

him void. COURAGE teacher! Jesus sympathizes with you, and loves the work in which you are engaged. The Spirit is all-powerful to change the heart, and build up Christian character. He is faithful who promised.

Have faith in God. Sow the precious seed, water the tender plant; study and pray; explain, entreat, exhort, desiring especially to know how to speak a "*word in season*," and then rest confidently on that assurance of the Lord, "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."—*Baptist Teacher*.

Train Them to Question.

BY C. W. JENKINS, NEW YORK.

It is the habit of many teachers to conduct the Sunday-school exercise as a recitation chiefly, and, while giving copious explanations of the more difficult passages, and answering the few questions which the bolder pupils ask, to occupy the most of the time in ascertaining how much has been learned, and with illustrative anecdotes and remarks. I think that many of us do not sufficiently encourage the putting of questions by the children, and that we underrate the value of such questions, as starting-points for the unfolding of the subject.

The first requisite for successful teaching is often said to be a thorough knowledge of what is to be taught; but certainly, to comprehend those states of mind which accompany or constitute ignorance, is equally important. It is quite as necessary to ask, How does this look to my scholars? as, How does it look to me? It is not enough that a guide know every mountain and river, every forest and lake, every highway and bye-path of the country through which he is to conduct a party of travellers; he must acquaint himself with their intelligence, natural and acquired, their tastes and prejudices, and infirmities even, before he can be to them an agreeable and useful companion. A teacher is frequently disappointed that an explana-

tion which seems quite lucid to himself, fails to make the expected impression upon his listeners. The indifferent or beclouded faces about him assure him of failure. He has worked faithfully at home, by himself, to prepare this simple and forcible presentation of the lesson, but he now finds that he has begun at the wrong end, and that his very subject as a whole, and in all its relations, has misled him, since it has led him away from some particular difficulty which exists in the children's minds. To get at that he needed the guidance and help which comes from their freedom to question him.

This freedom will never be generally exercised without specific and constant encouragement. Forward youngsters, indeed, there are in almost every class, who are all too ready to make irrelevant and profitless inquiries; but those who timidly doubt, those who are ashamed of excusable ignorance, those whose temperament, mental peculiarities, or history, make it hard for them to receive certain phases of truth, are the last to speak, unless there is a system, common to all, by which their wants may be made known. Teachers should therefore not merely say, "*Ask me questions whenever you like*," but should *educate their classes to the habit of questioning*. This can be done by making it a part of the "*lesson*" for each pupil to prepare one question, always involving something which he cannot learn by himself, and by regularly devoting a part of the time to answering these questions. It is better to have this exercise precede the prepared expositions by the teacher. This will aid the desired result—the putting of the teacher subjectively in the children's place, enabling him to see with their eyes, and think for a moment their thoughts. If he thus preface his teaching with a look into their minds, he will be far better able to unfold, in an intelligent and condescending spirit, the truth of God for their salvation.

"If we seek our happiness in anything beside the peace of God and a good conscience, we shall as certainly be unhappy, as that anything in the world is uncertain."—*Adam*.