

Suppose a little girl had come in there and you had caught up a word which reached you out of her talk and asked her to tell you about it, even though it had nothing to do with the lesson, and then you had turned it into the right channel.

That boy in your class who would talk football in spite of all you could do—no matter how strictly you forbade it or how sternly you frowned upon even a whisper of the thing that was in the mind of every boy there. How would it have been if for a few minutes you had let them talk it out to you, while guilefully you brought them round by that way, instead of by another path to the lesson and to what you would say to them?

You have a scholar who is always interested in any reference to flowers or trees or growing things—eyes brightening and head uplifted when such are alluded to—but otherwise usually apathetic or indifferent. Perhaps a little guile would lead you often to call out that special interest, giving your scholar frequent opportunities to get and give information about the things she loves. After all, this is only another name for the *tact* which is supremely necessary in order to successful, fruitful Sabbath-school work.

Watching closely the six or seven specimens of humanity who sit before you Sunday after Sunday, you will probably find in each of them some distinctive taste, inclination or natural gift upon which you can lay your hold for good. Ignoring all such individual gifts or tendencies, you may altogether fail to "catch" the souls of your scholars, even if the outward ear be yours. They may answer your questions fairly well, and there may be a bond of affection between you and them, but you will scarcely be able to meet the deeper needs of their natures, or to satisfy your own sense of responsibility regarding them.

It is in truth the harmlessness of the dove with the wisdom of the serpent that you will use in this matter of "catching with guile." Nor did Paul hesitate to say that in the employment of such means he was "crafty." Not seldom we may be able to turn even the world, the flesh, and the devil from foes into obedient servants by guileful use of their own weapons as we find them in the hands of our scholars.

By whatever holy art is given to us from

above, let us get and keep a strong hold of those committed to our care, that by personal influence we may draw them into the right way—the way to Christ. If we are true to our calling as teachers, this is the aim and object of all our work in Sabbath-school, so that we count it success when we accomplish this—failure when we do not.—*Sel.*

## WHY NOT?

"Why aren't good people nice?" asked a merry young fellow, who was himself both good and nice, although he was blissfully unconscious of this as he asked the question of his mother.

She had sent him to render some service to an excellent person, acknowledged generally to be extremely good; and yet while going cheerfully, and giving his service pleasantly, it had not been with pleasure in the doing, on the boy's part. The peculiar ways and propensities of the eminently good, but not pleasing, person, had not left a happy impression. He asked the question above, with a half, serious, half-comic expression, and a very suggestive shrug of his sturdy young shoulders, then changed it to "Why are not all good people nice? Some are, I am sure."

Well, this buoyant youth knew little of the trials and aggravations that may have conspired to make the good person in question uncongenial and displeasing; and there may have been a heartache back of it which he did not even dream of, and a consciousness of the fact of being displeasing, perhaps, and a sense of regret of which all others were unaware.

Still, with all kindly allowances made, the fact remains that all good people are not altogether "nice" in the boy's sense of it. Why not? All can not, in the nature of things, be equally attractive and pleasing, but, in a degree, this would seem to be the duty and privilege of all, for grace gives good manners as well as a clean heart.

There may be many reasons and adequate explanations for the fact, but here is one certainty potent in many cases: These people did not begin early enough to be "nice," so as to avoid the twists and cranks and grow up with pleasing ways. The application is obvious.—*Sel.*