

It is not likely that he could ever remember, intelligently, a word of that striking lesson. But could he ever forget the loving embrace, the tender touch, the close folding to the Saviour's heart? O surely, never, never!

We primary teachers, "ministering in his name," should gather our scholars close and hold them fast against our hearts. The literal loving touch, the absolute contact, means much as to influence, but there is a deeper significance still to the phrase "When he had taken him in his arms." Aside from the caressing touches which we love to give when the children come within arm's length, when they crowd close and want little bonnets tied and coats fastened, there is a taking them into a warm embrace that means more than a caress. Are the arms of love always close-folded about the children of our care? Is the love for Jesus' sake equally distributed to all? It should be so.

During the closing exercises of the Sunday school a primary teacher sat on one of the low chairs beside the children, leaving the general oversight of the room to her assistant. With the change of air in the opening of the large doors a dainty little maid needed her cloak on, and the teacher took the wee morsel upon her lap to adjust her belongings. The little blossom was exquisitely fair, and in a passion of tender and admiring love the teacher held fast the little one in her arms, noting, over the small shoulder, the delicate beauty of the sensitive face, the ravishing brown curls, waving back from the white forehead in the loveliest way, all the baby charms being set off by dainty dress. The beautiful child was also one of the most regular and studious in the class, and her attentiveness and interest, with her sweet gentleness, made her everywhere attractive. It was impossible not to love her most tenderly. It would be hard to judge of this teacher's love for her class as a whole by her feeling for this scholar. She thought of it herself, and wondered if this child had not more than her share.

But another Sunday, at the close of the lesson, a boy got up suddenly and made a plunge at another a few seats farther along. He was a forbidding-looking little fellow, his dull face never showing any change of expression. While never giving trouble, he did not answer questions nor show any special interest in the lesson.

"Take your seat, Johnny," said the teacher, quietly; "you know I don't like to have you change seats after you are once settled."

The boy obeyed with a sullen look, but the next glance toward him showed that he was sobbing distressfully. Filled with instant pity and surprise over the unusual demonstration, the

teacher's arms were about the child in a moment, and in reply to her gentle question he sobbed out, "He's got my hat." And sure enough, the mischief of the class produced the hat which he had somehow managed to secure. Johnny had evidently been terrified over the loss, fearing, no doubt, that it would be a final one, and that he would have to go home bareheaded and account for the missing article. His teacher's heart was smitten to think that she had so misunderstood the hasty action and had reproved the wrong boy. She said so to the sobbing child, assured him that Harry could not have meant to trouble him so much, and must feel sorry now, and sought to soothe him with all the tender skill she could command. As she did this her heart yearned over the dull boy in his trouble with a love she had not felt before, and she suddenly realized that he was very dear to her. Has not every teacher had some similar experience which has taught her that there are different kinds of appeal to the affections, and that it is possible, yes, easy, to love each member of the class?

But do we gather the children in the arms of faith? We ought not to fail of this, for so we not only bring them close to our own hearts as we pray for them, but we bring them near to the Saviour that he "may put his hands upon them and bless them." Surely this is something that we not only may do, but we must, and it is sweet to know that we may, while duty cries, "You must."

There is one way of touching a child which is perhaps less often tried than with older ones, and that is by the written word. A letter is prized as a rarity, and is apt to be more to a child than to an older one. Birthday letters have been often recommended and written, too, but did you ever try writing a little letter to each member of the class upon one occasion? I have just tried it, and have found the experience so sweet that if there is anyone to whom I may pass on the suggestion I cannot keep from doing it. I wrote Easter letters to my children—little love letters, I called them—inclosing a card in each, but making them personal appeals in the very simplest language, asking each little heart to love and trust and try to please the risen Jesus, so strong to help us every one, since he rose from the dead at this happy time, and putting into words my own love, that they might not doubt it for lack of the telling. I only hope the children have had half the help and happiness out of the letters that I have had. Perhaps it is a surer way to the hearts of the mothers than a direct letter to them would be.

Teachers, let us take the children in our arms.

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