

PREPARING TO TEACH.

No teacher in the course of regular work, should ever come before a class without having made the best possible preparation. We do not realize the criticalness of the work we have to do when we sit down beside any one to talk with him of Spiritual things. We do not know what that very hour his peril may be. His eternal destiny may depend upon the words we say to him in that very lesson. He may be at some turning point in his life, at some parting of the ways, and when we have finished our teaching the decision may have been made. It is always most serious work to teach others in spiritual things.

One part of personal preparation must be made in the teacher's own character. If he is not a good man he is not fit to touch the souls of others. He should live so carefully, so conscientiously, that he will never be afraid to look any man in the face. He needs the preparation of attested character. His neighbors must be able to witness well for him. A doubtful reputation disqualifies one for effective teaching. The good work he may do in his lessons on Sunday will be neutralized by the influence of his life on week-days.

Any inconsistency will hide something of the brightness of light. Rudeness in manner will also do it. Anything that is not Christ-like is our behavior or disposition will hinder the full and free shining out of the light within us. A beautiful life is a noble preparation for teaching. Those who sit before classes on Sunday should have white souls, untarnished names.

Another element of personal preparation is in the teacher's own heart-life. Really we can teach only what we have learned by experience. When the minister said he had been thirty years preparing the sermon which he had just delivered with such power, he spoke truly, although, perhaps, the immediate preparation of that discourse had required but a few hours. Thirty years' life with its rich experience had gone into the sermon. Any sermon or lesson is valuable just in proportion to the amount of life that has entered into it. We must learn by experience the lessons we would teach to others.

The preparation of the lesson itself must be conscientiously done. No slovenly work will

ever please God or leave good results in the lives and characters of scholars.

In preparing our lessons we should take exceeding care that nothing unworthy should ever be brought to give to the eager spirits that wait for us on the Sabbath. Nothing but truth is fit to build into the wall of the house we are rearing for God.

In all his preparations the teacher should work for God's eye, never for man's. He should do just as carefully, as painstakingly, the things which only God shall see as the things which human eyes may admire and human lips commend.

Really all our work is for the eye of God. That which man never shall see, God sees. We dare do nothing negligently, for even in our most obscure taskwork we are working for the great Master's eye. Those who open God's word on Sunday, interpreting to a class of children or young people the meaning of a passage of Holy Scripture, should make most diligent preparation, in patient, quiet study, that they may give no mistaken instruction, and that the teaching may be interesting and instructive.

It has been said that the words, "That will do," have done more harm than any other sentence in the English language. Too many Sunday-school teachers let this motto of easy-going indolence rule them in their preparation of their lessons. They fail to realize the serious nature of the work they are set to do. They feel that anything will do for a class of boys or girls, forgetting that these young hearts are open to influences which will shape their whole future. Nothing but the most careful and thorough preparation which the teacher can possibly give to his lesson is worthy of the sacredness of the work.

There is a devotional preparation which every teacher should make before going to his class. He should spend the last moments in prayer, going from the presence of God to his place of duty.

With such preparation as this, no teacher can ever fail in the work to which he has devoted himself.—*J. R. Miller.*

CATCHING WITH GUILF.

Think a minute! That little damsel in your class who annoyed you so much by her disposition to talk with her neighbor about things foreign to the lesson. You reproved her over and over again—you changed her seat—you gave her bad marks for inattention.