

kind, which consumes but a few moments in the telling, and increases the relishability of the lesson teaching. I have often noticed the avidity with which some of the teachers before me note down such little items,—which fact convinces me that my theory is correct, that the average boy or girl especially enjoys gathering something at Sunday-school that is worth hearing, even though it is not in itself religious.

Remembering that on several occasions, Jesus, by his words, appealed to the sense of the ludicrous on the part of his hearers, I do not hesitate to occasionally inject into my teaching some pleasantry, when (and only when) I can not only entertain the class thereby, but at the same time make some especially good lesson point.

I endeavor, by the phrasing of my opening prayer, to impress upon the teachers present that even a large and praiseworthy searching of commentaries and other helps is not enough. We call the Bible the Word of God, and so it is; consequently, he knows, much better than any of those to whom we have gone for help could know, just what the real meaning of the lesson text is, and what he would have us gather from it. Hence the need of frequent prayer on our part for help in the study, and for guidance in the teaching, of the lesson.

In connection with my teachers' class work I have printed each week, for the use of those who attend, and others, what is termed a "Suggestive Arrangement." As these weekly issues contain the result of much thought and study, they consume a great deal of my time in getting them ready for the printer; but, as teachers, we must be ready to make large personal sacrifices if we do our work properly. As many persons seem to place a high value upon the serviceableness of these "Suggestive Arrangements," for use and preservation, it would, perhaps, be well for some others having charge of teachers' classes to issue their lesson analyses, etc., on a somewhat similar plan.—Robert T. Bonsall in *S. S. Times*, Cincinnati, O.

### PREPARING THE LESSON.

Some teachers think that preparing the lesson is merely the loading of a cannon with powder, that it may go off with a big bang in the presence of admiring scholars. And the more powder, the bigger bang. So they load

up with scintillating similes, and pretty parables, and striking stories.

Other teachers have set up some historical or theological or ethical target-board off at a distance from their class, and load their cannon with ball, that their scholars may see how accurate is their aim and how fairly they can hit the bull's-eye. So they prepare a mass of facts and figures, arguments and evidences.

But the wise teacher rejects *in toto* the cannon notion. He sees in each lesson a ledge of that grand mountain of life—of Christ-serving, strong life—up to which he must lead his little band, on which he must plant their feet so firmly that they may not slip back during the six days' interval, but may be ready for the next fair terrace, and the next.

So the wise teacher, in preparing the lesson, knows that he must first reach that ledge himself; must repeat the journey over and over until he has learned the easiest way for little feet; must make ladders with rounds close together; must spread sand on slippery places and stretch ropes along the edge of the cliff. He, too, lays in supplies of stories and pretty parables, not, however, in the form of powder, to make a show, but (if this is not too severe a twist of the simile) as dainty food to keep the young travellers fresh and hearty. He, too, has facts and figures and arguments and evidences, not, however, as cannon balls, but in the shape of iron bridges and railings and ropes, that the way may be solid and safe.

There are some teachers that do not study at all. It is as if a will-o'-the-wisp should undertake to guide one on an important journey. Those teachers are going they know not whither, over they know not what road, for what purpose they have not the slightest idea, and land always in a bog.

Emphatically, the teacher that is not always climbing himself will leave his class on a very dead level indeed. He should be reaching down and pulling them up, but he is soon compelled to stand where they are and push, and ends with believing his "level best" to lie along the smooth road of the easy-going valley.

The teacher who ceases to grow ceases to teach. That is why a Sunday-school lesson cannot be crammed. That is why preparation for it must extend all through the week.