

Sabbath School Teacher.

TELLING AND ACTING A LIE.

One of the teachers in Mt. Holyoke Seminary, on reading Jacob Abbot's last book, entitled "Gentle Measures," expressed surprise at the distinction which he makes in one of the chapters between telling and acting a lie, and raised the question whether it is ever right to act a lie. On learning the view which she took of the matter Mr. Abbot sends us a letter for her, explaining his views more fully, from which we take the following passage:—

I made two distinctions in question, in my book, under the impression that when in our instructions to young persons we put two unequal sins on a par, with a view of deterring them more effectually from the commission of the lesser one, we are in great danger of weakening their abhorrence of the greater one. If you have had time, since writing your note, to examine the chapter more fully, I should like to know what view you take of the illustration I give, that there would be a difference between having a wooden leg made with a view, on the part of the wearer, of making people think it was a living one, and telling an absolute falsehood about it, by saying in so many words that it was really a living one. Or, if a boy recovering from a sickness were to be left seated near a window with a cup of medicine in his hands, and were to throw the medicine out of the window with a view of deceiving his mother, and leading her to think that he had taken it, we should both agree, no doubt, that he would be so doing commit a great sin; but suppose that when his mother came in he were to look her in the face and say in words that he had taken it, would or would not this be a somewhat different and somewhat greater and more aggravating form of the sin? If you will write to me informing me how the question strikes your mind in respect to these points, I will reconsider the subject, in view of the suggestions that you make.

And as to the effect of teaching this doctrine, supposing it to be true, I have been accustomed to consider it a sound principle that in general whatever is actually true in morals may be safely taught; but it is undoubtedly true that a principle which is generally sound may be subject to exceptions in the application of it.

TRY IT.

Brother Superintendents:—It is wrong and wicked for us to feel that because we have not all the qualifications of some others, that because we cannot teach or pray, or sing as well as they, that we may not do noble work for the master.

One of the best superintendents I know of to-day in our State, is a man who can hardly read his lesson correctly. A man whose advantages have been so limited that if any man could be well excused he could. He is so conscious of his own inability, that he reads his next Sabbath's lesson each morning through the weak at family worship, and then as they have preaching but one Sabbath in the month, he has a prayer-meeting each Sabbath morning before the school opens, when the lesson is again read and prayed over; then at the opening of the school this man reads it again, and by this time, though not always free from mistakes, it's the most eloquent reading I ever listened to, for they are words spoken by one whose heart is on fire with them. And through this man's influence, and principally the reading of our lesson series of the past year, twenty-six souls have found the way to Christ. Then do not let us feel that because we cannot do all that others can, that we can do work that shall fill our crown with the diadem of redeemed souls in the day that Jesus shall say, "Come, ye blessed of my father."

PREPARING A LESSON.

To the question, "How to prepare a Bible lesson," the following answers were given at a recent Sabbath-school Convention. They are brief, but illustrate well the different methods by which a variety of teachers endeavour to achieve the same great result, a wise and forcible representation of God's word.

1. Realize that all true spiritual light comes from God, and pray for the Spirit's help. 2. Read carefully the passage itself, without helps, to get out of it what you can. What is thus gotten is your own, awakens you, and will awaken others. 3. Then consult commentaries—a good brief, suggestive one, if possible; and thus get the light of other minds to aid your own. 4. Spend what time is possible in searching for, and laying up illustrations and apt anecdotes to illuminate and fix the truth in the mind.

Study every word closely and carefully endeavouring to grasp the idea of the passage. If anything is likely to be beyond the reach of the scholars, consider carefully how to make it clear to them by illustration, etc. Use commentaries, if anything seems obscure.

After prayer, read the Scripture, then study it with the help of commentaries, and then talk it over alone in your room just as though you had your class before you. Drill yourself first.

1. Ascertain what the passage is designed to teach. 2. Arrange the thoughts according to their importance. 3. Seek for illustrations of the various points. 4. Obtain what other light I can from commentators and others. 5. Pray that my own mind may be properly impressed with it, that I may speak with the spirit and the understanding.

1. Get a thorough knowledge of the scope of the whole lesson and context. 2. Compare all parallel passages. 3. Study all allusions to places, people, and manners or customs. 4. After thorough thinking of the whole subject alone, ascertain what commentaries say about it.

1. Give myself anew to God, and ask divine illumination. 2. Seek the mind of God on the passage. 3. Study the lesson with all helps I can command from human sources. 4. Remember the peculiar mental habits and modes of my class, that I may follow the law of adaptation. 5. Get full of the subject—brimful, running over.

1. Commit the lesson to memory. 2. Pray for light. 3. Note thoughts upon the same. 3. Collect and arrange best thoughts. 5. Consult authorities. 6. Arrange as follows: Persons, Places, Dates, Doings, Doctrines, Duties.

Study the lesson faithfully from my Bible, and then apply to my commentators after I have exhausted my own powers. This gives me fresh biblical thoughts for my scholars.

THE BEST TEACHERS.

Dean Stanley said in a recent address, that the solution of all educational difficulties was to find really capable teachers. He wished to impress those who had to go out to commence the work of teaching, that it depended on their exertions—on the amount of heart and soul which they could throw into their work, and on the amount of energy and the power of imparting energy, which they could bring to bear—whether the education of the children in their hands should be a complete success or a total failure. The solution of educational difficulties depended not so much upon the question talked about, as upon the character of the teachers that institutions were able to turn out. The deepest impressions carried from childhood into manhood, were impressions not only of what had been thought, but of the manner in which the instruction had been given.

THE HARVEST HOUR.

We are at this moment probably near the height of the harvest season of souls. The winter frivolities to which the Church too much gives heed, is past; fairs and festivals, with their questionable additions, are gone. The little money they give is spent, though the large demoralization they effect is yet unspent. The Lyceum, another drawback on the Church's prosperity, is about 'run out.' There is a little corner in which can be put a little work directly for God and souls. It is too little to deserve much reward, as the minister pungently tells the sinner how mean he is if he uses all his life for the world, and only gives his dying moments to God.

Much more is the Church mean and stingy that appropriates ten months of the year to idleness or vanity, or means to pay debts, and support its minister, and only pretends to give a month or two to saving souls. Yet some churches hardly do that. But God who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He hath loved us, is still willing to favor Zion under such miserly unfaithfulness, and especially willing to favor that Zion which has kept pressing at the mercy-seat. This is His favorite season. Long evenings, brisk atmospheres, leisure hours in both town and country, are the favoring circumstances. The Holy Spirit descends on souls now as the ethereal influence will soon,—

—"I was in a shower of strewing roses, on our path descend." Will the Church avail itself of this promise? If the husbandman sits idly by while the April showers and May sun break up and warm up the soil, the whole community call him a loafer. How much more is that minister and Church thus justly branded who let this season of grace pass unimpaired.

Be up and doing. Plough, sow, harvest all at once. Have extra meetings. Hold on to them! Get extra help! Don't be afraid of anybody who can bring souls to Christ, brother or sister, black or white, young or old. Call upon them. Does the busy farmer query as to help? He puts all that come into the field, and pays for the work done. So press all you can into your help. Get the praying bands, blessed institution, to help you. Hold on when you start. Don't be scared off, or driven off, or tired off. The last is the chief test. Be not weary in well-doing, for in due season ye shall reap if ye faint not. Many fruits are being gathered. Great revivals are setting the land a flame. Be equally faithful, and a like reward is yours.—*Zion's Herald.*

Our Young Folks.

GETTING UP STAIRS.

Ill! the baby is getting up stairs
One step, two steps, three steps, slow.
Down she comes with a thump, thump, thump,
Mamma kisses the little blue bump.
Higher next time will the baby go,
Mother love watches her, high or low.

Life's a continual climbing of stairs:
What if too eager ones tumble and fall?
Up again, try again, visit each time,
Safely at last shall the brave feet climb.
Fear not to love the rallying call,
God's dear love watches over us all.

FOUR YEARS OLD.

I am four years old to-day;
Just as big as I can be!
Tom is coming here to play—
Tom and Joe and Jimmy Leo,
Mamma baked a cake so tall!
So! the top is white as snow,
What if I should eat it all?
Toll me, would it make me grow?
We shall have a lot of fun—
Tom and Joe and Jim and me;
We'll be horses; and we'll run
Just like fury—whoa! howl! geol!
Come in boys, don't be afraid,
I am four years old you know.
See my cake, that mamma made!
Look! it's just as white as snow.
Fanny, reach me down my cap;
Find my hoo—we want to dig.
Baby sits in mamma's lap—
She can't hold me, I'm so big!
Stay and help us harness, please;
Get a string that's good to hold,
Come out doors, now, we shan't freeze;
We're big boys—we're four years old!

Young friends, education is to you what polish and refinement is to the true diamond. In its rude state the diamond resembles a stone, or piece of charcoal; but when cut and manufactured it comes out a bright and beautiful diamond, and is sold at a great price. so it is with you. Education calls forth the hidden treasures and latent brilliancies of your minds, which previously lie dormant and inactive, or, in other words asleep. It cultivates and develops your understandings, and fits and prepares you for the duties and responsibilities of coming years, which we trust will be years of usefulness, useful to yourselves, to your associates, and society at large.

"FOLLOW MY LEADER."

In all sheep-grazing countries you will find the land all crossed over with little, narrow, well-beaten paths, formed by the sheep as they follow each other in regular order. It is one of the peculiarities of this animal to always follow a leader, and one of great advantage to those who have them to drive. It would be a difficult matter for the shepherd to collect his scattered flock at night-fall, if it were not for this trait. Once start them on the right road, and all is well.

But there is one difficulty about this blind way they have of always following the leader. It sometimes happens that the leader falls over a precipice, or makes some foolish and dangerous move. But his example is not heeded by the silly sheep. They all press onward, and do as their leader did. If he leaps, in a moment of fright, from a high bridge, all the rest are quite likely to do the same, unless some one can reach the spot, and by force turn them aside.

Boys are fond of playing "Follow my leader," and often the play or the reality goes on when they least think of it. There are boy-leaders in every school and neighbourhood, and as their leaders are, so are, in a large measure, the boys that follow them. Where the boy-leader is a noble, manly lad, with high principles, he is a blessing, indeed, to the little circle. But where his character is the reverse of all these, woe to the poor lads who follow his lead. Not more disastrous is the fate of the poor sheep who heedlessly follow their leader over the dreadful precipice, to be dashed to pieces on the cruel rocks.

Do not follow the boy who uses bad language, speaks slightly of his mother's authority, goes rambling off in the woods on the Sabbath day, and is ready to fight any smaller boy who offends him. To go in his paths is to walk in the ways of death. The noble Christian boy, who loves his mother's fireside and reveres her name, is a far safer associate and guide. After all, there is no perfect human guide; but God has given us in His word an example that is perfect. It is the Lord Jesus Christ, whose example is spotless, and who will help us to grow more and more like Him, if we will but yield ourselves to His guidance.—*Presbyterian.*

REMEMBERING.

"Oh, dear," exclaimed Hugh, "I can't remember this long, hard lesson;" and throwing down his book impatiently, he gazed longingly out of the window at Harry Seaton and Will Garson playing ball across the street.

"You can remember ever so many errands when your mother sends you down town," said Cousin Ethel, quietly.
"Oh, yes," replied Hugh, his face suddenly brightening up; "but that's different from learning a geography lesson."

"What is your lesson about?" asked Cousin Ethel, after a little pause.

Hugh was so much interested in the game going on across the street that he did not hear the question until it was asked the second time.

"Here it is," he replied at last, handing her the book; "all of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. I've read it over twice, and can't recite a bit of it."

"If your mother should send you down the street after a spool of thread, a pound of pepper, a package of envelopes, a bar of soap, a paper of pins, and some note paper, do you think you could remember all of them?"

"But mamma would not give me errands in that way," said Hugh, laughing.

"Why not?" asked Cousin Ethel, "you know how to buy all these things."

"Yes; but she would tell me to go to a grocery store and get the pepper and—what next, Cousin Ethel?"

"A bar of soap."

"Oh, yes; then go to a trimming store for the thread and pins, and come back by a stationery store for the—I've forgot already."

"Envelopes and paper," continued Cousin Ethel, smiling. "So it is because all these errands are arranged, or told you in order, that you can remember them, is it?"

"Yes, ma'am," replied Hugh, wondering what this would have to do with his lesson.

"Now suppose you try to straighten out your geography lesson in the same way. Take Ohio first, study the large print, what is said of soil and climate; then learn about the rivers, towns, and so on, till you get to the end of that part of the lesson; don't you think you can do that much?"

"Yes, ma'am," replied Hugh, beginning to get quite interested; "but I have to learn it all."

"Suppose you stand at the bottom of the school-house stairs, and say, 'I can't reach the top in one step or two, or three—no use in trying.'"

"That would be very foolish," replied Hugh, laughing; "so I am to take one step at a time in my lesson, am I, and keep it straight in my mind, as mamma does the errands?"

"Yes, that's the way," said Cousin Ethel; "but one thing more—suppose while your mother is telling you where to go, and what to buy, you are trying about half the time to count the marbles in your bag."

"I see," exclaimed Hugh, interrupting her; "I must pay attention, as mamma says."

"Yes; get it straight in your head, what you want to learn; take one step at a time, and give your whole attention to it, and see if your hard geography will not grow easier."

"I'll try this way of remembering," replied Hugh.

"And if you keep on doing so, faithfully, year after year, your memory will improve more than you now imagine."—*National Baptist.*

THE ARITHMETIC LESSON.

"If Nellie makes her mother happy four times every day, how many times will she make her happy in a year?"

Nellie's father had brought home a new slate for her, and as she was so much interested in arithmetic, she had asked her mother to give her a "sum to do." This was the question her mother had proposed.

"Nellie said to herself, 'If I make mother happy four times a day, then, as there are three hundred and sixty-five days in the year, I shall make her happy three hundred and sixty-five times four.'"

As she thought it would be more convenient in multiplying she put down three hundred and sixty-five first on her slate, and four under it, and found the answer to be one thousand four hundred and sixty.

"One thousand four hundred and sixty times. O, mother, only think of that! I mean to begin to-day, and perhaps, if I try, I can make her happy more than four times a day. Perhaps I might two thousand times a year."

"But there are others in the family, Nellie. Think of your father and little brother, and Cousin Alice, who comes to see us sometimes. Think of all your friends! It may be in your power to make somebody else happy twenty times every day, and that would be many thousands in a year! and do not forget that this arithmetic will give just as true an account of the unhappiness you cause. How sad to think you might make somebody unhappy many thousand times every year!"

Little boy, how many times a day do you show an unkind or disobedient spirit? Somebody is always made unhappy by it. Think of the multiplication table, and see how much sorrow or how much happiness you may cause your dear mother or your dear friends in a year. Oh, I do hope, as you think of this, you will ask Jesus to make you like Him, and help you give some one cause for joy every day:

THE GRACE THAT PINCHES.

BY THEO. L. OUYER, D. D.

The prevailing sin of the day is self-indulgence. It is eating like a canker into the life of many of our churches. It leaves Christ's ministers to address empty pews on unpleasant Sabbaths. It robs Christ's treasury to keep up a showy "turn-out." If it hangs a bough of profession over on the churchside of the dividing wall, yet its roots are deep down in the soil of the world. It is often ready to deny Christ, but seldom ready to deny itself.

The most unpopular doctrine to preach in these times, and the hardest one to practice, is the old-fashioned apostolic doctrine of self-denial. This is the grace that pinches.

The daily battle of Christian principle is with that artful, subtle, greedy sinner, self. And the highest victory of our religion is to follow Jesus over the rugged path of self-denial. This is mainly to be done in the little every-day acts of life. The great occasions that demand sublime sacrifice are few and rare.

The Christian who suppresses a jest or a witticism, because it would burlesque his religion, practices self-denial. When he speaks out a bold but unpopular word for the right—m "fashionable society"—he is really taking up a cross for his Master. All genuine acts of philanthropy are born of the noble principle to deny self, and to honour Christ in the persons of these for whom Christ suffered.

The mission school teacher who sallies off in the driving storm to carry his Gospel loaf to a group of hungry children, is an example of this. "Why should I sit by the warm fire on my sofa to-day? Christ will look for me among my class." The seamstress who drops her hard-earned dollar into the Memorial Fund collection is really enthroning her Saviour above herself. Those educated Northern girls who went South to teach ragged freedmen their alphabet and the Bible are truer ladies in God's sight than all the self-pampering belles who air their fineries on Fifth or Wash Avenue.

We can not emphasize too strongly this grace which pinches selfishness. I care not how orthodox is a man's creed, or eloquent may be his prayers in public, if he has never learned to say "no" to the demands of fashion, and pride, and luxury, he is but a sorry specimen of the Christ-man.

What a touching lesson of self-denial we behold in every crutch and in every "empty sleeve" of those heroes in blue whom we meet yet on all our public thoroughfares! These noble men counted not their limbs dear, if only the nation might be saved, and freedom might triumph. Yet there are thousands of professed Christians who are unwilling to deny themselves the paltry gratification of a glass of wine or ale in order to help the sentiment of total abstinence to become popular, or to aid in saving the "weak brother who stumbleth." They know they are setting a bad example when they use or offer the poison-cup. They know that they are throwing their influence on the side of the tipplers. Yet, because it is "genteel" to partake of wine or punch, they do not hesitate to "take a drop" in the social circle. Perhaps they thrust the decanter before some weak, temptable friend, to his everlasting damnation! If the drunkard shall "not inherit the kingdom of heaven," what right has a professed Christian to ask to be admitted to heaven if he has helped to make a drunkard of his neighbour? I fear that God will say to the "pious" tempter, "That man's blood will I require at thy hands." Paul acted with a truer spirit of Christ when he uttered the noble precept, "It is good not to drink wine whereby my brother stumbleth."

Brother! let us pray for the grace that pinches. "If it goes against the grain," all the better. If it wounds our pride, so much the better. If it makes us look "singular," let us remember that we are commanded to be a "peculiar people," and not to look like the votaries of Satan. Brave old Doctor Wisner—who went home the other day to glory—was once the most singular man in the village of Ithaca. He dared to stand alone. He was ever ready to testify on the Lord's side, on which he had planted himself so valiantly.

Oh, for a new baptism of self-denial! Oh, for a new training in that lesson which our Master taught us, which apostles and martyrs echoed from the prison cells and kindled stakes—the sublime lesson that,

"Not to ourselves alone,
Not to the flesh we'll live;
Not to the world henceforth shall we
Our strength and being give!"

No longer be our life
A selfish thing, or vain;
For us, even here, to live be Christ,
For us to die is gain!"

—*Christian World.*

We never so effectually repel Satan's temptations as when we fasten on a gracious promise, and with it contend against him.