

our thoroughly secularized hearts, are carrying us ever farther away from Christ, and what shall be the end thereof.

When we have examined into these several charges against sectism, do we still ask if organic unity is desirable? The evil of our divisions is becoming more and more manifest. The various bodies are not so far apart as they once were; they think more highly of each other than they did formerly; the old time prejudices are passing away. The increased use of "Union Meetings" is encouraging and instructive for two facts which they disclose:—they indicate the desire of Christians to come nearer together\*; and inasmuch as they are resorted to when earnest men would move communities by extraordinary effort to fear God and to lead better lives, they are an individual confession that our sectarianism breaks down before the very work of evangelization which it is the Church's mission to accomplish. We have inherited these divisions from past quarrels; and we are retaining them not so much for the sake of perpetuating old ideas and feuds as because it does not occur to us that they might be cured. Who believes that, if our Christian people were to reconstruct American ecclesiastical affairs, they would call these rival denominations into existence? In view of all the circumstances, we are not too hopeful when we express as our judgment that the times are ripe for calling sectarianism a wrong, and for discussing the needed remedies.—*Scranton Churchman.*

\*This is shown by the Young Men's Christian Association, the Evangelical Alliance; the Congress of Churches, and the late Conference at Washington.

### WHAT ARE THE BEST METHODS OF SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHING?

By Mr. William M. Runk, Philadelphia, in *The Church Review.*

In considering this question, we must take for granted, (1) that Sunday Schools are necessary: (2) that the teachers are engaged, by and are a unit in carrying out the thoughts and aims of the Rector or of the Parish or of the Superintendent of the school, either of whom may be the guiding spirit in all that is said or done.

Now that the question is fairly before us, we must also consider that the views here given may not be in accordance with the thoughts and wishes of every one, but are given by the writer as those which have formed themselves in his mind after an experience of twenty-five years in Sunday School work as teacher and Superintendent.

This article has in view the thorough instruction of our scholars (1) in the Holy Bible; (2) in the *Prayer Book* and all that it contains relative to the Catechism and general Church teaching.

It is to be presumed that the teacher, feeling the necessity of preparation, will employ all the means at his command in learning thoroughly the lesson that is to be taught upon the ensuing Lord's Day, either by attending a lesson study that may be given in a public way, or probably the advantage may be offered through the Rector or Superintendent of his own parish. It is certainly very ill-advised for a teacher to appear before a class of either young or old without a thorough familiarity with the Scripture Lesson that has been selected. This familiarity must include not only a complete knowledge of the direct lesson, with its characters, places, and events, but also an acquaintance with what immediately precedes, for that is often a key to unlock the direct lesson which is to be impressed upon the scholar's mind.

If this idea of thorough preparation is ac-

cepted by a teacher and thoughtfully and prayerfully carried out, we feel sure that the work done will be much more efficient, and the scholars will quickly see that the knowledge possessed by their teacher must command attention and respect.

Now, as to the methods of imparting instruction, for that is the point to be considered, after all. We are fully aware that where one teacher can command the respect and close attention of a class, there may be five whose time is largely taken up by preserving order and by quieting the little differences that constantly arise where boys and girls are not of a congenial temperament.

We cannot exactly step aside to give directions upon this point without taking in too wide a field, and must therefore take for granted that the scholars are present out of respect for the teacher, and love for the school, and are simply waiting to receive all that is in the power of the teacher to impart to them. To our mind it is necessary that the teacher should carefully study the temper and disposition of every scholar in the class, for however good the method may be, it cannot be applied to all alike. One scholar will accept the truth given in a direct way, where another will require anecdote, illustration, or example to make it plain and forcible. In bringing almost any or every lesson plainly to the comprehension of the minds of scholars, let the teaching bear as much as possible upon every-day life, with its temptations and trials, and how they are to be overcome, to obtain the victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil.

The plainer the lesson, and the more direct its application is made to the lives of the scholars, the greater force "the Bible" will have on their characters. They will see that it is not only a book to be read with reverence and godly fear, but that it is intended to be a guide to direct their feet into the paths of peace and duty.

One cannot tell what may be the aims or ambitions of the pupils; some may have a future course marked out, in which your instruction will form an important factor, while others may gather just what is required to direct them to a proper life.

Now, if we are a unit in the thoughts so far expressed, it becomes our duty to see how each lesson may bear upon some *Prayer Book* thought, in order that our scholars may early be taught to admire and love it next to their Bible; for as it contains "all the Articles of our belief," as well as the manner in which we believe, we should worship our Heavenly Father, we should early impress this on the minds of those committed to our care. We must take for granted that this is also uppermost in the mind of the one who may review the lesson before the school, and thus the thought given out by the teacher becomes doubly impressed.

The ideas so far given are quite general, and let us now ask whether we have covered the principal point in the question which heads this article, for the main work to us seems to be "methods," and we find the meaning of this word to be quite broad, but we take it that the meaning intended to be applied to this question is "course," "routine," "step-by-step." We think the "course" and the "routine" have been carefully gone over. Now what shall be the (method) "step-by-step" that shall lead to successful teaching?

It is, of course, desirable that every scholar should read the entire lesson if possible, but as this is hard to accomplish, let the teacher, after commanding the close attention of all, either read it through himself or alternate every other verse by the class reading in unison. If there are any words that need explanation, let them be made plain as they are read, and you are then ready to bring forward the date, if it is a matter of importance, the place, the characters, any special event that

may be spoken of, and finally the lesson you would draw and teach, as gathered by the study you have given the subject.

We think one of the very first instructions a teacher should urge upon the class is a thorough knowledge of all the books of both the Old and New Testaments, the order in which they come, and the names of those who wrote them; for by this means the scholars may be made to feel that the Bible is not a distant book, but one to be read carefully every day.

All methods adopted should have but one ultimate end in view, namely, the education of children in Bible truth, and in love for the Church, and let the instruction imparted have this good purpose prominent, for that is the surest way in which the future ranks of our Churchmen are to be filled. It has appeared to us that many think that if they simply give instruction in holy truths, the whole duty has been done, thus often leaving a child without any clear, distinct views—as they grow into manhood or womanhood—as to whether they shall become Churchmen or members of some one of the denominations.

We seldom find a child that has been reared in the Church of Rome leaving it and going into the folds of Protestantism, for they are made to feel it is their Mother Church, and the only one through which they are to be saved. Now, while we would not think or believe in going to that extreme, yet we would have our children early learn to prize that beautiful hymn 191, and especially the second and fourth verses:

I love Thy Church, O God;  
Her walls before Thee stand,  
Dear as the apple of Thine eye,  
And graven on Thy hand.  
Beyond my highest joy  
I prize her heavenly ways,  
Her sweet communion, solemn vows,  
Her hymns of love and praise.

In closing this article we would add that no matter what methods may be adopted, they must all fail of their purpose unless we ask God's blessing on our school, and especially upon the members of our individual classes, and pray that the instruction we shall give from time to time may sink into the hearts and minds of those committed to our care, and that if we do not see the fruit of our labors while we continue with them, yet trust that in years to come the seed that we have sown will not have been sown in vain.

### UNITY.

I think that time will vindicate the wisdom of the position that has been taken. Namely, that praying and striving for unity, we still maintain the positive convictions which we believe we are set to maintain, because the hope of unity depends upon their maintenance; and that we are not willing, for a sentiment of inward communion to sacrifice any actual principle of order or of truth. If we are to invite communion with ourselves, from those who are in a way separated from us now, we must surely hold out something to them, in the way of an inducement, which they have not themselves. And that something is not merely the Catholic Faith, but the Apostolic Order. Just how the two are related to each other it may be difficult to say; but I believe it is true, that the faith has never been fully and entirely maintained apart from the Apostolic Order; while, in the face of history, no one would of course dare to maintain that the Apostolic Order has succeeded always, in preserving the purity of the Faith.—*The Bishop of Albany.*

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