

acter and conduct the parable of the bramble? Has he acquired added power of moral judgment and self-control? Unless that application be made, Jotham's story will remain a mere tale, and the preacher of the morning will have failed.

These are difficult questions to answer. It was Robert Louis Stevenson, I think, who said that the hardest thing about the work of the teacher was that you had to keep on chopping and chopping, and you never saw any chips fly. Our work is inward and at long range; and its full results are never immediately obvious.

It is interesting that the boy's version draws no moral, though the preacher had presented some direct practical applications. But we may not conclude that the boy had failed to get these, or that he could make none of his own. He simply tells his story in good climatic fashion, then stops. He reveals the fine sense for a good story, which is natural to children, and something of the unconscious art of a good story-teller.

This boy has gained a principle in light of which he may face his own problems. His evident appreciation of the story, its clear grip upon his imagination, his reworking and restating it in terms of his established habits and experiences, augur well for his permanent possession of the idea it embodies. But he must go further if it is to be of full value to his life. He must practice the application of this principle to his own conduct.

In such practice of the principles of life the Sunday School teacher may lead and guide

his pupils. The demand is justly made of the Sunday School in these days that it maintain a higher level of intellectual efficiency in its teaching. But with that there is a demand for greater practical efficiency as well.

We may strive for this in two chief directions:

(1) By a more definite correlation of effort with the parents of our pupils. It meant a good deal that the mother of the boy quoted should have been able to report to the preacher that she had helped her son in a selfish moment by reminding him of the bramble. One of the losses sustained in passing from Uniform to Graded lessons is at this point of contact with parents. Graded Sunday Schools must develop plans whereby the intelligent and sympathetic cooperation of teachers and parents may be secured and maintained. Parents' classes, weekly letters to parents, short courses for parents covering in a few weeks the material to be studied by their children throughout the year, and departmental parent-teachers' associations are among the possibilities.

(2) By making the Sunday School itself a centre of Christian activity as well as of Christian instruction. It is wasteful for the School of a church to confine its contact with its pupils to one hour on Sunday which is given over wholly to instruction, and to leave the leadership of the active, social life of these same pupils to other organizations, which are sympathetic, indeed, with its purposes, but whose plans are independent and uncorrelated.—Yale University, New Haven, Conn.

## Amateur Teachers

BY REV. A. C. CREWS, D.D.

"He is a well intentioned young man, and does the best he can, but really his work is very amateurish," remarked a Sunday School superintendent concerning one of his teachers. Evidently he had not a very high opinion of the young man's ability and used a well known word in its commonly accepted meaning.

Many people have the idea that an amateur is necessarily a poor performer as contrasted with a thoroughly efficient worker, but in reality it would not be possible to pay a person a higher compliment than to apply this term to him.

An amateur is, according to the dictionary, "an individual who does a thing for the love of it," as opposed to the professional who works for pay. He may be just as competent as the most skilled performer, but if he renders his services without fee or reward, because he loves the work, he is regarded as an amateur.

In this sense every Sunday School teacher

should be proud to be an amateur. If he does not possess any love for the scholars, or any affection for the Saviour, he ought not to think of being a teacher. Perhaps some one asks just here, "Is it not a high and noble motive to do this work from a sense of duty, even though it has no attraction?" Certainly there is something to admire in seeing a man or woman undertake a disagreeable task because of the compelling power of duty, but usually, back of this feeling, there will be the existence of love in some form. If a Christian has no love for Christ, and no love for humanity, it is not likely that duty will call very loudly to that person.

It sometimes happens that a teacher responds to the call of a superintendent to take a class rather reluctantly, and at first, is scarcely entitled to be regarded as an amateur, but as time passes the task is transformed into a delight, and although no dollars are received