the teachers and prospective teachers. Attempts to secure attendance at Southern Manhattan Training School and at a Teacher's Training class, conducted by the pastor, have not been successful.

Seventy-five percent of the teachers in DeWitt Memorial church school did not finish high school, and have had no special training in pedagogy. Most of them have been self-trained by the costly "trial and error" method after being thrust upon a class of youngsters. In such cases it is inevitable that pupils should draw a comparison between the public school teacher and the church school teacher. It is natural that on the basis of pedagogy the comparison is usually unfavorable to the latter. This handicap is overcome only by those teachers who are blessed with a charming personality and a radiant Christian spirit.

3. TRAINING FOR CHRISTIAN EDUCATION.

The church school teacher is the intermediary between the pupil and a unique content material.

"A genuine Christian education will not contravene any known principles of real religious education and in addition it will stress the finality of the ethical teachings of Christ and it will cultivate loyalty to him and his mission".*1.* Unfortunately not all religious education at DeWitt Memorial church centers upon this objective. Too much of the class period is often spent discussing current interests, such as basket ball, motion pictures, the latest murder, without focusing the discussion toward vital fellowship with God. The church school teacher must know Christ and understand the technique of bringing pupils into fellowship with Him.

Untrained teachers should be required to take special courses in approved schools and to continue their study during all their service. Of the twenty-four teachers and officers in the DeWitt Memorial church school, only five paid workers and three volunteers have taken a standard summer school course or more thorough training. The younger and more inexperienced the pupil the more trained a teacher is necessary to help him reach his Christian objective. If it is true that the younger pupil with undeveloped

1 Horne, Herman Harrell, "Religious Education-Our Dangers and Our Needs", Methodist Review, Nov., 1929.

intellectual, emotional and volitional ability has greater need for a trained teacher, then it follows that Beginners and Primary children should have teachers with the highest qualifications.

The DeWitt teacher needs abundant supplies of lesson material, supplemented by books and magazines. Curriculum principles should be used by the teachers as a guide in selecting, creating and using this material. All the teachers of the school must understand the curriculum principles and cooperate with one another in using them to accomplish the aims.

Unfortunately, some teachers have a tendency to plan for teaching their own class as a detached unit. The staff should so teach that scholars advancing from grade to grade will not be confused by contradictions and widely differing aims.

"What we need is a whole student being given a view of the whole ^{truth}~~truth~~, conceptually at least, by a whole man. What we too often have is a fragment of a student being given a fragment of truth by a fragment of a man".*1*

4. A CHRISTIAN SPIRIT.

There is no substitute for a sincere Christian spirit in the teacher. A deep personal religion is essential. A teacher must embody his teaching in daily conduct. He will teach more by his life than

*1*Horne, Herman Harrell, "Religious Education-Our Dangers and our Needs", Methodist Review, Nov., 1929.

by his words. The following pledge was made publicly by the DeWitt Memorial church school teachers at the last Rally Day service:

"Feeling keenly our responsibility, and appreciating our opportunity for Christian service, we dedicate our intellects and our hearts, our time and our talents to the teaching service of this church, believing that the children and youth should learn, through fellowship with Jesus Christ, "to do justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with their God".

VII. THE PUPIL.

THE

1. UNDERSTANDING PUPIL.

"The teacher is teaching not a course of study but a group of particular pupils. If the study is to be valuable to them, she must first of all study them. She must learn what their own problems are at home, at school, at play, at church, at prayer".*1* There are wide differences between individuals in the same group. The personnel of the group is constantly changing. In the Republic, Plato stressed finding "the natural bent of the child". "Knowledge which is acquired under compulsion has no hold upon the mind. Therefore do not use compulsion, but let early education be rather a sort of amusement; this will enable you to find out the natural bent of the child"(536)*2*

"No two children are standing in exactly the same position with reference to Christ. In order to lead them to Christ I must know where they are standing. Here is a child whose back is turned to Christ. If I take that one by the hand and lead him in the direction in which he is facing, I shall lead him away from Christ. Here is another child, perhaps in the same family, perhaps in the same class with the other whose face and heart are turned towards the Saviour and all I have to do is to lead him a few steps Christward. No two

*1*Carrier, Blanche and Clowes, Amy, Building a Christian Character, p xviii (preface), Doubleday Doran, 1928.

*2*Durant, Will, The Story of Philosophy, p.34, Simon and Schuster, 1927.

children have exactly the same knowledge of Christ. In order to lead them to him, I must learn what they know".*1*

Each pupil in DeWitt Memorial church school presents a unique problem. The racial heritage and home environment must be studied. Teachers have a fascinating and endless task in trying to appreciate the viewpoint of the individual pupil and the class as a whole. These viewpoints are often widely divergent from the standpoint of the teacher. Tragedies would be averted if lessons were more adapted to life situations of the pupils.

2. GUIDING THE PUPIL.

Every good teacher is a guide. DeWitt Memorial church school teachers should invite pupils to their homes, should encourage confidence, should become wholesome heroes and heroines to the pupils. To guide the pupil into a wholesome Christian experience, the teacher must-

- (1) Be prepared,
- (2) Depend upon the help of the Holy Spirit,
- (3) Present Christ in an attractive manner,
- (4) Use the pupil's language, and
- (5) Not expect too much of the pupil.

1 McKinney, A.H., The Child for Christ, p.57, Revell, 1902.

Research Bulletin No.6, issued by the International Council of Religious Education, suggests that the curriculum-maker should begin with the life needs of the learner. The learner is not always qualified to evaluate his own needs. So the curriculum-maker should have a background of comprehensive knowledge and experience which will enable him to sense the real needs of the learner in proper relationships. "Whatever is included should be brought into the closest possible relation with their interests".*1*

The curriculum is tested by the effectiveness of child learning. DeWitt Memorial Church school does not have an adequate system of reviews or tests for measuring the effectiveness of the curriculum. Members of the group need the progressive development of a longer period spent in the school. The average period of continuous attendance does not exceed five years. There is a cumulative development observable at each age level in proportion to the length of attendance at the school. Grading is on the age basis. It is a question whether the quantity and quality of the learning should not also be a factor in the grading.

1 Counts, George S., The Twenty-Sixth Year Book, p180, Public School Publishing Co., 1926.

The following propositions may be found in the table of contents of A.H.McKinney's book, "Average Boys and Girls", pp. 9-11:

- (1). "Boys and girls are fundamentally about the same everywhere.
- (2). No two boys and girls are exactly alike.
- (3). A human life is a unit, but no boy or girl remains the same for any considerable period of time.
- (4). Any boy or girl is not the same to all persons.
- (5). The laws governing the moral and spiritual development of boys and girls are of God.
- (6). Boys and girls should receive the best possible religious training.
- (7). The religious training of boys and girls cannot begin too soon nor be conducted too systematically."

VIII. THE INTELLECTUAL ASPECT.

1. APPLICABLE CHRISTIAN CONCEPTS.

Intelligent Christianity requires the acquisition of a definite, organized, integrated body of Christian concepts which are applicable to individual and social conduct.

(1). Concepts should be definite. "Gradually throughout his training the child should be forming a clear concept of religion and the part it is to play in his life. There must be a growth, stimulated by instruction, guided by wise counsel, given depth and meaning through the lives of strong men and women who express the Christian ideal in their daily living".*1* Finney says regarding the public school, "The school's business is to impart a rich, cognitive capital".*2* The Christian concepts of the average youth and adult, examined by the writer for church membership, are decidedly hazy and indefinite.

For instance, on March 23, 1930, the writer asked a fourteen-year old girl, of German parentage, to state her reason for wishing to become a member of the church. After much hesitation, she said,

1 Betts, George Herbert, How to Teach Religion, p. 63, Abingdon Press, 1919.

2 Finney, Ross L., A Sociological Philosophy of Education, p.160, MacMillan, 1929.

"Because I believe it will help me to be better".

In answer to other questions, she said, "God is the creator and ruler of the world", "Jesus Christ is the Saviour". She was unable to express any idea of the Holy Spirit. She confessed inability to use the Bible as a reference book.

(2). Concepts should be so organized that pupils are brought into contact with Christian ideas and ideals in a balanced sequence which will appeal to their growing intellects. The great Christian truths need to be intensively emphasized and clarified in each grade. Additional information should be given to the pupils just before it is most likely to be needed.

Among various members of the under-privileged church families there should be greater uniformity of opportunity to consider and organize ideas about the Christian religion. To this end, all the services in all the languages used in DeWitt Memorial church on all the days of the week should be coordinated with the ultimate and certain immediate objectives of the church school. Adult Christian education will be necessary.

(3). Concepts should be integrated with life situations. There is a danger in making factual information the end without integration into life experience.

The curriculum should be so arranged that a pupil taking the entire course of study will have a progressive spiritual growth, constantly stimulated by fresh points of contact with fundamental Christian truth. Such an ideal involves the reorganization of the whole program of DeWitt Memorial church.

2. THE BIBLE.

There are children in the DeWitt Memorial school who, when they become adults, will probably have only a superficial knowledge of the Bible. It is possible to use material which is chiefly Biblical without sacrificing pedagogy. Extra-Biblical material is valuable for purposes of illustration, broadening ^{the} outlook and ^{clarifying} ~~to clarify~~ Christian concepts. But all the extra-Biblical material used must harmonize with the truth of the Bible. It is a problem to make the lessons Biblical and also adapted to the interests of the child. But in failure to use the Bible there is a greater danger of leading pupils to think other material is more important than the Bible.

The principal of the Beginners' department said, "I sometimes omit the non-Biblical matter and substitute a Bible story of my own choosing. The Bible is adaptable for use among Beginners." The principal of the Primary department said, "At the Sunday sessions,

I often omit large sections of the suggested lesson material and enlarge upon the Biblical parts". "The most essential part of preparation for any kind of Christian work is knowledge of the Bible and experience of its truth".*1*

3. A TRANSCENDENT CONCEPT OF GOD.

Concepts of the Trinity are often confused. To the question, "What is God?", the usual answer is, "He is a spirit". When pressed to state the difference between God the Father and Jesus Christ, a frequent answer is, "There is not much difference". Ideas of God are not clearly defined, but few in the DeWitt church school are troubled with intellectual doubt about God's transcendent character. Recently a middle-adolescent girl sought an interview with the writer because she was confused and troubled about the transcendence of God. Most of the church school accept belief in God without giving the matter serious consideration. Teachers should continue to stress positively the preeminence of God.

1 Catalogue, The Biblical Seminary in New York, p. 16, 1929-1930.

IX. THE EMOTIONAL ASPECT.

1. USE OF PICTURES, MUSIC, LITERATURE.

Pictures upon the walls of the church school rooms ~~s~~hould be religious and of the best quality, attractive, appropriate, artistic. Care must be exercised in selecting pictures which will lead to the right concepts and which will avoid the cultivation of exaggerated, non-Biblical ideas. The beautiful stained glass windows in the church auditorium might, with proper lightning effects, be used effectively in evening services.

Music should be beautiful, dignified, appropriate. "Good music, good poetry and good religion go together", says Walter E. Bachman. "No other form of experience can take the place of music in creating a spirit of reverence and devotion or in inspiring religious feeling".*1* The worship service in the Intermediate and Senior departments of the school falls far short of this ideal. The music director does not sense the possibilities of creating a worshipful atmosphere by music. He shouts instructions to the worshippers, "The boys will sing the second verse!", "Now the girls"!

1 Betts, George Herbert, How to Teach Religion, Abingdon Press, 1919.

The same hymns are repeated so often that the words carry little meaning. Only occasionally is there an attempt to select hymns appropriate to the lesson. The remedy for this situation is in the hands of those who are responsible for the worship service. "Response to the appeal of music is almost universal among men, and especially have all peoples used it in their religious ceremonials and worship. Only comparatively recently, however, has there been any attempt to adapt the hymnology of the church to children and youth".*1* The hymn should be linked to the experience of the child at his own age.

Through literature, the emotional capacities are developed, and may be guided into richer living. In clubs and classes, reading lists might be suggested. Younger children might be helped by printed prayers for use in the home.

Music and pictures are a common bond between people of different races. At the 1930 Good Friday service in DeWitt Memorial Church, German, Italian, Russian and English-speaking people will sit side by side. A large part of the service will be conducted with no spoken word, An atmosphere of worship will be created by organ music, stereopticon pictures *of the crucifixion, and lighting effects.* Music, pictures, architecture, color, lighting effects and coordination of the service into a harmonious unit, may all be legitimately used in an appeal to approach God through

1 Betts, George Herber and Hawthorne, Marion O.,
Method in Teaching Religion, Abingdon, 1925.

the emotions. A worshipful atmosphere in the church must not be minimized.

2. WORSHIP.

There should be an atmosphere of reverence in rooms used chiefly for purposes of worship. Amusement activities should never be held in the church auditorium. An early adolescent, with a Roman Catholic background, suggested to the writer that there should be no gymnasium, club, or social activities anywhere in the church building. Although these things may have a rightful place in certain parts of the building, the aesthetic feeling and reverence of worshippers should never be offended. The illuminated cross in front of DeWitt Memorial Church does make an emotional appeal. Children have a sense of awe in the presence of God which may be cultivated. Reverence in the church should reduce the problem of discipline to a minimum.

Cleanliness in the DeWitt Memorial church building is necessary in order that people who live in untidy homes, supervised by shiftless parents, and who constantly see filth in the streets, may find a contrast in the church. Cleanliness should be associated with Christianity.

The emotional approach to God should parallel intellectual religious growth. But it should be

guarded against over stimulation. "Mysticism should not be reserved for the mystics. If God is, and is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him, this fact should be known not by hearsay, but, under suitable conditions, by first-hand experience. The secret of mystical experiences is already with those who fear God. After an age of rationalism we may expect an age of mysticism. It has always been so. Modern Christianity does not need a mysticism which contrary to reason denies the reality of the sense-world; it needs a mysticism which in accord with reason affirms the reality of the super-sensible world. The new technique of mysticism will certainly include the vision of Christ, the art of prayer, the open mind, the waiting soul, the willing heart".*1*

But the writer has frequent experiences with church school families whose technique of worship is crude. On the Sunday before this is written, there was a request to administer the communion service to an invalid who had taken a Roman Catholic novena in order that she might recover her health and that she might pray her deceased brother out of purgatory. Although her illness is chronic and probably permanent, although her children have attended the church school since infancy, she cherishes

1 Horne, Herman Harrell, "Religious Education-Our Dangers and Our Needs", Methodist Review, Nov., 1929.

the feeling that she can ^{buy}~~by~~ the favor of a merciful God through the intercession of the Virgin Mary.

Two days later the writer stood in a humble top-floor tenement home beside the dead body of a drunkard, who had committed suicide by jumping from the roof to the court below. In life he had not been faithful to any church. The wife regularly attends the Russian services of DeWitt Memorial Church and the three children are faithful members of the church school. Yet as we kneeled for prayer, we were surrounded by the funeral paraphernalia of the Greek Orthodox Church. These religious trappings had been installed through a regard for traditional forms of worship.

The church school families have a background of a ritual approach to God in the Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox churches. This emotional life needs intelligent motivation.

X. THE VOLITIONAL ASPECT.

1. CHRISTIAN ATTITUDES AND IDEALS.

At each age the changing concepts and sense of God's presence involves an accompanying change in Christian attitudes and ideals. "There is a religion of childhood, as well as a religion of youth, and a religion of manhood".*1* "Each stage in this succession is to be considered as having a character and quality of its own".*2*

"Not how many facts are lodged in the mind nor how many have passed through the mind and been forgotten, but how many truths are daily being built into the character - this measures the value of the knowledge we teach the child from the Bible!"*3* A boy, a member of the Beginners' department, was about to be taken to the hospital. Even the ambulance doctor and the policeman were moved when he told his family not to cry. He started to pray as he had been taught in the church school, "Heavenly Father, I thank thee for taking care of me". This prayer had been absorbed by his intellect, had appealed to his emotions, and at a crisis in his life influenced his volitions.

*1*Tracy, Frederick, The Psychology of Adolescence, p.185-6, MacMillan, 1924.

*2*Committee Report, Twenty-sixth Year Book, p.12, Public School Publishing Co., 1926.

*3*Betts, George Herbert, How to Teach Religion, p. 69, Abingdon Press, 1919.

Christian attitudes and ideals for the home should have a prominent place in the DeWitt Memorial curriculum. Personal problems pertaining to the home or to sex may be discussed privately with the individual. Specific personal help should be given, with the consent of the parents, for the solution of adolescent moral problems, just before it is most likely to be needed. The confidence of the girl or boy is essential.

2. THE GAP BETWEEN CONCEPT AND CONDUCT.

There are often gaps between Christian concepts and moral conduct. The curriculum should help to bridge this gap. Failure in this respect may be caused by-

- (1). Lack of coordination in the curriculum elements,
- (2). Concepts or emotions which are inherently wrong and inadaptable to life situations, or
- (3). Conscious or unconscious interference with proper integration by those in control.

The pupil should be guided in forming an objective code of moral conduct. Moral standards may be presented in an attractive manner from the Christian standpoint. There should be opportunities provided in school to practice the Christian virtues. The capacity to distinguish between right and wrong must be kept undulled.

3. A DECISION FOR CHRIST'S SERVICE.

Throughout the early years the volitions should be focused upon such vital fellowship with God that the young person will naturally reach the climax of a definite decision to be an active, devout Christian. During the past nine years only one young man, a teacher in the church school, has decided to invest his life in full-time Christian service. He became a medical missionary. His home environment was of a higher grade than that of the typical neighborhood family.

Most of those who become members of the church are recruited from the church school. The curriculum should include more stress upon decisions for Christian service and stewardship of time, money and talents. God has given every normal person the power to decide, "I will accept Christ", or "I will not accept Christ". Christian education must cultivate and strengthen the will.

XI. THE SOCIAL ASPECT.

1. A GENERAL STATEMENT.

The community benefits by the work of DeWitt Memorial church school. "Religion is the most important element in the life of the race to which the education of a child must adjust him".*1*

Beyond the moral education of the public school, **church schools are necessary to teach religion.** Without the church school, the community would be deprived of an essential agency for developing balanced lives. "Foremost American statesmen, educators and jurists are warning against the implications of an educational system which is purely secular, and are demanding for religious instruction larger access to the mind of the child.... School boards may not trespass upon any statutory minimum of secular curriculum or class-room time. They may not adopt any measure of compulsion or any measure which unreasonably interferes with the equal rights of other students whose parents are differently disposed. But within these limits they are legally free, when expanding the school curriculum and time to make reasonable room for a belief of parents that there should be for their children some counter-balance to the implications of a purely secular education and that religious education is entitled to larger standing

*1*Horne, Herman Harrell, The Philosophy of Education (Revised), p.125, MacMillan, 1927.

room in the capacity of their children for instruction."

1 This excerpt from the brief of Charles H. Tuttle, present federal district attorney for the southern New York district, maintains the legal right of parents to provide for week-day religious instruction for their children at the church school during "released time" from public school sessions. This position recognizes the value to the community of religious instruction.

2. SPECIFIC COMMUNITY SERVICE.

DeWitt Memorial Church touches the social needs of the community at many points.

Visiting nurses do much preventive work by giving advice in the homes, by assisting people to reach clinics, by arranging for hospitalization, and by treating minor cases at a dispensary located in the church building.

Although the church does not maintain a labor agency, the church visitors and pastors assist scores of people each year to secure employment. Vocational guidance is given.

Lonely and discouraged shut-ins are visited. Recently a committee of seventeen young people visited families in the neighborhood. On the night before

*1*Tuttle, Charles H., Brief for the Greater New York Federation of Churches and the New York State Sunday School Association, in the case of John Lewis (President of the Freethinkers' Society) against Frank Pierrepont Graves, Commissioner of Education of the State of New York, p.ii, 1926.

Christmas, a truck-load of adolescents joined a group from the Church of Sea and Land in following a movable Christmas tree to sing carols in front of the hospitals, homes for aged, and police stations in the neighborhood.

Certain poor families are given temporary relief in cases of emergency, and in cooperation with city charity organizations. This relief is in the form of food, clothing, rent, Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners.

The church is constantly being asked to adjust family troubles. Orphan children and aged people have been located in homes. In the summer of 1929, the church helped a Jewish man to locate his brother in England with the aid of Scotland Yard, the only clew being the name of a photographer on a faded twenty-eight year old picture. Early in March, 1930, there was a fire in the building beside the church. Temporary sleeping quarters were arranged in the church for a homeless Jewish family.

Members of the church school families are urged to become citizens of the United States and to vote. The church is a social center for many. During certain seasons of the year, the same young people are in the church building six evenings each week. The gymnasium, the sewing school, the varied activities of the clubs serve to supplement the direct religious teaching.

In the summer the church maintains a bungalow at Rockaway Point, L.I., where the group may have recreation together twice a week. Through the courtesy

of the New York Tribune, about two hundred and fifty children from the neighborhood are sent to the country on Fresh Air trips. ^{each summer.} There are numerous outings to city parks, boat trips, visits to museums, and Boy Scout hikes. Young people have been taken to restaurants where they may learn good etiquette.

DeWitt Memorial Church is in a strategic location to minister to the social needs of the community from the Christian standpoint. She has earned the goodwill of her Jewish neighbors.

There is a distinct cultural value in having Russians, Italians, Poles, ^{Jews,} Bohemians, Germans, Irish, English and those of American parentage working together to serve the community. The present interest of the church school extends to the foreign field. Liberal contributions are made for foreign mission work.

The curriculum of the church school may still further develop this social interpretation of Christ's gospel. The curriculum should be so organized that the volitions will find an outlet, or forms of expression, in social service.

XII. THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE CURRICULUM.

There is a philosophy underlying every set of curriculum principles. "Philosophy is directly concerned, not with the construction of knowledge, but with the formation and refinement of opinion; not with the ascertainment of what is, but with the determination of what ought to be; for values are and must ever remain matters, not of knowledge, but of opinion. To the question: What ought to be done? Philosophy has for answer no categorical imperative. Only revealed Religion can return such answers".*1* Philosophy tries to see the unity and implications of all the observed facts. The philosophy of education is a coordination or synthesis of the curriculum principles. The philosophy of Christian education should be expressed in terms of the ultimate objective. Eddington, with a spiritual note, directs attention to the search for the ultimate objective in the conclusion of his book, "Science and the Unseen World". "Religion for the conscientious seeker is not all a matter of doubt and self-questionings. There is a kind of sureness which is different from cocksureness. If our so-called facts are changing shadows, they are shadows cast by the light of constant truth. We need not turn aside from the measure of light that comes into our experience showing us a Way through the unseen world".*2*

1 McDougall, William, Modern Materialism and Emergent Evolution, p.12, Van Nostrand, 1929.

2 Eddington, Arthur Stanley, Science and the Unseen World, p. 91, MacMillan, 1929.

The pupils in the church school are surrounded by materialism. In their homes, on the street, at their work, many of the influences which impinge upon them are rooted in atheistic materialism. The Zeitgeist of the neighborhood is to live for the day, to be guided by expediency and pleasure. To be sure, the synagogues are crowded on the Passover and Yom Kippur. At Easter the Greek Orthodox and Roman Catholic adherents attend their churches. But in many cases this seems to be only a camouflage for a materialistic philosophy of life which recognizes a God without transcendence. ~~A man who has been~~

A man who has been connected with the church all his life explained that his son might not be able to continue teaching a class in the church school, because the son was taking a course at New York University which made it necessary for him to study on Sundays. The father said, "Some day he will be making a lot of money. That is the main thing".

Materialism with all its insidious by-products is the greatest foe of vital Christianity which the church school members have to face.

The philosophy underlying this set of curriculum principles is a for^m of Christian idealism. God is the creator and ruler. "In him we live and move and have our being". God is best revealed through Jesus Christ. The Bible is an essential instrument of

revelation. The task of those responsible for Christian education in the church school is to approach His Presence, learn His ultimate and immediate objectives for ^{parents,} teachers and pupils, and then cultivate the intellects, emotions and volitions of the pupils in harmony with His purposes. "Education is the eternal process of superior and partially controllable adjustment of physically and mentally developed, free, conscious human beings to God, as manifested in the intellectual, emotional, and volitional environment of man".*1* The telic function of the church school is to "seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness".

1 Horne, Herman Harrell, The Philosophy of Education (Revised), p. 315, MacMillan, 1927.

CHAPTER SIX.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS.

The problem, as stated in the introduction, was to search for and study the bases for an improved curriculum of Christian education, adaptable to the religious life and needs of the DeWitt Memorial church school. Such bases were found to be influenced by the religious background, concepts and practices of these pupils and their parents. Any statement of principles should be developed through an analysis and understanding of this background. The aim of this chapter shall therefore be to summarize the preceding study of the religious life and needs of these people, and upon the bases of this summary to present foundation curriculum principles which will underlie a program of Christian education applicable to these needs of DeWitt Memorial church school.

1. THE RELIGIOUS LIFE.

The religious life of the DeWitt Memorial church school must be held up for survey against the squalid background of a European peasant heritage and an unwholesome environment on the lower east side of Manhattan. Fifty percent of the church school is of Slavic parentage, and thirty percent is Italian.

Religious concepts are usually confused, indefinite, mixed with superstition, and influenced by Greek Orthodox or Roman Catholic customs. The religious life is more emotional than intellectual. Before being enrolled as members of the church school, most of the group were accustomed to a form of religion in which it was not necessary to make much use of the intellect. There is a love for ritual, sacred pictures and music.

Volitions are exercised to make adjustments between inherited racial attitudes and the encroaching habits of the semi-American neighborhood. Devotional attitudes are rooted in the emotions. Moral and social habits and attitudes reveal a wide gap between what is and what ought to be. The downward pull of the environment is strong. Members of DeWitt Memorial church school may know what is ^{ght} ~~right~~ and feel themselves under the urge to do the right, but many of them still lack sufficient volitional power to make permanent or put into action their good intentions. Their moral conduct is usually upon a lower level than their religious knowledge and feeling.

II. PERTINENT CURRICULUM CONCLUSIONS.

The study of the religious life and needs of the group has led to the formulation of the following conclusions.

1. OBJECTIVES.

There is no definite, accepted objective for DeWitt Memorial church school. The staff of the school has no common definition of the aim, and has not used common curriculum principles to reach an aim. Volunteer teachers aim "to teach the lesson" found in a quarterly, with the indefinite objective of helping the class to become good Christians. DeWitt Memorial church school should have the ultimate objective of bringing pupils into vital, unifying spiritual fellowship with God the Father as revealed in Jesus Christ. A series of immediate objectives, in graded sequence, should lead the Slavic and Italian pupils, step by step, side by side, toward this ultimate objective.

2. THE HOME.

The homes of the neighborhood are an essential supplementary field for the operation of the church school curriculum.

Most of the parents are handicapped by isolation from American customs, by inability to

read or write, and by low-grade mentality. They do not ^{know} the the Christianity of the Bible. The Christian education of these parents is the difficult task of the church. Christian education of the children by these parents is a function of the home.

3. THE CHURCH.

DeWitt Memorial Church has a great mission to perform. Some of those who control its policy have not studied the situation enough to intelligently formulate a curriculum. It is evident that there is a need for a further reorganization of the whole church program from the standpoint of Christian education. DeWitt Memorial Church is an educational institution and should function as such.

4. THE TEACHERS.

Teachers of DeWitt Memorial church school need more culture, which may be developed by wider contact with cultured people and by learning to appreciate good art.

There is a lack of training in pedagogy and the technique of Christian education. There should be a teacher training class. More adequate equipment should be made available.

There is not substitute for a constant deepening and enrichment of the teacher's Christian spirit and zeal.

5. THE PUPILS.

Pupils are often spiritually neglected because they are misunderstood by their parents and by their teachers. Teachers must undertake the fascinating task of studying the pupil's viewpoint. Unless this is done, the pupil cannot be guided into a better Christian experience of fellowship with God. Some of the pupil needs are peculiar to this particular group; some of the needs are common among average children and young people everywhere. The curriculum is for the benefit of the pupils.

6. THE INTELLECTUAL ASPECT.

Intelligent Christianity requires the acquisition of a definite, organized, integrated body of Christian concepts which are applicable to individual and social conduct. Religious concepts of the average pupil in DeWitt Memorial Church School are decidedly hazy. A unique feature of the curriculum should be adult education with the use of foreign languages.

A fund of Biblical truth should be received through use of the curriculum. It is very important to have a transcendent estimate of God.

7. THE EMOTIONAL ASPECT.

DeWitt Memorial church school members have a native capacity for approaching God through use of the emotions. The values of this emotional approach

may be conserved and the emotions may be directed into the wholesome channels of expression.

There is a legitimate place in the curriculum for the use of pictures, music and literature in creating an atmosphere of worship. Worship should have an important place in the curriculum.

8. THE VOLITIONAL ASPECT.

The will is the instrument for developing Christian attitudes, habits and ideals. The temptations, to which DeWitt Memorial church school members are exposed, necessitate emphasis in the curriculum upon training the volitions. The church school must help to close the gap between Christian concepts and moral conduct. The church school must help the pupils to reach the climax of definite decision for Christian service.

9. THE SOCIAL ASPECT.

DeWitt Memorial Church has a strategic location for rendering community service. Its program must be limited to those activities which will lead people on to vital fellowship with God, and Christian fellowship with one another. The varied phases of its present social service may be still further extended and coordinated.

10. THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE CURRICULUM.

The philosophy of education is a synthesis of curriculum principles. The philosophy of Christian education must be expressed in terms of the ultimate objective. The curriculum of Christian education for DeWitt Memorial church school must be built upon a sound Christian philosophy.

III. FOUNDATION CURRICULUM PRINCIPLES.

The conclusions stated in the preceding section are summarized in the following foundation curriculum principles, which should underlie a program of Christian education applicable to the needs of DeWitt Memorial church school.

1. The ultimate objective is to bring pupils into vital, unifying fellowship with God the Father as revealed in Jesus Christ. This aim should be attained through the use of a graded series of immediate objectives.

2. Christian education of the parents is a function of the church, and Christian education by the parents is a function of the home.

3. As an educational institution, DeWitt Memorial Church should adjust its whole program to the Christian education needs of the group.

4. Teachers should have culture, training in pedagogy, and a Christ-like spirit.

5. Adequate use of the curriculum for the benefit of the pupil rests upon a sympathetic understanding of the pupil's life situation.

6. Intelligent Christianity requires the acquisition of a definite, organized, integrated

body of Christian concepts which are applicable to individual and social conduct.

7. The emotional approach to God should be motivated into wholesome channels of expression.

8. Use of the curriculum should lead to the development of Christian attitudes, habits and ideals.

9. The social service of the church may be extended and more closely coordinated with the curriculum.

10. A practical Christian philosophy must permeate the principles and methods of the curriculum.

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