

Secondly, the difficulties in the class. Your class may be dull and inert, or it may be restless and brilliant. It may be very large so that you lose the personal touch or it may be so small that you lose the stimulus of the class spirit. It may be lost in a big classroom, or it may be surrounded on every side with buzzing classes, and the whole atmosphere of the School may be noisy and disorderly. Whatever the situation, two facts are apparent: (1) Your class difficulties greatly increase the difficulty in teaching your lesson, and (2) they largely determine the character of your teaching difficulties. If your class is dull, you must be patient, simple in language, willing to repeat and repeat and repeat, careful not to undertake too much in any one lesson. If your class is brilliant but restless, you must be alert, keen, avoid repetition (at least in the same language), not afraid to undertake a good deal in a lesson, accurate in statement, suggestive in statement.

The difficulties involved in bringing lessons and class together are considerable. The adaptation of the lesson has been discussed in a previous article. The language you use must mean the same to the pupil that it does to you, or there will be confusion, and herein lies one of the many causes of failure. A well known word may mean quite different things to different people. Take, for example, the two words "meadow" and "clover." Ask different people what they mean and then

look them up in a large dictionary, and you will get some surprises.

The point of contact is another problem,—just how to begin to fit the lesson to your class. Where does it touch their experience? Nobody in the class was ever a cupbearer to a king or is ever likely to be. True enough, but every one has been in a position where it was highly important to act quickly and make the most of the occasion. That boy over there was the last man at the bat in the last innings, when the tie was a score, the bases were full and the whole game depended on him,—how did he feel and what did he do? That girl next you was once alone in the house with the baby when it suddenly had a convulsion,—what did she do? A good point of contact means much in arousing that interest in the class which you need to make the class alert, to understand your explanations and teachings.

Difficulties may be explained then by seeing them distinctly, by working out clear explanations in your own mind, by translating your own explanations into the language of your class and by keeping your class individually in mind, as you work out your lesson. Labor and patience and prayer are necessary even to an infinite degree. So it is with the mother, the physician, the preacher as they do the tasks God assigns them. No great work comes easy, and the Sunday School teacher's work is great.

Toronto

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