

FALSEHOOD.

A FIVE MINUTES PRELUDE TO CHILDREN.

Text.—"The mouth of them that speak lies shall be stopped." Psalm 63: 11. I heard a boy tell a lie, the other day. How I pitied him! I knew what he said was not true, and he knew that I knew it. He thought to deceive his father, but he would shortly find out the truth, and then how the poor boy's mouth would be stopped with shame and remorse! Children are often tempted to tell what is not true, perhaps oftener to do that than to do any other sin; often in order to cover up some other sin. One sin leads on to another, you know.

God abominates falsehood, and will not tolerate any form of deceit. The text is a terrible threat to all liars, and his threatenings as well as his promises are sure of being fulfilled.

I'm going to tell you a true story about how little John, who was only six years old, told a falsehood, and how his mouth was stopped by it. One Sunday, his father was very sick, and a council of physicians had attended him. After they had left, he called Johnnie to him, and said: "I wish you to take that paper on the stand, and run to the drug store and get the medicine written on that paper." Johnnie took the paper and went to the store, half a mile away, but, being Sunday, he found it closed. The apothecary lived a quarter of a mile further on. Instead of going on to find him at his home, Johnnie turned back, but felt guilty. On going into his father's room, he saw that he was very pale and weak, with great drops of sweat on his forehead because of the pain. Oh, how sorry Johnnie was that he had not obtained the medicine. The father said: "My son has got the medicine, I hope, for I'm in great pain." The boy hung his head, and muttered: "No, sir; Mr. C. says that he has got none." The father cast a keen glance at the trembling boy, and said: "Has got none? Is this possible? My little boy will see his father suffer great pain for want of that medicine." Johnnie went off by himself, and how bitterly he cried!

He was soon called back. The other children were standing by the bed, and he was committing the poor mother to their care, and was giving his farewell counsel. It was a sad, tearful, mourning scene. After he had spoken very tenderly to each of the six older children in turn, he called up Johnnie, the youngest. How conscience-stricken the little fellow was! How he shook with emotion, as his dying father took him by the hand, and affectionately said: "John, my dear, come and see your poor papa once more who is going to die; in a few days you will see them bury him in the ground, and you will not have your papa any more. Never forget that you have a better Father in heaven. Ask him to take care of you, love him, obey him, and always do right and speak the truth because the eye of God is always upon you. Give your papa one more kiss, John and now, farewell." Then he prayed for the boy soon to be "a fatherless orphan." Johnnie did not dare to look at him, he felt so guilty. He rushed out, sobbing as if his heart would break, and wished he could die himself. Soon they said that the father could not speak. Oh, how Johnnie wanted to go in and tell him that he had told a lie and ask his forgiveness, but it was too late! He did creep into the room, but found the pastor there praying for the dying man. Oh, how his heart ached with anguish!

He snatched his hat, and ran to the apothecary's and got the medicine. He ran home with all his might, and ran to his father's bedside to confess the falsehood, and cried out: "Oh, here, father!" but his mouth was stopped from saying anything further. His father heard not, he was dead. All in the room were weeping. The dear, good father was dead, and the last thing the little boy said to him was a falsehood!

No wonder that this sad, sad incident made a lasting impression upon Johnnie, and made him ever after cling valiantly to the truth; and who do you suppose, children that little boy was? Doubtless you have all heard his name, for he grew up to a great and good minister of the gospel, and wrote very much for children. He afterward declared that this one lie to his father was the turning point of his life. He was the Rev. Dr. John Todd, of Pittsfield, Mass.

Children, be careful about the truth.

Never yield to temptation to tell an untruth. You will often be tempted. Beware, for verily, if you speak lies, your mouth will be stopped, and you covered with shame and remorse.—By Rev. H. Martin Kellogg, m. N. Y. Observer.

HOW MOTHERS CAN HELP THE PRIMARY CLASS TEACHER.

BY HOPE LEDYARD.

It is astonishing how little the average mother knows of the teacher to whom she entrusts much of the religious training of her little one. No care is taken in the selection of the class; either the child goes to the church school as a matter of course, or some little friend, with hopes of the prize offered to the scholar who exhibits the strongest "drawing" qualities, coaxes mamma to let Tot go with her, and—the matter is settled. Many mothers do not even know the name of the infant-class teacher; certainly the majority know nothing but her name. Now the child, the teacher, and the mother would each be the gainer by a different course.

Let me cite one case, by way of illustration, where a mother of four children feels she owes a duty to her youngest, who is just old enough to go to "Sunny school"—a suggestive name for an infant class.

There are six Sunday-schools within walking distance of the home; the mother visits them all, noting the advantages in each case. She decides that a certain class has the teacher that will be most successful with little Daisy. The room is well ventilated, there are assistants to see that the little ones have their wraps removed, the singing is hearty, and, above all, the teacher seems an earnest Christian. The decision made, Daisy is taken to the school by mamma, who surprises Mrs. Merlin by asking for her address, "that she may have the pleasure of calling on her." Every Sunday, before Daisy is tucked up for the night, mamma finds out what the little one remembers of the lesson; and each night during the week the golden text of the previous Sunday is repeated, and some little point of the lesson enforced by song or story.

One Sunday Daisy spends at grandmamma's, and Mrs. Merlin receives a note from mamma explaining the child's absence, and regretting that the little one should lose anything of the plan Mrs. Merlin is pursuing.

Now Mrs. Merlin has no plan! The note pricks her conscience. One mother, at least, expects her to have a thought running through her lessons, and she resolves to study and prepare herself more carefully. A call from Daisy's mamma a week or two later helps Mrs. Merlin most wonderfully. How it encourages her to have even one mother really grateful for her care of her little one! Lesson helps are talked over, and Mrs. Merlin hears for the first time of the Saturday class for primary teachers, and is only too glad to accept her new friend's offer that they attend it together. Daisy's mamma, finding the teacher does not see The Sunday School Times, offers to finish with her copy by the middle of each week, and send it to Mrs. Merlin.

Now and then mamma visits Daisy's class. She takes keen note of the disadvantages Mrs. Merlin labors under. What a small blackboard! How unnecessarily the superintendent interrupts the class. Knowing one or two who are influential in the church, mamma drops a hint here and there, and by and by the infant class has a new blackboard, while the kindly visits are more wisely timed.

"Teacher wasn't there to-day, mamma," Daisy reports one Sunday; "she's sick."

"Then we must call on her to-morrow, and you shall leave her some flowers."

The next day a dainty little bouquet is handed to Mrs. Merlin, and with dimming eyes she reads the card: "With Daisy Dapper's love." Is it any wonder that Daisy's name is often mentioned when her teacher prays?

I could tell you more, but have I not given enough by way of suggestion? Will not some mother be roused to her duty toward the primary teacher? But one word farther—I dare not leave it out. Pray for the teacher—for her personal growth in grace; that she may be wise and winning. It may be your little one's heart may be won for Christ by her word; if not yours, surely other children, who are dear to the Lord. Let us pray for the teacher of our little ones.—S. S. Times.

DAN.

BY SARA A. CLUTE.

In the cool evening twilight of a hot day in August, I heard a footstep on the stair following the inquiry, "Is Miss C. at home?" The voice was strange but pleasing. I opened my room to meet, on the landing, a form in the full fresh vigor of early manhood. Holding his hat and looking intently a moment in my face, he said, "I think you do not know me," to which I replied, "Pass into the parlor, please, a better light may reveal a friend." I lifted the curtain and turned to meet the handsome eyes and sunburnt face of a traveller. Another moment of inquiry, and, stepping forward he extended his hand saying, "And you don't know Dan?" The genial grasp, the name, the handsome eyes, recalled a boy of sixteen who had been an inmate of my home twelve years before.

"Yes, I do know you, Dan," I replied, "and glad am I to see you. Be seated, please, and tell me the record of your life since you were a student boy in this very house so long ago." And this is his story:

"You remember my mother had died before I came to live with you, and soon after my school year closed my father sold our farm not far from here and bought a much larger one near a thriving town in Iowa. I worked with him, and my sister also, whose husband had joined his fortunes with ours. We were very prosperous and happy. The years went on when suddenly my father sickened and died. Grieved and bewildered our hearts were heavy, and our hands for a time powerless. At length we all felt there was nothing better to do than to follow out his plan of business.

Less than a year ago I was in a field at work some distance from the house, when a storm of driving sleet came on, and my clothing was wet through and frozen, I took cold, and the next morning I awakened literally stiff. I could not move without pain. This state continued several days, when my sister, becoming alarmed, took me to a water cure for treatment. After a close examination by the attending physicians, I was told if my worldly affairs needed attention now was the proper time, as my case was a critical one. This being finished, I was put into a bath, seemingly in water at the boiling point; a vigorous rubbing followed, and I could move my limbs a little. The process was repeated the next day with equally favorable results. My improvement was so rapid that my sister left on the third day and I remained several weeks. Finally the day came when I was to be dismissed, cured. At the last interview with the leading physician, he said to me, "Young man, you have had a narrow escape. Few persons have had so severe an attack of inflammatory rheumatism and recovered so quickly, or, if relieved at all, have not been crippled for life. One thing has saved you. Had your blood been poisoned with tobacco or liquor, your chance for full recovery would have been very small." When he said this, Miss C. I thought of the advice you gave me the morning I left your home. "I do not remember that I made you such a gift, if it were good I hope you kept it; have you?" I asked. "Well," said he modestly, "neither drink, smoke nor swear. I came to thank you for your counsel, and now must bid you good-by." "But," I said, "stay to tell me if in all the years you have not found, one to lead and lift, and love you, now you have left your boyhood teacher."

"O, yes," he frankly said, while the brown cheek grew browner with emotions my question had raised. "I was to come for her last fall, but when the time arrived she was miles away and I was so stiff I could not raise my hand. She waits my coming now." His face glowed with well-earned expectation of coming joys. I followed him to the doorway; he stood a moment in the lingering twilight taking in the boyish past and the manly future, then turned, saying, "If ever I come within ten miles of this place, I shall visit your home, and I hope to find you here. Good night."

SELLING YOUR BOY.

Suppose a man comes to you and says, "Sir, you have a nice boy growing up there, I will pay you one hundred dollars if you will give me the liberty to teach him to tipple and drink. I will not compel him, but simply use attractive displays and persuasion on him." You indignantly repel the awful pro-

position. But a friend standing near says, "You might as well take the one hundred dollars; if you refuse, he will get your boy in some secret and illicit way, and teach him to drink. Your boy will learn to drink all the same, and you will have the one hundred dollars. And yet you repel with perfect abhorrence the suggestion that you should allow anyone, for a money consideration, to attempt the ruin of your boy. But when a man goes to your corporation and says, "I will give you one hundred dollars if you will allow me to teach as many of the boys in your county or city as I can allure to tipple and drink," what do you say?

In the first case the man wishes to try his arts upon one boy, and that one yours; in the second he proposes to try his arts upon all the boys, yours included. It would have been infamous for you to have accepted his money and delivered your boy over to his seductions; is it not all the more infamous for you to vote to take the money and deliver all the boys of the corporation over to his wiles? You would not compromise with wrong when the proposition for private corruption was made; a thousand times less should you do so, when it is proposed to attempt a wholesale and public corruption.—Prof. Foster.

HELPFUL PLANS.

The idea of a drill on the order of the books of the Bible was suggested to me by the great waste of time which occurred whenever I asked a scholar to look out a reference. Every Sunday we recite the list as far as learned, taking five or six new books each time, one beginning Genesis, the next Exodus, etc. I also question them on the position of special books, as "What two books is Ruth between?" etc. Three minutes' exercise like this each Sunday eventually prevents the far greater loss of time occasioned by hunting aimlessly for passages.

I have found that scholars generally know so little of the geography of Palestine, that I next devote a moment to a few questions upon its boundaries, divisions, distances, etc.—each Sunday adding some new fact. In order to interest the children more earnestly in giving, I devote the lesson time of the last Sunday of the year to a full explanation of the object to which they contribute their pennies, requesting them also before-hand to bring to me as many Bible verses as they can find on the subject of giving.—D. W. Lyman in S. S. Times.

HINTS TO TEACHERS ON THE CURRENT LESSONS.

(From Poloub's Select Notes.)

June 1.—Gal. 4: 1-16.

ILLUSTRATIVE.

I. Christian liberty. In Independence Hall, at Philadelphia, is the bell which first rang out to the citizens who in 1776 were awaiting the action of Congress, that the Declaration of Independence had been decided upon. Fifteen years before this, when that bell was made, the following words from Lev. 25: 10 were cast upon its rim: "Proclaim liberty to all the land and all the inhabitants thereof." For fifteen long years that bell rang out not an actual liberty, but the hope and the prophecy of liberty. But at length, on the 4th of July, 1776, the words written in prophecy were pealed out in reality and truth, a prophecy accomplished, a hope fulfilled. So the Christian has liberty engraved on his nature, partly a fact, and partly a prophecy and a hope. But the liberty is there, and at last the prophecy shall be fulfilled, and the hope realized, and he will experience, in all its fulness, the glorious liberty of the sons of God.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS.

The main thought of this lesson to be impressed is that between the bondage of doing right because we must, and the glorious liberty of the sons of God. Show (1) how one may do right from necessity because it is duty, and go through certain forms and ceremonies of religion, without any love for God who is worshipped by them. Show (2) how free the Christian is, because he obeys God as a loving child, and if a child, he is an heir of God. Teach that true religion means freedom, and show the blessings of being an heir of God.