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TEACHER TRAINING IN THE  
SMALL SUNDAY SCHOOL

by

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To the Teachers in the  
Troy Small Sunday School

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## INTRODUCTION

# TEACHER TRAINING IN THE SMALL SUNDAY SCHOOL

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Statement and Significance of the Subject

In spite of the increased emphasis on the serious responsibility of the church for the education of its children, the lack of good teaching is generally recognized. "It has been recognized that most Sunday School teaching has been very unsatisfactory."<sup>1</sup> Since this time (1925) much has been done and written in the field of leadership training, but most of this effort has been strictly for the larger schools where the departments are fully organized and equipped. The small school with less than one hundred pupils still is not popular with the religious educational experimenter; yet these schools outnumber the larger schools, enlisting two-thirds of the entire church school membership throughout the country.<sup>2</sup> One might think the little written on the small school indicative of its worth; however, the facts of the case prove the opposite, as indicated in the following statement:

. . . . .

1. James Hastings, Editor: Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, vol. XII, p. 113.
2. George V. Moore: Improving the Small Church School, p. 1.

"All they (small church schools) do is this: they feed the life of the church. They teach the majority of the children and young people and they provide the major portion of the leadership of the church, especially the ministers and the missionaries. . . . This is the soil out of which the ministers and missionaries in large numbers have sprung."<sup>1</sup>

Thus it is largely from these small church schools that full-time Christian workers come. Not only that, but many churches of today trace their beginnings to some small outpost Sunday schools.

It is generally conceded that the pastor's Sunday is too full to allow him freedom to do justice to the church school and that many pastors lack adequate educational training. The task of the spiritual nurture of the children thus falls into the hands of such willing lay workers as can be drafted. But without training these lay workers cannot be expected to do an effective piece of work.

The significance of the usual one brief hour a week in the Sunday school can partly be realized when considered as the sole Christian training of that week for the greater number attending. As Dr. Hamill puts it:

"Out of a whole week he (the teacher) has thirty golden minutes in which to teach the greatest and hardest of all books, often to boys and girls who never heard of it outside the Sunday-school class. Every minute . . . , every step . . . , is weighty with responsibility."<sup>2</sup>

The use of this time is largely in the hands of the

. . . . .

1. Ibid., pp. 1, 15.

2. H. M. Hamill: Sunday-school Teacher Training, p. 98.



individual class teachers. Of its importance Sensabauch says:

"The biggest task confronting the Protestant church today is the task of religious education. Many homes are dismally failing as agencies of religious education. In a democracy like ours the public school cannot adequately teach religion. Therefore upon the Church school rests the responsibility of the religious education of the childhood of to-day, and in doing this we are determining what the Church of to-morrow will be. It is a task worthy of our best efforts and the greatest investment of time and talent, and every Christian who can should engage in this great undertaking."<sup>1</sup>

#### B. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this thesis, therefore, is to discover ways of improving the work of the small Sunday school through teacher training. In order to make the study specific, a small church school in a suburban or semi-rural community will be used as a basis for investigation of needs and application of findings. In this study these questions will be considered:

1. What do the current denominational and inter-denominational writings on the small school suggest as ways to train teachers in these situations?
2. How does the Sunday school under study function, and what is it doing to train its teachers?
3. What could this Sunday school do to improve its teaching?

#### C. Method of Procedure

In undertaking to find out what is being done today in the field of teacher training in the small church

. . . . .

1. L. F. Sensabauch: The Small Sunday School, p. 47.

school, materials were gathered from the major denominations, supplemented by other publications which deal specifically with the small school and its teachers. These, considered as primary sources for the purpose of this study, were examined to discover the current emphases in teacher training. In the first chapter these findings will be gathered together and discussed under their topics. Following the same topical outline, a survey (based on written reports of the teachers) will be made of the situation in the specific small school chosen for study in order to determine its outstanding needs. This latter will be the second chapter. On the basis of the findings in chapter one, the third chapter will consist of recommendations for the improvement of teaching in the small Sunday school studied.

The outcomes of this study will be based on the needs and opportunities of the small school. It has been undertaken in the belief that church school teachers are sincere in their desire to do a better job and to know more of the methods and principles which will help them.

#### D. Sources of Data

As just indicated, the primary sources for this study in chapter one will be the materials of the denominational and independent publications. The Methodist church was found to have the greatest number of publications for the small school, followed by the Presbyterian and the

Baptist respectively. Although the Episcopal church has printed two educational units for the small school (each constituting a one-year curriculum), it has no material for study of the small church school. The United Lutheran church uses the leadership training materials of the International Council of Religious Education and does not publish any manual or text itself.

The following list comprises the available denominational materials (those published and used by the denomination) and other publications dealing specifically with the subject:

Denominational

Methodist:

Henry, F. E.: The Small Church at Work for Children (1941).

Marvel, Marie: Teaching Children in the Small Church (1938).

Roorbach, RosemaryK.: Teaching Children in the Small Church (1946).

Schisler, John Q.: The Educational Work of the Small Church (1940).

Sensabauch, L. E.: The Small Sunday School (1930).

Skinner, M. E.: Children's Work in the Church (1932).

Presbyterian, U.S.A.

Gillet, Edith L.: At Work With Children in the Small Church (1940).

Sherrill, Lewis Joseph: Religious Education in the Small Church (1932).

Baptist:

Gillet, Edith L.: At Work With Children in the Small Church (1940).

Other Publications

The Bethany Press:

Moore, George V.: Improving the Small Church School (1932).

American Sunday-School Union:

Raffety, W. Edward: The Smaller Sunday School Makes Good (1927).

CHAPTER I

CURRENT EMPHASES IN TEACHER TRAINING  
IN THE SMALL SUNDAY SCHOOL

CHAPTER I  
CURRENT EMPHASES IN TEACHER TRAINING  
IN THE SMALL SUNDAY SCHOOL

A. Introduction

To face the problems and endeavor to help those who teach in the small Sunday school, one must first come to understand the situation. In a preliminary study of the primary source materials referred to above, notation was made of the topics discussed by each in order to discover those generally considered important. The most prominent subject was found to be the developing and training of leadership including in-service and prospective teachers.

This preliminary study indicated the most pressing needs of the small school in relation to teacher training. The purpose of this chapter will be to summarize the chief points stressed in all of these materials and to describe the various phases of the work therein presented.

The main elements considered within the limitations of the assets and liabilities of the small school were included in two main divisions: the organization and administration and the training of teachers. Since the first is important as background for the second, it too will be considered.

The encouraging and discouraging aspects of the small school were pointed up as the starting point for all efforts at improvement. The assets as listed by the authors were found to lie mainly in the personal element, namely, the few faithful Christians, the intimate contacts which give a family spirit, and the simple organization which requires fewer leaders. Often small schools are in the rural areas where greater creativity and receptivity are found, due to being cast upon individual initiative for play close to nature.

A large number of the small schools were reported as awakening to appreciation of educational values<sup>1</sup> and as seeking assistance through denominational and interdenominational sources, such as field workers, institutions, and teacher training institutes.<sup>2</sup>

Common agreement was found in the sources studied in their emphasis on the great handicap to Christian education in the small school found in the lack of competent leadership. Other aspects considered by all the writers as less of a handicap are the inadequate equipment and a weak and insufficient program. Some of the writers stress the negative atmosphere, a feeling

. . . . .

1. Cf. George V. Moore: Improving the Small Church School, p. 13.
2. Cf. Lewis J. Sherrill: Religious Education in the Rural Church, pp. 41-42.

of inferiority and helplessness created by these two factors, and the obstructive attitude which is set against change to the new.

#### B. The Organization and Administration of the Small Sunday School

The topics found discussed under the organization and administration are the leadership, the grouping of children, the curriculum and methods, the relationships of the school to the church and community, and the equipment, all important from the standpoint of the teacher.

##### 1. Leadership

The efficiency of the small school depends largely upon its organization and discipline. That the responsibility for a good school lies with the superintendent and depends largely upon his performance of his duties was emphasized by several of the authors studied. His responsibility toward the teachers, with respect to organization, is that of providing a situation in which they can function to the best advantage. This demands graded grouping of the children. In this and other aspects of organization, the church school is increasingly patterning itself after the public school. The Sunday school must have sound teaching if it is to attract and gain respect through favorable comparison with the public



school in the minds of its pupils; and sound teaching begins with proper organization.

To facilitate the effective administration of the school, it is wise to have the division of duties clearly defined and assigned. Specific individuals should be responsible for properly keeping and reporting records and for running the finances on sound business principles. Activities should be balanced and responsibilities divided in order to maintain the highest<sup>1</sup> efficiency and fruitfulness.

Officers should be kept at a minimum; a simple form of organization is best. There will be need for the superintendent, secretary, treasurer, musician, and teachers in the smallest school. The pastor, too, should<sup>2</sup> take a vital part in the school. An obvious fact not always taken into account in the appointment of the staff is stated by Snowden:

"It is a mere truism to say that these officers should themselves be genuine Christians, competent and efficient, faithful in attendance and in the performance of their duties, spiritual leaders and contagious personalities."<sup>3</sup>

Good organization should give the school order,

. . . . .

1. Cf. Sherrill: op. cit., pp. 117-118.
2. Cf. Austen K. DeBlois and Donald R. Gorham: Christian Religious Education, p. 375, and Sherrill, op. cit., pp. 65-68.
3. James H. Snowden: Outfitting the Teacher of Religion, p. 237.

promptness, attention from teachers and pupils, reverent and unhurried worship, and a spirit of cooperation, sufficient time, careful records, separate classes in the spaces most suitable, with trained teachers and materials.<sup>1</sup>

As stated above, the superintendent is the crucial person. He does his work through the teachers. Snowden places on him much responsibility:

"A really good superintendent is half the school and can gradually make and mold things into better shape and infuse into them his own ideals and spirit."<sup>2</sup>

Moore gives responsibility for efficiency to the leaders:

"The work of the individual small school will be made more effective just in so far as its leaders study it carefully, see what is right with it, what is wrong with it, what can be done to make it better, and to proceed intelligently to do what should and can be done to improve it in its service to the lives of children, young people, and adults."<sup>3</sup>

## 2. Grouping of Children

Grouping is largely an individual matter in each local church school and is controlled by the number of pupils, the available space and equipment for class and department divisions, and the able teachers available. Sensabaugh suggests that there should be at least four groups, namely, beginner-primary (4-18 years),

. . . . .

1. Cf. W. Edward Raffety: *The Smaller Sunday School Makes Good*, pp. 29-33, and *Ibid.*, pp. 235-238.
2. Snowden: *op. cit.*, p. 238.
3. Moore: *op. cit.*, p. 7.

junior (9 - 11 years), intermediate-senior (12 - 17<sup>1</sup> years), and young people and adults (18 years and older). Where there is sufficient leadership to allow dividing the groups according to maturity and cultural development, that plan (followed in general education) can be followed for a more "akin-group".<sup>2</sup>

### 3. Objectives

The two fundamental tasks of the Christian church, according to Dr. Sherrill, are:

1. ". . . to bring persons to be Christians."
2. ". . . to take part in their development as Christians, in their individual experience and in their various relationships. These we often call by the terms evangelism and education."<sup>3</sup>

The whole organization of the school should be the framework that best fits the objectives of the school. Marvel states the importance of objectives as giving direction to the work of each teacher. "She must know where she is going before she can determine the best way to get there."<sup>4</sup>

Christian education today has a task distinct from all other education - that of preparation for the highest life. It is primarily spiritual, Christ centered, including one's relationships to God and his neighbors.

. . . . .

1. Cf. L.F. Sensabaugh: The Small Sunday School, chap. 2.
2. Cf. DeBlois; op. cit., p. 219.
3. Sherrill: op. cit., p. 18.
4. Marie Marvel: Teaching Children in the Small Church, p. 15.

The general aim of the Sunday school is still that which was renewed through the Reformation, namely, to bring children and adults into fellowship with God through faith in Jesus Christ as personal Savior and Lord.<sup>1</sup> This faith when developed through Christian education gives one a new life, a developing Christian character, loyalty to the church, and results in participation in social service.

To accomplish these tasks the school, according to Dr. Sherrill, has a double task:

"To minister to growth in Christ (after profession of faith in Jesus Christ) is the role of Christian education. . . . It is time that we end the effort to build a church by choosing only one end of the inseparable process, spiritual birth and spiritual growth."<sup>2</sup>

#### 4. Equipment

##### a. Building

There is general agreement among the writers that the equipment of the small school is usually a serious handicap. Snowden says that it is probable that one-half or more Sunday schools meet in the main room where all other meetings are held.<sup>3</sup> There can be neither good attention nor teaching where there is no privacy. Every session of the school is helped or

. . . . .

1. Cf. DeBlois: op. cit., pp. 105-110.

2. Sherrill: op. cit., pp. 22-23.

3. Cf. Raffety: op. cit., p. 37, and Snowden: op. cit., pp. 234-235.

hindered by the physical setting. Snowden suggests that:

" . . . the equipment of the Sunday school begins with the architect, or rather the building committee and the congregation back of the architect, who plans the building and foreordains it from foundation to finish." <sup>1</sup>

Although ideally there should be separate rooms for classes and a central assembly room for each department, the one-room school has often done good work. <sup>2</sup> A good start, agree all the books, is to make the best use of what is at present available. Constantly alert leaders find and use new places and materials for their classes and plan ahead for improvement.

The form of organization, the grouping of classes, and the program will largely be controlled by the use made of available equipment and space. A bit of planning with the purpose of giving each age group its own place will bring returns in interest and learning. Search for unused corners or small rooms may bring just the space needed for one small group. Fresh paint and colorful pictures add much to the beauty of the spot. One way of dividing a large room is by screens (of cloth or wall board) that can be used as bulletin boards. The rules of health, such as light and air, should be <sup>3</sup> carefully observed, by artificial means if necessary.

. . . . .

1. Snowden: op. cit., p. 234.
2. Cf. Raffety: op. cit., p. 28.
3. Edith L. Gillet: At Work With Children in the Small Church, p. 21. Cf. Ibid., pp. 35-36, and Sherrill, op. cit., pp. 115-116.

## b. Teaching Equipment

Aside from the building and rooms, each school<sup>1</sup> should aim to have this setting for proper instruction:

1. Seats and tables the right size for each age group.
2. Visual aids, as pictures, maps, blackboard, use of projectors, perhaps some missionary curios.
3. A reference library and, if possible, one of Christian fiction and good books not available elsewhere.
4. Bibles, hymnbooks, and other class instruction materials.

These may need to be acquired gradually. Classes may take pride in adding some special equipment for use.

## 5. Curriculum and Method

### a. Curriculum Content

Curriculum was definitely mentioned by the authors of the primary sources in connection with the lesson materials. The inference is that curriculum in action includes: the instruction, worship, service, and recreation. The printed material used as a basis for this teaching is still important, however.

The chief source of a constructive curriculum in Christian education is the Bible; "it is the Book

. . . . .

1. Cf. Gillet: op. cit., pp. 25-30; Moore: op. cit., pp. 132-136; Rosemary K. Roorbach: Teaching Children in the Small Church, pp. 30-36; and John Q. Schisler: The Educational Work of the Small Church, pp. 102-106.

of Life, the Book of Lives, the Living Book."<sup>1</sup> Its truths are necessary to fulfill the aim of the Sunday school. There is no place for the teaching of the Bible in our present day secular school; therefore this is the unique privilege and sacred responsibility of the Christian church schools.<sup>2</sup> However, this does not eliminate using related materials such as:<sup>3</sup>

1. lives and deeds of Christian leaders (past and present)
2. missionary biographies
3. history of the struggles of the Christian church for religious liberty
4. Reform movements in the Christian church
5. Contemporary problems in the light of the Bible.

Neither should there be such freedom taken in these extra-Biblical materials that the content becomes too broad, vague, and visionary.

DeBlois quotes Dr. Georgia Harkness on the two aspects of Christian education: ". . . teaching of the Bible is, and probably will continue to be, the major element in religious education"; she adds the warning against neglect of the deeper objectives of the essential life values.<sup>4</sup>

. . . . .

1. Cf. DeBlois: op. cit., p. 262.
2. Post, p. 18.
3. Cf. DeBlois: op. cit., pp. 266-270.
4. Ibid., p. 262.

b. Selection of the Curriculum

Selection of the lesson materials should be guided by the needs of the school and not by the cost, as is the temptation of the small school. There are many types of curriculum materials published, and each small school must decide which best suits its children. What are some of the standards by which to judge? First a choice must be made in type, between uniform, department graded, or closely graded lessons. Available materials of this type should then be studied carefully in the light of the special school. For the school with but one class in each department it is usually best to take the department graded, as this is prepared for the several ages in the department.<sup>1</sup> The Episcopal church has published materials (two one-year units) for use where there is a one-group school together for at least part of the hour.

Secondly a choice must be made in content. Principles in selecting material are suggested by DeBlois:

1. Does this material stimulate life?  
Does it tend to visualize experience?
2. Is it helpful in building individual lives toward the "new life" of Christian education objectives?

. . . . .

1. Cf. Sherrill: op. cit., p. 84.



3. Is the material itself vital, incarnating the spirit of life?

Using these principles, says DeBlois, the honest conclusion leads one to call the Bible the chief source of Christian educational content.<sup>1</sup>

A third consideration is suggested by the increased emphasis on the home and church and its school working together as given in the "New Curriculum" of the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A. The importance of the home has been neglected in most teacher-pupil materials published.<sup>2</sup> The "New Curriculum" recognizes its importance in bringing together the other two agencies (the church and its school) in the Christian education of the child. Thus in the selection of a curriculum the place given to the home must be considered.

Once the curriculum has been selected, with the whole school in mind, as the basis for a correlated program, it becomes the responsibility of the teacher to adapt it to her own group. Those who wrote the materials hundreds of miles away could hardly be expected to write the best possible application for each local need.

#### c. Method

How successfully the materials and the equipment are employed depends much upon the skill and aptitude of the teacher. DeBlois suggests the following as a

. . . . .

1. Cf. DeBlois: op. cit., p. 262.
2. "The Why? What? When? of the New Curriculum", Board of Christian Education, Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., p. 4.

guide for the selection of a method. Survey the methods successfully used in general education. Use what meets the needs of each individual student and fits the requirements of correct educational procedures. Have variety, combinations, and correlation in the choice and use of method. Keep in mind the differences in the maturity and cultural growth, as well as the age, natural ability,<sup>1</sup> and educational growth.

The methods of teaching are so varied that it is far from necessary, even for the little trained and inexperienced teacher, to hold to the use of a few and therefore monotonous methods.

(1) Within the Class

A favorite of all ages and perhaps the most effective is story telling.<sup>2</sup> An outgrowth of the well-told story might be one or more of the following: re-telling by the children, dramatization, discussion, development of appreciation, memorization of the Bible text, investigation, a problem leading to a project, handwork, an exhibit or some other creative activities or service. Poetry, music, large pictures, and other visual aids will give another approach to the lesson truths. There may be places that help to teach, as a picture corner, browsing table, library, missionary

. . . . .

1. Cf. DeBlois: op. cit., pp. 215-219.
2. Cf. Raffety: op. cit., p. 217.

curios, and other exhibits.<sup>1</sup>

The good teacher will study the Bible as her textbook, and study the pupils (each age, training, purposes, ideals and goals), for these are the things that govern and motivate all the teacher's work. After this the teacher should be ready to apply the methods that are the noblest, most practical, and best adapted to the pupils for whom he is responsible in their situation.<sup>2</sup>

## (2) Out of the Class

Not all the methods of teaching are limited to the classroom. Of importance to the church school teacher is the out of class work which may be done in two main ways. First, visitation in the home will gather names for the cradle roll and information that will result in understanding teaching. Secondly, working through other agencies in the community can be mutually beneficial. A visit on the part of the church school teacher to the school room where the children attend is likely to be appreciated by the public school teacher and profitable to both in appreciating one another's work with the same children. The library, clubs and camps, and the public health representatives are all community contacts of value to the teacher.<sup>3</sup>

. . . . .

1. Cf. DeBlois: op. cit., pp. 195-215; Gillet: op. cit., pp. 44-78; and Ibid., chaps. 19-22.
2. Cf. DeBlois: op. cit., p. 220.
3. Cf. Gillet: op. cit., pp. 83-86.

## 6. Relation to the Church

Early Christian schools were a vital, integral part of the Christian church.

"In the earliest centuries the Christian Church and the Christian school were planted side by side. . . . New converts were instructed for a period of three years in most of the schools, before they were baptized or received into the full fellowship of the Church."<sup>1</sup>

The beginning of the Sunday school movement as we know it today, however, was quite apart from the church. When the schools began to be taken in by the churches, it was with reserve and caution. In some instances, especially in the small rural schools, this union with the church has not completely taken place. The organization is still quite separated from the church, either in action, or finances, or both - the church and its school running parallel, not hand in hand, for they never meet. The church should realize that it has failed the school in the place where its greatest weakness lies - trained leaders. The church needs true repentance for its neglect of its school, writes Snowden:

"The church must awake to the situation and do its duty toward the Sunday school. It is not an incidental agency or excrescence growing upon its body, but is a vital part of its very constitution and mission."<sup>2</sup>

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1. DeBlois: op. cit., p. 105.
2. Snowden: op. cit., p. 234.

To bring the church and its school together, the denominations have set up organizational ties through the pastor, superintendent, church leaders, and in some cases, an educational committee. These connecting groups seek to bring together the educational function of the small church, realizing that the task of the church is one in responsibility toward its people.<sup>1</sup>

One way of making the church and school feel their unity of objective in reaching people and helping them in the Christian life is through the installation service held during the regular Sunday church worship.<sup>2</sup> This service can do much in giving importance and significance to this phase of church education. Such recognition by the church for the nearly impossible task which has been left the school by irreligiously irresponsible parents will also be a motivation for better teaching. Promotion Day is another time for a close link with and recognition by the church. The relationship to the pastor, who should be vitally interested in the school's work, should also form a link between the church and school. Working in close connection with the superintendent, he should be the chief officer of the Sunday school, because its task is primarily spiritual. He

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1. Cf. Sherrill: op. cit., pp. 32-33.
2. Cf. Moore: op. cit., p. 74; and "An Installation Service for the Consecration of Church School Teachers and Workers", The Methodist Publishing House.

should be the ready counselor of the school in matters of policy and personnel, including new teachers and officers.<sup>1</sup>

## 7. Relation to the Community

There should be at least an equal recognition and interest shown in the Sunday school teacher and the materials she teaches as is shown in the public school teaching. It would be well if there were a connection between the public school and church school in appreciation and allotment of spheres of teaching. Not in any sense should sectarianism of denominations or the atheism of irreligion enter the schools.<sup>2</sup> There seems to be a negative influence from the latter in the present public school (as reflected in the recent Supreme Court decision).<sup>3</sup> If it is right to keep denominationalism out of the schools and state, then it is also right to keep out "Tom-Paine-ism" and secularism, McLaughlin quotes Dr. Luther A. Weigle, Dean of the Divinity School of Yale University, as saying in 1931.<sup>4</sup>

In the community life, the school, along with the church, should support those things which are consis-

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1. Cf. Henry W. McLaughlin: Religious Education in the Rural Church, pp. 106-107; Raffety: op. cit., p. 69-70; and Sherrill: op. cit., pp. 34-37.
2. Cf. McLaughlin: op. cit., pp. 192-204.
3. On March 8, 1948 the Supreme Court of the United States handed down a decision which states that the public school building can no longer be used for religious instruction of any faith.
4. Cf. McLaughlin: op. cit., p. 199.

tent with the good of the community life. The church school has an opportunity to work as a social force in the community for its improvement.<sup>1</sup> The days of the Sunday school missionary in the frontier sense have almost gone, but there is a new day with hard frontiers to subdue right at hand for the small Sunday school.

### C. The Teacher Training Program

The leadership of Christian education includes all those who organize the work, classify and emphasize the aims or goals, outline methods, plan and execute curriculum, teach and direct classes, cooperate with other leaders, and secure united and progressive effort in all. The importance of this leadership is stated by Schisler:

"The standard of work in the local church will rise no higher than the earnestness, understanding, and faithfulness of its leaders. Lesson materials may be perfect, buildings and equipment adequate, time ample, and other factors satisfactory, but without competent leaders all these things avail nothing."<sup>2</sup>

In most schools the leadership consists of the educational committee of the church directing the work, the superintendent, the supervisor, and all other officers and teachers. DeBlois writes of their responsibility:

"The leaders of Christian religious education are entrusted with the care of human souls, and they are responsible for the salvation of the souls that are

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1. Cf. J. M. Somerndike: By-Products of the Rural Sunday Schools, Introduction and chap. 1.
2. Schisler: op. cit., p. 42.

thus committed to their care."<sup>1</sup>

Those leaders in the most immediate contact with the pupils are the class teachers. Therefore their training is of great importance.

In the training of teachers for the Sunday school two main objectives were discovered which the authorities feel such a program should accomplish:

1. To inspire the teacher to have greater effectiveness both educationally and spiritually.
2. To have practical value for the teacher in every approach.

These two aims were found generally considered in relation to the teacher's task and person, the preparation of future teachers, and the training of those already in service.

#### 1. The Challenge

The teacher in the small school may feel that her work is rather insignificant in comparison to the whole task of Christian education. However, McLaughlin answers her doubts:

"The key to the situation (improved Sunday schools) is an intelligent and trained leadership. . . . This leadership must be of three kinds - the parents, the minister, and the lay leaders and teachers."<sup>2</sup>

Teachers are the leaders that have the most direct contact

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1. DeBlois: op. cit., p. 378.
2. McLaughlin: op. cit., p. 73.



with the pupils in the Sunday school. Sunday school missionary Somerndike speaks of the invaluable result of their effective teaching:

"One of the chief elements of Sunday school efficiency is the training of lives for Christian service. . . . 'By their fruits ye shall know them.' To such a test the rural Sunday school can bring a brilliant array of Christian men and women, whose influence for good has extended beyond the ability of man to measure."<sup>1</sup>

The teacher in the small school has this same opportunity to develop Christian character.

"Go . . . teach,"<sup>2</sup> said the Lord. The quality of the response within the teacher in her spiritual life and devotion, qualification developed through training, and preparation (or the lack of these) will bear like fruit in the lives of those she teaches.

To Mould it is more than an opportunity, it is a necessity for the life of the Christian faith, for one is not born with such faith:

"The challenging truth is that Christianity is always just one jump ahead of mass extinction. It has to get taught - to every last generation - or die."<sup>3</sup>

## 2. Who is a Good Teacher?

In the writings considered a great deal of space was devoted to the qualifications of the good teacher. The following were found to be stressed

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1. Somerndike: op. cit., pp. 95-96.
2. Matthew 28:19-20.
3. Ralph Norman Mould: Guiding Boys and Girls to Christ, p. 5.

most, the first two receiving the greatest emphasis of  
1  
all as primary requisites:

1. A strong personal faith: This must be a faith that is both secure and adequate, to meet the day in which we live. It must be both vital and intelligent to the teacher before he can teach it to others.
2. Native ability as a teacher and desire to develop and improve: This demands a willingness to spend time and effort in getting training.
3. A consistent Christian life: Teaching must be strengthened by example.
4. Knowledge of the nature and needs of her pupils: Only as the teacher constantly adapts her materials and methods to the needs of her pupils will she achieve her objectives.
5. Understanding and appreciation of the Sunday school organization and its aims, general and specific: The cooperation of each teacher is essential.
6. A deep sense of the responsibility and importance of her work: This is shown in cooperation, faithfulness, preparation, promptness, attendance, and personal Christian living.
7. Knowledge of the principles and methods of teaching, and the materials of instruction: This is necessary to be able to transmit the message.
8. Alertness and teachableness: She must be ever alert to grow in ability and understanding through participation in whatever training is available for Christian teachers.
9. Ability to interpret Christianity: This must be in terms of everyday experiences.
10. Understanding of the environment: This means to appreciate and to use it to stimulate religious awakening in her pupils.

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1. Cf. DeBlois: op. cit., pp. 365-368; Raffety: op. cit., pp. 151-162; and Schisler: op. cit., pp. 42-43.

In regard to the first requisite Richardson says the primary function of the disciple is to bear witness to the vital truth of the Gospel. He refers to the fifteenth chapter of John to get the characteristics of the true witness as given by the Lord:<sup>1</sup> A true witness has been with Him, abides in Him, and so bears fruit, continues in His sayings that fruit may abound to the glory of God, His Father in heaven.

Since the teacher is the representative for Christ her Master, she should resemble Him. Her personality should possess the qualities of love, understanding, friendliness, wholesomeness, and common sense. To these she adds the training and skill which is developed through care and prayer. DeBlois concludes:

" . . . in the final analysis, the leader in the work of Christian education must be a spiritual person, all else depends on this."<sup>2</sup>

### 3. Prospective Teachers

#### a. Selection

Any look ahead into the next few years (if indeed not into the present) shows that there will be need for replacements in the teaching staff. In a volunteer staff replacements are always frequent and difficult to get. Then, too, there are many on the

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1. John 15:7-10.

2. DeBlois: op. cit., p. 368.

present staff who have too many duties or those not best suited to them. Volunteers are often earnest and reliable, but not gifted, vital, and original. The comparison with public school teachers (though unfair) shows the Sunday school teachers often to be unreliable and unstable. The urgent need is for more and better trained teachers. But where and how are they to be secured?

"The teachers for every church are in the community," answers one author.<sup>1</sup> Other occupations have capable persons who could also fill the needs of the Sunday school. Some reasons why recruiting of teachers<sup>2</sup> has been more difficult than it should be are:

1. the task has not been exalted as it should be.
2. the task in being belittled has been made to seem so easy that there is not enough to challenge those who seek real opportunity for service.
3. the congregation has not assumed responsibility and initiative in securing teachers.
4. the school has not made its teachers the ideal of its youth that they might strive to become teachers in the school.
5. selection of teachers for enlistment has not been done on a systematic plan with regard for past achievements in Christian living and promise of future growth.

Where can a school find teachers? Prospective

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1. F. E. Henry: The Small Church at Work for Children, p. 37.
2. Cf. Charles D. Spotts: "Getting and Training Leaders", International Journal of Religious Education, July-August, 1947, pp. 9-11.

teachers can be found by searching in the homes of the church, the young people's society, and the church roll. Each teacher should be selected with great care, as fully<sup>1</sup> fitted as possible for a specific group. A job analysis should be made of the position to be filled; then a specific person should be challenged to serve in the place needing her ability. Persons thus selected should be given definite preparation for the task through training. It is a good plan to organize a young people's class for those potential leaders who desire to become teachers and leaders in the Sunday school. It is also well to request service for a limited time, including a vacation.<sup>2</sup>

b. Training

The training of leadership for the Sunday school should be a long-term program, for there is a constant need. The training of prospective teachers and new workers was discussed by the authors as an effective way to meet the need of leadership.<sup>3</sup>

Each church should have definite plans for those whom it is training. Prospective teachers may be instructed and inspired in many ways. The small school should encourage church young people in college to take

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1. See Appendix, p.
2. Cf. E. Morris Fergusson: *How to Run a Little Sunday-School*, pp. 12-13; Henry: *op. cit.*, pp. 38-39; Marvel: *op. cit.*, chap. 8; Schisler: *op. cit.*, p. 42; and Sensabaugh: *op. cit.*, chap. 3.
3. Cf. Moore: *op. cit.*, pp. 68-69.

courses on Christianity and the Bible. Observation of good work now being done teaches and inspires. What is done with young people today will determine what kind of a church there is in the future. Hence, the small school that avails itself of the magazines, conferences, and activities within reach to train its prospective leadership is staking a claim in the future for improved teaching.

Selected persons of promise should be systematically trained for teaching through a young people's group or a class at the Sunday school hour. This training may also be done by cooperation in a community school which has added enthusiasm and fellowship. The course of study will hold added value if it leads to credit. A caution is given to the Sunday school staff by two writers not to use these trainees for substitutes and so to interrupt their training until after a year of faithful study.<sup>1</sup> Although leadership is developed by service, Sensabauch warns, "A good prospect for teaching may easily be spoiled like the picking of unripe fruit before it is ready."<sup>2</sup>

After the work of the training class and other parts of the approved training plan have been completed successfully, recognition should be given in an instal-

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1. Cf. Ibid., p. 69, and Sensabauch: op. cit., p. 40.
2. Loc. cit.

lation service at the church in order that the congregation may know who has completed this preparation.<sup>1</sup>

#### 4. In-Service Teachers

Although the long-term program is the aim and ideal of the Sunday school, the present teachers call loudly for attention. These teachers of the present staff bear the burden of the teaching; hence, they need immediate help if the teaching is to improve now. The problem of training teachers in service is often of a remedial nature rather than of growth. Therefore this training presents more difficulties than the training of new recruits and needs much tact, patience, and ingenuity.

##### a. Enlarging Vision

The desire for better teaching must be present within the teacher before a receptive attitude makes possible help that can result in improved work. Enlarged vision and an appreciation by the teacher of her task, the realization of handling eternal and life-giving issues in human souls,<sup>2</sup> will determine the quality of her individual work and so be reflected in the changed lives of her pupils.

Mould quotes Dr. Paul C. Payne on the teacher's opportunity, which should open her eyes to a great vision

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1. Cf. ante, p. 17.

2. Cf. DeBlois: op. cit., p. 3.

of service.

"The Sunday School teacher who wants to make every inch of his life count, clear to the hilt, would do well to look at his Sunday School class. . . . He can multiply his life, his highest ideals, his impact on human society, by as many as he can bring into that class. . . . Sunday School teacher, God expects you to build a new world. . . . You have your chance in that Sunday School class. Lead those boys and girls to Christ. Make Jesus real to them by what you teach and what you live. The greatest thing in your life is not anything you do in your business relations or social group - it is what happens to those boys and girls under your guidance."<sup>1</sup>

b. Desire for Improvement

The natural result of an enlarged vision is the desire within the teacher to do better work. Dr. Sherrill approaches improvement in the teacher through training. This training, he writes, will awaken in the teacher dissatisfaction with poor work; similarly it will show her ways to improve. Such awakened teachers will recognize needs in psychology - the knowledge and understanding of childhood; in theology - the understanding and knowledge of Christian teaching as found in the Bible, and the knowledge of Jesus Christ, the central figure and chief resource; and, finally, in pedagogy of Christian education - its purposes and methods.<sup>2</sup>

"For such reasons as these (the needs of teachers noted above) the improvement of leadership by the training of teachers and other workers is the strategic

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1. Mould: op. cit., p. 3.
2. Cf. Sherrill: op. cit., pp. 57-58.



point of attack when we undertake to improve the education in a church."<sup>1</sup>

c. Preparation

Effective teaching depends upon good preparation. Workers' conferences and various other types of training to be suggested will aid the teacher in using better educational practices which will bear better results spiritually when applied in her preparation.

Snowden writes of the importance of preparation:

" . . . no amount of . . . instruction in the art of teaching will avail unless the teacher will pay the price of true success in thorough preparation for the class and then in patient sympathetic work during its sessions. . . . there is no royal road . . . that can take the place of prayerful self-preparation."<sup>2</sup>

Thus it is up to the teacher to be willing to put into action all those things which she has learned. The good class session does not just happen - it is carefully planned and prepared by the teacher. Each session is approached as a part in the whole unit; thus in preparation she first takes the long view by reading the whole unit to see how each part fits into the whole.

A careful teacher knows her children and the equipment with which she will work. In the light of these she will consider her material and adapt it to fit her situation. To aid the teacher in her planning, Miss

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1. Ibid., p. 58.

2. Snowden: op. cit., Preface, p. vi.

Roorbach suggests a teaching plan book in the form of a loose-leaf note book containing the class roll, title of the unit and desired aims (those included in the quarterly and those adapted to her own local situation), a list of material aids (pictures, stories, songs, Bible, etc.), a list of the things the class may do during the week (books, excursions, interviews, etc.), and an outline of the first class session (the content, the method, and the desired outcomes). Space should be left for recording results and things learned that would have improved the session.<sup>1</sup> This lesson planning should be repeated each week in lessening detail as proficiency is attained. After such planning the teacher should study her plan to make it a real part of her life. Her life must be so full that her teaching is a sharing of her religious knowledge and experience with the immature minds she teaches.

On Sunday morning it is well for the teacher to arrive in advance of the pupils and be ready to receive the early arrivals with undivided attention. This time may be used for further preparation of the pupils for the lesson and of the teacher for the kind of children they are that day. If possible the children should share with the teachers in making ready their space for the type of session planned.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Roorbach: op. cit., pp. 54-55.
2. Cf. Gillet: op. cit., p. 44.

d. Class Session and Worship

One of the great advantages of the small church with the small school is that there can be close fellowship with and among all ages. This is possible in many activities. When the small school has graded classes allowing for individual graded growth along with this all-ages fellowship, this is wholesome and advantageous to growth in Christian living.

All the contacts and preparations of the week climax in the class session. It is desired of the teaching that it should inspire the child to express himself in worship, this time the spiritual height of the Sunday school session. As Fergusson says: "The highest work . . . of . . . the Sunday school is its worship."<sup>1</sup> The failure of the small school to meet the test of true worship in the time given to their "exercises" is pointed out by Dr. Sherrill as usually one of the places in the school most in need of careful change.<sup>2</sup>

Nothing should detract from this sacred time of worship. It is thus necessary that the whole staff show and practice proper reverence as the example for the children to follow. The staff themselves must be clear of the aims of worship and the ways of expression, i.e.,

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1. Cf. Fergusson: op. cit., p. 78.
2. Sherrill: op. cit., p. 86.

individual or private and group worship. The latter may be for many ages, all taking part together, or may be in graded groups. It is valuable that children at an early age have the experience of common worship in the church, even though they may not comprehend it all.<sup>1</sup>

Within the class the teacher has the joyful responsibility of encouraging individual prayer among her pupils. Says Gillet: "One of the greatest responsibilities of the teacher is to guide the growing prayer life of her children. . . ."<sup>2</sup>

The planned worship is the time the school plans for the worship experience for the children. A carefully selected theme should be used for a unit of time. In planning children's worship the good leader will consider these items:<sup>3</sup>

1. the atmosphere (room, beauty, quiet, and order)
2. the temperature and ventilation
3. the attitudes of the teachers and staff
4. the preparation needed
5. the order and manner of service.

The leader will also provide guided activity for those who come early to help in preparation for the worship and seek general participation in the service of worship. A reverent manner of teaching songs and responses to be used in worship makes their use more meaningful to children.

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1. Cf. Ibid., pp. 88-89.
2. Gillet: op. cit., p. 99.
3. Cf. Roorbach: op. cit., pp. 78-80.

In addition to the planned worship times in the school, advantage should be taken of the informal, unplanned moments of true worship, which may come at any time. A few minutes of fellowship before beginning may naturally lead to praise in worship. "The most spontaneous worship often has the most meaning for children."<sup>1</sup>

e. Through-the-Week Program

At this point the general set-up of the small church brings both advantages and disadvantages, i.e., there are fewer children whom the teacher knows better (through parents and community life), but often the fact that they live at great distances from one another makes transportation necessary for any gatherings or visiting of either a spiritual or social nature. Yet due to the limited time on Sunday it is necessary for the school to plan for additional contacts and instruction, such as weekday religious instruction, visitation, and vacation Bible school during the week.

The week-day school is urged by McLaughlin:

"Under present conditions the week-day church school must be made a definite part of the program of religious education if the rural church is to provide adequate religious instruction for all of the youth in the community."<sup>2</sup>

He speaks of its success in practice:

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1. Cf. Gillet: op. cit., p. 93.
2. McLaughlin: op. cit., p. 168.

"Pastors, public school superintendents, police and probation officers are enthusiastic in their praise <sup>1</sup> of the plan wherever it has been given a fair trial."

Sometimes the school is conducted within the public school, at other times the pupils are released early to go to a nearby church that sponsors or cooperates in the school. <sup>2</sup> The state laws control this practice. Often in rural areas the cooperative parish carries on this program.

The individual teachers will want to plan for at least occasional contacts with their children during the week. These contacts, whether in group gatherings or through home visitation, will be more than rewarding in better understanding; hence more vital teaching and home cooperation will result. <sup>3</sup>

Dr. Sherrill speaks of the difficulty of securing home study as due to three things: 1. the home - does not cooperate; 2. the material - not appealing or satisfying; 3. the assignment - not clearly given by the teacher so that the child knows what to study. <sup>4</sup>

To aid in home cooperation Dr. Sherrill suggests that the church school adopt in practice the aims of the public school Parent Teacher Association, which in principle are: better understanding by parents of what the school aims to do, growth in sense of value of this work,

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1. Loc. cit.
2. Cf. ante, p. 18.
3. Cf. Sherrill: op. cit., p. 107.
4. Cf. Ibid., p. 99.

and cooperation of parents because they understand and value this work. In the small church such cooperation should be easily attained as the parent-teacher group is already closely associated. The work of the school needs to be understood and valued by the parents. This information can be given the parents through the minister's sermon or at appropriate gatherings of the church families.<sup>1</sup>

The through-the-week program should also include play. Recreation is significant in the small church where often contacts are limited to the home circle. Much can be learned from watching children at play, and much can be taught them through the right leadership in play. Raffety adds:

"We are apt to think of the Sunday school at study, and the Sunday school at worship, but in a very real and important sense Sunday school workers should think of the school at play. . . . Educational and spiritual values must be put into programs of play, and will be by wise leaders."<sup>3</sup>

The influence of programs of recreation, especially in rural churches, has "literally purified a whole community." The reason, says Raffety, is that ". . . the goal of all good times is Christian character."<sup>4</sup>

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1. Cf. Ibid., pp. 100-101.
2. Raffety: op. cit., p. 86.
3. Ibid., pp. 88-89.
4. Cf. Ibid., pp. 90-91.

f. Types of Training Program

(1) Personal Counseling and Supervision

A great help to the whole educational set-up is that which is given to the teachers in service through supervision. Practice forms habits during the teaching of lessons; hence, guided practice will help the teacher to see right procedures and give an opportunity for constructive criticism and practical suggestions that the practice may form the right habits.<sup>1</sup>

Supervision should thus help leaders to reach their goals and raise the level of teaching through inspiration along with practical help. It should be based on the desires of the people and their immediate needs with a long view toward continued improvement. The need of supervision may be introduced through the pastor, superintendent, parish educational director, or through the teachers themselves. The last often has greater worth, for the value of counseling or supervision is dependent upon the attitude of receptivity and active desire on the part of the one counseled and the genuine helpfulness of the counselor; they must both desire improvement.<sup>2</sup>

Who will do this supervision and counseling? In the small school it may be a field representative from the denomination or the International Council of Religious

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1. Cf. Moore: op. cit., pp. 87-92.
2. Cf. Sherrill: op. cit., p. 69.



Education or it may be the pastor, superintendent, or community church member of ability and tact.<sup>1</sup>

It is a good plan for the supervisor and the superintendent to have a conference with each of the teachers at the beginning of the school year, for example before Rally Day, and if possible at the beginning of each quarter's work to check on the progress. The first conference of the year should be a stimulation supplied through new goals set for the year, goals set, preferably, by the workers themselves after careful consideration.

Before any constructive counseling is done, the class and teacher must be seen in action.<sup>2</sup> Supervision of a teacher at work consists of looking for both the good and bad points of the teaching. The supervisor will take an unobtrusive part in the class and observe all details of the procedure and its results.<sup>3</sup> The evaluation of the teaching will be done as objectively and accurately as possible.

Soon following the visit to the class, a conference should be held which will just be the beginning of a series of visits and conferences, first to analyze ability and need, then to note progress and strengthen weaknesses. Opportunity should be given to the teacher to

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1. Cf. Ibid., pp. 71-72.
2. Cf. Moore: op. cit., pp. 89-91.
3. Cf. Philip Cowell Jones: The Church School Superintendent, pp. 63-67.

see a good teacher in action that she may learn from her<sup>1</sup>  
and be inspired to do better herself.

In the small and rural church areas counseling of teachers is apparently most effectively done through the larger parish where there is a director of religious education shared by a group of many churches. The handicap of such a plan is that this person is often shared by so many that divided time makes it impossible to stay with one church long enough to raise greatly the level of teaching; hence, there is a need for one such director in each church.<sup>2</sup>

Richardson suggests the "Invisible Supervisor."<sup>3</sup>  
The Christian teacher should maintain intimate and sympathetic personal communion with Him through prayer and prayerful living. This constant direct communion realizes the indwelling Christ and so the teacher becomes more like Him her Master, more able to fulfill her call to draw children to God through Christ. This Supervisor is ever available to all the the most important of all; without Him no supervision is complete.

## (2) The Workers' Conference

One of the most common and most comprehensive

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1. Cf. Moore; op. cit., p. 85.
2. Cf. Sherrill; op. cit., pp. 71-72.
3. Cf. Norman E. Richardson: The Christ of the Class Room, p. 266.

suggestions given for improvement of the local Sunday school is the workers' conference; this is included in all primary sources dealing with the organizational aspects of the small school. Of it Moore says:

"A valuable means for the development of the regular workers in the small church school is the workers' conference, sometimes called the teachers' meeting."<sup>1</sup>

What these meetings consist of is simply expressed by Sensabauch: ". . . the workers taking counsel together on the plans and problems of the Sunday School."<sup>2</sup> Where this is done in frankness with a genuine desire to see the whole school improve, and not in selfish interests that exclude the needs of the rest, improvement in the program and performance is the result. Much is dependent upon the leadership and preparation.

The importance of team work is stressed by Sensabauch:

"One of the reasons why there are so many mired Sunday schools the country over is because pastors, officers, and teachers do not understand the importance of team-work."<sup>3</sup>

Hindrances to successful workers' conferences are in the lack of frankness and honesty in facing problems, poorly planned, led, or attended meetings, and indefiniteness in publicity of the time and the place. However, when these meetings are made interesting and

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1. Moore: op. cit., p. 78.
2. Sensabauch: op. cit., p. 48.
3. Loc. cit.

practical through adherence to a definite program and time schedule there is no problem of attendance.

These meetings should be attended by all the workers in the school - the pastor, superintendent, all general officers, teachers, substitutes, and representatives from the young people and adults. This makes up a responsible group, for the "religious nurture of those who attend Sunday school are involved."<sup>1</sup> Within this group lie also great opportunities expressed by Dr. Sherrill:

" . . . experience suggests that we have here (workers' conference) one of our best opportunities for continuing the education of the workers while they are 'on the job'. Such a conference in a small church imperceptibly becomes a training school."<sup>2</sup>

Due to its importance, it is necessary that great care and thought be given to the time and place of meeting. It is necessary that the former, at least, be regular. In some communities the workers' conference holds a definite place in the calendar - surely it should be in the church calendar. Once set, all those who are part of the conference should observe with diligence this date.

The elements of the program should include the following and not take more than one and a half hours:<sup>3</sup>

. . . . .

1. Cf. Sensabauch: op. cit., p. 51.
2. Sherrill: op. cit., pp. 73-74.
3. Cf. Moore: op. cit., pp. 79-80; Schisler: op. cit., p. 112; and Sensabauch: op. cit., chap. 4.

1. A devotional time of song, Scripture, and prayer, and perhaps a very brief talk to deepen the spiritual life and focus thought on the seriousness of the task.
2. Reports of the various departments and offices, prepared in brief, should be given.
3. The pastor and superintendent should present recommendations for discussion. This would include organizational and financial matters and special day programs.
4. Immediate problems (the starting point) should be considered by the group. The major portion of the time should be used in systematic study, preferably of a course taken for credit, (or some helpful lecture or book on the work).

Thus the thought of the whole force is brought to bear on a specific problem and their best guided thinking can later be used in attacking the problem. These conferences, or meetings of teachers, hold the answer to many of the problems which hold back the progress of the school.

### (3) The Quarterly Preview

Although the primary sources mention the necessity of the individual teacher's knowing the theme of the unit and the parts in the lessons, no mention was made of the quarterly preview where teachers jointly meet to view the quarter's lessons. This is a recent innovation of Christian education to answer the need of the teacher to know more than one lesson at a time and to see how each fits into the whole; hence to give help in the preparation of the unit of lessons for each quarter.

The procedure of the meeting is a survey of the whole quarterly with all the teachers of a department (or specific age group, if possible). There should be on hand pictures and other visual aids, stories and any additional related material that would make the unit more meaningful to the teachers but especially to those they teach. Dr. Melconian describes the session:

"With the new quarterlies in hand, the lessons are scanned and related to the theme and aims of the quarter. Suggestions for the enrichment of the lessons come out of a creative sharing, involving handwork and other activities, worship resources, discussion topics, stories, pictures, etc."<sup>1</sup>

There should be a time for discussion of ideas gained through previous study of the unit and the evening's perusal. The outcomes of this evening, besides the primary aim of inspiration and knowledge of the direction of the quarter's material and how to prepare and teach it, should include the enthusiasm which stimulates the creativity and alertness of the teacher to find practical help for herself. Her mind will be living with these lessons and this enrichment of the teacher makes her lessons live for the children she teaches.

But the outcomes are not limited to the individual teacher. Her response to the values found in the pre-view may reach her pupils more directly as in the

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1. Vartan D. Melconian: "The PRE-VIEW as an Aid to Learning", Presbyterian Church School Superintendents' Association, Presbytery of Chicago, p. 1.

case of the intermediate teacher who invited her class to the "First Quarterly Pre-View Party".<sup>1</sup> Their curiosity was further aroused when they arrived and found the dining room table spread with the new quarterlies, binder rings, cardboard, colored pencils, paper, punch and paper cutter. They set to work making the quarterly into a loose-leaf book that for the first time became "'My' church school resource book to use with the Bible, meaningful and useful to the pupils."<sup>2</sup> As they worked, they discussed "how they might enrich the lessons with pictures, hymns, poetry, drawings, clippings, etc."<sup>3</sup>

A successful way of reaching the home has also come out of the quarterly pre-view experience:

"... a superintendent now is sending the parents of children up through the junior age a quarterly mimeographed paper entitled 'REVIEW AND PRE-VIEW'. In it the work of the past quarter is reviewed and the children who participated are mentioned by name, and the new quarter's work is outlined so as to enlist the cooperation of the parents."<sup>4</sup>

#### (4) Teacher Training Courses

The importance of this phase of the small school's work has brought forth many and varied possibilities of training for teachers. All the primary source materials include this in some or many of these

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1. Cf. Ibid., p. 2.
2. Cf. Ibid., p. 3.
3. Cf. loc. cit.
4. Cf. loc. cit.

topics - developing, training, improving, and strengthening leadership.

In Miss Newman's article on the transformation that was wrought in a one-room church school, she mentions two important steps that were taken:

1. "to enlarge the vision of our leaders."

"The progress we have made during the years has come almost entirely through leadership of those who received inspiration and training in county and state work, including conventions, institutes, camps, training schools. . . ."

2. "the formation of an educational committee."<sup>1</sup>

This experience bears out what Mr. Fergusson wrote in 1916:

"As it is seldom that such (able) teachers can be found in the community and put to work just as they are, the school must plan to train them."<sup>2</sup>

A list of some of the forms of teacher training<sup>3</sup> courses follows:

1. Local teacher training classes meeting other than Sunday school hour
2. Community classes where several Sunday schools cooperate
3. Community schools where several courses are offered
4. Workers' conferences of the local school staff - weekly or monthly

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1. Marie Newman: "The Story of a One-Room Church", The International Journal of Religious Education, February, 1934, p. 16.
2. Cf. Fergusson: op. cit., p. 13.
3. Cf. McLaughlin: op. cit., pp. 82-84; Moore: op. cit., pp. 62-92; Raffety: op. cit., pp. 157-159; Schisler: op. cit., pp. 95-98; and Sherrill: op. cit., pp. 75-76.



5. Intensive study of methods for a week or two, every night - one or more schools
6. Summer training school or assembly
7. Camp conferences, conventions
8. Bible institutes, missionary training schools, and professional schools of religious education
9. Colleges and universities with departments of Christian education
10. If no personal contact can be had, correspondence.

If training cannot be had formally, the teacher may do some self-training through these ways:

1. Use of texts and periodicals on Christian education, circulating library
2. Observation of good teaching in carefully selected schools (and public schools)
3. Self examination through self-testing
4. Classes and discussions with parents
5. Check-up on attainment in light of goals set.

#### D. Summary

This chapter has presented the emphases found in the primary sources regarding the training of teachers in the small Sunday school. They have been topically arranged to cover the problems the authors discussed.

Although the date of writing of these and the secondary sources varies from 1914 through 1946, a period of 32 years, a marked similarity was discovered in the emphasis upon training of the teachers as the place to begin with the improvement of the school. The

greatest difference seems to lie in the manner or methods the various authors would use, rather than in the needs stressed. The need today is the same as yesterday's need - more and better trained leadership in the small Sunday school.

A strong asset of the small school was found in the personal element - the faithfulness, family spirit, and receptivity of the small school. The greatest liability was considered by all authors to be the lack of leadership, trained and capable, and open to change; next in importance was the limitation imposed by inadequate and poor equipment.

In the organization and administration of the small school much responsibility was given to the superintendent, who should be backed by the pastor, and work through the teachers. These all need to be genuine Christians, competent and faithful, with a contagious spiritual personality. The limitations of inadequate equipment, originating with the architect, need not keep the school from doing good work educationally, although the school should always aim for such improvement as is consistent with the objectives of spiritual birth and growth.

The curriculum should be selected with consideration of its content, method, and type; regard should be shown the children's needs and the teachers' ability.

The Sunday school should be a part of the church organically through an educational committee which is responsible for the work. There is a definite responsibility of the church and its school for its children: it should prepare selected persons for teaching; and for the uplift of the moral life of the community it serves, it should have a positive influence for the good.

In order to improve the present Sunday school teaching, attention must be given to the training of teachers in service to awaken their vision and desire for improvement. Training will accomplish this as well as give methods by which to improve. One of the greatest responsibilities of the teacher is the providing and guiding of worship experiences. The importance and necessity of contacts with the child during the week, both in spiritual education and wholesome recreation, were stressed.

A major form of assistance for the teacher in service was suggested in supervision and counseling. The possibilities for training in the small school are varied and vast, including personal counseling, supervising, the workers' conference, quarterly pre-view, and teacher training courses. Teacher training need not be limited or restricted, for there is some form or forms that even the smallest, most poor and isolated school can use.

## CHAPTER II

ANALYSIS OF A TYPICAL SMALL SUNDAY SCHOOL  
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO TEACHER TRAINING

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### ANALYSIS OF A TYPICAL SMALL SUNDAY SCHOOL WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO TEACHER TRAINING

#### A. Introduction

In the preceding chapter the important aspects of teacher training in the small Sunday school were considered each in turn as they were found emphasized by the primary authors studied, as the essentials and ideals toward which the teachers in the small school must strive. On the basis of the above, a guide was given to the staff<sup>1</sup> at Troy school with the request that each teacher analyze his work in relation to each topic included and indicate what he would like to do in the future. Seven of the present teaching staff of twelve, the superintendent, and the pastor responded in a written estimate of their present work. Out of the study of the aspects presented by the primary source authors in chapter 1 a series of check lists were evolved for the purpose of further analyzing the actual situation. These check lists, shortened and simplified,

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1. The Troy school is a fictitious name given to the small school under study in a semi-rural area of northern New Jersey.

were given the lay teachers at the Troy school; seven of the staff answered the questions (all of whom cooperated in the above self-analysis).

These reports of the teachers will be supplemented by consultation with the present staff and by the writer's intimate personal experience and knowledge of the situation.

In the Troy school was found the asset of simplified organization run by a small but faithful group that has held together with a strong family spirit. Contact with the church has been limited. However, this last year the parent-teacher teas and the conference with representatives of the official bodies of the church and its school have begun a closer cooperation and understanding.

Since the cooperative parish director of religious education has fourteen churches in her parish she naturally can seldom visit a church school. In the past there has been cooperation with a Methodist church in the daily vacation Bible school and participation in the training school of the cooperative parish.

As the assets lie in the personal realm so the liabilities lie in the material. What these are specifically will be evident in the following report of the data secured from the staff.

#### B. The Organization and Administration of the Troy School

##### 1. Leadership

The Sunday-school organization is very simple.

At the head is the superintendent, the spiritual and administrative leader appointed by the elders. He is aided by an assistant, a secretary-treasurer (both of whom teach), a former music teacher as opening pianist (from the beginners' department), a boy who takes the attendance, five other teachers, four assistants, and one substitute. This is the entire personnel active each Sunday. There are, in addition to these, the superintendent of the cradle roll department and the superintendent and the visitors of the home department active outside of the session. The latter superintendent is also the pianist-beginners' teacher.

Of the seven reporting teachers not in school one attended university four years and is a registered nurse, as is another teacher; two are normal school graduates; one is a high school graduate; and two have had two years of high school. All have attended Sunday school in their youth, most of them a life time. Eight of the staff took the fall training course of the cooperative parish.

Division of duties are simply defined. The keeping of records is limited to the class and school attendance books on Sunday and the secretary-treasurer's reports of the in-between activities. The library is almost unused and in charge of no one. No one especially plans for a worship center each week. No budget is prepared for the year, nor is a yearly calendar planned.

## 2. Grouping of Children

Grouping of the children is controlled by the space now available. The twenty-eight beginners have their own narrow room; the other forty-three children are in one main room. This last group includes the seven primary, junior, and intermediate-senior classes, who all worship together.

## 3. Objectives

The eight responses received from the teachers are in general agreement on the objectives of their school, although they do not all use the same terms. Six write of teaching the Bible to children, another combination of five write of preparing the child for Christian living. The concern of the teachers may be expressed in some of their own words: "to give him (the child) a knowledge of and background in the Bible", and "to prepare the child to go forth to live a Christian life (every day) and to help build around him."

Thus, it is seen that individual teachers have found the objectives of the school as teaching the knowledge of the Bible and God and His Son so that the children thus taught may be prepared to live constructive Christian lives in the Christian faith. Not all responding included both aspects, which, according to Dr. Sherrill, are the two great tasks of Christian education.<sup>1</sup> Only one of the

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1. Ante, p. 7.



teachers including the two aims just mentioned added how this faith is to be received, how this fellowship with God comes. She writes, "To have the child accept Christ as his personal Savior." That the other teachers do not mention this indicates that their thinking on the aims of their teaching is either not complete or not fully formulated.

#### 4. Equipment

##### a. Building

There is a separate Sunday school building called the chapel, built in 1891. At present this is the only building used for classes. It has no more cellar than is necessary for the furnace. The church is used by the choir for the Sunday morning rehearsal after 10:30 A.M.; therefore the Sunday school has not felt free to use that space as it did before the school shrank to less than forty in attendance about five years ago. The growth following the revival of the daily vacation Bible school in 1943 has continued to the present, making the Sunday school rooms inadequate. Two generations ago the church basement furnace room (about forty feet square) was used for classes, but as it now is, this room is physically unfit for use. The young people of the church raised some money which they wish to use in its repair. Many of these young

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1. The new boys' Bible class met in the church on March 7, 1948.

people are actively working in the Sunday school and are interested in fixing this room as an additional Sunday school class room and a meeting place for their meetings. The official bodies of the church have faced the problem and are sympathetically working on the plans.

b. Tables and Chairs

The beginners' room is inadequate both in size and furnishings; it is separated from the rest of the school by wooden partitions, which do not cut out much of the sound. There are twenty-eight children on roll with an average attendance of twenty, twenty-three small chairs, and one long table approximately ten by two feet. The table and chairs are conglomerate -- natural wood, green paint and blue paint. There are plans to paint these this summer.

All above the first grade are in the main room which is similarly equipped, although not so crowded. Three classes each have a children's table, one class uses the kitchen table in warmer weather, one uses the piano bench, and the others make a circle of their chairs.<sup>1</sup>

c. Other Materials

Among the permanent supplies are hymn books,

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1. For placement of the classes, see Appendix, p. 109.

ample for the singing. There is a supply of thirty-six American Standard Version Bibles whose print is in paragraph form, making it difficult for teachers and children to find verses; hence these are not used very much. In the summer months, flowers are sometimes placed at the front of the room. Flannelgraph equipment is on hand, and also one large blackboard. The windows are high from the floor, with shades in good condition; there are no drapes. Some appropriate colored pictures are placed about the rooms.

#### d. The Library

There is a book case in the back of the room that contains eighty-nine books, mainly fiction, some of it definitely Christian. The age group for most of the books is adolescence (the smallest group in the school). There are a few little children's books and a few books of reference for class use. These books are in charge of no one and seem to be handled through the teachers. There is no specific time for circulation or time limit on those taken home. Consequently they are not much used; only one teacher reported use by herself and her children. These books have been collected over the past few years when the library was revived (there had been a large library a generation ago). Some books were purchased by the Sunday school at the request of the teachers, and others were gifts of interested individuals.

As a result it is a conglomerate collection.

e. Musical Equipment

The musical equipment is limited to the two pianos, one each in the beginners' room and the main room. These are both used for singing by the groups, generally at different times, for they usually have the same pianist.

5. Curriculum and Method

a. Curriculum Content and Selection

For a time Troy school discarded the denominational materials in all departments except the beginners'. These materials lacked a growing and developing use of the Bible, either in part or entirely. Therefore the staff did not consider them adequate. In the interim an accepted Bible story book was used for their teaching, but without first working out a curriculum organization to prevent repetition of study. Although pleased with the Bible content, the teachers felt this also unsatisfactory. The staff next decided that each teacher should use the lesson material of her own choice. This provided a unified program for each class but was unsatisfactory because of the lack of correlation. Now the school is planning to use the "New Curriculum" with the hopes that they will be assisted in bringing up the educational standards of their teaching as well as finding good Bible content.

b. Method

(1) Within the Class

The method found in use in all the classes was story-telling. Other methods mentioned by four of the teachers included questions and answers, discussion, notebook and paper work, use of pictures and songs, service, prayer, and worship. The flannelgraph is sometimes used in the group worship. There are no general or special exhibits. The library is available but its contents are not well known or much used.

(2) Without the Class

There are no activities reported out of the class. In a past year one of the present teachers had her girls come on a series of Saturdays before Christmas to make presents for their families.

6. Relation to the Church

The Sunday school is quite independent, both financially and organically, and self-perpetuating. There seems to be little contact with the church outside of the annual Children's Day program which has made up the eleven o'clock service for many years.

The last contact with the church organically was in 1944 when the elders asked the present superintendent to serve. The last financial connections with the church were in 1947 when the missionary society allotted ten dollars to

the school to help secure an outside church leader for the daily vacation Bible school, since no local volunteer was able to take this responsibility.

There is no active educational committee nor is such recorded at any time in the memory of the present staff. Thus, organically, the Sunday school is quite separate from the church. As a result of requests made in the Women's Auxiliary, one mother has been in charge of securing an attendant for each Sunday to stay with younger children in the chapel while their parents attend church. There has been no attempt to set up a program for this group; what is done each Sunday is in charge of the attendant for that day.

There also seems to be a difference in the leadership in the Sunday school and the other organizations of the church. Although four teachers are active members of these organizations, their leadership does not participate in fulfilling the needs and personnel of the Sunday school (with the exception of the young teachers, all of whom belong to the young people's society).

An initial contact with the parents was made when the children shared some of their experiences in song and verse at the spring and fall Sunday school teas. Some of the parents have no other connection with the church than through their children. A few are church officers.

No installation service for the Sunday school staff has ever been held. Among the present staff, none

have received recognition before the congregation as teachers of the children of the church, except as their classes have taken part on Children's Day in the church.

The minister recently finished work on his doctor of philosophy degree at the university where he still teaches during the week. Now he is seen at the Sunday school. In the past he has given agreement to plans that the staff have made.

#### 7. Relation to the Community

The main contribution of the Sunday School to the community, aside from its open doors ten months of the year, has been through the daily vacation Bible school. This school has reached children from several denominations, from other faiths, and from homes with no religious connections. Some parents have joined with the church as a direct result of this school. Leadership among the mothers and the young people has been developed in service in this school. In the past it has also been a bond of cooperation with the Methodist church nearby.

The relationship to the public school has necessarily been limited to the cooperation in reading notices of, and releasing children before bus time for, rehearsals for special occasions.

## C. The Teacher Training Program in the Troy School

### 1. The Challenge

The method of securing teachers in the past has been to take whoever could be had. The result of such a policy is that the staff is likely to be made up of people who are teaching for different reasons. Some are called to be teachers from love of, or duty to the Christian faith. All teach with the general aim of developing character so that the children will not grow up as delinquents. Six teachers wrote that they were teaching because there was a need; four included their desire to be teachers.

The "challenge" thus is simply this: "A group of children are coming to Sunday school and have no one to teach them. Won't you help and become their teacher?"

Even though there is a lack of official challenge given, many of the present staff have expressed for themselves the true challenge of transmitting, in a manner interesting and understandable to the child, their own positive faith in Christ so that the children may in turn love Him and desire to share Him with others.

### 2. Who is a Good Teacher?

In the preceding chapter<sup>1</sup> the primary requisites of the good teacher were found to be a personal faith

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1. Ante, pp. 21-23.



reflected in living, and potential teaching ability at least partly developed. Less than half of the teachers reporting mentioned both of these requirements. Most of them dwelt on one aspect or the other, going into details such as trust, knowledge of the Bible, or willingness to learn, faithfulness, understanding, and ability to "put over" the lesson. Several mentioned the joy of the task.

Either the major requisites have been taken for granted by most of these teachers or their importance has not been recognized.

### 3. Prospective Teachers

#### a. Selection

There is no systematic plan in operation to select from the congregation and the young people those who are prospective teachers for the school.

When a teacher is badly needed, which is chronically, a call goes out. The present superintendent has ceased to announce the need from the pulpit, for he has received no response from the congregation. The women teachers have received a similar discouraging lack of response from the Women's Auxiliary and so have ceased to ask for personnel there. The staff has been the major help of the superintendent in recruiting teaching staff. Most of the new recruits have come from within the school itself. What a few years ago was the oldest girls' class is almost entirely used on the present teaching staff as full teachers or assistants. The same age group of boys

is entirely lost to the school, with the exception of the one who takes the attendance.

b. Leadership Training

The training of some of the young teachers began in service in the daily vacation Bible school five years ago. During the past year four have served as assistants.

In the fall there was a series of cooperative parish training classes attended by six teachers and one teacher's assistant. Three teachers went to the Evangelical Teacher Training Association classes in a city some distance away. After several weeks this was stopped due to the difficulties of the long travel in severe weather. The staff now desires to send some young teachers or prospective teachers to a summer training camp or school for a week or two.

4. In-Service Teachers

Although the teachers have long felt their inadequacies, they have not been able to develop a long term plan by which they may get this training they need. The daily tasks of the teachers have been heavy and varied, from busy high school pupils to some having family responsibilities that prevent their regularly attending a class of special training for any length of time.

a. Enlarged Vision

The present staff recognizes that the teaching of

their school does not on the whole compare favorably with that of the public school which the children attend. They feel that the Bible material which they have is important, perhaps the most important thing that the child has to learn; yet they realize that the teaching is inadequate, because they do not know how to teach as they should. This group of teachers has been urgent in their request for practical help in order that they may make the Bible live for their boys and girls. In short, these teachers have a vision of their task and a desire for help and inspiration toward fulfilling it.

b. Desire for Improvement

Of all the assets of this small school, the earnest desire of the teachers for the improvement both of their teaching and their school's organization is perhaps the most encouraging. Each teacher has expressed a feeling of need at the meetings and in the reports made for this study. These teachers realize that they should constantly have their task in mind and so aim toward improvement through reading, attending courses, and generally being alert to helps that apply to their work. Through the reports received the writer found a recognition of these needs on the part of the teachers: Bible knowledge, prayer, knowledge of how to transmit the teacher's faith to the pupils, supervision with suggestions for improvement, a correlated curriculum, how to interest pupils more, how to

teach on the pupils' level of understanding, knowledge of the pupils' homes, and inspiration from contact with other groups.

This last list of needs, as recognized by the teachers, covers the four areas in which awakened desires for improvement should manifest themselves, as stated in the foregoing chapter,<sup>1</sup> namely, child psychology, theology, both general in the Bible and specific in Christ, and the objectives of Christian education.

#### c. Preparation

In their reports on preparation, the teachers agreed that this must be done in advance so that the teacher is ready to meet the class on Sunday morning. Six spend one or more hour's time; one suggests twice as much time as would be spent in the class. The time of preparation, ideally, is some time each day with a review at the end of the week, writes a junior teacher. Thus the teacher is familiar with the material and is ready for the questions of the child. The materials they suggest using in preparation are the lesson quarterly, the Bible, other books, and much thought. Two of the teachers reporting keep note books with lesson plans, reference material, and records of their classes. Nothing is said directly about long-term or quarterly over-viewing of the lessons

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1. Ante, p. 28.

so that each lesson would be correlated and seen as part of the whole unit theme.

d. Class Session and Worship

In the past there have been fellowship suppers which were attended by the whole family. In addition to the games in which all ages could participate, this evening sometimes included hymn singing and a short talk which gave the children an experience of common worship in addition to the church worship. A few of the children experience the privilege of the common worship of the church, attending with their parents (some of whom they are responsible for bringing). Other children attend without their parents, and some do not attend at all.

The worship time in the beginners' room is the only graded worship in the school. Here the children are encouraged to develop prayer naturally as a part of their Christian teaching response. In the main room of the Sunday school, all the other departments, from primary through intermediate-senior, have an opening service which is the planned worship for that group. Following this, the teachers have their children for the class time, where they may take advantage of high spots of worshipful moods of the children. Two teachers reported this; one expressed teaching the children to "make very natural little prayers" for them to pray. One teacher said they did not worship in the class session. Five minutes before the close of the

session, the superintendent again takes charge and leads the group in the closing song and benediction.

The atmosphere of the worship period as produced by both physical and spiritual factors is considered by the teachers to be generally good. The following situation is present on the usual Sunday morning. The room is much the same; there are sometimes flowers in the summer, or an object for a special talk. The order of service is about the same each Sunday, with fifteen minutes of singing, a prayer by the superintendent, the story read from a children's Bible story book, and the offering and prayer. At times this opening is in charge of the different teachers and their classes. Variety is secured through this change of leadership, through an occasional flannelgraph story telling, or through an illustrated talk by the superintendent. Since the teaching is not correlated, there is no opportunity to relate the worship with the lessons. The worship is in itself an entity.

e. Through-the-Week Program

Whatever activities are carried on during the week must be done by the individual teacher. According to the reports, however, nothing is now being done by any teacher, except the one teacher who has visited and the two who have telephoned the homes. Three mention transportation as the reason.

In the past one primary group met in the home of

their teacher each week for several weeks before Christmas to make gifts for their families.

Throughout the year the only through-the-week activities of the whole school are the seasonal, as the Sunday school picnic, the daily vacation Bible school, the rehearsals for Children's Day, and the Christmas program.

f. Types of Training Program

(1) Personal Counseling and Supervision

Any personal counseling that has been done in the past has been initiated by an individual teacher and has been done whenever and with whomever she might choose. Some such sharing with one another among the staff and their interested friends outside their church has, according to the reports of five teachers, been helpful and encouraging. However, they have many times felt the need of getting more complete answers on pedagogical procedures and spiritual questionings of their children.

The only supervision of the teaching has been done by the superintendent who finds himself occupied most of each Sunday session with various and sundry tasks, leaving him little time for supervision. For example, at present he is acting secretary of attendance.

(2) The Workers' Conference

The former teachers' meetings have not been replaced by the workers' conference, either in name, content, or purpose. These irregular meetings are called as an

urgent need arises. At this time the superintendent calls his teachers to find a time appropriate and a place of meeting, usually in one of the homes. Thus there is neither a set time of month or day, nor a regular place of meeting for this group of teachers.

The order of the usual teachers' meeting corresponds in part with the devotional, report, business, recommendation, and discussion elements of the ideal workers' conference. Informal reports, not prepared as such, are given of the immediate needs of the teachers. Recommendations for solutions of problems and plans for special days are given by any or all present. No time has been devoted to special study of a book or course related to the work. The meetings are usually lengthy, often lasting over two hours to cover the accumulated business in a democratic manner, and then usually continuing still longer for refreshments.

### (3) The Quarterly Pre-View

A systematic pre-view of the lessons has not been carried on among the teachers of this school; indeed, since each teacher has separate and unrelated lessons, there could hardly be a school pre-view.

The school is now looking forward to the correlated "New Curriculum". As yet no plans have been made for its introduction to the teachers, aside from the study of its basic principles in two meetings last summer. The teachers



hope before long to attend an introductory talk given by a field representative of the board of education.

#### (4) Teacher Training Courses

At present there is discussion of what training should and could be offered to the present teachers and those young people who are interested in teaching. Last fall the Sunday school urged those who could to attend courses in a city an hour's bus ride away. Several started but dropped out after having difficulty with limited bus service and lack of local encouragement. In October and November, 1947, seven of the present staff took courses for several weeks under the cooperative parish teacher-training institute. Some remarked that these were helpful in story telling, lesson preparation, and in giving interest in the Old Testament as a source of stories for children. The need for more training is strongly felt in Biblical background and in how to teach.

The Women's Auxiliary and the Elders and Trustees have both responded to the Sunday school's challenge to help them train teachers by promising to send two (in addition to the two to be sent through Sunday school and young people's finances) to training camp this summer. Although this will make a beginning in the training of the new recruits and young teachers, it is felt by the older ones that they, too, need training in addition to the cooperative courses which were a helpful beginning.

#### D. Summary

The situation of teacher training of the Troy school as reported by the teachers in their written responses and through conversation has been set forth in this chapter, supplemented by the intimate personal knowledge which the author received while serving on the staff of this school. The following facts were revealed.

Although the characteristics of a good teacher were mentioned throughout the reports of the teachers of the Troy school, the primary requisites, it was found, were not included by over half of the teachers responding.

From the reports it was evident that there is no system or forethought in the recruiting of needed teachers; a willing person is simply asked to take the class needing a teacher. Neither is there any plan of training the recruits; they are given a class and left to make decisions on the materials and methods quite independently. Recently some older girls, anxious to teach, were apprenticed to older teachers as assistants. No other plan has been set up for preparation in training, although seven attended the shorter courses of the cooperative parish, and a few have attended city Bible classes.

The majority of the teachers are high school students or homemakers without training for teaching. The need of such a program, the reports revealed, is strongly felt by both groups in the face of their lack of knowledge

of how to present their important message. The teachers expressed their desire to know more of child psychology, the Bible, and the objectives of Christian education.

The preparation of most teachers is limited to a half to an hour and a half of preparing a story and perhaps some expressional work for an individual session. There is no indication that anyone consciously adapts the material to her specific children or correlates each lesson with the unit as a whole. Two teachers reported favorably of notebooks they keep of their classes.

It is likely that some children never have the experience of church or family worship. At present the whole group of primaries through seniors have common worship. Usually the superintendent is in charge and reads from a Bible story book, although some variation is had through teacher-directed class participation.

Aside from the neglect of the teacher training in the matter of class preparation, there was evident the lack of supervision for those who are in process of learning through experience. The only one who could do this is the superintendent, who is kept from it by the pressure of minor duties and by his lack of knowledge of supervision procedures. The staff has gained some answers for their problems from counseling with "anyone we thought could give us any help."

Another weakness of the school was seen in the lack of any weekday program, as three teachers said, by

lack of transportation. Seasonal activities, as the daily vacation Bible school, the Sunday school picnic, and the Christmas program, are the only activities that fall on weekdays.

The training of teachers has been neglected in the past by the school and church. A few individual teachers have made efforts to get training elsewhere and in past years have received but passive encouragement from the school. In the past year the school endeavored unsuccessfully to have teachers attend an eight-months' city course. However, the cooperative parish six-weeks' course in a town nearby was attended by more than half of the teachers. There is no plan for training although the adults as well as youth on the staff desire to be trained.

### CHAPTER III

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE  
TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAM OF A TYPICAL SMALL SUNDAY SCHOOL

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#### SUGGESTIONS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAM OF A TYPICAL SMALL SUNDAY SCHOOL

##### A. Introduction

The preceding chapter gave the present status of the organization and administration of the teaching situation and the teacher training offered at the Troy school. This information came directly from contacts (personal and in the form of written reports) with the school and its staff. This revealed wherein lay the strength and the weakness of the practices of the school in order that on this basis suggestions might be made for the improvement.

In general the outline of the preceding chapters will be followed in this chapter. Each specific topic under the organization and administration of the school in which the teachers function and the program of teacher training will be considered separately and specific recommendations made. These recommendations will consist of adaptations of the data secured from the primary sources studied in chapter I, as they apply to the needs of the Troy school discovered in chapter II. Naturally not all the weaknesses can be overcome immediately or even in a year of hard work. However, much progress can be made by tackling the major problems and planning ahead. It will be possible to put many of these suggestions into effect almost immediately

while others will take a period of years to accomplish; in both cases deliberate planning is necessary to effect a comprehensive program for the improvement of the Troy small school by working for trained and therefore more efficient lay teachers.

Many of the assets usually found in the small school, simplified organization, small but faithful group, the initiative of the country, and the growing appreciation of educational values, are strongly present in the Troy school. As the Sunday school and church ran parallel without meeting hand in hand for many years more should be done to develop a family spirit with the church congregation. This last year the school reached outside to take advantage of some of the training offered, for the first time in over five years.

Private class space is being sought. Although the answers have not yet come, there is planning proposed which would greatly aid not only in class space but also in providing room for four distinct departments.

The weaknesses in the program have been previously<sup>1</sup> presented. Being helped to see these weaknesses was the outstanding influence awakening the teachers to their lack and their need of specific training. There has been a

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I. Ante, p. 56.

marked open-mindedness and receptivity on the part of the staff members.

B. Suggestions for the Improvement of the Organization and Administration of the Troy School

The organization and administration of the Troy school is in the hands of a lay staff that lacks specialized training for their task. Improvement can be made through the leadership, the grouping of the children, a clarification of objectives, improvement of equipment, a correlation of the curriculum, improvement of method and closer and more meaningful relationships with the church and community.

1. Leadership

The teachers of Troy school in their reports, as indicated in the preceding chapter, revealed through their past Sunday school faithfulness that there is strength in the devotion of the staff. On the other hand, there is a lack of specialized training in Sunday school curriculum and method; only two teachers reported <sup>1</sup> having had such training before attending the cooperative school this fall.

Since the superintendent is such a crucial person on the staff, it is important that he be given the opportunity

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1. Ante, p. 62.



of further training, either through specific study under the guidance of the pastor, or in the inspiring fellowship of an intensive training institute for superintendents. The superintendent of the Troy school is willing and anxious to learn more of his work, but has only had the training of the cooperative course. It is evident that some on the staff are overworked, for example the teacher who is pianist for worship in the main room, teacher in the beginners' room, and superintendent of the home department. Able persons should be sought to take some of these duties.

In the running of the school the superintendent should be relieved of secondary tasks by having individuals responsible for specific duties such as recording attendance, managing the library, and setting up the worship center. His work would also be strengthened by having committees to plan the calendar and propose a yearly budget which would include plans for improvement in definite areas. In all the selection and training of the leadership, attention should be given to the importance of the Christian life, as well as to the efficiency of the person placed in the position of spiritual leader.

## 2. Grouping of Children

With all of the youngest children up through the first grade in the present beginners' room, almost three-eighths of the school is placed in a narrow room that is less than one-third of the size of the floor space of the main

room.<sup>1</sup> This constitutes a problem that must be dealt with.

The teachers have talked of transferring the first grade children into a small primary class meeting in the main room. Immediate transference would greatly relieve the crowding of the beginners' room. Future plans should provide more adequate space for these little children. Utilization of the church basement might answer this need.

When the first grade is in the primary department where it belongs, there will be children from six through sixteen years old in the main room. The intermediate-senior<sup>2</sup> classes could well use the church. This small group with their own department should grow and develop their own worship. This would leave a primary-junior department. While normally functioning as separate departments, the three groups could on special occasions gather together as a whole Sunday school. If the basement room of the church were equipped, there would be room for four distinct departments which should be placed according to size and age. It would probably be best to leave the oldest group in the church auditorium as this establishes the habit of using the church. The youngest children should be given preference and assigned the most ideal class space.

### 3. Objectives

The fact that the main objectives of Christian spiritual birth and growth were both mentioned by but three

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1. Ante, p. 52.

2. The oldest boys began meeting in the church March 7, 1948.

of the teachers, and that while some emphasized teaching the Bible and others Christian living, their expressions seemed to lack full understanding of the implications of these objectives,<sup>1</sup> indicates a need of guidance. All the teachers should be led first to study and understand the general objectives, then the specific objectives, thinking of these as they apply in the teaching in Troy school. Out of such a study should come understanding and appreciation of the objectives of educational evangelism which will be reflected in the teaching of the Troy school.

#### 4. Equipment

##### a. Building

Possibilities for making the best use of the present building spaces have been suggested in relation to grouping.<sup>2</sup> The church auditorium should be used; plans for the repair of the basement room should progress. Representatives from the Sunday school and the young people ought to work closely with the trustees on a committee for this project. The need of this room and its possible contribution to the whole church program ought to be presented to the congregation to challenge their support. Their volunteer help added to that of the young people (already offered) would considerably lessen the costs as well as add interest in the project. The long-looked-for place for an

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1. Ante, pp. 52-53.

2. Ante, pp. 77-78.

inside rest room might be here also. This plan should be encouraged and developed into action.

b. Tables and Chairs

The greatest need in equipment is more table space with chairs of the correct size. As reported,<sup>1</sup> the primaries have low tables but need smaller chairs. Some may be had from the beginners' room, where the smaller class will have minimum table and extra chair equipment. The plans to paint their furniture, including the piano, would aid in making the room attractive. There are three classes without tables. On the usual Sunday the church balcony and "amen-pew" spaces<sup>2</sup> are not used; therefore tables could be set in either place for the oldest groups. Making needs known to the congregation may bring results in the providing of tables as it did in the provision of a book-case.

For the classes that meet in the open main room, privacy could be secured through the use of light movable screens; these could also serve as bulletin boards. Such screens might be made by some of the men of the congregation. No effort should be spared until each class has a place distinctly its own.

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1. Ante, p. 54.
2. The "amen-pews" are made up of four pews arranged in a square on either side of the pulpit.

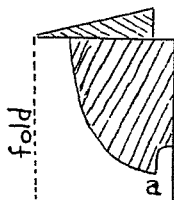
c. Other Materials

In addition to the equipment now being used, it would be helpful for each class above the primary department to have access to a small blackboard and maps. The big map belonging to the school should be used. A place to keep supplies should be provided for each class. The cabinet already under the kitchen table should be used and additional ones could be made. Orange-crate cabinets constructed by individual classes could also be placed there.

The Women's Auxiliary have offered to finance curtains for the chapel, but the committees have not completed their function. The older girls' class and young people could make this a project.

For the whole school there should be a catalogue of available pictures indexed and kept in a classified file, with a picture-librarian in charge. As a beginning of this collection there are many fine large pictures in the beginners' room closets. One who is adept in mounting should be given this duty. The teachers should become alert to use these and to add to the collection. Some of these pictures could be used in the worship center, as well as in teaching. A simple picture holder can be made from a manila folder.<sup>1</sup>

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Directions for making a picture holder from a manila folder: cut away the shaded section. Open half-way and place picture in the spot marked 'a'.

d. Library

The book case with no one in charge, containing eighty-nine books which have not been reviewed, might constitute the beginnings of a library. This calls for a special staff member who would review the books to judge their suitability in light of the aims of the school. They should be divided according to age group and type. This would reveal which age groups do not have a sufficient supply of books in relation to the enrollment. Books not available elsewhere should be chosen as an ideal library for the Troy school and plans for their purchase should be made. To start the circulation the librarian could have the different age groups come in turn for her to explain the library and the books for their age; this may take a series of Sundays following the class dismissal at ten-thirty.

e. Music

The present music was reported as limited to the piano and the children's singing.<sup>1</sup> As children develop more interest in proportion as they take more part it would be well for the teachers to find out the musical abilities of the children. Some may play instruments that would

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1. Ante, p. 56.

combine into a little orchestra for special services. Others may be found who can do solo or small group singing.

## 5. Curriculum and Method

### a. The Content and Selection of Curriculum

The former process of selecting the curriculum on the basis of dissatisfaction and trial, the reports showed,<sup>1</sup> has but partly led the teachers out of their dilemma. The teachers look to the "New Curriculum" to fill the needs expressed, a curriculum of Biblical and extra-biblical materials that is correlated throughout the school. The cost of this will be high, but the school is prepared and willing to pay more in realization of its importance. This promises to rectify weaknesses in the present system.

### b. Method

#### (1) In Class

The limitation of method, principally to story telling, is an indication of a lack of knowledge of the many varied activities possible. When the classes have more privacy and room, such things as simple acting of a story or framing of a picture, choral speaking of a verse, or making an exhibit of scene in a box will become possible. Since all of these would be distracting to other classes if done in an open room, more use can now be made of pictures, work

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1. Ante, p. 56.

books, animated maps and other teaching helps. In the use of all methods the teacher will constantly remember that method is not an end but a means of accomplishing the aims of Christian education.

(2) Out of the Class

Nothing, it was reported, is now being done between Sundays. Whether or not leadership is found for weekday activities, visitation by the teachers should be done in the homes. This will be included in the following pages under "Through-the-Week Activities".

6. Relation to the Church

The lack of connection with the church is not all due to the Sunday school teachers; there is no educational committee representing the church to confer with the school on the problems of its needs. Special representatives conferred with the pastor and Sunday school representatives when pressing needs were called to their attention in February, 1948.<sup>1</sup> Help was given and more is being sought. The need of a permanently functioning committee is felt.

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1. In February the church officials were approached by Sunday school representatives with some of their pressing needs. Representatives of the elders, trustees, and the Sunday school met with the pastor on February 29. This meeting resulted in a closer bond which is now expressed in the presence of either the pastor or an elder at the school each Sunday. Also a result was the securing of a teacher for the older boys; he began the following week to organize the Boys' Bible Class.



One year ago the Sunday school requested that the pastor have a children's sermon in the church service. He later took the proposal to the elders who agreed that this could become part of the order of service. As yet this has not been done.

The teachers deserve recognition for their service by the congregation. It is suggested that an Installation Service be held for all the staff of the school soon after its reorganization, probably each fall. The committee of Christian education should have a part in this service.

Every connection with the church that will aid in understanding and cooperation should be encouraged. A help in this direction is the parent-teacher tea which could become an annual affair.<sup>1</sup> There should not be a distinct group of children meeting with the sole aim of entertainment while their parents attend the church service;<sup>2</sup> every meeting of the children ought definitely to help them in Christian living. This should be part of the work of the educational committee looking toward the integration of the church and Sunday school program.

#### 7. Relation to the Community

The responsibility of the school toward the children of the community is not limited to their direct

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1. Ante, p. 58.

2. Ante, p. 58.

Christian education on Sunday, daily vacation Bible school, and weekdays; it includes every influence upon the lives of the children. The outreach of the daily vacation Bible school has shown that there are many children literally within the shadow of the church, yet unreached by any spiritual influence.<sup>1</sup> These and other unreached children of the community are the responsibility of the school. The teachers should as much as possible attend the Parent-Teachers' Association and know the school and the children's teachers. They should keep informed of the ordinances regarding children, the social services, the laws, and the delinquency (where and why). In every way they should use their influence to improve the community conditions; this includes intelligent voting.

#### C. A Suggested Teacher Training Program for the Troy School

Most of the leadership of the Troy school is found in the teachers. Since these class teachers have direct contact with the children, their work is of great importance. If this work is to improve, they must be inspired to be more effective educationally and spiritually and be given training to accomplish this.

##### 1. The Challenge

To aid in developing a definite challenge to teach in the Sunday school, one that is felt by those within the church as well as by the present staff, one or more of the

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1. Ante, p. 59.

following means are suggested: Group study of the emphasis on the instruction of children in the Bible, the history of the Sunday school movement in America, within their own denomination, or local church, with special emphasis on the leadership and the results of such work.

To clarify the task teachers of Troy School should be asked to serve for a limited time, at the end of which there would be a reorganization of the staff. Where there is mutual satisfaction, individuals will be invited for another year. Since nothing is now being done to dignify the task, the pastor through his sermon could challenge the congregation with the importance of Christian education, the responsibility of the church for its school, and exalt and dignify the position of the Sunday school teacher. The teachers might draw-up a contract to be signed by each teacher at the new year; it should state the essential things that each teacher in the school should endeavor to fulfill in her life as a teacher.<sup>1</sup> Near the beginning of the school year the installation of teachers should take place during the church service. This installation service and special sermon might coincide with Rally Day, making it a special Christian education or Sunday school day throughout the church.

## 2. Who is a Good Teacher?

Since the reports of the Troy school showed the primary requisites either taken for granted or not recognized by more than

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1. Appendix, p. 110.

half of the teachers it must first be determined which is true. In either case there should be a clarification within the teachers' thinking. Self-rating is a good educational process for teachers to discover the desirable characteristics of a good teacher.<sup>1</sup> Clarification may also be done by preliminary home study of this topic by all teachers followed by a guided group discussion or an inspirational practical talk. This would aim to establish appreciation of the requisites.

If it is true that the teachers, at least in part, do not know these requisites, a definite time should be spent, first in studying these qualifications in the Bible, then in study of their incorporation into the life of a Sunday school teacher. The latter may be aided by a biographical study of some great Sunday-school missionary or educator, or by use of a book from this bibliography.

### 3. Prospective Teachers

#### a. Selection

Before initiating a plan for the selection of teachers it is the responsibility of the school to make the teaching situation, particularly with respect to organization, equipment, and curriculum, fulfil the ideal as far as it is able, so that worthy people will desire to respond.<sup>2</sup> Also the task of the teacher should be exalted and made the ideal of the youth

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1. Appendix, p. 111.

2. Ante, pp. 16-17.

through gaining the respect and recognition of the church<sup>1</sup>  
as a whole.

The first step will be to decide what are the essential positions that need to be filled, both immediate and expected vacancies. A job analysis should be made of each. Then should follow the systematic search for possible new teaching recruits who can best fill the requirements. Regard should be paid to past achievements in Christian living and possibilities of growth. The young people, the most recent suppliers of staff members, should be carefully checked. The homes of the church (consult roll) should be systematically considered one by one to formulate a list. With the job<sup>2</sup> analysis in hand a representative of the school should call on one prayerfully chosen from the list, who should know how his name was selected. Arrange this first interview with great care. Definite preparation should be offered him in training, guidance in supervision, and his services should be requested for a limited time with a vacation included.

#### b. Leadership Training

Thus the selected prospective teachers will be offered this much needed training before any actual teaching is done. The present procedure of apprenticeship for some might be made a part of the training for all. Most of the oldest Sunday-school

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1. Ante, p. 17.
2. Appendix, p. 115.

scholars are in the young people's society or are already assisting teachers; hence a class for them during the Sunday school hour is not possible. However, adults interested in teaching might also have such a class. The young people might welcome such a training class before their usual Sunday evening meeting. If there are not enough trainees for two classes the adults likewise could meet at this time. Although the two-class plan has the advantage of similar age grouping, it has the disadvantage of requiring additional leadership.

At first the class might be held for a short time. These short classes might develop into a class meeting a full year. If no teacher is secured, some interested adults that cannot teach might transport the prospective teachers to the cooperative parish short courses and the eight-months' Evangelical Teacher Training Association courses in a nearby town and city.

The plan to send three selected persons to the summer conferences should be prayerfully followed in regard to who should go and what conference he should attend.

This formal training, with the apprenticeship, is well supplemented by selected reading and observation of good teaching.

#### 4. In-Service Teachers

Since the present staff is made up of high school students and homemakers, any training program for teachers in-service must take this into account. It must be at a time

when both can attend, or two classes must be held. Next to leadership, time is the biggest factor that stands in the way of teacher training.

a. Enlarged Vision

The staff at Troy school does have a sense of falling short of that which they should accomplish. Just where and why would be shown by further study and training. A talk from someone who has done successful work in reorganization of a similar small school would show what can be done. Group reading of a booklet such as Mould's "Guiding Boys and Girls to Christ", followed by discussion or a devotional service would refresh and widen the vision of the staff. The effectiveness and the importance of the contributions of the small school should be shared with the teachers.

b. The Desire to Improve

This desire is present in the areas of need which<sup>1</sup> Dr. Sherrill states awakened teachers should recognize. The relative value of these needs was not indicated by the teachers of Troy school except one teacher's mention of Biblical background. Eight teachers stated their need simply as more training (to these teachers, the writer believes, this meant educational psychology and method). How generally the individual<sup>2</sup> needs expressed in chapter 11 were realized or accepted is

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1. Ante, pp. 16-17.
2. Ibid.

not evident from the reports. Therefore, a discussion of these would be important, to bring out the pressing needs for immediate treatment in the workers' conferences. This would probably lead to the two-fold emphasis, Bible and method.

#### c. Preparation

The teachers made no mention of interrelating each lesson with what precedes and follows. The quarterly pre-view, to be considered in the following pages<sup>1</sup>, would answer this need. In addition a general lesson plan of procedure<sup>2</sup> from week to week would aid in this shorter planning. Also this plan is best worked out by the teachers, used as a guide in lesson preparation, and then in the class session. This weekly plan would then become a part of the teacher's note book.<sup>3</sup> A record of the pupils' addresses and birthdays should also be in this note book.

The phase of preparation not mentioned by the reports is the early arrival (at least fifteen minutes) on Sunday morning to set things in order. Early comers can then take part in the teacher's final preparations for the session.

#### d. Class Session and Worship

Little attention has been given to the creation of a

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1. Post, p. 96.
2. Ante, pp. 29-30.
3. Ante, p. 30.



worshipful atmosphere of the room in beauty. Much can be done to add to the worship by at least an occasional worship center, as an open Bible and a globe. Quiet and reverence will be aided by having older boys act as ushers for seating. The classes will enjoy and profit in planning the worship centers and at times the worship program.

More meaning could be had if the superintendent continued the theme of the opening worship for a unit of time. Spontaneous worship was not directly mentioned by the teachers; hence its value and meaning is not recognized or experienced. A study of the ways of worship and its expressions might be incorporated in a workers' conference. Graded worship correlated with the class lesson should be experienced by the children at least occasionally. It is hoped that such may be had when the "New Curriculum" is introduced.

To give the children every worship experience possible the Sunday school should encourage the children and their parents to attend church service and family functions.

#### e. Through-the-Week Program

The primary sources considered weekday contacts necessary to supplement the brief time of the Sunday session. Yet in the Troy school nothing, except the two weeks' daily vacation Bible school, is now done as a school. If leadership can be had, a special series of well-planned weekday meetings could be held, leading up to Easter and perhaps Christmas. Parents could be asked to help in the

transportation, since this is done for other weekday activities of their children. Such a program might develop into year around weekday instruction.

As wholesome recreation is especially important to the pupils of the rural small school, some such program should be provided. The type and scope will depend upon the leadership. The least individual teachers can do is systematically to visit their pupils and carefully to plan interesting activities<sup>1</sup> for their children to carry out between Sundays, either alone or in smaller groups.

One teacher reported visiting in the homes, and two others said they had telephoned the homes. Visitation as a means of reaching the homes and increasing the appreciation and understanding of both the homes and the teacher is urged upon all the teachers. This introduction of the teacher to the home and its needs may give her an opportunity to help some family solve great needs. She should have advance information of community service agencies.

#### f. Types of Training Program

##### (1) Personal Counseling and Supervision

The goal of supervision is the improvement of the teaching and the need of improvement must be recognized before its introduction can have the greatest value.<sup>2</sup> The teachers in Troy school have sought help within and

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1. Ante, pp. 34-35.
2. Appendix, pp. 113-114.

without in the improvement of their school. The need thus recognized, the first step in organizing a system of supervision would be to formulate goals for their teaching.

A plan or schedule of visitation could then be made so that each teacher might have the opportunity of this assistance. The superintendent is not free to do this with his present duties; as has been stated, he must be freed to do his special tasks. If the pastor or local person of ability is not available to aid the superintendent in supervision, the plan might be adjusted so that the parish director of religious education could assist. The least that should be done immediately is to have a set of goals and a systematic check-up with the superintendent and pastor. The teacher should be kept aware of the help of the Invisible Supervisor, who is ever present.

## (2) The Workers' Conference

The few irregular meetings have resulted in discussions and activity that speak of the value and necessity of having the staff together. Regular meetings would anticipate needs and planning could be done in advance. The place of the meetings should be the chapel, at least occasionally. The pastor, a representative from the church officials, the cradle roll superintendent, the home department visitors, and representatives from the church young people and adults, as well as the Sunday morning staff, should attend. Therefore all these should be

consulted before the regular meeting time is set. Once agreed upon by all, this time should be jealously observed.

All the elements<sup>1</sup> of the program should be carefully planned and limited in time. Each worker should be informed of what is expected of his report. This careful organization planned beforehand will eliminate the over-long meeting. Careful minutes should be kept. The systematic study of an immediate problem should be added to the elements included in past meetings. This may be begun through a lecture or book-study; later a course for credit should be planned. The teamwork that has been shown can be utilized and channeled in the well planned program of the regular workers' conference.

### (3) The Quarterly Pre-View

With the present set-up, with no correlation of the materials used by the different classes, there can be no quarterly pre-view for the class sessions. However, there can be a pre-view of the quarter's worship. This would allow the teachers through advanced knowledge to correlate their individual lessons with the worship as much as possible. When the "New Curriculum" is put into use, the teachers in each department should have their

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1. Ante, pp. 40-41.

own pre-view meetings.

The outcomes of the pre-view (i.e., the Pre-View Party and REVIEW and PRE-VIEW<sup>1</sup>) may be used by those teachers who can take the initiative and energy to plan these. Surely each teacher will need to have her own pre-viewing of her quarter's work, even without the inspiration and practical help of others using the same material. This might be made the center of discussion at a workers' conference with the purpose of stimulating and guiding each teacher to do so.

#### (4) Teacher Training Courses

The teacher training suggested previously for prospective teachers<sup>2</sup> will apply also to the teachers in-service.

In addition to these, special use of the study section of the workers' conference or a special six-weeks' course is suggested. This evening might be divided into two periods with a brief devotional period (a hymn, scripture, and prayer) dividing the evening. One period could cover the Bible study desired while in the other period help could be given in the practical aspect of the methods of teaching.

These suggestions involve the problem which, it is evident, is the greatest in this small school, the

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1. Ante, pp. 42-43.
2. Ante, pp. 25-26.

matter of securing leadership for such courses. Since this is not available at present within the church it is necessary to look elsewhere. A pastor in a nearby church who has offered to assist the teachers in Bible study might be asked to teach in the proposed short term school. The other facilities available in the community, such as training classes and conferences, should also be fully used.

The present plan for the fall is to have a retired minister preach on Sunday mornings (during the pastor's leave of absence). As the Sunday school so obviously is in need of help and as the young people should have an advisor, it is suggested that a student from the denominational seminary at Princeton, one who is especially qualified to serve in both of these fields, be secured for each weekend. This would be of great assistance in the introduction of the "New Curriculum" from which great values are sought and would make possible a definite program of teacher training as suggested above.

Some topics which might be considered in the short courses are suggested herewith. These were selected from the expressions of need on the part of the teachers of the Troy school:

1. What are the objectives of Christian education?  
(Centered in the International Council of Religious Education objectives and the objectives of the "New Curriculum".)
2. What are the needs of our school in the light of 1.?
3. How can we make the best possible use of the equipment we now have?

4. What can we gain from a quarterly pre-view?  
(Consider its use in the home and with the class too.)
5. What does it mean to prepare a lesson?  
(Include guides in preparation.)
6. How do children worship?  
(Study the forms of worship, ways of expression of worship, and the teacher's part as a guide to worship.)

#### D. Summary

The suggestions of this chapter have been made in the light of the emphases of the primary sources and the situation presented in chapter II. The strength of the Troy school was found to lie in the devotion of the staff and their eagerness to improve their teaching through training. All the suggestions given cannot be followed at once; the proverb "Rome was not built in a day." may be paraphrased, "A good Sunday school is not made overnight." One simple phase, such as grouping of children (through the organization) ~~or~~ the training of the new teachers through summer conferences (in the teacher training program), should be attempted at first, adding new places of emphasis only after the first endeavor is firmly established and the group, seeing one accomplishment, is ready to take hold and work on a harder task.

The superintendent as the crucial person should be among the first to get specific training which with his intimate contacts and his willingness to learn will bear fruit in every activity of the school. The duties of the school should be assigned to specific persons that the superintendent may be free to act in his capacities. It is also well to offer

training through summer conferences to new and prospective teachers.

The grouping of children can be greatly aided by transfer of the first grade children and use of the church auditorium immediately and later through renovating the basement room. This project should continue to be promoted by the Sunday school. An informed and interested congregation can help in many specific ways, particularly in redecorating and furnishing the basement room for class use.

Some of the equipment needs additions to satisfy the present enrollment: tables, primary chairs, screens to separate the classes, and class cabinet-space. The equipment on hand needs to be organized and explained for present use, as the library, picture file, and large map. Use of methods can be expanded now and more when separate class space is achieved.

It is hoped that the church will form an educational committee to care for the Christian education of the children and the Sunday school needs in a systematic and orderly manner.

Definite topical studies have been suggested to aid in the development of objectives, challenge, appreciation of who is a good teacher, enlarged vision, and improvement of the teaching. It is necessary to raise the level of the school before seeking recruits for the staff. These should be carefully and systematically selected from the congregation with regard to past achievements and possibilities of growth in



Christian living. Such selectees may then be visited with a definite position in view and a plan whereby they may be trained through classes and apprenticeship.

Preparation of a lesson is far more than getting a story ready for one class session; it involves correlation of material within the unit, adapted to the individual class, and final preparation at the school with the early arrivals.

Much can be done through a worship center to add to the reverence of the children. This value will be increased if the children are given guided parts in the preparation and the service. How children worship and ways of expression of worship should be clear to the teachers who are the guides.

Contacts during the week can begin immediately with visitation. The staff might well plan for a special series of children's meetings before Christmas or Easter. Planned recreation, important to rural youth, should also be a supplemental part of the school's program.

If a qualified person is not available for supervision now, the teachers can check themselves with goals for teaching they formulate with the Invisible Supervisor's help.

The workers' conference can grow in value as teacher training by the inclusion of carefully planned and guided study times. An introduction to the possibilities of the quarterly pre-view would show its value when used with the children and parents as well as teachers.

The training of teachers requires leadership, which is not available in Troy school's local situation. Thus suggestions are made from looking elsewhere. The importance of leadership should be recognized and efforts made to secure it.

CHAPTER IV  
GENERAL SUMMARY

## CHAPTER IV

### GENERAL SUMMARY

The purpose of this study has been to discover ways of improving the work of the small Sunday school through teacher training. In order to discover the current emphases in teacher training, the outstanding denominational and independent writings on the small Sunday school, used as primary sources, were examined in the first chapter.

The sources studied were seen to agree that the training of teachers is the starting place in the improvement of the small Sunday school. The need of the small school has always been that of more and better trained leadership. Lack of such leadership has been the greatest handicap. On the other hand, the personal element of the faithfulness and family spirit generally existing was found to be considered a strong asset.

While good educational work may be done in spite of the lack of the buildings and equipment, the school should always aim toward betterment of its physical features as well as its educational procedures. Much responsibility for the work of the small school rests upon the superintendent, who should be backed by the pastor and work through his teachers. In the selection of a curriculum consideration of the needs of the children and of the teachers' ability as

well as of content, method, and type was emphasized by the authors. Another emphasis discovered was that of relationships. The ideal small Sunday school is organically a part of the church through the educational committee; it should fulfill its responsibility to its children and to the community in a positive influence for the good. Essential to the school is the long-term plan of selection and training of qualified persons as prospective teachers. To improve the present teaching, the in-service teachers should be challenged to grow and be given help through supervision, the workers' conference, and the various forms of teacher-training courses.

In the second chapter, to make the study specific, a small Sunday school in a semi-rural community was used as a basis for analysis of needs and application of findings. The stimulus to investigate this small school came through the staff's sincere desire to be trained so that they might be able to improve their teaching and their school. To discover existing conditions in organization and administration under which the teachers functioned and provisions for teacher training, the teachers were given a list of definite points on which to base written estimates of their work. Information so gained was supplemented by the experience of the writer as a member of the school staff.

It was evident from the reports of the teachers of the Troy school that the recruiting and training of needed teachers is not done with system and forethought. Neither is there a correlated curriculum for the school. The program of

training for in-service teachers is limited to apprenticeship for some. The first concerted effort of the school to secure training was in the fall of 1947 when seven teachers attended the six-weeks cooperative parish courses. Supervision of the teachers is left to the superintendent, who is too busy with minor duties to give this much time. The teachers revealed a lack of awareness of the primary requisites of a good teacher. They expressed desire to know more of child psychology, the Bible, and the objectives of Christian education that they might better present their important message. The worship experience of many of the children was found to be limited to the opening service of the main school. Few of the children attend the church service and the rare church family functions. Graded worship is held in the beginners' room, the rest of the school having a common worship service.

In the light of the emphases found in the primary sources and of the needs discovered in the Troy school as reported by the teachers, in the third chapter suggestions were made for the improvement of the teaching situation in that school and a plan was proposed for training prospective and in-service teachers.

Improvement should be sought in the training of the superintendent, the crucial person, in regrouping of the children, in the addition to and full use of present equipment to provide separate class space, in the expansion of method through training in the better use of materials at hand, and

in special training for all the teachers. An educational committee of the church should be organized to take care of the business of the school in a systematic manner and so free the teachers to concentrate on their educational development. Topics suggested for the study of the Troy school teachers were based upon the needs suggested in their reports. Since the school has the responsibility of improvement of its organization and teaching program before asking new members to join the staff, suggestions were given for achieving such improvement through supervision and the workers' conference. New recruits should be carefully selected and offered definite preparation in training and apprenticeship. A true appreciation and understanding of worship and its forms of expression, as well as practical help in the preparation of worship services would greatly increase the value of the Sunday session. Teachers should also be given assistance in teaching preparation. The teachers of the Troy school could begin to have weekday contacts immediately through visitation of the homes. These contacts are essential to supplement the Sunday program. A special short series of weekday meetings preceding Easter or Christmas might be the beginning of more continuous meetings during the week.

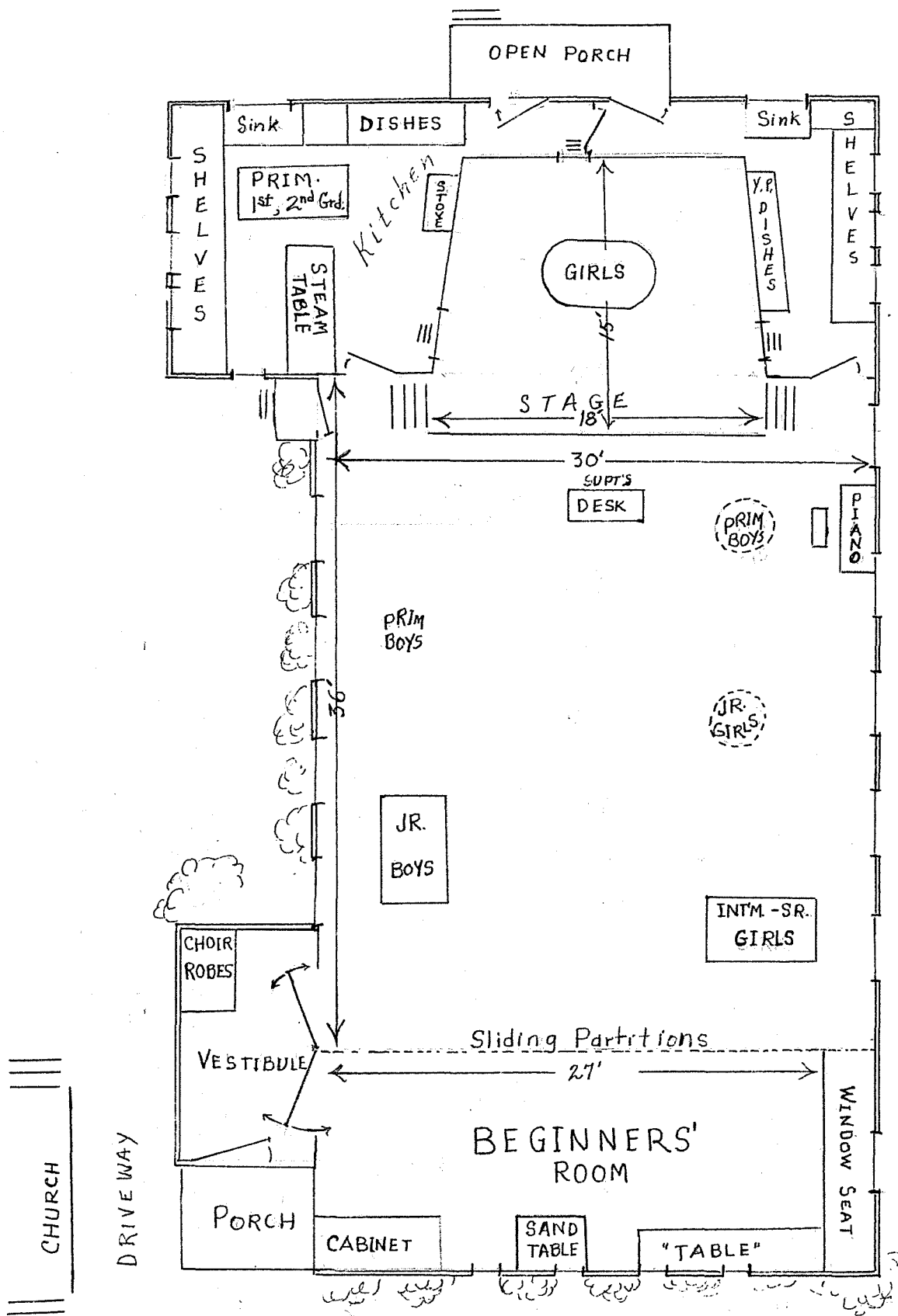
It was further recognized that improvement of the small Sunday school through such a teacher training program requires adequate leadership. Since in the Troy school's local situation, the leadership necessary for the training

program is not available, definite suggestions were made for meeting this basic need. It is hoped that the dependence of the school upon trained and so better equipped teachers will be recognized by the church, and that steps will be taken to secure this trained leadership through the denominational seminary or from other qualified sources. Only as this need is met will the boys and girls of Troy school -- or any small Sunday school -- receive that Christian training and experience which is their rightful heritage.

## APPENDIX



# APPENDIX A



Present Grouping of Classes in the Chapel

Approximate Scale 1/8" = 1'

## APPENDIX B

### TEACHERS' COVENANT<sup>1</sup>

Realizing my own weakness, but also that "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me", I will:

1. Hereby declare my belief in:  
The deity of Jesus Christ  
The divine origin and absolute dependability of the Bible  
And other Scriptural doctrines.
2. Endeavor so to live that my life shall be an example to my pupils.
3. Accept and faithfully perform the duties of a teacher during this Bible School year, and in the event I am unable to continue my services for any reason, notify the Bible School superintendent in writing, 30 days in advance if possible.
4. If necessary to be absent, notify the substitute secretary as soon as possible in order that my class may have a prepared teacher.
5. In order to grow more effective in my service and to help develop higher standards of work for our school, either attend some leadership training class or read at least two approved books on Christian education this year.
6. Agree to make it a rule to attend the monthly Teachers' and Leaders' Conference and to attend the departmental meetings.
7. Affirm my purpose to be on hand Sunday morning at teachers' time, for prayer and to help maintain discipline.
8. Pray daily for the pupils of my class and the class session, and thoroughly study the lesson during the previous week.
9. Earnestly seek to carry out the object of our Bible school in my class:
  - a. To win my pupils to Christ
  - b. To build up my pupils in Christ
  - c. To send my pupils forth for Christ.

. . . . .

1. Adapted from South Hollywood Presbyterian Church Bible School teachers' covenant.

## APPENDIX C

### SOME MARKS OF A GOOD SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER

#### My Own Self-Rating

1. I have an attractive personality and Christian character. \_\_\_\_\_
2. I have a purpose for each pupil. \_\_\_\_\_
3. I know the family background of each pupil. \_\_\_\_\_
4. I have visited or have in effect a plan of visitation for each pupil. \_\_\_\_\_
5. I am making some definite effort to enroll new pupils. \_\_\_\_\_
6. I remember our Sunday School in my prayers daily. \_\_\_\_\_
7. I have a systematic plan for my own teaching growth. \_\_\_\_\_
8. I give more time and attention to the preparation and planning of my lesson than to the actual teaching. \_\_\_\_\_
9. I have attended a teachers' training school or read at least one new book on teaching during the past year. \_\_\_\_\_
10. I am teaching because of my love for Christ and His Church. \_\_\_\_\_
11. I am seeking to follow Christ, my Master and Teacher. \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX D

1

### HOW TO PREPARE A LESSON

1. MEDITATE
    1. On the greatness of your calling
    2. On the ultimate aim of all your teaching
    3. On the inadequacy of human wisdom and skill
  2. PRAY
    1. For yourself
    2. For your children
    3. For your fellow-teachers
  3. THINK
    1. About preceding lesson periods
    2. About lessons to follow
    3. About the present lesson
    4. About each of your children
  4. STUDY
    1. The materials presented in your teacher's book
    2. The suggested Scripture references in their context in your Bible
    3. The assignments given the children
  5. SOAK
    1. In the deep spiritual truths involved in the lesson
    2. In their implications for you if you really appropriate them
    3. In their implications for your children
  6. SEARCH
    1. For "hooking-up" points in the children's experience
    2. For extra materials to enrich the lesson
    3. For various things the children can do in the lesson truth period
    4. For practical suggestions for "follow-up" for the children
    5. For definite ways of living out the lesson truth yourself
    6. For interesting assignments for the following lesson
    7. For something to do in a high spot of worship
  7. SUMMARIZE
    - Aim -- Source material -- Extra materials -- Approach
    - Children's activities -- "Follow-up" suggestions
    - Assignment
  8. MODIFY -- change to fit your exact situation
- . . . . .
1. Emily J. Werner in George Aus: Forward with Christ, pp. 34-35. (Adapted).

## APPENDIX E

### SUGGESTIONS FOR THE SUPERVISOR<sup>1</sup>

The supervisor is a helping teacher. Supervision is a natural and essential part of teaching and should be done in a spirit of mutual desire for improvement.

1. Have conferences first to create common understanding.
2. Visit the teacher at work in her class or group for a number of complete sessions. In the visit make yourself inconspicuous; remember to observe, not to assist.

Observe these things:

- a. the interest of the pupils
- b. the pupils' attitudes and responses
- c. what the pupils seem to be learning
- d. the personality and attitude of the teacher
- e. the materials and methods being used
- f. the equipment and environmental condition
- g. the strong points in the work and the points needing attention

Make notes inconspicuously or immediately following the visit.

3. Evaluate the notes made on the teaching.
4. Confer with the teacher in an unhurried interview. This is the opportunity to make suggestions for improvement. Begin with the positive things to encourage the teacher; then study together the weaknesses noted. In a free and frank discussion, suggest solutions to the problems. These should be tried out in the class and later discussed to see if the results are satisfactory.
5. This is the beginning of supervision. The first visits and conferences should be followed up with many more to establish the teacher. Supervision as a means of teacher growth is a continual process.

. . . . .

1. Adapted from Moore: op. cit., pp. 87-92.

APPENDIX F

MONTHLY CHECK LIST FOR SUPERVISOR OR SUPERINTENDENT<sup>1</sup>

1. Is the room clean and in order each Sunday?
2. Do teachers come regularly?
3. Do pupils come regularly?
4. Are classes properly divided?
5. Is proper literature used by both teachers and pupils?
6. Is space used to best advantage?
7. Are all babies enrolled by the nursery visitor?
8. Are accurate records kept?
9. Is missionary education included?
10. Is a daily vacation Bible school planned for each summer?
11. Is there an occasional program of fellowship for the whole church (picnics, dinners, family socials)?
12. Is continuous effort made to reach new members?
13. Is a training class for teachers and one for prospective teachers held each year?
14. Are programs for all meetings planned in advance?
15. Are all on the outlook for prospective workers?

. . . . .

1. Adapted from Lucy Foreman: "The Superintendent in the Small Church", International Journal of Religious Education, July-August 1947, pp. 13-14.

## APPENDIX G

### JOB ANALYSIS<sup>1</sup>

for a Sunday School Worker

To give the exact nature of the position and the kind of person needed to fulfill the position.

1. Name of the position \_\_\_\_\_
2. When needed to be filled \_\_\_\_\_
3. Age preferred \_\_\_\_\_
4. Man or Woman preferred \_\_\_\_\_
5. Abilities needed or essential \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. Additional desirable abilities \_\_\_\_\_

. . . . .

### FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF THE CHALLENGE

1. Limit the time of service (not for life).
2. Include a vacation to be used as desired: -free  
-to visit  
-to attend  
a conference.
3. Approach with dignity commensurate to the significant task.

. . . . .

1. Adapted from Spotts: op. cit., pp. 9-11.

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