

heard frequently in Sunday School :

"Some days will come the golden sun,
Some days the rain will fall ;
But we'll be glad for every one,
For God doth send them all."

It was their mother's request for the completion of the verse which brought the inci-

dent to the teacher's knowledge.

It is not necessary to multiply these true stories, which are part of the encouragement of many a Beginners teacher ; but they surely show that it is worth while to teach the little ones, even if, as yet, they know no difference between a nursery rhyme and a Bible verse.

Tell Us a Story

BY DEAN H. T. J. COLEMAN, PH.D.

Some persons incline to the opinion that a story is to a child little more than what it is to many adults, namely, a means of amusement with which to occupy one's leisure time. But the fact is that for the child the story is not merely a means of amusement, it is a form of truth. It presents truth in the only way in which the child mind can possibly grasp it.

Take the story of Santa Claus, for example. Few of us are so desperately literal in our view of things, that we would banish the good old saint from the children's calendar on the ground that both he and his reindeer sleigh are pure myths. Though our minds, in a sense, reject him, our hearts believe in him. But the child mind accepts him as unreservedly as does the child heart. The child's knowledge of polar geography is not so extensive that a house at the North Pole is any more improbable than a house in the next street, while the world of nature is to him full of mysteries just as wonderful as the filled stocking or the laden Christmas tree.

Santa Claus, we say, stands for the spirit of good will at the Christmas season. Such a statement is true enough for sophisticated adults, who have cultivated the gift of abstraction to the impairment of their gift of imagination. To the young child the spirit of Christmas good will is Santa Claus, and Santa Claus is the spirit of Christmas good will.

This literal and uncritical belief of childhood must, of course, be gradually tempered into the more prosaic attitude of later life. Only through such a process, as difficult as it is important, is the child enabled to hold to the spiritual substance of the Santa Claus story after the shadowy accompaniments of sleigh and reindeer and polar dwelling have all disappeared in the light of a growing intelligence.

There are, too, some persons who are rather afraid of stories. Many of the great stories of world literature are to them merely fiction, and therefore untrue. But the fact is that, to the people who first told them, these stories were a form of truth. And to the discerning mind at the present day, that is, the mind

which is really hospitable to truth, their value as a medium for imparting truth remains unimpaired.

If, for example, we are to impart the truths of the Bible to young children, we must do it in the Bible's own way, which is, as we might suppose, the child's own way as well. The Bible's own way is through story. The early Hebrews knew little of what we would call science and little of what we would call history, but they thought about the order of nature and the course of human events just as truly as we do, only the form which their thoughts took is more natural now to children than it is to adults. And this seems reasonable enough, when we consider that these early Hebrews lived in the childhood stage of their race.

No story is good enough to tell once to children unless it is good enough to tell more than once. Any story whose hundredth telling is more fascinating than its first, is genuine literature, and any story which, while it appeals to children, satisfies also the different (if not more exacting) tastes of the adult mind, is a classic, and in fact (if the stronger expression is allowable) a great classic.

Now the stories of the Bible are great classics since they meet this most searching of tests. Is it not possible that the best foundation for a religious education is the telling and re-telling of Bible stories with all the wealth of emphasis which picture, hand work and dramatic representation can supply? When we have reached the hundredth telling, we will perhaps be really prepared for the more abstract and more detailed treatment of the Bible which the ordinary Sunday School lesson scheme demands.

Queen's University, Kingston, Ont.

Developing Impression by Expression

By Rev. E. R. McLean, B.D.

Every teacher is quite well aware that he knows more about the lesson after teaching it to others than he would had he simply listened to another teaching it to him. Or