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A SYNTHESIS
OF THEORY AND PRACTICE IN
THE EVOLUTION OF
A DAILY VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL
PROGRAM

BY

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A THESIS

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INTRODUCTION

A SYNTHESIS OF THEORY AND PRACTICE IN THE EVOLUTION OF A DAILY VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL PROGRAM

INTRODUCTION

1. The Statement of the Problem

The Daily Vacation Bible School is one of the youngest members of the Religious Education family. It is an integral part of the whole church program because it offers a unique opportunity for progressive religious education. Within less than twenty years this school has struggled into existence and then has grown into a worldwide movement. But even so, it is still in the experimental stage. New emphases are being evolved, new values are being discovered, and the method and technique are being improved upon from year to year.

From our denominational colleges, our training schools and our seminaries go out every year young men and young women who with little, if any, specific training, are called on to be leaders in Daily Vacation Bible Schools. To them, perhaps, the administration of the schools does not seem to be complicated until the actual time comes for a preliminary meeting with the teachers. Then it is too late to do all the work and the planning that should have been done before. It rests with the leaders to bring to this first

meeting such an overflow of enthusiasm that the teachers too will become imbued with it and long to get started in their work. It is incumbent upon the leaders, moreover, to be thoroughly familiar with the various age characteristics of the children, to set up definite objectives, to select the course of study and supplementary materials to be used, and to suggest methods for putting into effect these materials. Throughout the entire session of the school, as well as at the outset, the teacher must be an endless source of inspiration and of suggestion. This is no small task. In fact, for the average leader, especially in rural districts where facilities are limited, it is an all but impossible task. The purpose of this study, therefore, is to help solve this problem by bringing together from the realm of theory on the one hand, and out of the background of actual experience on the other hand, such materials and principles as will be valuable to a leader in the evolution of a Daily Vacation Bible School Program.

II. The Method of Development

The first step in this study will be to analyze the principles and practices of the early development of the Daily Vacation Bible School Movement as a whole. The second step will be to examine principles underlying the evolution of a program as they are set forth in theoretical discussions of Daily Vacation Bible Schools and in courses of study arranged for Daily Vacation Bible Schools. This

material will be gathered from leading text-books on child psychology and pedagogy and on Daily Vacation Bible Schools. The next chapter will deal with an account and analysis of personal experiences in Daily Vacation Bible School work. In the conclusion, as indicated above, there will be an attempt to bring together the results of this study of theory and practice in the evolution of a Daily Vacation Bible School program for those interested in the administrative approach.

III. Source Material

The sources for this study will include information gained from interviews with leaders on the International Council of Daily Vacation Bible Schools, from letters from various denominational headquarters which have experimented with Daily Vacation Bible Schools, from various text-books available, and from personal experiences of the writer and others in Daily Vacation Bible School work.

The following are some of the schools included in the writer's experiences:

The First Presbyterian Church, South Norfolk, Virginia .	1927
Mission Church, Bay View, Virginia	1927
First Presbyterian Church, Ocean View, Virginia	1927
T. D. Wesley Church, Lynnhaven, Virginia	1927
Willy Boom Mission, Bristol, Tennessee	1928
First Presbyterian Church, Blountville, Tennessee . . .	1928
The First Presbyterian Church, Glade Spring, Virginia .	1929

The Union Church, Weavers, Tennessee 1930
The First Presbyterian Church, Blountville, Tennessee . 1930
Dan Graham Church, Reedy Creek, Tennessee 1930
New Bethel Church, Piney Flats, Tennessee 1930

With the exception of two, all of the above schools extended over a period of two weeks, and averaged about sixty pupils with about ten helpers in each school.

CHAPTER I

AN ANALYSIS OF PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE AS REVEALED
IN A BRIEF HISTORY OF DAILY VACATION BIBLE SCHOOLS

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AN ANALYSIS OF PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE AS REVEALED IN A BRIEF HISTORY OF DAILY VACATION BIBLE SCHOOLS

I. Reasons for the Origin of the Schools

Before actually launching upon our undertaking, it will be well, in order to orientate ourselves, to look back into the origin and the development of the Daily Vacation Bible Schools. With such a background, we shall then be better able to appreciate the importance of the problem before us. The whole Daily Vacation Bible School movement has naturally developed out of a very specific need, and it is this fact which accounts for its phenomenal growth. During the vacation months thousands of idle children were roaming the streets of New York. What is more, at the same time hundreds of church buildings, because of decreased attendance and temporary cessation of activities, were standing empty, and finally many college students and public school teachers, free from the round of studying during the vacation period, and therefore in need of creative expressional work, found themselves with nothing to do. Seeing in these conditions, three significant factors, Dr. Robert G. Boville, secretary of the Baptist Board, and other leaders had a vision for the utilization of these three great forces, through

the cooperative enterprise of the Summer Bible School, and thus they make a distinct contribution to our nation.¹

Some one has worded the first slogan of the movement:

"Idle children spoiling for something to do, idle churches yawning in empty indolence, a generation growing up in ignorance of the Bible and unacquainted with the person and teaching of Christ. Here are factors that challenge attention. The Vacation Church School is the answer."²

Thus with the slogan, "Idle churches, idle children and idle students", the founders of the movement organized the Vacation Schools. The first regular Daily Vacation Bible School was held in 1901, its primary objective being conservation, the conservation of the three forces just mentioned, with special emphasis upon the children. Other pioneer schools preceded this, however, and still others followed. These we shall briefly consider.

II. Principles Underlying the Origin of Various Early Schools

Very little is known about the earliest schools. But so far as we are able we shall trace some of the principles and practices underlying these earliest attempts in Summer Bible Schools for children.

A. The School held at Montreal, Canada, in 1877

In the vanguard of the movement was a school that was

1. Cf. An interview with Dr. R. G. Boville.
2. Pamphlet, "The What, Why & How of D.V.B.S." Am.Bapt. Publication Society.

held in Montreal, Canada, in 1877. Very little is known about this school except that it was held during the vacation time and that its program was as broad and as varied as the present programs of Daily Vacation Bible Schools. From the handbook of the International Association of Daily Vacation Bible Schools we find that the program consisted "of hymns and songs, Scripture reading, stories, military drill, Bible memory work, calisthenics, manual work and patriotic exercises." Because it is the earliest known school with definite records, this is often called the first Daily Vacation Bible School.¹

The principles underlying the organization of the program of this early school seem rather undefined, because the whole program was so broad. Various elements combined to make up the material program, with an emphasis on the physical play and exercise. This would indicate recognition of the principle of variety, with physical activity alternating with mental work. There was also an emphasis on the Bible in the form of Scripture reading and Bible memory work and on expression through worship in the form of hymns and songs. The manual work was added to complete the provision for expression. We would judge from this, then, that the whole program tended to be material centered, based upon the principle that knowledge produces character. The need for expression, however, was also taken into account.

1. Cf. Armentrout, J.S., Administering the Vacation Church School, p.8

B. The School Held at the First Church in Boston in 1866

The Vacation School had evidently been in existence before 1877. Clarence Arthur Perry of the Russel Sage Foundation says in his book, "The Wider Use of the Church Plant" that the first Vacation School our country knows of or has any record of is the one held in 1866 in Boston under the auspices of the First Church of Boston.¹ Nothing whatever is known of this school. It is generally assumed that religious instruction, interspersed with recreational features, played a dominant part.

C. The Vaughn Type of School

Passing over other schools which were organized during the period intervening, we come to the Vaughn School which was first started in 1898 in Elk Mound, Wisconsin. It was strictly educational in its purpose and standards. The curriculum of Bible Stories was well worked out on the basis of Public School grading. The teachers were most carefully selected. Although much effort and time was spent on this type of school, it was never actually developed. It has been criticized much, because, while there was grading it seems that the child was not carefully considered in the preparation of the materials. The influence of this school is localized, rather than affecting the larger movement to any extent. Nevertheless, much of the educational emphasis of the later

1. Cf. Ibid, p,8.

schools is attributed to the careful planning and the academic emphasis of this school.¹

We see that, as early as 1898, the Vaughn School was emphasizing the educational aspect of the Bible stories and all the courses used. As a basic objective the teachers were carefully selected and especially trained. With the main emphasis here it was a very easy thing to lose sight of the pupil and his activities. Thus there is evident an even greater emphasis upon the material centered curriculum than in the early Montreal School. In spite of this, the principle of grading the children was well worked out.

D. The School Held at the Epiphany Baptist Church
in New York in 1898

One other school ought to be considered in this early period, namely, the school held at the Epiphany Baptist Church in New York in 1898. It is of no small significance because it leads so definitely into the present day Daily Vacation Bible School Movement. Very similar to the school held in Montreal, Canada, this school has a rather interesting story. As an experiment one summer Mrs. Eliza Hawes, head of the primary department of the church, and the Reverend Howard Lee Jones, pastor of the church, gathered the children of the neighborhood together for some Bible stories and songs, games and handwork. They little dreamed that they were starting something that would

1. Cf. Stafford, H.S., Vacation Religious Day School, p.9,10. and Armentrout, J.S., Op. Cit., p.16.

strengthen churches of every denomination throughout the whole world. Soon after the school was opened one of the New York Daily papers carried the following item:

"Novel Enterprise of the Reverend Howard Jones: The new pastor of the Baptist Church of the East 64th Street and Madison Avenue, the Reverend Howard Lee Jones has decided to commence a new work in the East Side of his parish which extends from the Park Avenue to East River. About ten days ago, a morning school opened in a hall in East 71st Street between First and Second Avenues. The school was opened daily from nine to twelve. Sight reading is (sic) taught and some simple calisthenics, but the principal occupation is (sic) the study of the Bible and the Catechism. The interest in the new enterprise is growing rapidly. The first morning there were over fifty-seven children."¹

It is evident here more than in any of the previous schools, that Biblical and theological knowledge was the basic objective. This undoubtedly can be traced to the idea of "transfer of training", or in other words to the belief that such knowledge, in itself, would insure moral and religious development. The fact that games, handwork and calisthenics are included reveal some conception of the need for activities.

E. The Lathem Type of School

In all the previously mentioned schools the handwork has received much criticism because of its lack of motivation. After all, it was used only as a drawing card for pupils and as a means of making an attractive display on the "closing night". No provision whatever

1. Cf. Grice, H.L., Daily Vacation Bible School Guide, Intro.

was made for integration. The music, games, handwork, storytelling and Bible lessons were carried on as separate units:¹ The main purpose, therefore, often became obscure and to the child the activity itself became the main thing. As a protest, and as a means of putting the Bible in its rightful place, Dr. A. L. Lathem of Chester, Pennsylvania, organized in 1912 a new type of school which proved to be the forerunner of a reactionary movement. An excerpt from a letter from Dr. Lathem to the writer shows something of what this school is like:

"The work began in the summer of 1912, the first school being conducted in the Third Presbyterian Church of Chester, Pennsylvania. It is a school without handcraft, focused Scripture upon Jesus, is sympathetic and progressive, beginning with kindergarten work and after a thirteen year's course of five weeks each year culminates (sic) in graduation at the end of the twelfth grade. The school is done with high school work."

The curriculum, which Dr. Lathem thereafter published, consisted largely of the memorization of certain materials which have been worked out in catechetical form, such as Bible passages, the catechism, and certain Biblical mechanics.² This school and other schools which followed its lead are, as has been said, merely reactions against the unrelated and uncorrelated program of the original Daily Vacation Bible School, with its "handwork as bait". All the materials in Dr. Lathem's course are strictly Biblical, the element of activity being omitted entirely, even

1. Cf. Grice, H.L., *Opus Cit.*, p.10.

2. Cf. Armentrout, J.S., *Opus Cit.*, p.17.

in the kindergarten and primary departments. The courses of study include the strictest of memory work. Small catechisms are gotten out for use in each department. Throughout all the departments the courses are material centered, rather than child centered.

Since 1920 the movement has grown quite rapidly and, all in all, there are today about 1000 such schools found in every state of the Union, two or three in the provinces in Canada and a number in foreign lands.

This school is mentioned here because it has had a direct influence on the Daily Vacation Bible School Movement in that its programs are beginning to be more correlated and more Biblical. Both this school and the Vaughn School have been promoted because of emphasis on Biblical facts.¹

Dr. Lathem's School has placed the emphasis on the knowledge of the Bible and theological material, largely, to the extent of being utterly unconscious of the psychological principles of childhood. The memoriter method is predominant, the principle of activity being almost entirely ignored.

III. Some Principles Revealed in the Process of the Development of the Daily Vacation Bible School Movement

Dr. Boville, as mentioned before, became intensely interested in the prospects of Daily Vacation Bible School

1. Cf. Grice, H.L., *Opus Cit.*, p.16.

work. After focusing his own interests and attentions on the school Dr. Jones had held, he strove to arouse interest of the Baptist Board. In this he was successful, and under his leadership and that of other competent leaders, as well, the movement has grown by leaps and bounds. In 1907 there was a National Organization evolved, independent of the Baptist Board and the Federation of Churches. In 1911 the Daily Vacation Bible School Association was formed, non-denominational in its character. Much attention was directed towards producing manuals and literature to aid in administration. In 1917 this Association was changed into an International Association and in 1922 into a World Association. There was an indefiniteness about the relation of the Daily Vacation Bible School Movement with the World Sunday School Association and the Federation of Churches, until in 1926 the Association definitely merged with the International Council of Religious Education. The secretary of the whole Association, Dr. Boville, became a member of the International Staff and for the first time the Daily Vacation Bible School was officially recognized as an educational agency.¹

A. Principles Revealed in a Brief Review of the Early Period

The Daily Vacation Bible School Movement, as we have seen, was born within the church, and in the formation and development of the idea the church played no small part.

1. Cf. An Interview with Dr. R. G. Boville.

The motive underlying the movement at first was largely missionary and directed toward those children who were unprivileged. The principle purpose was to use the idle church buildings as a means of keeping these children off the street and away from its demoralizing influences. To put it more positively, the primary aim was to bring these children into the church and to give them a Christian training. This training included, besides instruction, organized, healthy, happy play and an opportunity to make things. Manual work was being used very little in the public schools at this time and therefore the Daily Vacation Bible Schools put a great emphasis on this type of work. As a result the children swarmed to the doors of the churches "to do something".

Because of this emphasis, we noted that a new system, which placed the Bible and the catechism at the center, was organized by Dr. Lathem of Chester, Pennsylvania. Perhaps Dr. Lathem was justified in breaking away from a type of handwork that was not motivated and a program that was not integrated. In itself his idea was good, but in his zeal, he seems to have gone to the other extreme. He, too, like the leaders in the Vaughn School, failed to adapt his materials to the various age groups for which they were prepared.

The whole Movement of Daily Vacation Bible Schools began to spread with much influence. Many agencies began to see its worth. In 1910 the immigrant department of

the Board of Home Missions of the Presbyterian Church U. S.A. adopted it as a part of their program. It was a very popular agency because it made such an appeal to the homes which were out of touch with the church. The Presbyterian Church made it a part of the world church program.

The second denomination to promote the schools was the Northern Baptist Church. The schools enlarged the Sunday Schools and thus became a missionary activity. "New pupils, new schools" was the main slogan. Many rewards were given for attendance and for bringing new pupils. These rewards assumed such an importance that it would seem that the real values of the school were only partially realized.¹

As this period covers many of the schools we have reviewed, we remember then that one of the main principles on which the program was built was the principle of evangelism through the curriculum. This was brought about mainly by the manual work as a chief attraction, and the Bible work as a chief end. Among the other activities were a rather mechanical memory work, unrelated handwork, and supervised recreation.

B. Principles Revealed in a Brief Study of the Later Period

As interest in the schools grew, the emphasis began to shift gradually from propaganda to program, with the primary purpose that of building Christian character by

1. Cf. Armentrout, J.S., *Op. cit.*, p. 11.

training the children in Christian living. Leaders in the various denominations began to realize the inadequacy of the Sunday School, both with respect to the amount of time available and to its degree of efficiency. Because of this realization, interest in the Daily Vacation Bible School deepened. It was found that this new agency met the need of the church. Here was combined the opportunity for longer sessions -- two or three hours instead of one -- with the opportunity for continuous work on five consecutive days. Here was truly a chance to make the work of the church school more significant, more interesting, and more vital. Today the majority of the denominations recognize the Daily Vacation Bible Schools as an indispensable agency in their religious education program. During recent years, moreover, more and more attention has been paid by religious educators to this work, until today there is available a considerable amount of literature, of a theoretical and of a practical nature, on the Daily Vacation Bible School.¹

The main principle stressed during the later period, we find, is an attempt to correlate all phases of the curriculum, not only as applying to the elements of the Daily Vacation Bible School program, but also applying to their relation to the Sunday School and the public school, and to their effort to meet the needs of the religious education department as a whole.

1. Cf. Grice, H.L., Daily Vacation Bible School The What, How and Why, pp.9-11. also Armentrout, J.S. Op. Cit., pp.12,13.

Gradually, the emphasis on education brought with it many ideas of reconstructing programs to fit the child in specific communities and churches. The emphasis started as mentioned above with adapting the materials to the child, but as modern educators have been experimenting with methods in teaching they have revived the old Pestalozzian experience-approach method. Briefly stated this method is that the child is at the bottom of all organization and all curriculum study. Only as the child needs information and asks for material is it given him. The teacher acts merely as a guide and counsellor. This method at the present time is still in the experimental stage.

In this new development of the later emphasis we find, for the first time, that the dominant principle stressed is that of the child centered program, with child psychology giving new emphasis to the principle that learning is based upon experience.

IV. Summary

We have seen how the earliest programs of Daily Vacation Bible Schools stressed especially those things such as handwork, games and drills that would prove a drawing card for the children. The Bible memory work and the Bible Study that were used were taught by the old method, without any special meaning or significance attached. Especially helpful passages were chosen and taught in the hope that the children would someday, after they had grown

older, understand them and try to live by them. Then, in a very gradual and interesting way the whole emphasis shifted from the material centered program to the child centered program. A study of the early books on the curriculum of the Daily Vacation Bible School reveal that the most helpful passages were gathered from the Bible and put into a course for children regardless of their age, experience, and needs. As someone once said, "There was a time when we taught original sin, today we teach original nature." Then, because of the various types of schools which grew from the original schools and influenced the whole movement in a very definite way, the attention of leaders and teachers was brought to bear on the fact that these older schools were not accomplishing the things that the church most needed in the children. A study of the text books at this time reveals a noble struggle to accomplish this fact. In the Manual of Music that Dr. and Mrs. Boville published in 1921 special stress is laid on the atmosphere of worship. Since this manual was published, the tendency has grown stronger and stronger for the child-centered program, until today we have such books as Beginners in God's World by Miss Elizabeth Shields, The Kingdom of Love by Blanch Carrier, and the numerous World Friendship Missionary Books, all stressing the child, its needs and interests.

In our survey of some of the principles underlying the origin of and the process of development of the Daily

Vacation Bible Schools, we have found that, although there was some variation of emphasis in the curriculum of a few of the schools, -- such as the public school graded curriculum of the Vaughn School, and the Biblical centered curriculum of the Lathem School -- on the whole, the emphasis was upon the material. We have seen the shift of principles underlying the programs from the early idea which was that knowledge produced life, to the present emphasis which is built upon the child's interests and experiences as a vital factor. In both emphases there was a recognized need for activity, in the earlier, activity as busy work, and in the later, activity as purposeful expressional work. One purpose has been predominant throughout, even with the change in principle, namely, that of bringing a knowledge of the Bible to the child.

CHAPTER II.

PRINCIPLES UNDERLYING THE THEORY IN THE EVOLUTION OF A DAILY VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL PROGRAM

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PRINCIPLES UNDERLYING THE THEORY IN THE EVOLUTION OF A DAILY VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL PROGRAM

I. Introduction

Although the Daily Vacation Bible School itself is a distinct unit of religious education which is being given increased attention in the writings of modern educators, it, nevertheless, shares the general fundamental principles of any religious education program. For this reason, in our investigation of the theoretical principles underlying the Daily Vacation Bible School program, we shall not be limited merely to books on the principles and administration of Daily Vacation Bible Schools, but shall include, as well, other books in the general field of religious education.

In the first group we shall include those educators dealing strictly with Daily Vacation Bible Schools such as Armentrout, Stout and Thompson, Gage, and Stafford, and in the second group we shall include those dealing with religious education in general, such as, Betts, Cope, Smith-er and Carrier.

The following list comprises the books to be examined: -

Armentrout, J.S. - Administering the Vacation Church School

Stout, J.E. & Thompson, J.V. - The Daily Vacation Church School

Gage, Albert H. - How to Conduct a Church Vacation School

Stafford, Hazel S. - The Vacation Religious Day School

Betts, George H. - How to Teach Religion

Smither, Ethel - Teaching Primaries in the Church School

Carrier, Blanche - How Shall I Learn to Teach Religion

II. An Analysis of the Principles Set Forth by Certain Educators

A preliminary reading of the above texts reveals some variety in the method of approach to the material. As a result, not all of the basic principles posited below are treated in each text. In general, however, they have been found set forth, in some form or other, as the main points to be considered. These principles are: definite objectives must be set up; the interests and needs of the child must be the determining factor in the curriculum; the curriculum, as a whole, must be^a balanced, progressive unit; all the elements of the curriculum must be carefully chosen and planned; all the administrative details must be arranged in advance.

A. Definite Objectives must be Set Up

The first principle advocated is that before a Daily Vacation Bible School program is actually launched, definite objectives must be set up.

There is one broad aim underlying the building of a Daily Vacation Bible School program which is generally recognized to supercede all other aims, namely, to build a Christian character and, in doing so, to help the child know and love God as Heavenly Father and to appreciate the life of Jesus to the extent of accepting Him as a Saviour. This aim, though perhaps not definitely expressed in every instance, may be said to be the underlying aim of them all. We shall discover, however, what the individual views are as we turn to the writers themselves.

1. J. S. Armentrout

As suggested in our study of Administering the Vacation Church School, the development and change of emphasis in the history of the Daily Vacation Bible School is set forth by Armentrout as passing through three distinct stages of development, namely, the evangelistic aim, the knowledge-of-the-Bible aim, and the development-of-personality aim. The emphasis on the development of personality, however, does not lose sight in any way of the Bible content.¹ The development of Christian character itself involves this acceptance of Jesus as Saviour, the development of a Christian mode of conduct, and striving for the highest which Christianity can offer.² This whole process must center in the development of the child and,

1. Cf. Armentrout, J.S. Op. cit., p.23

2. Cf. Ibid, p. 23

the full realization of this, will demand expert educational practice.¹ Whether this aim or some other is adopted by religious educators, the aim will not be in terms of mere knowledge.

As modern religious educators agree, the whole curriculum must help the child live at his very best at each stage of his development rather than to help him get ready to live in a vague and distant future.²

The Daily Vacation Bible School program should be closely correlated with the other organizations of the church through the functioning of a committee on Religious education which should so supervise and correlate the entire program of religious education of the church that it, as a whole, will seek from different angles of approach, the Christian development of the pupil. One responsibility of such a committee is to determine the needs of the pupil and to set up the objectives of the organization in the light of these needs.³

In brief, Mr. Armentrout's objectives may be summed up as the development of Christian character.

2. John E. Stout and James T. Thompson

As all other schools have as one of their objectives the promotion of the physical welfare and the happiness of

1. Cf. Ibid, p.24

2. Cf. Ibid, p.24

3. Cf. Ibid, pp.24,25

the child, the Daily Vacation Bible School cannot, in the opinion of Mr. Stout and Mr. Thompson, overlook this same objective. When the home environment of the child is taken into consideration, the need for learning how to develop a strong, healthy, body becomes very apparent. Therefore, the play life of the school has an important mission in teaching the child how to play under wholesome conditions. A period should be utilized for health talks, habit talks, and experiences. Happiness as well as play, promotes the development of the body and is also a great instrument in helping children to remember and to enjoy lessons, because it contributes also to the right type of mental development.¹

The central objective, however, is the development of Christian character. All activities, plans, buildings, and equipment should be devoted to this objective. The importance of this objective is intensified by the lack of religious instruction in the public school and the consequent necessity that it be supplied by the church.²

3. Albert H. Gage

Mr. Gage states that the purpose of the Vacation Church School is to develop Christian character. It gives boys and girls the opportunity of coming into close association with trained teachers, who teach the Jesus way of

1. Cf. Stout, J.E. & Thompson, J.T., The Daily Vacation Bible School, pp.17,18

2. Cf. Ibid, pp.19,20

living, by living it themselves. It creates for them the possibility of knowing the Christ of the Bible by coming in contact with the Bible. The Vacation Church School creates the highest type of social atmosphere, which is Christian in character. It is here that children learn to play and to work, to live on the highest plane, to develop the finest attitudes, and to go into their homes with a spirit of kindness and service.¹

4. Hazel S. Stafford

The Daily Vacation Bible School objectives stated briefly by Mrs. Stafford are:

- a. To supplement the Sunday School work.
- b. To supply what the public school cannot supply.
- c. To instruct children in fundamental religious values common to all denominations.
- d. To strengthen the religious life and to help solve the problems of the community.
- e. To make use of the play spirit.²

5. George H. Betts

Mr. Betts divides his aims into three classes, stated as three great requirements for the child to learn through religious teaching.

The first of these is fruitful knowledge, that is

1. Cf. Gage, A.H., How to Conduct a Church Vacation School, p.10
 2. Cf. Stafford, H.S., The Vacation Religious Day School, pp.7,8

knowledge of practical truths which will help the child in every-day living. The second requirement is right attitudes, that is, a development of interest and enthusiasm for the beautiful. The third and last aim is skill in living, which is merely religious knowledge gained and practiced in daily living.¹

6. Ethel M. Smither

The Daily Vacation Bible School program, according to Miss Smither, should set up definite objectives concerning the child's relation to God, to Jesus, to the church, and to the world-wide community.

The objective of knowing God and having the right relationship with Him, may be divided into smaller objectives, such as discovering the Father in every-day experiences; discovering the Father by sharing God-like problems; discovering ways in which God cares for us; thinking of God always in terms of the very best in life; knowing God as the Father of all little children; knowing God as a forgiving Father; and knowing God as a Father Who is good and expects goodness from all His children.²

While not definitely setting up objectives as such, the following quotation indicates certain outcomes Miss Smither would hope to achieve.

"Children best learn to understand God when

1. Cf. Betts, G.H., How to Teach Religion, p.47

2. Cf. Smither, E., Teaching Primaries in the Church School, pp. 21-27

they act towards others and face their problems in ways pleasing to God....Children should feel that God is with them in every simple joy, sorrow, or moral struggle..... God helps to care for them through persons, such as father, mother, teacher; through their own obedience to comrades; and through their self-control.....Worship becomes more genuine when children learn that God is pleased when they seek fellowship with Him and is interested in everything they do."¹

One of the objectives should be a familiarity with, and a development of, an appreciation of Jesus Himself, and of facts about Jesus who reveals God to us so completely. He should be the example for the child and an incentive to right conduct. When the child begins to learn the beautiful stories of Jesus' life, and when the child learns to see in Jesus a Friend and Saviour, Jesus will radiate in the life of the child.²

To summarize Miss Smither's objectives, we have found that the definite outcomes desired by this educator are a knowledge of God as a Father through personal contact in every-day living; an appreciation and understanding of Jesus as a Friend and Saviour through stories of His life; and finally, as a direct outgrowth of the child's relation to God and Jesus, the development of responsibility toward the church and the world-wide community.

7. Blanche Carrier.

Blanche Carrier, one of our modern religious ed-

1. Cf. Ibid, pp.21-25

2. Cf. Ibid, pp.28,29

ucators, admits, along with the majority of Sunday School teachers, that one of the real objectives of religious education is to teach the Bible. But this broad objective is modified by her to a certain extent. As she sees it, it is to "teach the Bible in such a way as to bring about a personal worship of God, a personal relationship to Christ as Saviour, and a personal experience in Christian living."¹ The Bible should never be taught as an end in itself, but should help to lead the child into actual experiences of God and into Christian relationships with other children.²

The child should be helped to see that being a Christian is a happy, progressive experience. To be a Christian is simply to be practical by applying missionary principles and Christ-like standards to our relationships at home. There is an opportunity for creative work in discovering how a Christian would act in each new situation which confronts the group.³

The program should lead to enthusiastic and intelligent service for the world in general as well as for the local community.⁴ The whole program should make the child want to work for the church, as well as showing him how he can help. What the church means to the people is a vision that any child can, at least partly, understand.

1. Cf. Carrier, B., How Shall I Learn to Teach Religion, p.68

2. Cf. Ibid, p.8

3. Cf. Ibid, pp.77,78

4. Cf. Ibid, p.78

Through stories about the history of the church, the child can be led to develop a valuable pride for the church's part in a world Christian program. This training should include a decided challenge and a knowledge of the meaning of sacraments and forms of worship.¹

All the above training avails nothing unless it affects the child's philosophy of life. The child should be able to give a Christian interpretation of life and of the great outdoor world, which includes an appreciation of all the experiences of Christian people. This leads to an understanding and love of the Bible and to an appreciation of the experiences of the Biblical characters in their relation to God.²

In summing up Miss Carrier's point of view as to the principal objective of religious education, we see, therefore, that it is to be found in a Bible-centered program, presented in such a manner that through actual experience the child is brought into personal relationship with God and into Christian relationship with other people by practical living.

8. Summary

Christian character is the common note emphasized by the educators in discussing the first principle, namely, that definite objectives must be set up. Everything in the

1. Cf. Ibid, pp.80-84.

2. Cf. Ibid, pp.84-88.

program is to work towards this end and every other aim is to be subordinate to it. There are other aims, such as giving the child a knowledge of God and of Jesus, helping him to discover God in every-day life, and developing in him an increasing responsibility toward the church and toward the world in general.

B. The Interests and Needs of the Child Must Be
The Determining Factor in the Curriculum

Because the Daily Vacation Bible School came into being to meet a distinct need in the religious training of children, and because the curriculum of the school is of vital importance, the second principle set up, namely, that the interests and needs of the child must be the determining factor in the curriculum, deserves careful consideration. It must be so organized as to meet all the religious needs of the growing child, to teach him how to live his everyday life efficiently, and to be a guiding factor in all the interests and needs which are of vital importance to him.

In this present study of this second principle, we will again seek the opinions of individual writers previously referred to.

1. J. S. Armentrout

Mr. Armentrout, in his discussion, calls attention to the important change which has taken place in the increasing emphasis in education upon the child and the re-

alization that he must be fitted to live in present day experience.¹ It is the peculiar function of the curriculum to help train the child for this living by contributing to the growth and development of his personality. In the opinion of this writer, this growth and development takes place through the experiences of the child. Therefore, the curriculum must be so constructed as to have in it such elements as will definitely contribute to enriching the experiences of the child.² These elements, according to Mr. Armentrout, are that the child learns, first of all, through the situation in which he finds himself. In the Daily Vacation Bible School situation, the experiences of the child will include the factors incidental to worship, to the playground, to the workshop, and the classroom. The curriculum must, therefore, make provision for these.

In the next place, the child will learn through his past personal experience. Hence, the curriculum must allow for the expression of this past experience in terms of interpretation and application to present experience.

In the third place, the child will learn from historical subject matter. The curriculum must, therefore, provide for the telling of stories. This will include the biographies of great personalities and the record of the race as a whole as it faced its experiences, both with God and man.

1. Cf. Armentrout, J.S., Op. Cit., p.141.

2. Cf. Ibid, p.54.

The fourth element can be said to be prophetic in nature. The child will learn each day through the development of finer attitudes. The curriculum must bring home to the child a conscious recognition that in all of his experiences, he is every day growing into a finer type of individual because of his high ideals and attitudes.

Finally, Mr. Armentrout believes that the child learns through the acquisition of knowledge itself and the curriculum must also allow for this.¹

In summarizing, we have found that Mr. Armentrout interprets the needs and interests of the child in terms of the child's experiences and these experiences, which include the present situation of the child, his past personal experience, historical subject matter, the prophetic element, and the acquisition of knowledge itself, must be the determining factor in building the curriculum.²

2. J. E. Stout and J. V. Thompson

Messrs. Stout and Thompson approach the study of our second principle, namely, that the interests and needs of the child must be the determining factor in the curriculum, through a discussion of the graded principle. In the opinion of these two writers, the child's needs are the first consideration, and these needs are most effectively met in the curriculum by means of grading.

1. Cf. Ibid, pp.144,145.

2. Cf. Ibid, p.154.

It is necessary to group children according to age, experience, and capacity. The very purpose of such grouping is, according to Messrs. Stout and Thompson, the effective presentation of materials, worship program, and activities so that the children themselves will respond naturally and quickly to the desire for making something, doing something, and being something.¹

These writers believe that at least three groups are essential. The first would cover the years three, four, and five. These children have not yet learned to read and write and, therefore, get most of their ideas, stimulus and instruction from the teacher and her actions. Primary pupils constitute the second grouping, covering the ages from six to eight years. Children of this age can usually read very simple things and are able to plan and carry on activities by themselves. The Juniors, from nine to eleven years, constitute the third group. They are more mature and, with careful supervision, are capable of purposing, developing, and judging many problems and projects for themselves.²

The following are some of the standards and tests to be applied, on the basis of this grading, to the choice of a curriculum:

- a. Is the range of material as wide as the interests of the group?
- b. Is the material adapted to the particular group for which

1. Cf. Stout, J.E. & Thompson, J.V., Op. Cit., p.67.
 2. Cf. Ibid, p.67.

for which it is intended?

- c. Are all the ideas of conduct as found in the stories, activities and worship, desirable for the development of Christian character?
- d. Do the lesson materials contain only such ideas, ideals and suggestions as the child mind can clearly understand and immediately apply to his daily living?
- e. Does the material contain an element of expectancy?
- f. There must be a close link, throughout all the course, with the home and school, and the Christian ideals conceived in Bible School must carry over to these. Religion envelopes all of life, and unless the curriculum materials carry over into life, they fail.

In other words, then, the curriculum must be intensely interesting to the child, it must develop in the child right habits, and inspire the child with a Christian master motive.¹ Messrs. Stout and Thompson, then, believe that the child's needs are the first consideration, and are met most effectively through the curriculum by means of the graded principle.

3. Albert H. Gage

No where in his book does Mr. Gage have a distinct study of our second principle. There is no concentrated study made of the curriculum, its determining factors, and

1. Cf. Ibid, p.69.

its necessary elements. The various phases of the parts of a curriculum are studied separately, however, and in reviewing these, it was discovered that the graded principle was basic, in the opinion of this writer, in conducting a vacation school.

Mr. Gage stresses the fact that there is an increasing emphasis upon the graded school. He believes, however, that it is well to remember that God has graded boys and girls and not men, and therefore all we can do is to recognize the natural divisions which God has made and adapt our program.¹ He also believes that any group of children will naturally separate by ages.²

In the opinion of this writer, as in the opinion of a previous writer elsewhere referred to, at least three groupings are necessary. The Kindergarten grouping for children under six years of age is the first grouping. The Primary age constitutes the second group and the third group is a combination of the Juniors and Intermediates.³

In summarizing Mr. Gage does not clearly and distinctly state that the interests and needs of the child must be the determining factor in the curriculum, but this principle is implied in such statements that the school must be graded, that handwork must be adapted to the age of the children, and that we must adapt our programs to the natural divisions which God has made in grading boys and girls.

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1. Cf. Gage, A.H., Op. Cit., p. 49
 2. Cf. Ibid, p. 49
 3. Cf. Ibid, p. 40

4. Hazel S. Stafford

Mrs. Stafford in her book, The Vacation Religious Day School, does not definitely discuss the interests and needs of the child as the determining factor in the curriculum; however, that this principle is taken into consideration is evidenced by the fact that, through her program showing the various phases of the religious school, this writer emphasizes grading as a basic factor.

5. George H. Betts.

"Who can measure the potentialities that lie hidden in the soul of a child? Education is but the process of unfolding and bringing into action the powers and capacities with which the life at the beginning was endowed by its Creator."¹

With this introduction, Mr. Betts takes up in a very indirect way a study of the curriculum as expressed in our second principle.

In the opinion of this writer, the curriculum should start with matter adapted to the youngest child. The material of the curriculum should be progressive and broadening in scope, suited to the age of the child. Its order and arrangement should at all times be decided by the needs and development of the learner and should make constant point of contact with his experience and life.²

In conclusion, Mr. Betts states that each child is a bundle of possibilities. The curriculum must be so

1. Cf. Betts, G.H., Op. Cit., p.30

2. Cf. Ibid, p.140

organized and carried out that the proper stimulus will be applied to bring out the dormant potentialities in the child.

6. Ethel M. Smither

In the introduction of her book, Teaching Primaries In The Church School, Miss Smither gives us a sentence which introduces us, in a sense, to the author's method of approach in studying the interests and needs of the child as the determining factor in the curriculum. "We teach Christian values or ways of looking at life as we share life with children day by day," is the statement Miss Smither makes.¹

Children learn by doing, and behind the doing lies the purposing motive. The entire curriculum for the primary child must be built on this basic factor of the child's activities, for, as Mr. Dewey says, "A child acts a thing out before he takes it in."² The needs and interests of the child, as expressed and understood in our second principle, are for Miss Smither to be found in the purposeful activity of the child. The purpose behind the activity must come from the children and it must involve all of a child's ability. Children have definite preferences in activities as well as grown-ups.³ It is recognized, of course, that these activities must be guided and directed, especially for the primary group, but it is of more vital importance to recognize that these definite preferences of children

1. Cf. Smither, E.M., Op. Cit., p.11

2. Cf. Ibid, p.102

3. Cf. Ibid, p.109

must have expression in doing things.¹

In summarizing, we have found that the needs and interests of the child as the basic factors in the curriculum for Miss Smither, lie in the definite activities of the child. These activities, in order to make their highest contribution in the life of the child, must be purposeful, and must be guided and directed, as well as acted out in the life of the teacher. The curriculum for the primary child must be completely centered in the child.

7. Blanche Carrier

The new theory of education which Miss Carrier champions, holds that we should not learn first and then act, but act in order to learn; that as we make a map or create a play, or do any number of things, we begin to collect information, discover its value, and use it in actual life. We learn while we are doing.² Therefore, Miss Carrier believes that the needs and interests of the child as the determining factor in the curriculum are found in the experiences of the child.

It is necessary to begin with the child as he is, recognize that he is born with certain tendencies, that he has possibilities for good or bad and will grow into whatever person he becomes through the experience he has.³

1. Cf. Ibid., p. 109

2. Cf. Carrier, B., Op. Cit., p. 130

3. Cf. Ibid., p. 27

The curriculum, therefore, must be so organized as to be a guiding influence in the life of the child, helping him experience those activities which will result in habits, ideals, attitudes, and desires which are truly Christian.

In brief, we find that Miss Carrier champions the experience-centered curriculum, taking into account not only the needs and interests, but also the child as he is, his hereditary tendencies, his possibilities, and his philosophy of life.

8. Summary

Though our writers have expressed themselves in terms of their own individuality, yet they are all agreed that the curriculum must be built around the child. This necessitates, first of all, the grading of children into departments, then the needs and interests of each department are taken into consideration in order to have a graded curriculum, and form a working basis for the program. These departments, differing so in psychological principles demand for each one an entirely different approach in subject matter and in method.

We have found that the child is considered, not only as he is in the immediate present, but his past is taken into consideration in his hereditary tendencies, and his future is planned for in the recognition of the possibilities within the child for good or bad. Thus we see that the interests and needs of the whole child must

be the determining factor in the curriculum.

C. All the Elements of the Curriculum Must be
Carefully Chosen and Planned

The program is divided into various important elements, each element seeking to develop a certain phase in the child's life. The elements usually included are worship, memory work, story-telling, dramatization, music and manual activity. As many of the authors we are considering devote as much as an entire chapter in discussing one or more of these, we shall endeavor to find at least one principle from each educator on each element.

1. Worship

Worship is generally recognized as one of the fundamental elements of the Daily Vacation Bible School program, because as an experience of communion with God, it is an embodiment of the very purpose of the school. We shall now consider some of the leading principles stated by our authors as underlying training in worship.

a. J. S. Armentrout

Armentrout quotes his principles underlying Worship from Dr. Hartshorne in Worship in the Sunday School:

- (1) Worship should make real and concrete the content of Christian purpose.
- (2) It should give opportunity for training in

in worship by expression.

- (3) Attitudes should be made concrete and related to Christian purposes.
- (4) Worship implies instruction.
- (5) The service should be constructed in accordance with the psychology of feeling and emotion in its relation to worship.
- (6) Participation should be general.¹

b. J.E.Stout and J.V.Thompson

Worship, according to Messrs. Stout and Thompson, should be graded because the Kindergarten worship experience is so limited in comparison with the Juniors.²

An atmosphere of reverence, respect and happiness should prevail in all worship services.

Every idea, expression, and attitude should be so guided and guarded in worship that it will become a part of the permanent life of the child.³

c. A.H.Gage

Mr. Gage says the Daily Vacation Bible School should be opened every morning with a devotional period in order to change the spirit of the children and fit them for a happy and helpful morning. This period always omits drill and allows no disturbances. Throughout the service,

1. Cf. Armentrout, J.S., Opus Cit., p.49
 2. Cf. Stout & Thompson, J.V., Op. Cit., p.87
 3. Cf. Stout & Thompson, J.V., Op. Cit., p.75

a spirit of reverence and earnestness should be dominant.

d. Hazel S. Stafford

Worship is not included in Mrs. Stafford's book either in her discussion or in her program.

e. George H. Betts

As singing is a great part of worship it should be done sweetly, softly and reverently.¹

f. Ethel Smither

Miss Smither says that worship is the climax of religious teaching, and she defines worship as follows:

"Doing the will of God, is worship if the activity is undertaken because it will help to contribute to the purposes of God. The daily task is worship when one tries to do it to the glory of God."²

"Worship is not limited to a worship service but is closely linked to any religious teaching, in fact, the most valuable worship is that spontaneous worship that comes as a result of the teaching experience."³

Some of the values in worship are: learning children's religious ideas, correcting unChristian ideas, telling God about class plans and arousing desire to pray, and learning to pray.

g. Blanche Carrier

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1. Cf. Betts, G.H., *Op. Cit.*, p.104
 2. Cf. Smither, E., *Op. Cit.*, p.237
 3. Cf. *Ibid.*, pp.241-242

In discussing worship, Miss Carrier says that worship is part of an experience and, to be an experience of communion with God, it must be centered about some real problem or significant experience.¹

There must be a place in religious life for worship, because the changing standards today make our choices of conduct very difficult. To provide an adventure of the spirit, intelligent worship helps a child to find his right relationship with God and the universe.

The children must not only have a desire to worship, but must understand all the materials in a carefully planned program.²

One of the main essentials in worship is that there must be a worshipful atmosphere.³

Miss Carrier's whole emphasis, we have seen, centers about the necessity for having consciousness of a problem as a starting point for all true worship. If this is done, she maintains, there will be a zeal for intelligent worship and a desire to adventure in the Spirit, and unconsciously there will prevail an atmosphere of reverence.

h. Summary

It seems to be the general opinion of all these writers that worship is really an expression of the spirituality that lies at the heart of what has been taught.

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1. Cf. Carrier, B., *Op. Cit.*, p. 56
 2. Cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 151-158
 3. Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 160

Miss Smither well puts it when she says it is the climax of religious teaching. Bringing together the principles set forth by all the writers, we note that worship should be concretely graded, centered about a real experience or problem.

2. Memory Work

There seems to be a divided opinion with reference to memory work, as to what should be memorized. The question is whether it is permissible or not to include those passages that will help the child in future life, or whether it is essential to limit oneself only to those passages which concern life at the present moment. Memory work, from the beginning, has had an important place in the program of the Daily Vacation Bible School. The following discussions will give us a conception of its present status.

a. J. S. Armentrout

"That material should be memorized which sums up the principles of living discovered by the pupils" says Mr. Armentrout. In other words, all the materials to be memorized must be vitally related to the child's life. These materials should have both a present and a future value.¹ Materials that should be used in the Daily Va-

1. Cf. Armentrout, J.S., *Op. Cit.*, pp. 63, 64

cation Bible School are passages from Scripture, hymns, poems that express a Christian experience, and prayer that a child may use to control his conduct.¹

b. J. E. Stout and J. V. Thompson

Messrs. Stout and Thompson do not include memory work in their discussions.

c. Albert H. Gage

As the boys and girls who attend the Daily Vacation Bible School are at the stage when mechanical and accurate memory work is easy, Mr. Gage says that a verse for each day and a portion of Scripture should be memorized. Emphasis should be placed on their doing things they learn.²

d. Hazel S. Stafford

Mrs. Stafford, in her program, includes Scripture verses, songs and prayers, all correlated with the daily theme. These comprise her selections for memory work.

e. George H. Betts

As memory plays such a part in religion, Mr. Betts gives the following laws to be observed in memorizing Bible verses, poems and songs:

(1) Law of complete registration. The thing mem-

1. Cf., Ibid, p.65

2. Cf., Gage, A.H., Op. Cit., p.54

orized must be registered before being retained and learned.

- (2) Law of multiple association. New facts must be related to the old ones.
- (3) Law of vividness of impression. Verses and songs must be made intensely interesting.
- (4) Law of repetition. Impression must be deepened through exercise.
- (5) Law of wholes instead of parts. It is much better for a child to memorize a whole passage by reading it through several times as a whole than to take a portion of it, memorize that, and then take another portion, thus memorizing the whole passage in segments.
- (6) Law of divided practice. In order to be sure of a passage it should be memorized partly one time, then after an interval of time has elapsed it should be taken up again. It has been proven that a passage is retained longer when learned at intervals than when learned all in one time.¹

f. Ethel Smither

The children should have a strong motive for learning any memory work and should have a definite use for it. As for the method of teaching memory work, Miss Smither uses

1. Cf. Betts, G.H., Op. Cit., pp. 177-180

the same laws as Mr. Betts does.¹

g. Blanche Carrier

In Miss Carrier's discussion on memory work she states that one of the most important factors is the selection of the proper memory work. Beautiful passages expressed in a concise way, and convictions and conclusions from human experience, should be selected. Long passages are preferable to shorter ones. All should become a part of the child's experience.

Adequate time should be taken for interpretation, and even then, no passage should be memorized without a real use for it. Perhaps it will be wanted for a worship service, or to use in correcting some unfavorable conduct.²

h. Summary

To summarize briefly the whole discussion, we find that modern writers stress that all memory work must be carefully selected, with two controlling factors in mind. It should fit the child's experience, and it should be learned by the child for some definite purpose, such as a worship service or the correcting of conduct. Back of all memory work there should be this strong motive for learning. Every verse should be carefully interpreted and as much as possible experienced before actually memorizing.

1. Cf. Smither, E., Op. cit., pp. 128-130

2. Cf. Carrier, B., Op. cit., pp. 182-195

Several laws should be taken into account during the actual memory process.

3. Story-telling

One of the most valuable instruments a teacher can use in the teaching process is that of story-telling, but even in as simple a matter as story-telling, there are definite principles that a teacher should keep in mind in order to tell her stories effectively.

a. J. S. Armentrout

The subject matter is presented in the Daily Vacation Bible School, Mr. Armentrout points out, by a most commonly used method, - the story-telling method. These stories should be selected because of the experiences they contain of those people who have solved similar problems to the ones the children have.

Among the most valuable stories are the Bible stories which tell of religious experiences of people who were being led into a knowledge of God. There are also modern stories of people who exemplify, in their lives, Christian principles. There are stories from literature in general which tell of finer living.¹

b. J. E. Stout and J. V. Thompson

Mr. Stout and Mr. Thompson briefly mention stories

1. Cf. Armentrout, J.S., *Opus Cit.*, pp. 59-62

by saying that they should be graded and used often to impart information and to minister to vital needs and carry a vital message to children. The stories may be from the Bible, dealing with problems, about missions, or just cultural in content. Every story should be related to the theme of the day.¹ The stories may be from the Bible, stories that deal with specific problems, mission stories, or stories which are just cultural in content. Every story, however, should be related to the theme of the day.

c. Albert H. Gage

According to Mr. Gage, the value and purpose of the story is varied. It may be merely to amuse or to make virtue attractive and interesting. It may be to develop imagination, to stimulate the emotional life, to broaden the vision, to create interest in books, or to stimulate action.²

The story itself has various elements. These are a beginning, a succession of events, a climax and an end. Sometimes the conclusion is in the climax and can end the story without further addition.

One of the most important principles of story telling is concerned with the selection of stories. This should be based on the age interests and needs of the children to whom the story is to be told.³

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1. Cf. Stout, J.E. & Thompson, J.V., Op. Cit., pp.59-62
 2. Cf. Gage, A.H., Op. Cit., pp.78,79
 3. Cf. Ibid., p.80

After the story has been selected, a step of no small importance is the preparation for telling. This does not mean that the teacher is to memorize the story, but that she should know the story so well that it will become a part of her personal experience. At all times the audience must be kept interested and made to live the experience along with the story teller.¹

d. Hazel S. Stafford

Mrs. Stafford gives very little discussion of stories in her book, except to say that the most important thing in telling stories is to keep them vivid and simple, and to let them fall naturally into several well defined units easily understood and reproduced by the pupils.²

e. George H. Betts

Mr. Betts thinks the story is the chief means of teaching younger children, because it is real and shows

"Virtue being lived; goodness proving itself; strength, courage, and gentleness expressing themselves in practice; selfishness, unloveliness, and wrong revealing their ugly quality."³

The principle of using stories in teaching religion are: (1) Making the story a chief instrument of instruction.

(2) Selecting a story full of religious and moral

1. Cf. Gage, A.H., *Op. Cit.*, p.87
 2. Cf. Stafford, H., *Op. Cit.*, p.31
 3. Cf. Betts, G.H., *Op. Cit.*, pp.120,121

value.

- (3) Adapting the story to the age of the child.
- (4) Telling the story well.
- (5) Repeating stories for younger children until they are well known.
- (6) Telling stories so they will be enjoyed.¹

Some of the guiding principles in planning a story are:

- (1) Decide the truth to be conveyed and let all the story lead up to this.
- (2) Have an effective beginning.
- (3) Plan the story so that the truth will stand out in the climax and eliminate all irrevelant materials.
- (4) Make the ending so that the mind will have a complete and satisfactory feeling.²

f. Ethel Smither

Miss Smither thinks the story has a decided value in religious education when it helps the children to build the highest Christian ideals, and when it helps them plan and carry out living according to the teachings of Jesus. Stories used in worship help children find fellowship with God when they help children act in a more Christ-like manner towards friends and playmates. They are also of value

1. Cf. Betts, G.H., Ibid, p.
 2. Cf. Betts, G.H., Ibid, p.214

in helping children bring out the Christian aspect of problems and situations.¹

g. Blanche Carrier

Miss Carrier does not discuss story-telling in her book.

h. Summary

As we have seen above, the story is a very important instrument in the Daily Vacation Bible School, because it is a means of getting information across to the child, of giving the child some wholesome enjoyment, of aiding the child in seeing religious and moral value in life, of developing the imagination, stimulating the emotional life and leading to action. In order to fulfil all the above requirements, the story must be adapted to the needs and interests of the child, it must be carefully planned, and thoroughly enjoyed by both teller and listener.

4. Dramatization

Like the worship, dramatization is a wonderfully expressional activity of the Daily Vacation Bible School. It is so important, that it is included in many of the books on theory. We shall now see what our writers have

1. Cf. Smither, E., *Op. Cit.*, pp.161,162

about this activity.

a. J. S. Armentrout

Dramatization is merely a method of experiencing and presenting religious truth and, in a very loose sense, includes the spontaneous playing of a story as well as carefully producing one.¹ Some of its values are, the furthering of the child's development, regulating the emotions, experiencing religion, providing a means for religious expression, and creating proper attitudes.²

b. J. E. Stout and J. V. Thompson

Messrs. Stout and Thompson do not discuss dramatics in their book.

c. Albert H. Gage

Mr. Gage in his book, How To Conduct A Vacation Church School tells us that some of the principles governing dramatics are: a careful selection of the story to be dramatized, a careful study of the story, and a knowledge of the story by the pupils. The last principle calls for active and careful rehearsals. The children should do the costuming and scenery themselves.³

d. Hazel S. Stafford

1. Cf. Armentrout, J.S., *Opus Cit.*, P.87
 2. Cf. *Ibid.*, pp.90,91
 3. Cf. Gage, A.H., *Opus Cit.*, pp.88,89

Mrs. Stafford suggests several books on dramatization and several dramatic^{zations} themselves, but otherwise gives no suggestions or principles concerning them.

e. George H. Betts

Children are natural actors and can easily imagine themselves to be someone else. Dramatization is an expression of imagination and also a stimulus of imagination. A child who acts the character of some great person will always feel nearer that person. Thus dramatization raises virtue to an ideal and makes Christian conduct more real through experience.¹

f. Ethel Smither

Miss Smither says that dramatization to be genuine must be spontaneous.² The teacher, in dramatizing, acts merely as a consultant and a guide. Children want to dramatize only when they have had a vivid experience of a familiar story. It should always be a direct and natural part of the class session, related to the daily theme.³ Dramatization is very educational because of the costuming and scenery. A trip to the library or to the museum is very helpful. This form of education develops the unselfish side of the child's life as he learns how all people depend upon each other.⁴

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1. Cf. Betts, G.H., *Op. Cit.*, p. 176
 2. Cf. Smither, E., *Op. Cit.*, p. 114
 3. Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 115
 4. Cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 117, 118

g. Blanche Carrier.

Miss Carrier omits all discussion of dramatization from her book.

h. Summary

We may conclude, then, that dramatization is very important in the education of the child as a natural and spontaneous expression of the child's religion. Some of the principles to be remembered are: the selection of the story is to be made by the child; the story must be learned by all the children until they can live with it; it must be real to the child or discarded; the teacher, in the dramatizing, must be a counsellor, and finally, all the actual work must be done by the child. There are many by-products of dramatization, such as we found there were in the story. Some of these are, thorough enjoyment, information, expression, unselfishness, and broadening of vision.

5. Music

Of all the expressional elements in the program it is evident that music is the most universal. This is well illustrated in the fact that foreign children, enjoying little of the dramatization or worship, will lose themselves in music, both vocal and instrumental. Because this is so important, there are a few fundamental principles

which ought to be followed to obtain the best results. These we shall find in the books we have been already reviewing.

a. J. S. Armentrout

According to Mr. Armentrout, music is important because it is expressional and forms a vital part of worship. Music, like all other elements of the curriculum, should be carefully selected in order to carry out the central idea of the service, and should be comprehensible to the children. All of the hymns and songs should be of the very highest type both in poetry and music. All songs and hymns should be learned outside the worship service and should become familiar to the children before being used there.¹

b. J. E. Stout and J. V. Thompson

Messrs. Stout and Thompson say that there should be a special period each day set aside for musical instruction and this, if possible, should be graded.² Perhaps no greater accomplishment is attained than to teach the children to sing beautifully the really great hymns of the church. Music should be selected on the basis of the enrichment of the child's thinking, the inspiration he obtains, and the personal enjoyment he gets out of it. Opportunity for general participation should be provided.

1. Cf. Armentrout, J. S., *Opus Cit.*, pp. 41, 42

2. Cf. Stout, J. E. & Thompson, J. V., *Opus Cit.*, p. 90

These hymns may be used in the worship period after they are learned.¹

c. Albert H. Gage

To the mind of Mr. Gage, one of the first essentials of good music in a Daily Vacation Bible School, is a good leader, one who loves and knows music. All children like to sing and, therefore, this leader can help in the selection of songs and in the correction of such things as breathing, tone and interpretation.² Musical chords may be used as signals to rise, to march, and to be seated.³

d. Hazel S. Stafford

Mrs. Stafford is very opposed to music's being used to fill in time, as she thinks it should be selected with great care. Nothing is so effective in inspiring the children to right action, or is so devotional, or so aids relaxation, as music. Each song chosen should have a direct mission. The technique may be secured by the teacher without direction, if she sings softly and sweetly. On every daily program, there should be one song containing a relaxation element.⁴

e. George H. Betts

Music is held by Mr. Betts as being very essential

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- 1. Cf. Ibid., p.76
 - 2. Cf. Gage, A.H., Opus Cit., p.98
 - 3. Cf. Ibid., p.97
 - 4. Cf. Stafford, H., Opus Cit., p.29

to religion, because no other form of expression can create such a spirit of reverence, devotion, or religious feeling. The Church needs a revival of hymnology because many of the Sunday School songs contain an inferior type of music and many of the church hymns are beyond the children's grasp. The following are some principles for the selection of music:

- (1) Music must be adapted to the child's capacity.
- (2) Music that is worthy, interesting, and devotional must be chosen.
- (3) Words that are within a child's understanding, that arouse interest, and that are suitable in sentiment, must be selected.¹

f. Ethel Smither

Miss Smither gives us the following principles concerning music, as she sees them:

- (1) Songs that express some emotion that has been aroused through experience, or those that set up new experiences, should be selected.²
- (2) The meaning of songs should be made clear by the use of pictures, stories and conversation.³
- (3) The teacher should know how to sing the song herself. She should sing it before the children as they begin to learn it.⁴

1. Cf. Betts, G.H., Op. Cit., p.127
 2. Cf. Smither, E., Op. Cit., p.244
 3. Cf. Ibid., p.187
 4. Cf. Ibid., p.186

- (4) The teacher, as she chooses songs, should set high standards for the words and music.¹
- (5) Children should hear, from time to time, music that is beyond their comprehension.²
- (6) It is good for children to create their own poems or their own rhymes.³

g. Blanche Carrier

Miss Carrier does not give a discussion of music in her book.

h. Summary

Music, then, as the above writers see it, is very important because it is universal, because it forms a vital part of the worship service, and because it creates a spirit of reverence, devotion and religious feeling. Some of the important principles governing the teaching of music in the Daily Vacation Bible School are:

- (1) Music must be carefully selected in order to bring out some desired characteristics in the child;
- (2) Music must be taught by one who knows, as well as thoroughly appreciates, good music;
- (3) Music that children understand, appreciate, and

1. Cf. Ibid., p.190

2. Cf. Ibid., p.192

3. Cf. Ibid., p.193

are interested in should be selected.

Mr. Gage is the only one who stresses the technique of singing, although all the other writers agree that music should be of the very finest type.

6. Manual Activity

Handwork has been the most discussed element of the Daily Vacation Bible School Program. It has been the dividing line between various types of schools. Uncorrelated handwork, as we have previously noticed, was the main reason why Dr. Latham broke away from the common type of Daily Vacation Bible School to organize an entirely new type. It was the elaborate handwork that has made many prospective Vacation School leaders give up their schools in despair. Let us turn to our texts to see what views are held by their authors.

a. J. S. Armentrout

Mr. Armentrout, to evade the old idea of handwork, has called this part of activity, "creative construction". Handwork should be a means of expression of instruction, such as a project.¹ In addition, it should be a vital and essential part of the educational program.² Some types of handwork are, notebooks, costuming and scenery, materials

1. Cf. Armentrout, J.S., *Op. cit.*, p.78

2. Cf. *Ibid.*, p.79

for less fortunate children, studying people of other lands, working out a land project, and making models of Biblical places.

Some of the educational values of construction are, self-expression, creative element, completion, sharing with each other, and care for property.¹

b. J. E. Stout and J.V. Thompson

No manual activity such as, weaving a basket, cooking, or making a dress, is in itself a religious element. It becomes spiritual only when in the child's mind a spiritual end is sought for. The activity becomes very valuable and important to the child, when he expresses in it his desires of service.²

c. Albert H. Gage

Mr. Gage tells us that handwork should be adapted to the use of the child and at the same time be pleasant work. It is never a bait or, merely to amuse, but is distinctly for character education, for children learn by doing. The spirit of altruism may be taught when children make things for others.³

d. Hazel S. Stafford

1. Cf. Ibid., p.79

2. Cf. Stout, J.E. & Thompson, J.V., *Opus Cit.*, p.77

3. Cf. Gage, A.H., *Opus Cit.*, p.115

The only manual activity Mrs. Stafford suggests is notebook work to illustrate a daily theme. As it is only suggested in her programs, it is impossible to deduct any principles from it.

e. George H. Betts

Mr. Betts does not include a discussion of handwork activity in his book.

f. Ethel Smither

Miss Smither quotes John Dewey as saying that a child acts things out before he really takes them in. The wise teacher then selects only the best activities for acting out Christian ways of thinking, feeling and acting. Therefore, in contrast to the old disjointed, uncorrelated activity, the teacher introduces today play, memory work, scrap-book work, sewing and cooking, because such activities are necessary to carry out a class purpose.¹

g. Blanche Carrier

Handwork and activities, according to Miss Carrier, have received a new emphasis by the modern age, which stresses learning entirely by doing, and by living through an experience. More than one thing should be sought through this natural experience.

1. Cf. Smither, E., *Op. Cit.*, pp. 102, 103

Every such experience involves all others and should utilize such methods as discussion.¹ There should be an underlying purpose in each activity or project, such as helping the group discover something of value, adding meaning to a situation, helping the group to live together in a Christian way, or recording results.² The real purpose should always be kept in mind, namely, to arouse in the pupil desires to discover, to work happily together, to share and to learn something of value.³

h. Summary

In summarizing briefly the statements concerning activity, we recall that all the educators stress the idea that all activity, to be meaningful, must be correlated with the other elements of the program. The activity is never an end in itself but is used only as a means of expression, of gaining information, and of realizing various altruistic values.

7. Summary

The various elements in the curriculum are receiving individually such attention as they have never received before. The Educators are increasingly realizing that everything in the program must do its part individ-

1. Cf. Carrier, B., Op. Cit., p.114
 2. Cf. Ibid., pp.121,122
 3. Cf. Ibid., p.124

ually to accomplish the larger aim of the whole program. In other words, the whole program taken together, is a unit having the same theme and trying to accomplish the same purpose. Each separate element, however, must follow certain definite principles. These we have found to be: Worship must be graded, centered about the child, and correlated with the daily theme; Memory work must be selected according to the child's experience and his need for the particular passage, and learned only after adequate interpretation and grasp of meaning. The story must be correlated with the program and related to the interests and needs of the child. Its main purpose is to impart information, give enjoyment, and lead to desirable conduct; Dramatization, to be real, must be spontaneous and natural; Music must present the beautiful and appreciative things in life and must be a means of emotional control and expression. Any kind of activity must be correlated with the lesson and motivated by the truths learned there, in fact, it must, itself, be an experience of Christian principles.

Thus, through these principles, recurring again and again, is the dominating idea of correlation and the equally important idea of the experiences of the child.

D. The Curriculum As a Whole Must Be a Balanced, Progressive Unit

The very name, Daily Vacation Bible School, suggests that the school as well as the separate courses of study, are

centered about the Bible. Thus the curriculum in itself would be primarily religious with the central purpose of giving the child a knowledge of the Bible in order that he may come into a knowledge of God. At the very heart of the curriculum, then, we would expect to find the Bible as a textbook, as a source of inspiration, and as an aid in problem solving. However, because of the tendency to swing away from the Bible-centered curriculum and to stress the Biblical material, the term Vacation Church School is being introduced as a substitute for the term, Daily Vacation Bible School. Nevertheless, even in such schools where the Bible is no longer the unifying element in the curriculum, the need for activity is being stressed. This emphasis is involved in our fourth principle which reads, the curriculum, as a whole, must be a balanced, progressive unit.

1. J. S. Armentrout

The curriculum question, in the opinion of Mr. Armentrout, is one of the most important questions in our day. Next to the child, it is the biggest question in the field of education. There are really two views of the curriculum, the narrow view, which includes only the subject matter itself, and the broader view, which considers everything that touches the child. In using the term, Mr. Armentrout has the first view in mind because he says that, after all, the

the narrow view touches slightly more than just the subject.¹

Today the curriculum emphasis is educational, and as an educative process, it is active rather than passive. As a result, great emphasis is placed on the active experience of the child. And because of this, the value of the Bible today is conceived to lie, not so much in its historical facts as in the controlling principles of life it contains. Some of the elements that enter into the curriculum are: The situation of the child; the past experiences of the child; the historical subject matter; the prophetic element; and the important role of the teacher.

Some of the essential characteristics of a curriculum are: It must have a definite goal, that is, it must set a special aim before itself to be accomplished wholly by itself; it must be a unit, that is, all the elements combined to work toward a common purpose; it must be balanced, that is, all of the elements and phases must be apportioned according to the needs of the child; and, it must be progressive, that is, working from plane to plane, from known to unknown, from the simple to the difficult.

Thus, in short, the important characteristics of the curriculum are purpose, unity, balance, and progress.

2. J. E. Stout and J. V. Thompson

1. Cf. Armentrout, J.S., *Op. Cit.*, pp.138,139

In the choice of curriculum, Messrs. Stout and Thompson state the field is broad. The primary textbook is the Bible and as the truths of the Bible have been experienced by many great souls, all of these experiences may be sources for material. Then the interests of the Kingdom of God, therefore, all lessons to be used with little children must be of a wide range, rich in content, and deep in experience.¹

The curriculum must be a complete whole. In any case it must have the elements of unity, progress, cohesion, and adaptation, that is, the pupil's mind must have been carried through to the completion by a definite unit of work. The whole idea must move from simple to more difficult things.²

3. Albert H. Gage

Turning now to Mr. Gage, we find the following view expressed. The curriculum must always be adapted to the local school, to the number and experience of the teachers, and to the length of the daily program.³

"The Daily Vacation Bible School must have a well defined program that is balanced, progressive and culmulative in its effect."

Mr. Gage has worked out an order of the program along five lines which are, worship, music, Bible in-

1. Cf. Stout, J.E. & Thompson, J.V., Op. Cit., p.66

2. Cf. Ibid., p.73

3. Cf. Gage, A.H., Op. Cit., p.41

struction, handcraft, and patriotism. He spends the major part of his curriculum space in presenting the elements of the daily program. These we took up in a former paragraph.¹ Mr. Gage, like Mr. Armentrout, stresses the balanced and progressive elements of the program. In addition, he states that the curriculum must be very flexible, depending largely on local conditions.

4. Hazel S. Stafford

Mrs. Stafford, like Mr. Gage, gives us an actual program in detail, but includes also the curriculum upon which it has been based. From this program we shall glean some leading principles.

Mrs. Stafford's curriculum is graded, just as the public school is graded, with eight grades in grammar school and to the third year in high school. The Bible work from the first grade through high school is based on some one's interpretation of Bible stories and not on the Bible itself. The handwork is in every case an outgrowth of the Bible work. Hence Mrs. Stafford, as we see here, puts the Bible at the center of her curriculum. All memory work is determined by the Bible lesson, as is the music also, with only familiar hymns and songs being used, for little people. This gives evidence of unity.

Mrs. Stafford's whole program is more of a sug-

1. Cf. Ibid., p.45

gestion and allows for modification by each local school. It seems progressive because of the advance in the subjects of the stories and study.

5. George H. Betts

Mr. Betts, like Messrs. Stout and Thompson, says the source of the curriculum reaches outside the Bible to the great range of human experience and human problems.

As for the principles for the organization of this curriculum, its lessons should start with matter adopted to the youngest child. It should present a continuous series of steps providing material broadening scope, adapted to each age or stage from childhood to full maturity. Its order and arrangement should, at all times, be decided by the needs and development of the learner, and should make constant point of contact with his life and experience.¹

Mr. Betts, as we have seen, thinks the curriculum reaches past the Bible to all human experience, and being founded on the experiences of the children it must be measured in religious knowledge, attitudes, and appreciations, and in organization, it must be graded at every step. Here again, we find progression stressed, with unity and balance perhaps indirectly implied.

6. Ethel Smither

1. Cf. Betts, G.H., *Opus Cit.*, p.140

Miss Smither adds in her discussion of the curriculum, little that has not already been discussed, but she stresses the principle of content of the curriculum and unity in the curriculum. She states that the whole subject matter should revolve about God and Jesus to such an extent that the result will be controlling factors in life, increased responsibility to the church and to others. The old idea of the knowledge centered lesson plan gives way to the new idea of thinking in terms of units. These units usually provide a procedure covering many lesson periods. They are centered directly about the purposes of the class.¹

Thus there is a direct stress on unity as evidenced above and because it effectively provides for the grading of the child, there is an element of progression present.

7. Blanche Carrier

Miss Carrier seems to go a step further in the sources of curriculum material to the child's own experiences.

"It will stress the pupil's own discovery of best ways of living and of highest ideas of God by experimenting, comparing and evaluating. Its approach to the Bible will be that of studying the Spiritual experiences of men of the past in order to conserve and use those spiritual resources that are of permanent value and to improve upon those interpretations that were grounded in ideas of an earlier day which have now been outgrown."²

The program should lead the child to experience God and should develop understanding of God and of Jesus. Miss

1. Cf. Smither, E., Op. Cit., p.86

2. Cf. Carrier, B., Op. Cit., p.70

Carrier says that a real experience can hardly take place in thirty minutes. Thus the separated isolated Sunday School lessons are done away with and a unified, progressive program is substituted. It is a balance of discussion, activity, and worship that goes to make up an experience.

8. Summary

We have now discovered that the leading principles concerning the curriculum are: The source of the curriculum material is chiefly from the Bible, stories of people experiencing God, and the child's personal experience; the elements of the curriculum should be unified and balanced; the lesson procedure from week to week should be progressive.

E. All Administrative Details Must Be Arranged in Advance

The selection of the time for holding the Daily Vacation Bible School, the most careful choice of a curriculum, the securing of suitable teachers and adequate equipment, all these, while important, do not insure a successful school. There must be, in addition, careful planning and forethought for details, in order that there may be a smooth and efficient functioning of all the parts of the school machinery. From the various books previously examined, we shall now list some of the outstanding factors

involved in the administrative end of the Daily Vacation Program.

1. J. S. Armentrout

One of the first principles, Mr. Armentrout gives, is that the Vacation School must grow out of the educational program of the Church, after which the Church must decide on the type of school, whether it is to be one fostered individually or one fostered by a group of churches or agency.¹ Mr. Armentrout then lists the following appropriate principles:

- a. The interest of the church must be established.
- b. A committee must be formed to promote the school.
- c. The finances must be arranged by a committee.
- d. Teachers must be secured.
- e. Place of meeting, and such minor details as advertising must be arranged.²

2. J. E. Stout and J. V. Thompson

Messrs. Stout and Thompson begin their principles with the aims of the school. After these have been adequately set up, a principal or director should be appointed. The curriculum must then be chosen and adopted. The activities of the school will revolve around the principal

1. Cf. Armentrout, J.S., *Op. Cit.*, pp.101-107

2. Cf. *Ibid.*, pp.109-120

the teachers, and the pupils.¹ The length of the session must be determined by local conditions.² The principal must master all methods of administration, and should have affixed all responsibilities prior to the opening of school.³ The school should be graded and all class periods conducted separately.⁴

3. Albert H. Gage

In organizing, Mr. Gage says that responsibility should be delegated in a meeting of all workers before the opening of school. Each worker should be familiar with all aims, methods, and details of the program and arrangement and equipment of room. The principal should see that all materials are on hand. Some of the things to remember are:

- a. School begins and ends on time.
- b. Discipline must be maintained.
- c. Lives of leaders count more than words.
- d. The spirit of school is determined by attitudes.
- e. Nothing must touch the life of the child that should not become permanent.
- f. To fulfil all purposes there should be a carefully prepared program.⁵

In short, the school should be orderly, reverent and interesting.

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1. Cf. Stout, J.E. & Thompson, J.V., *Op. Cit.*, p.82
 2. Cf. *Ibid.*, p.83
 3. Cf. *Ibid.*, p.84
 4. Cf. *Ibid.*, p.89
 5. Cf. Gage, A.H., *Op. Cit.*, pp.40,41

4. Hazel S. Stafford

Mrs. Stafford thinks that the executive committee should consist of a general chairman, chairman of curriculum and teachers, chairman of publicity, chairman of equipment, chairman of finance and chairman of a house-to-house canvass.¹ When these are in effect, the daily program must be planned to meet the needs of the pupils.² Schools are better attended when they are held immediately after the close of public school.³

5. George H. Betts

Mr. Betts gives four steps in the administration of a religious program. The first is the setting up of right aims, in view of which the curriculum is selected. The second is the selection and organization of the material in the light of the pupils. The third step is the right presentation. All this may be summarized in right aims, right materials, right organization, and right presentation.⁴

6. Ethel Smither

Miss Smither does not include a discussion of administration in her book.

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1. Cf. Stafford, H.S., *Opus Cit.*, p.18
 2. Cf. *Ibid.*, p.22
 3. Cf. *Ibid.*, p.23
 4. Cf. Betts, G.H., *Opus Cit.*, p.42

7. Blanche Carrier

Some of the principles gleaned from Miss Carrier's book are:

- a. There must be sufficient time for a real experience-centered program.¹
- b. There must be teachers with a broad understanding of Christian affairs in the world, an appreciation of the Bible, and efficient in method.
- c. Every class should have separate rooms.
- d. The curriculum is not merely the teaching material but takes in the whole experience of the child.²
- e. The parents of the child should be trained, in order to give religious guidance to children.³
- f. There should be an active board of education in each school.⁴

This is a new type of program and demands the best that is in every teacher.

8. Summary

To summarize briefly, there are definite steps necessary in the administration in order to have an efficient Daily Vacation Bible School. The interest of the church must be established, committees must be appointed including

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1. Cf. Carrier, B., *Op. Cit.*, p.97
 2. Cf. *Ibid.*, p.206
 3. Cf. *Ibid.*, p.208
 4. Cf. *Ibid.*, p.206

finance, advertising, equipment, program, a capable principal and staff must be selected, a well rounded program must be worked out, efficient administration must be held throughout the actual convening of the school.

III. Summary

Considering all the principles underlying the theory in the evolution of a program which we have touched, we may state them thus:

- a. The big objective is to develop in the whole child a Christian character, giving the child a knowledge of God and of Jesus, and helping him standardize rightly his attitudes and habits.
- b. The needs and interests of each department must be taken into consideration in order to have a perfectly graded curriculum and in order to form a working basis for the program set up.
- c. The main source of curriculum material is the Bible and in order to effectively put this into working condition, it must be grouped about the experiences, needs, and interests of the child.
- d. The various elements of the curriculum must be unified and correlated with the theme of the day, and with the experience and interests of the child.

Definite steps, such as mentioned in the paragraph above, make the administrative end of the Daily Vacation Bible School run smoothly.

CHAPTER III

THE PRACTICE IN THE EVOLUTION OF A DAILY VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL PROGRAM

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THE PRACTICE IN THE EVOLUTION OF A DAILY VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL PROGRAM

I. Introduction

The choice of our subject for study is chiefly due to the decided change which practical experience in the field of Daily Vacation Bible School has wrought in the writer personally. In order to understand definitely and clearly the development and growth thus experienced in every phase of the Daily Vacation Bible School program, much of the practice in the early schools will be related, after which the experience of a later school will be carried out more fully to show how practice supplements and modifies theory in the evaluation of a program. These experiences will then be evaluated respectively in the light of the theoretical principles set up. Of a necessity the reports of these experiences will be of a personal nature.

II. Report of an Early Experience in Daily Vacation Bible School Work

a. Introduction

Until called upon to conduct *her* first Daily Vacation Bible School, the writer, knew little of the proceedings of such a school, except that it contained such elements as music, recreation, worship, handwork, and story-telling. Her preliminary preparation for the school consisted chiefly in getting materials for use in the program. It seemed even then that this really minor part of the program required so much time and effort that the essential part of the program was overlooked. Briefly, now, in order to compare this first experience in actual practice with the theoretical principles just set forth, we shall relate here how the various phases of program planning and administration were carried out. The phases are objectives, the role of the child, the nature of the curriculum, the treatment of the separate elements in the curriculum, and the actual administration of the school.

b. Report of the Actual Proceedings

This report, as suggested above, will follow the general outline followed in the discussion of theory.

1. Objectives Set Forth by the School

Although rather undefined, the main objectives set forth at the beginning of the school in brief were, that a worshipful attitude should prevail for both pupil and teacher, that children should be given a knowledge of God and Jesus through stories and memory work, that all

the requirements for memory work, songs and handwork for each department should be accomplished by each child before receiving a certificate. The giving of certificates as acknowledgment of work accomplished and of Bibles in recognition of exceptional work, played a big part in the program objective. In short, the objectives were to develop a worshipful attitude and to give factual knowledge of the Bible, with rewards and prizes as an incentive.

2. The Role Played by the Interests and Needs of the Child in Determining the Curriculum

There was an element, in the early schools, of military preciseness which, in itself, would seem to ignore the principle of a child-centered program, and yet to a certain extent, the interests and needs of the child did determine the curriculum. The courses of study were graded allowing, at each step, for advancement of knowledge and for more depth of experience. It was felt generally, that the child needed to know from memory, passages from the Bible, therefore, one of the main elements was memory work. There was a special period, called the habit forming period, in which some of the most undesirable habits of the local children were brought to light and evaluated. During this period many outside visitors aided the administration, Visitors such as a fireman, a lawyer, a doctor, and a policeman.

Briefly summarizing, some recognition of the interests and needs of the child as a determining factor in

the curriculum was revealed, especially in the grading of the courses and in an attempt at habit formation.

3. The Procedure Followed in Carrying Out the Various Elements of the Program

a. Worship

Worship was one of the most progressive educational elements of the whole program. Although it was not unified with the daily theme it was a unit in itself and each day's experience was related to the experiences of other days, as well as being adapted to the needs and feelings of the child. The flag salutes, pledges and songs immediately preceded the worship service. The two periods were distinctly separated by the call to worship.

The worship was graded because the informality of the Primaries and the Beginners was hardly suitable for the ritual-loving Juniors.

No interruptions nor boisterousness were tolerated in the worship service, in order that a reverent attitude might be developed. The songs, stories and Scripture were chosen to arouse emotions and provide a means of expression.

In short, the worship contained an element of real reverence, being graded to meet specific needs, unified, in order that it might be meaningful, and progressive to show advancement of thought and feeling.

b. Memory Work

The memory work in this early school was one of the educational emphases of the curriculum. It was thought that the value of the school could be demonstrated in the quality and the quantity of the memory work. Thus it was chosen without thought of correlation. Most of the rewards given were for the amount of memory work accomplished. Beside the quantity of memory work done there was an emphasis on the accuracy of it.

Thus we see that a great amount of memory work was done. After it was carefully selected, it was carefully memorized.

c. Story-telling

Story-telling was a much used method in the writer's early schools. The stories told were employed to create the desired atmosphere in the worship service. They were used to impart the knowledge in the daily lessons, and they were told to help the pupil discover undesirable habits and to present concretely the ideal habits. Stress was placed on the selection of the stories but little stress was placed on the actual telling.

Thus we see that story telling was a method used somewhat effectively in the early schools, because of the care exercised in selecting and adapting the story.

d. Dramatization

Dramatization was solely used in presenting an effective play for the closing night. The play chosen was usually a simple Biblical narrative that would involve a great many pupils in speaking parts and the remainder in songs. The lines were given out to the various players and the parts were drilled. Usually the story of the play was told several times to the whole school. All costuming was arranged by the pupils and usually the parts were chosen by popular vote. This was a means of expression and an opportunity to gain poise and self-confidence. However, the sole purpose of the play was the presentation of it. Expression, poise and self-confidence were merely by-products.

e. Music

The music for the Kindergarten and Primary departments was conducted by a woman who taught music to children in the day school. She loved this teaching and consequently she taught effectively, often composing music or writing words to fit the needs of the children.

In the Junior department, music was an interesting bit of relaxation or a preparation, for a later worship service. So we see music, varying in the different departments, in the one department used as a means of expression of beauty and truth, and in the other a means of

relaxation and of expression in worship.

f. Handwork

Just as many of the old authors, such as Armentrout, Stafford, and Gage suggest, the handwork in this school was busy work. Usually very elaborate, it demanded much time and energy in preparing samples and ordering materials. Aside from amusing the children, a purpose of the work was to make an elaborate exhibit for the closing night.

Thus, in a brief glance, we have seen that the handwork was really just busy work for the purpose of amusement which demanded more than its share of time in planning.

g. Summary

Taking the various elements as a whole, we find them highly intensified in separate aims and accomplishments, but hardly unified or progressive. The worship was the most real experience in the school. The memory work was elaborate and well done. The story-telling was largely depended upon as a method of teaching. Dramatization was emphasized mostly for display. Music was learned for the purpose of worship and as a relaxation element. And last of all, the handwork was largely busy work.

4. Nature of the Curriculum Constructed

The curriculum as shown in a discussion of the various elements, could hardly be called a unit, except possibly in the one aim to impart to the child knowledge of the Bible; otherwise, none of the elements were correlated. The Bible story was central, and often a memory verse was chosen as a sort of text for the story. Usually, however, all of the memory work consisted of long, familiar, and popular Bible passages.

There was the idea of grading brought out as shown by the departments. The program was usually a fixed schedule allowing for little creative work on the part of the teacher and pupils. This fact was due to the type of book that was used, which, apportioned fifteen minutes for worship, ten minutes for memory work, etc., and caused the program itself to be disjointed with many items left unfinished.

Thus we find the curriculum, as a whole, rather set and formal in its program procedure, containing only one unifying element or objective, namely, the aim to impart knowledge of the Bible.

5. Features Involved in the Administration of the School

The local church set the time during which the school was to be held, decided on the place where it was to held, appointed the principal and the teachers and put to work com-

mittees on finance, advertising, house-to-house canvass, and supplies. This left to the principal the setting up of the course of study for each department, the training of teachers and the actual details of administration of the school after it was started.

The teachers met every morning before school opened for a short prayer service and again after the closing of the session at 11:30 for discussion of the morning's work. This developed an attitude of self-criticism, and gave the principal an opportunity to make various constructive suggestions. Various responsibilities were specifically assigned to individual teachers in order to permit the school to run smoothly. All matters of discipline and arrangements were to be considered by the principal, before being actually administered by a teacher. In this way, an attempt was made to secure cooperation and harmony with the staff.

The problem of administration depended, then, first on the local church for general interests and previous planning, and secondly, on the principal for details such as training teachers, arranging courses of study and directing all organization.

6. Summary

To summarize this report on actual procedure of the writer's early experiences in Daily Vacation Bible School work, we find that the objectives were not clearly defined, but stressed especially the imparting of Bible knowledge;

that the curriculum took into consideration the needs and interests of the child, to the extent of grading the children and attempting to form habits; that each of the various elements sought in itself to accomplish a separate phase of development, while the curriculum, as a whole, was not unified, progressive, or balanced; and finally that all the administrative details were dependent on the principal of the school, and were arranged in advance in order to have the most effective program.

C. An Evaluation of This Early Experience

In the light of the theory previously discussed, we shall strive to evaluate the points mentioned above.

1. The Objectives Set Forth by the School

An objective should always be carefully defined at the beginning of the school and checked up at the end. We find that in this early experience, many of the valuable possibilities of the school were overlooked. We have seen in our study of principles the knowledge of the Bible should be only a means to an end and not an end in itself. Through it the child should be led to God, and be influenced to desire to be pleasing to Him. In this way, the highest kind of character development will be achieved. The objective actually set up, therefore, falls short of the mark.

2. The Role Played by the Interests and Needs of the Child in Determining the Curriculum

The courses of study should have been graded, as they actually were to some extent, but the military precision brought about by the type of book used should have been eliminated. So mechanical a plan cannot possibly be molded to meet the actual interests and needs of the children. While, as we have seen, an attempt was made to develop right habits, through the habit forming period, actual results are not thus assured. The laws of habit formation demand that the child be given actual practice in performance of the act which is to become habitual.

3. The Procedure Followed in Carrying out Various Elements of the Program

a. Worship

The worship, we noted, was especially valuable and uplifting because of the interest in creating a reverent attitude, because of the grading, and because of the careful planning, through which the worship programs were correlated. This element, therefore, more nearly meets the standards set up.

b. Memory Work

Although uncorrelated and rather mechanical, the memory work produced results as far as storing up of knowledge goes. Here was evident, as in the early days of the Daily Vacation Bible School movement, the old idea that a mere committal of passages to memory insures corresponding

conduct. We know that this work, in order to be meaningful and worth while, should have been closely tied up to life experiences and problems.

c. Story-telling.

The story-telling, as used, proved to be effective and productive of varied results. It was a means of imparting knowledge, of giving enjoyment, of creating a worshipful attitude, and of helping to make ideal habits concrete and desirable.

d. Dramatization

The time spent on dramatization resulted in a lovely play at the closing program, but because the lines were given out and memorized, and the parts were acted as suggested by the director, there was little real expression or emotional value in the dramatization.

e. Music

The music, as has been suggested, was especially good in one department, where the songs were adapted to the children, and not so good in the other department where songs were used partly for relaxation and partly for worship service. The music was uncorrelated with the rest of the program.

f. Handwork

The handwork here is criticized much because of its lack of correlation with the rest of the program, its demand for elaborate preparation and its expense. The handwork, as an accomplishment in itself, was good, but it added nothing to the purpose of the school. According to the principles set forth, it should be a part of a larger purposeful activity, religiously motivated.

4. The Nature of the Curriculum Constructed

The curriculum, as a whole, was far from being a balanced unit. Each element aimed for a certain accomplishment in itself, seemingly oblivious of all the other elements. This uncorrelated program must have ^{left} a scattered, disjointed feeling in the child's mind at the close of each day. There may have been some progression shown in the stages of grading.

5. Features Involved in the Administration of the School

Because of the lack of materials and the lack of knowledge of the best methods, as well as of the inexperience of the administrator, the administration did not run so smoothly. There was a need for perspective and broadening view of the school as a whole each day, although the opinions and suggestions of the teachers aided, in this

respect, at the check-up meeting.

D. Summary

To summarize very briefly, we see that considering the program of this early school as a whole, there was a decided lack of unity and consideration for the child. Taking up the curriculum, with its various elements, we see there was a lack of connection and correlation. Moreover, the emphasis on the knowledge of the Bible overshadowed, to a great extent, the child's needs and interests. On the other hand, there were some good points in the program, particularly the worship services, the teacher's meetings, and in part, the story-telling and the music.

III. Report of a Later Experience in Daily Vacation Bible School Work

A. Introduction

As a result of this and other early experiences, and as the natural outcome of training in religious education, the emphasis shifted gradually from the material to the child. The disciplinary attitude changed to one of love and happiness. In consequence, the Daily Vacation Bible School, as last conducted, became for the child, not primarily a place in which to make things, but a place in which to live more abundantly. The objective shifted from a vague, abstract aim of learning how to be good to one of developing Christian character at specific age levels.

The curriculum, with all its elements, became unified through the Bible and the child using them as centers for its organization. Let us turn now to a detailed account of this later experience.

B. A Report on the Actual Proceedings

As in the report of the early experience, the same general outline will be followed.

1. The Objectives Set Forth by the School

The ultimate objective of this school was to use the Bible, in the light of the child's own experiences, to lead him to God as a Heavenly Father, and to Christ as a friend and Saviour. In doing the above it was hoped to help the child feel an increased sense of responsibility toward the church and toward his world friends in general. Each child was asked to bring his Bible to school and he was taught a reverence and an appreciation for it.

Although the child was considered chiefly in setting up objectives, the teacher was kept in mind also. It was realized that if she were to lead the children to God she herself must become more spiritual. This was definitely made one of the objectives. Another was to make the entire session of the school one of happy experience for the children, in order that the thoughts of God and religion might have happy associations.

2. The Role Played by the Interests and Needs of the Child in Determining the Curriculum

All the programs used in this later experience in Daily Vacation Bible School work were originally worked out by the principal and the staff of teachers. The psychology, needs and interests of the child were listed, around which the whole program was built. As a result, three departments - the kindergarten, primary, and junior - were organized, with a specially planned program for each.

These programs consist of Bible stories, memory work songs and handwork selected on the basis of the interests, the needs, and the capacities of each group.

The interests and the needs of the child as shown here really determined the program.

3. The Procedure Followed in Carrying Out the Various Elements in the Program

The content and purpose of the various elements, worship, memory work, story-telling, dramatization, music and handwork, which follow, grew directly out of the whole program theme and were definitely correlated with each other.

a. Worship

The worship service growing directly out of daily lesson theme, was composed of songs, stories and verses all helping to express and carry out the purpose. This unified worship service enabled the child to put into practice the

things he had learned, and to express with reverence the emotions and desires that had been aroused.

b. Memory Work

The memory work of this school, although not equalling in quantity that of the early school, surpassed it by far as to the purpose it accomplished. It was so directly related to the theme, that often the whole day's work centered about the memory passage. All of this shows that under such circumstances it could not but become meaningful to the child and would almost inevitably influence his daily experiences, because of which there was a careful selection of the passage.

c. Story-telling

The story-telling itself was little in advance of the previous experience, except in its correlation with the rest of the program. This involved a most careful selection of the story and an effective telling with sufficient opportunity for discussion on the part of the children to incorporate it as a part of a meaningful experience.

d. Dramatization

The dramatization in the later schools was really made an expressional activity, for the parts were acted only as the children were thoroughly familiar with the story.

This element was also correlated with the rest of the program.

e. Music

Music was merely an outgrowth of the whole program, being so correlated with it that the songs aided in its presentation. There was an effort set forth in the older departments to learn some of the church hymns which were sometimes used for expression of religious sentiment, often merely for relaxation. Much care was always exercised in the selection of the very best music as well as of inspiring words, appropriate to the group for which they were intended.

f. Handwork

The regular constructive handwork was eliminated entirely from the program except for the very smallest children. The reason for this was the same one Lathem gave for his breaking away from the early schools, to found an entirely Biblical-centered school (see ch.I). The difference here, however, was that these schools while being Biblical-centered were also child-centered, and made provision for some activity. The simple work in the later school, consisted of notebook work for Primaries and Juniors and of some simple construction for the Kindergarten. The Primary notebook included pasting pictures (prints and

cut paper) while the Juniors was more elaborate. This was made purposeful by putting into effect the application of each daily lesson.

4. The Nature of the Curriculum Constructed

With the child at the center, Bible lessons and every-day experiences were so combined as to work out a lesson course of study, as revealed in point three, the elements of the course were so correlated and so balanced as to make a unified program. Progression is evident in the fact that the course was divided into departments and the material was adapted psychologically to the individual child. All of these elements were grouped about a central theme. The Bible stories and memory verses were adapted and harmonized so that in the child's experience the program was a unit. It was thus child-centered and Biblical-centered at the same time.

On the whole, then, we may say that this curriculum did tend to meet the needs of the child and was balanced and progressive.

5. Features Involved in the Administration of the School

Although the local church set the time for the Bible school, provided the place for it and selected the teachers, it was the writer's privilege several weeks before the school actually opened, to visit the church, to

try to increase the interest of the community, and ^{to} start the teachers in their study. Again about a week before the school started, another teachers' meeting was held and the third was held immediately before the opening of the school. This constituted a part of the teachers' training, the rest of it being accomplished through daily meetings, one held before and another held after the school session each morning. In cooperation with these teachers, the program selected was organized and evaluated as the church arranged committees on finance and house-to-house canvass, the ^{writer's} special duty besides familiarizing herself with the courses of study was to get all supplies on hand.

During this last school, in addition to caring for administrative details the writer taught three Bible classes, which included telling Bible stories.

Such details as training teachers, getting committees to work, selecting and working out a course of study and securing supplies, comprised the administrative duties which fell to the writers' lot.

6. Summary

Very different from the early school, we see, this school had all elements correlated, and all materials both Bible-centered and child-centered at the same time. Having considered the procedure in detail we shall now proceed to evaluate what was done.

C. An Evaluation of This Later Procedure

Again in the light of the theory of the preceding chapter, supplemented by personal experience, we shall proceed to evaluate the program used in these later schools.

1. The Objectives Set Forth By the School

The main objectives set forth by the educators referred to were, leading a child to know God, to love Jesus, to appreciate the Bible, and to realize this responsibility to others. These on the whole, were covered by the objectives set up before the opening of school. There was some evidence to show that to some extent these objectives were carried out. The objective of increasing the responsibility of the church, for example, was brought out vividly by a carry-over from the Daily Vacation Bible School. Other evidences were not lacking.

2. The Role Played by the Interests and Needs of the Child in Determining the Curriculum

The course of study originally worked out by the teachers was developed on the basis of a child's needs and interests. It would have been much broader, however, if it had included in the curriculum the allowance for the child's own daily experience in the class procedure. The curriculum allowed for the needs and interests, but did not provide for sufficient flexibility to meet specific situations.

3. The Procedure Followed in Carrying Out the Various Elements of the Program

a. Worship

The worship service, composed definitely of songs, stories, prayer, Scripture and meditation, with a definite time for holding it, seems to have been contrary to the opinion of our modern educators, who insist that worship, to be real, should center about some problem and should be spontaneous.

b. Memory Work

The memory work included long passages from the Bible instead of a mixture of poems and songs. In spite of this, however, it was much more in harmony with the accepted principles suggested than was the earlier attempt.

c. Story-telling

The stories, as suggested above, were most carefully selected in this last school. The story-telling was more effectual than in previous years because of a special training received by the principal during the year just passed.

d. Dramatization

Dramatization in this school was worth while, because it grew out of the experiences and plans of the chil-

dren. It was spontaneous and thus became a real opportunity for expression. It was, therefore, in keeping with the principles set down.

e. Music

One of the values attained through the music was the number of appropriate, usable songs and church hymns the children knew at the end of school. Having been carefully chosen and interpreted, as well as used in the worship services, these became very valuable to the children, and an effective means of religious expression. Fundamentally, then, the principles followed here are in accord with those previously evidenced.

f. Handwork

The notebook work of the Juniors and the construction work of the Beginners can hardly be considered handwork in the old connotation of the word, because handwork brings to mind basket weaving, sewing, and similar activities. This, we have seen, was not included in the program of the last school, therefore, because of this elimination, the whole program seems more valuable, because of the amount of extra time the children have for the worthwhile activity in the absence of distractions due to the type of handwork that is merely busy work.

4. The Nature of the Curriculum Constructed

In our characterization of the curriculum as a whole, we have already seen that it is called a balanced, progressive unit. The child-centered curriculum with the Bible playing a most important part in the Bible lesson, and striking the dominant note in the worship service, the memory work and the activity, while at the same time adapted to the needs and interests of the child, shows that the curriculum is unified.

5. Features Involved in the Administration of the School

The nearness of the several schools to each other enabled the writer to visit the churches at least three times prior to the opening of the school. This was a great advantage because many of the administrative responsibilities could be discussed and planned definitely in advance. The needs of the children could be outlined, the objectives set up, the curriculum could be planned, and definite responsibilities could be apportioned among the teachers. In this way, much could be accomplished toward training the teachers and toward securing cooperation and efficient functioning.

6. Summary

Thus we see from the critical evaluation that adequate objectives were set up at the beginning of the school, that the elements of the curriculum were adapted to the needs

and interests of the child, that the curriculum was a balanced and progressive unit, and last of all, that the administrative details were so arranged in advance as to allow a smooth running of the school.

IV. Summary

We have just been considering certain personal experiences in the practice of Daily Vacation Bible School administration and have been comparing them with the theoretical principles previously set forth. We have had, on the one hand, a report of the early school with its indefinite objectives, material-centered program, separate, non-unified elements, and its non-progressive curriculum as a whole. And, on the other hand, we have had a report of the later school with its definite objectives, its curricular elements unified, its curriculum a balanced, progressive unit in itself, and its administrative details all arranged in advance. We have seen in advance, the comparison made between the two and have noted how much more the second school in principles more nearly parallel the accepted principles, than does the first school.

In conclusion, we shall now attempt to synthesize the values discovered in theory and practice as they pertain to the evolution of a Daily Vacation Bible School program.

CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION

A brief history of the early Daily Vacation Bible School movement, with an analysis of some of its underlying principles and objectives at various stages of development has helped us to see much of the lack of correlation and lack of unity ^{that} has been due to the tendency to follow tradition. It has served, too, by contrast, to bring into relief outstanding emphasis in modern theory. It has helped us to understand at the same time, the origin and significance of present trends.

"When-ever historical records do not assist in such analysis and synthesis of present-day problems, they may be frankly dismissed from discussion."¹

Our study of the theory underlying the Daily Vacation Bible School program has given us an apprehension of the general principles involved, and a conception of their relation to each other. This theory which was partially put into practice in the first school, and generally embodied in the later school, contributed toward a degree of proficiency in the administration department. To bring this theory and practice more closely together, we shall now proceed to consider them, following again

1. Graves, F.P., A Students History of Education, p.VII

the general outline used before.

I. Objectives Set Forth by the School

In the theory underlying the evolution of a Daily Vacation Bible School program it was concluded that definite objectives should be set up. One ultimate objective was to bring the child to Christ, and to develop Christian character. When this objective was brought into practice it seemed very indefinite because character cannot tangibly be measured, especially within so limited a period of time. It was found that the objective must be made definite, according to the needs of a specific group of children. Special attention was therefore given to some of the undesirable habits, evident in the children, and an attempt was made to correct these by substituting desirable habits.

II. The Role Played by the Interests and Needs of the Child in Determining the Curriculum

Emphasis, as stated before, has shifted from the early material-centered curriculum to the present child-centered curriculum and today the whole program, including its various activities, is determined by the age, characteristics, needs, and interests of the child. With this, in many instances has come a shift from Biblical to secular material. In practice, however, it was found possible to combine the two, that is, to plan a course on the basis

of the child's needs and experiences, and at the same time to draw from the Bible as the primary source of material.

III. The Procedure Followed in Carrying out the Various Elements of the Program

As the educational emphasis shifted from a material-centered curriculum to a child-centered curriculum, it brought with it certain implications with respect to worship, memory work, story-telling, dramatization, music and handwork.

A. Worship

It was theoretically conceded that aside from being a very fundamental element in the program, the worship service should be a real experience of reverence and communion, with no toleration of disturbances or interruptions. More than this, the material used as a means to worship should be correlated about some interest or problem of the child. In practice it was found that the above could be accomplished with an expert leader and a well planned program.

B. Memory Work

All the educators, except Gage, insisted that memory work should be related to the experience of the child and correlated with the daily program. Mr. Gage insists¹ that much memory work should be given to the child every

1. Cf. Gage, A.H., How to Conduct a Church Vacation School, p.54

day because at this age his mind is mechanical and accurate as well as active. In the first experience related, Mr. Gage's view was carried out in a systematic, mechanical form of memorization. It was felt, however, that little value was gained beyond the acquiring of material. In the later experience, memory work that was correlated and full of meaning for the child was found to be of much more significance.

Miss Carrier, on the other extreme, holds that only those verses that prompt a definite, immediate use, as for example, in a worship service, should be memorized.¹

In this case, much valuable memory work is discarded, for moral and conduct control verses can be made usable in the daily experience of the child outside of the church school. Personally, the writer should take a medium stand, certainly refraining from burdening the child with a great deal of unrelated, meaningless work, while at the same time giving him more than he can immediately use.

C. Story-telling

In this chapter on theory, the educators stress the purposes of the story which are to make virtue attractive, to impart knowledge, to broaden vision, and to stimulate action. They stress the selection of stories, the adaptation of stories, the preparation and the telling of stories.

1. Carrier, B., How Shall I Learn to Teach Religion?, p.182

From experience, the writer finds one of the primary purposes of story-telling, omitted above, even in the Daily Vacation Bible School, may be to give wholesome enjoyment. The other principles are general and are easily applicable in practice.

D. Dramatization

Theoretically, dramatization is a natural and spontaneous expression of religious truth, with underlying principles with regard to selecting a story, planning the dramatization, and making the costumes. These principles, for an inexperienced worker, are hard to put into practice, for it is much easier to take a "ready-made" play and assign the parts. This was obvious in the report of the writer's first school. But in the later experience, it was found that as effort ceased and play and interest took its place, the whole element became a natural and spontaneous expression, with many worthwhile by-products.

E. Music

Music, according to most educators, is an expression of the emotions, such as deep feelings, reverence and devotion. The main principles in music are concerned with the selection of the right type of words and music, the adaptability of these to the group, the interpretation of the meaning, and the actual singing. Mr. Gage again breaks away from his colleagues in saying that musical chords

should be used to command the children. In the writer's experience, she has found that the secret of successful music is a good leader who knows and appreciates good music.

F. Handwork

As set forth in the theoretical discussion, all the educators agree that the handwork should be meaningful, and to be so, it must be correlated with all the other elements of the program. It should be only a means of expression.

And yet, many of these educators, such as Gage and Armentrout, continue with suggestions for such things as basketry, sewing, and woodwork which, to the writer's mind, can very rarely be correlated with the program. Thus, in order to make all activity meaningful in the last school, the writer discarded all handwork that could not be correlated with the program. The result was very successful. This does not mean, of course, that basketry, woodwork, and the like should never be used, for many administrators have correlated these activities successfully with the curriculum and made a meaningful activity of it. The writer, however, has found it difficult to correlate such activities with the curriculum.

IV. The Nature of the Curriculum Constructed

The curriculum, to meet the objectives set up and the needs and interests of the child, had to be a balanced unit. The grading provided for the progressive aspect, be-

cause the more advanced grades must contain more advanced material.

This principle was applied in practice in the original courses worked out. These, as previously indicated, were progressive in difficulty on the basis of grading, and so far as could be ascertained, were balanced. They were also unified about a central theme.

V. Features Involved in the Administration of the Bible School

As shown in a discussion of the theory involved in the evolution of a program, it is essential that certain details in administration be carefully planned in advance. After the interest of the church has been aroused and all the committees are functioning, the principal with a capable staff must be selected. This staff must then select or work out, under the guidance of the principal, courses of study to be used in the various departments. Along with this, definite objectives must be set up and specific duties assigned.

In practice the above theory was found to be true and of no small importance. In the writer's early experience, because of the lack of training, this principle was practically neglected. Later it was carried out with the result that in later schools, the machinery of organization functioned more smoothly.

VI. Summary

Bringing together now the results of this study of theory and practice, we conclude, that the following steps are essential in the evolution of the program of a Daily Vacation Bible School, and must, therefore, be taken into consideration by everyone who would undertake the administration of such a school.

1. Definite objectives must be set up on the basis of the specific needs of the particular group. Ideally these objectives should be determined through discussion and cooperation on the part of the administrator and the teachers. In any event, the objectives, even if personally set up by the administrator, must be clearly outlined and set before the staff for their approval and adoption.
2. The needs and interests of the child must be considered in determining what materials should enter the curriculum. The purpose of the school being to help the child grow in Christian character, it is essential that the administrator and teachers discover his present level of development, and his specific needs, in order that the curriculum may be centered in his own experiences and definitely linked with his own environment.
3. As every element in the school, such as worship, memory work, story-telling, music, dramatization and

handwork must contribute to the purpose of the school, which is the development of the child, ~~each~~ must be definitely planned and carried out in accordance with the laws of child psychology and the principles of teaching. Provision must therefore be made in connection with each of these elements for purposeful activity, which is centered about the child's own interest and contributes to his religious growth by becoming a part of his experience.

4. The curriculum, as a whole, should be a unit, balanced, and progressive in character, saturated by the purpose of the school. No element such as mentioned above should unduly overshadow another. All should function as a coordinating whole, in which there is progression from one stage of development to another.

5. All details and suggestions of administration must be definitely planned before the opening of the school. These, too, must be determined with the child in mind. Committees on finance and house-to-house canvassing must be set to functioning.

Teachers must be selected and trained. The curriculum must be planned and evaluated. The school must be graded and the schedule must be worked out with the teachers. Details of administration must be apportioned to the teachers. All supplies must be on hand for the opening day.

In such a school and with such a program, it may safely be predicted, the child will develop a more Christ-like character, the teacher will become more spiritually-minded, and the whole church will be strengthened and revitalized.

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