

"Name the twelve apostles?" "Who was king of Israel at the time of the division of the kingdom?" "Name the Books of the Old Testament?"

The contestants from both Schools went away good friends.

The value of such a contest may perhaps be summed up as follows:

It gives the scholars more interest in future Bible study.

The questions asked and answered at any particular contest will be in themselves a valuable course of Bible study to all the scholars present.

The contest enables the scholars to see how definite—or the opposite—their Bible knowledge really is, and to see the value of really knowing what they know.

But perhaps, after all, one of the most valuable outcomes of such a competition is in regard to the teachers. It enables them to see just where their scholars really stand in reference to definite knowledge of Bible facts. It shows them where their work has been deficient, and where they, in future, should supplement it. For instance, in the contest referred to, the teachers were very much surprised that, when the question "Name the twelve apostles?" was asked, not one scholar raised his hand to answer—their ages ranged all the way from eight to sixteen years.

Of course, knowledge of Bible facts is not the primary object of Sunday School teaching; but rather "the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" and all that this implies. But the Bible is God's own setting forth of that knowledge of salvation through Jesus Christ, and every fact and incident therein written down helps to make the revelation clearer. A competent knowledge of what the Bible contains is the best foundation of religious knowledge.

The Moral of the Lesson

By Professor H. T. J. Coleman

The ability to generalize accurately is not a common ability even with teachers. Consequently, when seeking for a statement of the moral of the Lesson, it is frequently helpful to consult the Lesson Helps.

A rather arbitrary practice has been followed for many years in connection with the International Lessons; the moral is given briefly and dogmatically in a so-called Golden Text.

One objection to this practice or, at least, to its universal adoption, is furnished by the fact that it is always best, where it is possible, for the teacher and class to develop the moral at first hand. In some cases it may even be wise to avoid any explicit statement of the moral. The spiritual truth of any portion of scripture is not a ribbon to be tied around a cluster of blossoms to keep them together; it is rather the beauty, the aroma, the life, of the blossoms themselves. Nathaniel Hawthorne said a very suggestive thing when he remarked in the introduction to one of his novels that to add a moral to a story frequently means to destroy the story, since the story is the moral. No one with any spark of imagination or of spiritual insight, he says, would think that he had the whole butterfly when he had transfixed the creature with a pin and fastened it in a pasteboard box.

This represents of course, an extreme view, and yet it calls attention to the danger of an undue emphasis upon a formal statement of the moral as such. It is better for the pupil to feel the force of a narrative, and yet be unable to summarize its moral in a sentence, than to have the moral and miss its concrete human setting. If the stories of the Bible become the permanent possession of the child, with all their wealth of detail and suggestiveness, the ethical and religious element which gives to them their unique place in literature will be none the less powerful because of our refusing to make every separate incident the text of a miniature sermon.

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The Superintendent's Grip

By Rev. James Binnie, B.D.

A firm grip is the first requisite. The superintendent of the large School needs it and knows his need. It is needed just as much by the superintendent of the small School, who must not for a moment think