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THE SCIENTIFIC POINT OF VIEW WITHIN THE CHURCH

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and con with the help of experts drawn from every available source.

The Hour Glass Club (an hour of systematic study a day) should be mentioned as a training factor for boys' secretaries. This club recognizes the necessity of constant study if men are to keep up with the advancing world in this matter of religious-social engineering. Over 150 boys' secretaries belong to the club for the purpose of having intelligent and consistent direction of their study. The purpose and scope of the club is to foster the vocational, cultural and recreational development of all its members. The Hour Glass Club "recognizes perfectly well that a man may be a hustler, having a cheerful disposition, attractive manner and abounding energy, and yet accomplish little work of real worth. Unless his efforts be intelligently directed, unless they be highly spiritualized, unless they be well reinforced by the power of God, they are apt to be puerile in operation and futile in effect. And so the Hour Glass idea is simply this — a man must study his problem from several different angles and he must increase his resources in order to do the most effective work."

The Association of Boys' Work Secretaries of America is a very vital factor in training. Over 330 secretaries now belong to this association which holds a conference once in two years and in the meantime keeps all members informed of advances and new ideas and ideals in work for boys. This is a most significant group of practical religious educators. They are studying every phase of developmental life and every instrument and agency that lends itself to steering life into channels of complete fulfillment.

THE SCIENTIFIC POINT OF VIEW WITHIN THE CHURCH

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What the church most needs and always will need is, of course, religion. Her defects are always religious defects; her real triumph always consists in increased communion between God and man — communion of feeling, or of labor and sacrifice, or of insight. The need of the scientific spirit within the church is a religious need — the need of seeing facts with the impartiality of God's own mind; the need of seeing like things as like, and

different things as different, just as God sees them; the need of seeing in human life and growth the causal connections in accordance with which God himself is educating the race. Lack of this spirit implies religious defect. Absence of it means that the church does not care to make the distinctions that God makes in the structure and processes of mind; and it results in this, that the church does not really accept God's ways of doing things but seeks some shorter, less expensive, way.

We who resort to psychology, and biology, and educational experiments in order to find out what the church should do with its children, have no desire to substitute devices of man for the operations of God in the souls of children. We seek rather to test our devices by the laws of spiritual growth, assuming that these laws are divinely ordained. We stand for religious efficiency, that is, God's will actually done. This means that we must know what is happening with the children in our churches. We will not be content to guess what is happening; we must see the facts. We will give to traditional methods such respect as their known results justify. On the other hand, we will love nothing that is new unless it gets results. To be scientific means for us that we must be teachable, avoid getting into ruts, be willing to confess our failures. The scientific method rebukes us when we are hasty in our judgments; it condemns us when we cling to plans because they are ours; it requires us to be ready for changes, and then more changes, with all the cost that change involves. But it gives us the comforting assurance that age by age we shall see farther and farther into God's way of making men, and that thereby we shall gain ever increasing control of the destiny of the human society for which He has made us responsible.

The scientific spirit, the spirit of definitely knowing the facts, applies to everything whatsoever that the church does with and for children and young people. It applies not only to the process of teaching a lesson in a Sunday-school class, but also to all the relations of the pastor and of the church board to children and youth; to every item in the work of the superintendent of the Sunday school, the work of the secretary, the work of the treasurer; to every young people's society, boys' or girls' club, catechumen's class; to social affairs, athletics — everything.

It is the rare church that really knows the facts of its own situation in all these directions. Thrice rare is the church that has compared itself at all these points with the most ap-

proved standards. In this respect, however, the churches are not as far behind other educational institutions as one might suppose. The complaint is common that our colleges, our high schools, and our elementary schools also are following traditions of curriculum and method that will not stand scientific tests. In our whole educational system, in state as well as in church, we are undoubtedly patching up ancient garments without really knowing whether they fit or not. It is at least as hard to secure scientifically grounded reform in state institutions as in the Sunday school. There is the same blind confidence in good intentions; the same inertia of habit; the same failure to know just what is happening and why; sometimes the same distrust of scientific method — as if it proposed to lay unwashed hands upon holy vessels.

But let us not make this discussion too general. Let us illustrate the point of it by showing just how the spirit of science can get us forward in practical details. Suppose we start with the question, To what extent do the pupils of a given Sunday school become full or confirmed members of the church before they withdraw from the school? How many pastors really know? I have found pastor after pastor who could not tell how many pupils twelve years of age and over remain outside full membership; much less how many of these pupils are males and how many females, or what their ages are. I have found pastors who could not even tell how many pupils in their school had come into full membership in the church within the past year. Suppose now that at the end of every year each Sunday school should make out a balance sheet that would account for the church relations of every pupil old enough to be a full or confirmed member. Thus:

Sunday School of the _____ Church
CHURCH RELATIONS OF PUPILS 12 YEARS OF AGE AND OVER
 Annual Report, December 31, 191—.

	Age 12		Age 13		Age 14		ETC.	Total	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	ETC.	M	F
Full members on Jan. 1st									
Became full members this year									
Full members at this date (Dec. 31)*									
Not yet full members.									
Totals									

*Allow for any full members who have died or withdrawn from or been received into the school during the year.

Just as every business firm accounts at the end of its fiscal year for every dollar received, so this annual report accounts for all pupils of adolescent age and over. By studying such reports for a series of years, you can definitely know whether more boys or more girls come from your school into full church membership, and at what age they come. The report for any year will show just what task remains to be done — just how many male pupils and just how many female pupils are eligible for full membership, and just how many there are of each sex at each age.

Knowing these facts, you can now go on to study causes. Why are more pupils received at one age than another? If there is disproportion between the sexes, why is it? Why are not all the pupils received into full membership before adolescence is over? The scientific spirit warns us not to answer these questions hastily. Let us not be too ready to assume that it is the perversity of certain young persons that keeps them out of the church; let us not be too ready to say that boys stay out because they are naturally less religious than girls. As a matter of fact, what is church membership from their point of view? Do we really know? In each individual case there are specific causes at work — in the home, in the environment of school, street, amusement. In each case there is a Sunday-school experience of a particular kind. On what, as a matter of fact, have you relied to bring these pupils into full membership in the church? What reason have you to suppose that this upon which you have relied is the most efficient of all available means? And do you know, or do you merely guess, that the plan upon which you have relied has been carried through in detail?

The scientific point of view consists essentially in insisting upon seeing what is here, and upon counting it if possible. It is the most practical point of view in the world. It is a divine bar of judgment before which nothing finally counts but intelligent consecration. It does not subordinate the church to anything outside the church. Child study and educational psychology are not breaking into the sanctuary, for every Sunday school is already acting upon some conception of what children are like, how their minds grow, and how they should be taught. The problem for us is not, Shall we have theories on these matters? but, What kind of theories? The training of workers from the scientific point of view involve such humble inquiries as these: What are we trying to accomplish? Just what are we doing to this end? Where have we learned our present ways of doing

things? What effect has each of these ways upon our pupils? Why just this effect? These are *our* problems. They are not invented outside, and then foisted upon the church; they arise within the church's own work. As a matter of fact, you can not face a single question of efficiency in getting results without needing child psychology and the principles of teaching. Note how our analysis of accessions to the church led us at once to child study (the significance of age, sex, and environment) and to analysis of the teaching process. So it is always.

Take as another simple and pressing problem the hold of your Sunday school upon its pupils. You are aware of the common complaint that we do not hold our pupils well, especially boys, after adolescence sets in. How does the scientific method apply here? First of all, the scientifically consecrated mind will be likely to ask, What are the facts as to the hold of my own school upon its pupils? Instead of inarticulate moaning over an ill-defined defect, there will be an insistence upon knowing just what the defect is, how extensive it is, and what the causes of it are. The first step will naturally be to inquire how many pupils there are of each age and sex in order to discover at what ages the dropping out of pupils occurs, and to what extent the sexes differ in this respect. There are schools—would you believe it?—that cannot give you these simple facts, because no record of enrollment by age and sex is kept. Suppose, however, that we locate and measure the difficulty. We now know how many pupils of each sex drop out at each age. The next step is to determine causes. Here we are back again at child study and the principles of teaching.

If you desire a revival of religion in your Sunday school, go through every item of its procedure and of its organization in this constructive spirit. Do not go through it with a hammer—you can smash things and discourage the workers without either science or sense. But humbly insist that whatever can be known about your school shall be known. You might begin with Sunday-school worship. Precisely what does the leader aim at each Sunday? What does he actually do minute by minute? What is the actual effect of each item upon the pupils? Is the effect the same upon pupils of all ages and of both sexes? How do you account for these results, and for the absence of other results?

In the same consecrated spirit the entire course of study should be inquired into. What lessons and what textbook are in use in this class? On what ground were they selected? What

do you desire to accomplish in this class this year? Is this course the best in all the world for accomplishing this specific result? Why so? How, as a matter of fact, does it work? Do you really know what reactions the pupils make to it? Do you know why they make just these reactions? To what extent are these reactions due to the lesson material, to what extent to the textbook's treatment of it, and to what extent to your own methods? Similarly, every process, by whomsoever performed, from pastor to janitor; every piece of material, whether in class teaching or in worship; every sort of result upon each sort of pupil—all this is to be observed, and known, and judged.

Not to stop with guesses as to the facts; not to acquiesce in anything because it's what we've always done; not to condemn without a fair hearing of evidence; not to discard anything without definite knowledge of something better to take its place; but to insist upon making ourselves efficient in getting results ascertained to be there, never covering up our faults, and never evading difficulties but always facing them—this is at once the scientific point of view and the religious point of view in religious education.

THE RIGHTS OF THE SCHOOL IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

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I shall endeavor to treat, first: of the rights of the school in the life of the church and also of the rights of the child in the administration of the school.

1. *The Bible school has a right to an adequate place in the life and work of the church.*

By an adequate place I mean, first, one that gives to the school a measure of recognition in keeping with its vital importance in the church's life; and, second,—and this is even more important—an opportunity to do its best work for the church and for the Kingdom of God.

Any commercial enterprise conducting its business affairs with reference only to immediately apparent demands, and with little or no consideration for future needs, would be considered faulty in the extreme, and its inevitable failure would occasion neither surprise nor sympathy. I am reminded of the remark of a business man—made some years ago, I am glad