

Do not turn from that task, complaining that these other powers should not abdicate, leaving you alone with one solitary, insufficient hour a week in which to do so much. Your complaint is just; but the work of God is done by those who abjure the right of complaining. The apostles tarried at Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high, not until somebody else, who had as much right as they to attempt to save the world, and get slain for his pains, began the movement. It is God's work, and He has bidden you to do it. He will not leave you comfortless.

Winnipeg

FORMATION VERSUS INFORMATION

By Frederick Tracy, B.A., Ph.D.

Hardly anything is more important to the Sunday-school teacher than to have a clear idea of the real nature of the work that is before him. The task which a man sets himself to do is often half accomplished in simply finding out what it is that has to be done. To understand the nature of a problem is often a long stride towards its solution. In our noble Saxon tongue "to know" and "to be able" are synonymous expressions. To say "I can," and to say "I know how," is to say the same thing from slightly different points of view.

If, as a Sunday-school teacher, I am to be complete

MASTER OF THE SITUATION,

I must at least understand what the situation is. What, then, is the exact problem, the task, the precise situation, that confronts me as I face my class? What is it that I am supposed to accomplish, or to strive to accomplish?

This question has been variously answered. One teacher conceives it as his business to impart instruction concerning divine truth to the minds of his pupils; another, to endeavor to lead his scholars to Christ; a third strives, as he says, "to turn their young lives into the heavenly way;" still another speaks of his work as that of "moulding the character of the pupil, at an age when it is especially plastic and susceptible to the moulding influence of the teacher."

All these ways of stating the teacher's task are correct, if properly understood. But it is essential that no mistake be made regarding their significance; for a form of words which in itself is unobjectionable may, through fallacious interpretation and application, be made the vehicle of all manner of pedagogical error.

When we speak, therefore, of "imparting instruction," do we think of ourselves as conveying knowledge into the pupil's mind, as one might shovel coals into a bin, or grain into a sack? When we speak of "leading our pupils to Christ," or of "turning their young lives into the heavenly way," what is it exactly that we mean by "leading" and "turning"? Is it the same sort of process as that of turning a vessel into a certain channel by means of a rudder; or leading a horse from the stall to the watering trough? When we speak of "moulding" the plastic young character, have we in our minds the image of the potter and the clay; the potter doing exactly what he pleases with a perfectly passive piece of clay?

If these are the analogies under which we think of our vocation, then we fail to recognize that the human intelligence is

A CONSTRUCTIVE ENERGY,

as well as a receptive capacity. The mind of the child must not merely receive the truth from the teacher, but construct it for himself, and translate it into conduct. Similarly in the case of the other expressions employed. To lead the pupil, to turn him, to mould him, is to stimulate him to action, rather than to thrust your activity upon him.

It is worth while for every teacher to ask himself what is the place which information should occupy in his educational ideal. Knowledge is no doubt a thing to be most highly valued and most diligently sought, but it is not, by itself, the greatest thing in the world: "Whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away." It is possible to imagine a man whose mind is richly stored with knowledge, but whose will is undisciplined, whose emotions are unchastened, whose ideals are low, and whose desires are base and grovelling.