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HOW TO TEACH RELIGION

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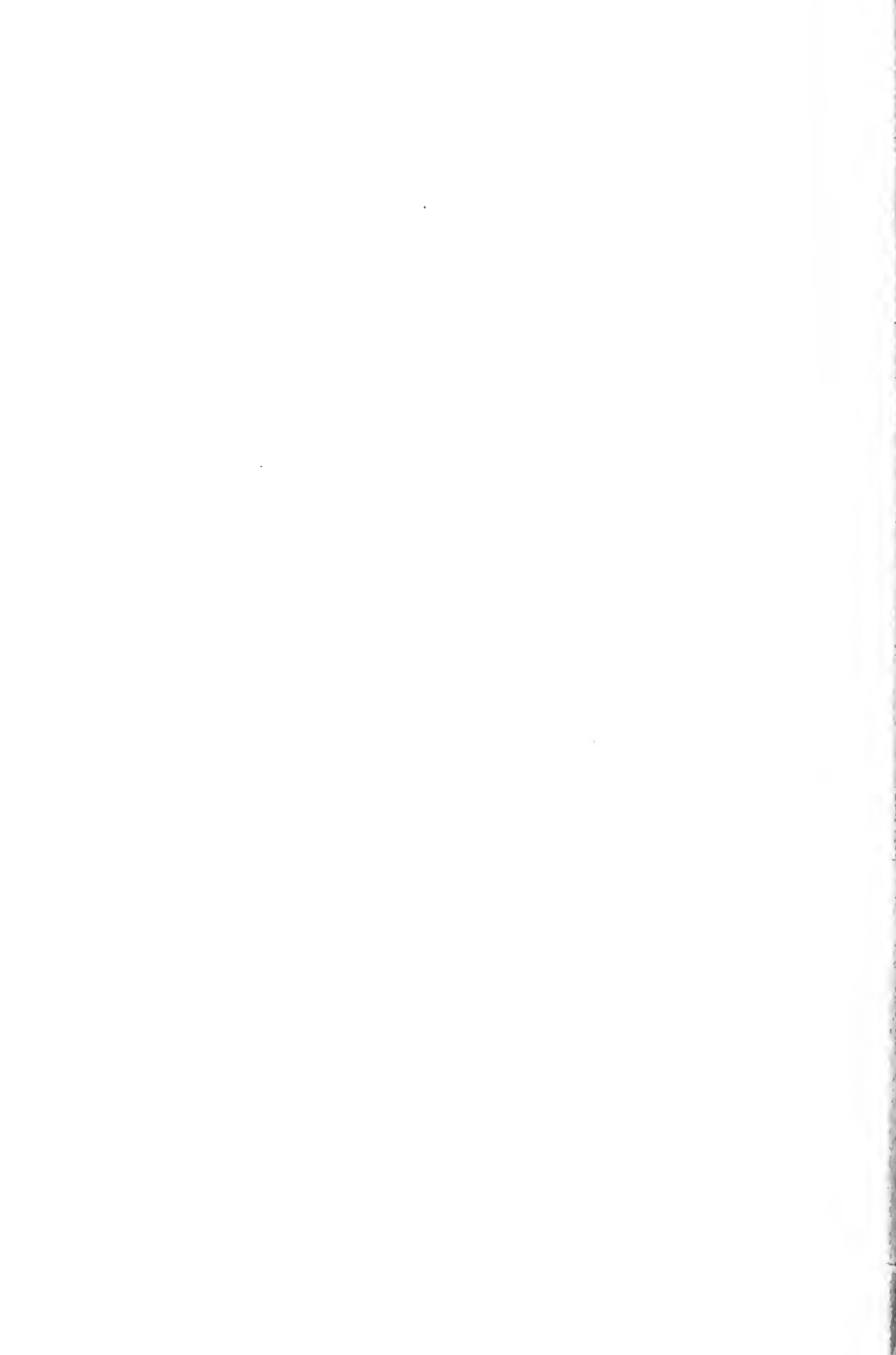
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DEDICATION

In the hope of raising the standard of instruction in our religious organizations, be it ever so little, this work is dedicated, first, to all our teachers of religion who feel that they do not know enough about teaching and who would like to learn more, and, secondly, to all parents who are anxious to give their children systematic instructions in the home, but who feel themselves lacking in a knowledge of how to do this

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PREFACE.

THIS work was written in the belief that one may teach more effectively by knowing how than by not knowing, and that the more clearly one knows the better one can do it.

It aims to state in a clear, simple, and non-technical way some of the fundamental principles of education and then to show how these may be made use of in the teaching of religion.

No doubt, in aiming at a popular statement of these principles we have lost something in technical accuracy, but we have preferred to be understood by those for whom we have written than to be commended for strictly professional virtues by those who may never read our book.

“How to Teach Religion” grew, first, out of a general demand for such a work in the Religion Classes of the Church, secondly, out of a request that such a one be written for the use of instructors in the priesthood quorums, and, thirdly, out

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of a feeling that a work of this sort might be welcomed by teachers in other religious organizations and also by parents in such stakes as have one evening specifically set aside for the home.

The book is equally adapted for the work of the Sunday School, the Primary Association, and the Improvement organizations as for the organizations named above. Also it may be read with equal profit, we think, by parents and teachers individually or studied by the latter collectively, as, for instance, in ward preparation meetings or stake unions. The work as here given was, before being published, used successfully in monthly stake meetings with workers of the Religion Class in five different stakes, a few minutes at each meeting being devoted to some educational principle before the regular study of lessons was taken up.

Of course, we have borrowed extensively. Our debt, however, is greatest to Professors Dewey, James, and Thorndike.

✓ = TRANSLATED into German and
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I

THE TEACHER OF RELIGION

WHAT can I do that will be of most worth to me? Everybody who has thought at all has asked himself this question. Young persons looking for a vocation, ask it. Grown men and women seeking earnestly to do good, ask it. If there were a person anywhere who had the reputation of being able to answer the question for each individual, we would go to the ends of the earth to put this query: What can I do that will be of most worth to me?

Now, it happens that we have on record the answer to this question. It is the answer, too, not of the wisest man in the world, but of the wisest Being in the universe, namely of God himself. Here it is:

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“And now, behold, I say unto you, that the thing which will be of most worth unto you will be to declare repentance unto this people, that you may bring souls unto me, that you may rest with them in the kingdom of my Father.”

While these words were uttered specifically to John Whitmer in the first years of this dispensation, still they are as true of every other person as of him, in one age as in another.

But bringing souls to Christ is distinctively the work of the teacher. The preacher and the parent are teachers. So that the words quoted from the revelation are equivalent to saying that the thing of most worth in life is to be a religious teacher in the broad sense of the word, to influence souls to do good.

If, then, the service of teaching be the most important that can be undertaken, how ought it to be done?

To begin with, it should be willing service.

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In the first days of the Church in our dispensation men were anxious to embark in the service of the Lord. They came from far and near to find out through the Prophet Joseph what the Lord would have them do. Among these was Father Smith, who went from his home in Manchester, New York, to Harmony, Pennsylvania, to visit his son for this purpose. Of this number, too, were the Pratt brothers. All were anxious to know the will of the Lord concerning them, to know what He would have them do. This is pre-eminently the spirit of the teacher.

When Jesus was about to depart, after his ministrations for forty days among his ancient disciples, He asked the Twelve what they desired of Him. Peter wished to go, at death, to his Master. But John wished for greater things. "Lord," he said, "give unto me power over death, that I may live and bring souls unto Thee!" This, too, was the spirit of the teacher.

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“Men should be anxiously engaged in a good cause,” says the Lord in a revelation to the Prophet, “and do many things of their own free will, and bring to pass much righteousness.” That is the true spirit—to be anxious to do good. The premium, in religious work as in every other, is put upon the willing labor.

And so, we repeat, service in teaching religion ought to be willing. The true teacher virtually says in his heart, I want to do this.

In the next place, the service given by the teacher should be intelligent service—and in four respects.

(1) It goes without saying that he should know what he is expected to teach. He should study the subject-matter of his lessons, and that in as broad a way as he is able. This implies not merely that he gather material, but also that he get a main thought out of it for each lesson, that he develop that thought as best he can, and that he study how best to give

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it so as to modify conduct in his class.

(2) The teacher should know what qualifications he himself should have in order to make his work most effective. Now, the Lord has also told us what are the qualifications of one who wishes to do His work. "Remember faith," He declares, "virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, brotherly kindness, godliness, charity, humility, diligence." Let the teacher who reads this reflect on each of these words as specifically as he can, and he will get an idea of what they mean.

(3) The teacher should, most of all, know his pupils—their likes and dislikes, their individual differences, their home and school and town environment, so as to take advantage of these in arousing interest in the subject he teaches. As most of the sections in this book discuss the pupil in these various aspects, we need not here say anything else on this topic.

(4) The teacher should know also what he expects his pupils to become. This

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point is discussed in detail in another section, but two things need to be mentioned here.

The first is, that he must teach ideas, or truths, since conduct cannot effectively be modified except through ideas. But he does not teach ideas for the sake of the ideas themselves. He teaches ideas because he wishes them applied in the practical life of his pupils. Of what service is it to know that one ought to be truthful if one often tells an untruth?

Hence our second point, which is that whenever an idea is given that is at all practicable, it should be followed up till there are some results in conduct on the part of the class. To teach an idea is comparatively easy and requires little time; to turn ideas into practical qualities and establishing these as habits of conduct, is hard and takes much time and patience. Knowledge, remember, is only one of ten items mentioned in the passage given above as the qualifications of the teacher. What we want, then, in all our

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work of instruction is not so much ideas about mercy, love, industry, virtue, in the minds of our young folks, as the qualities of mercy, love, industry, virtue in their everyday lives, "changing what is to what ought to be," so that the spirit of light may instruct the soul.

Meanwhile, the teacher should often call to mind this fine passage:

"O ye that embark in the service of God, see that ye serve Him with all your heart, might, mind, and strength, that ye may stand blameless before God at the last day. * * * For the field is white already to harvest, and lo, he that thrusteth in his sickle with his might, the same layeth up in store that he perish not, but bringeth salvation to his soul."

II

WHAT THE TEACHER HAS TO DO

WHEN we wish to go on a journey we first consider our object in going, where we are to go, and how much we can afford to spend on the trip. If we have a house to build we can do so to better purpose if we know beforehand whether it is to be a barn, a residence, or a church. A professional watchmaker can mend our timepiece better than one who has not given watchmaking any attention. A physician can deal more effectively with typhoid fever than one who knows nothing of medicine. In a word, a person can always do a bit of work, physical, mental, or spiritual, a great deal better when he has first learned how to do it.

And teaching is no exception to the rule. It goes without saying that you can

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reach your aim better in the class-room if you know something about the nature of the mind, something about the principles according to which it learns, and something about what you are to teach, than you can if you have not given special attention to these subjects. And other things being the same, the more clearly you know these, the greater will be your success as a teacher.

Now, what are we attempting to do when we teach? What is the teacher's specific problem? In reply we may say that every teacher who conducts a class is endeavoring, whether he knows it or not, to do two things: first, to give ideas to his pupils and, secondly, to get the children to respond to these ideas. Let us restate these purposes in some detail so as to grasp them fully.

And first as to the giving of ideas.

We cannot easily overestimate the importance, individually and socially, of this matter of giving and receiving ideas. The

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boy Joseph Smith, for instance, got an idea from the New Testament that when he lacked wisdom he should pray for it. What followed? First, he meditated over the passage, then he went out into the grove near his father's house to apply it, and received as a result that splended first vision. This was the individual benefit to him. But out of that first revelation to the Prophet has, in the main, sprung what we know as "Mormonism."

As a matter of fact, the range of the idea-getting apparatus of the child is tremendously wide, and it ought to be comparatively easy to get the ideas the teacher wishes to give, providing we go about it in the right way.

First of all, there is the sense of touch. You take up a wooden ball in the hand; you feel the solid substance; the nerves carry the impulse to the brain; and the mind gets an idea of hardness and of roundness. Secondly, there is the sense of taste. If you put sugar or vinegar into the mouth there comes an idea of sweet-

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ness or sourness. Thirdly, when we come near a rose and the aroma reaches the nostril, we have an idea of smell. In the fourth place, we have the sense of hearing. The ball drops on the floor, for instance; air-waves are created; these reach the brain through the auditory nerve; and the result is an idea that the ball has fallen. The range of hearing varies from thirty-two vibrations per second to forty thousand, in the acutest ear. The fifth sense is of sight, produced by ether-waves varying from four hundred and forty trillions per second to seven hundred and ninety trillions per second.

All these senses—touch, taste, smell, hearing, and sight—are the various avenues through which ideas reach the mind. They are all, moreover, of material objects, beginning with solids, passing through liquids and air-waves, and ending in the most delicate ether-vibrations. But the important point here is the wide range of the idea-getting organism, the numerous points of contact of the mind with

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the outer world. Through one or more of these avenues to the mind the teacher is to give ideas to the children.

So much for the first part of the teacher's problem—the means through which he gives ideas. We now come to the second part, namely, the response, or the expression of these ideas, on the part of the class.

A word, in passing, on the importance of expression, educationally and religiously.

Professor James used to say, "No impression without correlative expression." This, he declared, should be the maxim of every teacher. The ultimate purpose of all teaching is behavior, conduct. To quote again from James, the teacher should regard his task "as if it consisted chiefly and essentially in training the pupil to behavior; taking behavior, not in the narrow sense of his manners, but in the very widest possible sense of fit reaction on the circumstances into which he

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may find himself brought by the vicissitudes of life * * * Not to speak, not to move, is one of the most important of our duties, on certain practical emergencies."

That is the viewpoint of a modern philosopher. The viewpoint of religion is the same. "Be ye doers of the word," urges the sacred writer, "and not hearers only." And our Savior closed His great Sermon on the Mount with the solemn injunction that whosoever heard those sayings of His and did them would be likened to a wise man who built his house upon a rock. Similarly the Lord has declared in our own day that only he who "keepeth His commandments" can receive "a fullness of truth."

Now, expression, response, behavior, may, roughly speaking, take on one or all of the three following aspects:

In the first place, the idea given may bring about right feeling in the child. When we hear or read of some one doing a kind act we immediately have a positive

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pleasurable emotion, irrespective of whether or not we go and do likewise as a result.

Or, in the next place, an idea may put us in a better attitude toward life. Was it not the author of the "American Revolution" who said that when a boy he thought of God as a terrible being whose eye was constantly on little Johnny Fiske searching for imperfections? The true conception of God, of course, is that while He knows our sins He is interested in our good works as well and takes joy in our progress; and this idea puts us instantly in a proper mental attitude with respect to the external world and our duty in it.

Or, thirdly, an idea may cause us to act, to do something. In some cases it may cause us not to act. As soon as the Prophet Joseph was in full possession of the idea of the sacred writer, he went out into the woods to put it to the proof. The action may not necessarily be immediate. And we must not be disappointed if it is

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not. For “no truth, however abstract, is ever perceived, that will not probably at some time influence our earthly action,” in its widest sense of speech, of writing, of yeses and noes, of tendencies from things and tendencies toward things, whether in the future or in the immediate present.

In this connection it ought to be said that there is an idea-expressing apparatus as well as an idea-getting apparatus. The hands and the organs of speech, for example, are as much a part of us as the organs of touch and taste and hearing, and as such require attention in training. In the teaching of English, for instance, the instructor pays even more attention to writing and speaking—expression of ideas—than he does to the imparting of ideas on this subject. And so it should be in all training for religious and moral conduct. The organs by which we express ideas need to be trained. When the teacher has given the idea, only part of his work is done. The circuit must be com-

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pleted, there must be expression of the idea in feeling, in attitude, in action.

Nor is it enough that the teacher have a mere knowledge of this important fact. He must make a conscious effort to have the circuit complete—of idea and consequent action on the part of the pupil.

III

ON DEVELOPING A SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY

IF you, as a teacher in any of our religious organizations, or as a parent in the home, had the absolute assurance that you could make of your class or your children whatever you wished them, what would that be?

No doubt the answer in both cases would be the same—to make of them thorough-going Latter-day Saints. For if they are thorough-going Latter-day Saints, you know that they will try to be good citizens, to be moral and intelligent—in a word, to be good men and women in every activity of life. To be a Latter-day Saint, however, means not only that we do certain things but that we do them voluntarily, that we choose to do them.

Hence we purpose in this section to point out the necessity of giving attention

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to this element of choice in the education of our youth, to show how foundational it is in human character, and, so far as may be, to indicate the lines along which development should take place.

Beyond all question the principal of free agency is one of the things essential to the existence of intelligence—it is one of the fundamental things about us. We exercised our agency in our spirit-state before we came here. Adam and Eve had their right of choice before the Fall. Indeed prior to our earth-existence the Lord decreed that man here should be free to choose his own course. Every person “is independent in that sphere in which God has placed” him, to act for himself, “otherwise there is no existence.” were we not free to choose for ourselves there could be no such principle as repentance in the gospel plan.

The term “intelligence” comes from two Latin words, one of which means “between” and the other “choose.” Now,

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whenever we are confronted by a situation involving a moral choice, we go up if we choose one way and down if we choose another. In the long run, every man must choose for himself. No one can do that for him.

It follows, therefore, that in every educational system, religious or secular, the training of the will-power should be fundamental. And the matter becomes increasingly important as life becomes more and more complex, and choice difficult. Andrew D. White, in a recent statement, quotes approvingly from Dr. Arnold to the effect that "the one thing which is more important than any other in a student is a worthy exercise of the will-power, the ability to declare and to carry out the declaration 'I will' or 'I will not,' and to found this declaration and action on good reason." And Mr. White adds, "It is for this reason that I have always exhorted my students to cultivate the worthy exercise of will-power."

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Temptation assails us in the world as it assailed Christ in the wilderness.

First, an appeal may be made to our senses. "If thou art the Son of God, command that these stones become bread!" To-day more perhaps than at any time in the past is it imperative that we train our bodily powers, because the more perfectly the organs of our body act as an instrument the more efficient will be our mind. But perfection of body comes usually only as we have overcome temptation of the senses. Our bodily appetites must be controlled. The first glass must be turned down. The tobacco-habit must not be formed. And certain positive habits must be established. All this not only in the interest of our spiritual welfare but of our material welfare as well. And so our boys and girls must be trained in the exercise of the power to choose between right and wrong, so that when they meet a moral crisis, small or great, they will pass it according to their best light at the time.

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Then, again, appeal may be made to spiritual pride. "If thou art the Son of God, cast thyself down" as a challenge to the protection of the Almighty. Our boys and girls must be trained so that, when this temptation comes, they will choose as Christ did.

Finally, appeal may be made to our love of wealth and fame. "All the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them will I give thee if thou wilt bow down and worship me." Our youth on the farms and in business will come sooner or later to the point where they must choose between God and gold. They may see the situation clearly—God on the one side, gold on the other. Indeed, they may want to go on the side of God. But unless their wills have been pretty well stiffened in a thousand minor temptations they will not choose the right side. Also professional men in the Church, may be tempted to make shipwreck of their faith in order to win greater success in their vocation. Their wills must have been

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trained by the time they reach this point so that they can decide properly.

But how can the religious teacher and the parent aid in the development of will-power in the youth?

First, it must be clearly seen by him that the will-power cannot be developed in a day. We can not go to bed at night men of weak wills and rise in the morning men of great will-power. Power of will must grow silently through long and patient exercise. One cannot go on yielding to a thousand petty temptations through a period of years and reasonably expect, at the end of this time, to have signal power of decision in the great issues of life. The first step in the training of the will-power in our young persons is therefore for ourselves clearly to recognize this important fact and then to act on it.

In the next place, every normal young person ought to know these two things: first, that he is responsible before God for his actions, and, secondly, that being

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responsible, he must learn to choose for himself in every situation according to the best light he can obtain.

Without entering into any niceties as to the influence of heredity and environment in human conduct, we rest the case on the broad statement of individual responsibility. In our Church children are accountable before the Lord when they are eight years old for what they do, and after that increasingly so. And this fact they should clearly understand, and that as early as possible.

As to the other point, if children understand that they are expected to choose for themselves between alternatives of conduct, the probability is that they will put it into practice. Doubtless they will make many errors of judgment, but they should nevertheless be encouraged in cultivating their power of choice, for here alone, if anywhere, lies the key to their ultimate independence and progress. At all events if the parent or the teacher insists on deciding every question for the

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child the result will be more or less inability in the child to decide rightly when there is no parent or teacher about.

Lastly, children and young persons should be given opportunity and help by both parents and teachers to decide their own problems for themselves.

A child has, say, fifty cents. Shall he be allowed to spend it, or must he save it? The average untrained child will doubtless want to spend it, where it may be the best for him in this particular case to save it. Now, the parent may decide this question for the child by putting the money in the bank. A better way would be to balance, with the child, the present necessity against a future need, and so help him to decide for himself to put the money away. Thus two points may be gained: judgment in the child will be trained and his will-power, his power of wisely deciding for himself, be encouraged.

Again, a boy is offered a cigarette. Will he smoke it or not? Most likely

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if his Sunday school teacher or his father is around, he will not smoke it. But what will he do if they are not? That is the test of his character. Then, too, if he takes it, will he take another and another and another till he has formed the habit of smoking? Here, at all events, is his opportunity to decide. It may not be possible for parent or teacher to train this boy in such a way as to make him say no; but, surely, training him so that when he is confronted by this situation he will think about it, training him so that, thinking about the situation, he decides for himself, with a keen sense of his personal responsibility in the matter, the chances are he will say no.

Once more, every boy who accepts the priesthood promises to do certain things, namely, attend to his duties in that calling. He should therefore perform those duties faithfully and intelligently. Pressure from without may for a time induce him to do this. But the probability is that as soon as this pressure is removed

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he will throw off the responsibility in his calling. Hence prior to and during this period of youth, parent and teacher alike should induce in him, if possible, a sense of his personal responsibility in the matter so that he will choose to do his duty.

According to the report of the Juvenile Court office in Salt Lake City for the year 1911—and the fact implied in these figures is borne out by juvenile statistics all over the nation,—the ages of greatest delinquency are from thirteen to eighteen. The figures are: at 13 years the court had up for offenses 117 boys and girls; at 14, 105; at 15, 151; at 16, 135; at 17, 116; whereas before that period the highest number (at 12 years) was 89, and afterwards (at 18) was 46. This period represents the age when the sense of independence and free agency is greatest. At this age, the boy “knows more” than his father. Now, if the boy and the girl have been carefully trained in choice and personal responsibility before they reach these ages, the chances are greatly lessened

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that they will go wrong; the chances are greatly increased that they will pass safely this dangerous period.

The whole point, then, is to make every event in the life of the boy or the girl an opportunity for the cultivation of judgment, of setting one thing over against another, and then of learning to choose for himself in the best light obtainable. A boy or a girl who has been thus trained in the exercise of judgment and of choice can be more safely trusted to shift for himself than would otherwise be possible; parent and teacher may feel confident that whatever situation confronts him where he must decide between right and wrong, he will choose the right. The law of growth in responsibility, therefore, is, place responsibility on the boy and girl, but not so much as will break them down, and let them act under it.

IV

ON THE TRAINING OF JUDGMENT

IN the preceding section we endeavored to show that our young people should get, as early as possible, a sense of their individual responsibility and that they should receive special training in the exercise of personal choice. Here we intend to supplement that idea by another which grows out of it; namely, that they should also be trained to think, with a view of judging justly and accurately. For if one must choose for oneself, it is clear that one must know how to choose, must get out of any given situation exactly the right thing to do. And if one is to do this in critical situations, one must have formed the habit of judging in small situations. We shall therefore discuss in this section the ways in which the class

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recitation may contribute to this desirable end.

In every walk of life we have occasion to exercise our judgment—occasion to consider two alternatives of conduct for the purpose of choosing between them.

As citizens and dwellers in society we have frequently to decide whether any given act of ours is that of the wolf or the brother. Our lawn needs water, say, at a certain hour, and the city ordinance forbids our using it at that particular time. We must set the condition of the grass over against the effects of violating a law. Or, again, we break out with a rash. Shall we hide it from the health officer at the risk of spreading the contagion or shall we sacrifice our own convenience and freedom for the public good?

As religious beings also we have to judge between alternatives of conduct. Teachings are given us that we must accept or reject. It is sometimes necessary

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to think in order to decide. We are block teachers, or we are bishops, or high councilors, or we have been set apart to do a given work. In every one of these capacities we are required to exercise judgment—to decide what to teach, to decide how to judge this case before us, to tell what to do in any given situation.

Judging, like every other power of the mind, must be trained. We cannot go on taking snap judgments for many years and then reasonably expect to judge rightly in a complex case, merely because we may want to judge rightly.

Now, in every act of judging there are several elements, which instructors who wish to cultivate this attribute in their pupils should keep in mind. These elements are brought out in a revelation to the Prophet Joseph Smith concerning the procedure of the high council in cases before them.

In the first place, the council is to hear the witnesses—to gather all of the facts

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in the case. Then the speakers who have been appointed on both sides are to speak. They analyze the evidence; they segregate that which is evidence from that which is not, with a view to getting at the facts that bear on the case. Thirdly, these men apply the evidence thus sifted to the particular case for the purpose of ascertaining whether a law of the Church has or has not been broken. The decision is next rendered by the president, who calls upon every councilor present to express his judgment by voting with or against him. Finally, under certain conditions all are urged to seek divine light on the situation through prayer. Everything done throughout the trial is to be done in equity and justice.

While this illustration of the elements in the act of judging is taken from what the high council should do in the trial of a case before it, still this is what every one should do when he is called upon to judge in any given situation.

He should have all the facts before him

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as he judges, else he should withhold judgment, he should analyze these facts with a view to separating the true from the false; he should endeavor to ascertain the direction in which the facts point; and if he "lacks wisdom" he should "ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not." Then he is in a position to decide what to do or what not to do, what to believe or what not to believe.

Of course, not every case requires this great care in judging. When you meet your friend on the street, you decide instantly that it is So-and-so. It is not hard to tell whether you ought to go to town or not. These and thousands of other judgments you are called upon to make every week, are more or less easy. But there are others that are not easy except to those who habitually take snap judgments, who jump at conclusions. Shall a young man go to college or not? Is this particular person whom we thought our friend, a rascal after all or not? Is there really a clash between religion

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and science, and if not how can we remove the seeming difference? Shall we get married in the temple or by a justice of the peace? Here are types of situations that confront many. They are not to be disposed of in the same way in which you would decide the question as to whether or not we ought to go to town. They are critical situations—turning points in our lives.

The point here, however, is that judgment can be trained and should be trained, and that the teacher in our various organizations may help in this training. But how?

To begin with, the instructor who undertakes this, need not make young pupils conscious that he is doing it, but it should be a conscious matter with him. nor does the work need to be openly done, so to speak. The teacher does not say to his class, Now, to-day we are to train our judgment. Rather should he say, not to the class but to himself, How can I make

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every recitation yield training to my pupils in judging, in thinking that will produce sound judgment?

Having decided to use every lesson in this way, the instructor will next proceed to keep in mind two things: First, he will not wander himself in the recitation nor allow the class to wander, but, secondly, he will hold everyone down to the subject of the lesson. Let us see how these suggestions work out.

In almost every class there are tendencies, on the part of the teacher and on the part of the pupils, to bring to bear on the lesson ideas that do not belong in it. And this comes about in accordance with a natural process. The mind naturally associates one thing with another. One thing happens with another, and whenever the one comes to mind the other comes to mind also. Or two things look alike, and the one brings with it the other. You go to your matchbox, say, and finding only one match there, you wonder what you would do if you were out all

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alone with only one match and it went out. This calls up a story you were told once of a boy who went to look for horses in a snow storm, who got lost, and whose only match failed to kindle the damp wood. And so on, and so on.

Now, this is not to think at all. It is in fact destructive of good thinking, if indulged in too much. And it must be stopped whenever it makes its appearance in the recitation—anyway, it would be stopped by a teacher who has made up his mind to train his class to think. Because thinking requires that we turn away those things that come up which do not help us to keep to the subject. The mind that thinks, holds itself down to the subject. The teacher and the class have to stop themselves from saying what does not belong to the subject. The instructor is the class-leader. If he has an idea of a unified, consistent, methodical recitation—why, the class will follow his lead through this sort of lesson, and naturally will think in a more orderly and thorough-going

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manner than if the lesson proceeded in a hap-hazard, illogical way.

The teacher who is anxious to give his pupils training in judgment will try to get the right answer to his question. He will lead his pupils from wrong to right answers, from slovenly and inaccurate answers to answers that are accurate. Good thinking is not satisfied with a word that is nearly right, it seeks the word that is exactly right.

That is what the teacher may do by way of training judgment in his class. And surely it is worth while to induce in them habits of discriminating between facts and not facts, between ideas that belong and ideas that do not belong, of weighing them in the balance, of deciding what importance is to be attached to this or that. But it all ought to be done in a pleasant way, one that does not offend or make the recitation drag.

V

THE MEANING OF HABIT IN RELIGIOUS TRAINING

HAVE you ever observed a young child just learning to talk? If so you know how difficult speech is in its earliest stages. The child has an idea and wishes to express it, but the organs of speech will not respond readily. They need training before they can be brought under the control of the mind. In this particular matter of speech, therefore, the child's task is to get these organs under perfect control, so that they will do the bidding of the mind.

What is true of the organs of speech, however, is equally true of all the organs of the body, of the body as a whole. The mind does not apparently come in direct contact with the grosser materials of the external world. The body is the special

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medium by which this contact is brought about. In a sense, therefore, the body acts as the instrument of the mind or spirit. And one of the most important things in education is, to perfect this instrument so that it will help and not hinder the mind in an effort to attain its ends. Now, this is accomplished by means of good habits—the subject of the present section.

The organs of the body must be trained. That is the first thing to remember. They must be made the “ally of the mind instead of its enemy.”

To illustrate this thought: A young man is asked to drink a glass of beer. His mind says. “Don’t drink it!” His bodily appetite may say, “Oh, drink it, this once won’t matter!” What will he do? That depends much on what he has done before under the same situation. If he has always held out before, most probably he will not drink it. But if he has yielded before, very likely he will

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yield again. His past is thrown in the balance and acts as the decisive weight. In the one case his body is his friend, in the other it is his enemy.

Again, a man is tempted to break the Sabbath. The mind says, "keep the Sabbath day holy! That is the law of God." His past habits may say, "But this work has to be done!" or, as is most likely, "We have to have some amusement!" What will that man do? It depends in great measure again on what he has done in the past. If he is in the habit of breaking the Sabbath, he will say yes; if he is in the habit of keeping it he will most likely say no. Habit is a strong determining factor. As before, the body is in one case an ally helping the spirit to do right, in the other case it is an enemy working in opposition.

And this is true of habit in general. The organs of the body must be trained so as to respond readily to the wishes of the mind or spirit. Part of this work is done for us by nature, as when the very

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young child cries or takes food from its mother's breast. It does this instinctively. The body is so organized as to aid the mind in self-preservation. But in the main this work of training the body in proper responses to the spirit has to be done consciously by some one. We repeat, therefore, education has for one of its main purposes the training of the bodily organs to act as the mind's ally instead of its enemy.

A second fact it is well to know in the religious education of young persons is that the sooner we can get at this work of training the body to respond habitually to the desires of the spirit the more effectively it can be done.

The brain, which is the organ directly under the control of the mind, is composed of plastic material, the plasticity being the greatest during the time when the body is growing. It is like a liquid in the child, easily susceptible to impressions through the senses, but it

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thickens, so to speak, as the years come. Like the cement which workmen lay on our sidewalks, it is easily moulded at first and difficult afterwards. This is why children and young persons quickly pick up new ways and ideas and why older persons change their ways with difficulty. For the same reason employers, when they want men to learn trades, always prefer young men and boys. Foreigners, as is well known, never learn to speak English with perfect accent when they begin the study of the language after the age of twenty-five or thirty.

Hence, we repeat, the work of adapting this plastic material of the brain should be undertaken while it can be done to the best advantage and with the least effort.

As already hinted and as we shall learn more in detail later on, there are two sets of actions that we perform. First, there are those things we do without being taught, such as crying and laughing; and

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then there are those we have to learn to do, like speaking and being just.

The things we do without being taught are done instinctively or naturally, as we say. They require little or no thought in order to do them. We do not first decide to laugh and then laugh. On the contrary, whenever there is a laughable situation before us, we just laugh, and there an end—unless, of course, there is a reason why we should not do so.

But that is not generally the case with those actions which we have to be taught. We have to learn to lace our shoes. We have to learn to be just under varying situations.

What we should do, therefore, with these actions which we do by reason of having been trained, is to transfer as many of them as we can into the class of actions which we do without taking thought. That we can make such a transfer is very evident when we reflect on the things we do every day more or less habitually. There was a time, for in-

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stance, when we could not lace our shoes. Then there was a time when we laced them with considerable effort and attention—our fingers being so unpracticed as to do the work but awkwardly. Now, however, we do not even think about it, so mechanical has this operation of lacing our shoes become. Indeed, we even think of something else while doing so. This has become possible only by reason of the fact that the oftener we do a given thing the easier it becomes, the less thought it requires, the more perfect the response of the bodily organs to the activities of the mind.

What is true of lacing our shoes is true of hundreds of other things that we do. Certain things we have been taught we have put into practice so many times that we have to all intents handed them over to habit and we do them without any special attention. What gentleman ever thinks of raising his hat when he meets a lady whom he knows—he does it without thinking. Prayer in some families

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is a habit. Not to use tobacco and beer is a habit with many persons.

Now, to illustrate, the sense of justice, as we have said, is one of those things to be aquired. Suppose an instructor is to teach this quality in a class. What is the most effective way of teaching it? First, he will make the idea clear—what it is to be just. He will do this mainly by giving instances where some one has acted justly in certain situations. But only a small part of his work is done when he has made the idea clear. He will therefore take care to make the class see situations in their own lives where this attribute requires to be exercised. But even this is not all. He will next endeavor to get the class individually to act justly whenever a situation calls for it; for to have an idea about justice is of little or no value unless there follows it a just action. Moreover, he will examine the members of his class with a view to finding out whether they are practicing the idea; that is, he will call for reports

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from them. Finally, he will follow up the matter of acting justly till he gets something like a habit in his pupils, so that they act justly to the extent of their knowledge—which habit will give without a special effort of the mind in each individual case.

Perhaps it may not be out of place here to say that heretofore we have placed too much emphasis on ideas in our classes and too little on the practice of those ideas. At present, for the most part, what comes to mind when we have an idea? Another idea. But what should come even more readily is an action. We have set one idea against another idea, instead of an idea against its associated action. To-day we teach the idea of mercy, to-morrow the idea of kindness and the next day of observing the Sabbath day. But what we should do is teach the class to act mercifully, and not stop till we have formed in them something of a habit of mercy in conduct. That we don't do this more is the reason why

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our teaching is so often ineffectual—bring no result in action, in conduct. Instead of having behavior always in mind, we are mostly thinking of ideas. No number of ideas merely will bring a testimony of the truth, only the practice of truth will do this. “If ye keep my commandments ye shall know the truth.” It is better to give a whole month in a class to the subject of Sabbath observance if we get our pupils in the habit of practicing this idea, than it is to cover all the principles of the gospel without getting the practice of them.

This section cannot better be concluded than by giving five maxims to aid habit-formation quoted from Professor James.

The first is that “in the acquisition of a new habit, or the leaving off of an old one, we must take care to launch ourselves with as strong and decided an initiative as possible.” An Austrian newspaper once contained an advertisement to the effect that “a certain Rudolph Somebody, promised fifty gulden reward

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to any one who after that date should find him at the wineshop.”

The second maxim is, “Never suffer an exception to occur till the new habit is securely rooted in your life.”

A third maxim is, “Seize the very first possible opportunity to act on every resolution you make, and on every prompting you may experience in the direction of the habits you aspire to gain.”

The fourth requires that we do not “preach too much to our pupils or abound in good talk in the abstract,” but lie in wait rather for practical opportunities and be prompt to seize them as they pass, and “thus at one operation get our pupils both to think, to feel, and to do.”

The fifth maxim reads thus: “Keep the faculty of effort alive in you by a little gratuitous exercise every day.”

VI

THINGS WE DO WITHOUT BEING TAUGHT

ATEN-YEAR-OLD boy the other day said to his father: "Oh, I wish I could stop thinking, just for a little while! Why can't we stop thinking?"

This child, you see, had stumbled upon the profound fact that consciousness is a "stream" that goes on and on. For, in truth, the thinking process never stops during our waking hours. Our pupils will get ideas whether there is a teacher about or not. To learn is as natural for them as to breath or to grow. The teacher's great problem, as we have seen, is to get them to learn the right class of ideas.

Similarly it is natural for the child to feel and act as a result of these ideas, whether it is educated to do so or not. The teacher must therefore never lose

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sight of the fact that he has to deal with a mental activity in his pupils which always goes on during waking hours and which constantly tends to express itself in one way or another.

And what a wise provision in nature it is, this tendency in us to get ideas and to act, even before we are taught by our elders! For consider how impossible it would be for the teacher to get a hold on his pupils' attention or conduct so as to lead them if it were not for this native tendency to action on their part. "You may take a horse to the water, but you cannot make him drink, and so you may take a child to the schoolroom, but you cannot make him learn the new things you wish to impart, except by soliciting him in the first instance by something which makes him natively react. He must take the first step himself. He must do something before you can get your purchase on him."

Now, this native tendency to feeling

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and action in our pupils shows itself in various ways.

One of these is curiosity. Who has not observed this manifestation in even small children? There is a strong impulse in them to learn the nature of anything new. It is a way nature has of urging the child to better knowing in its full extent. Nobody has to tell the child to be curious. And so sometimes we take advantage of this strong native endowment in children and young persons to teach them new ideas.

Another of these native tendencies to action is fear. An infant has been known to cry on seeing a bearded stranger and hearing his voice. It did so through fear. Loud noises and unusual sights cause in the child a vague terror, which it expresses in crying and trembling.

A third kind of activity which we do not have to be taught is imitation. Everybody is familiar with the instinct in a child to copy what it sees in others. It is as likely to copy what is bad as what

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is good. Probably it would not be an exaggeration to say that nine boys out of ten who smoke and swear and swagger do so through imitation. When our Savior said, "Follow Me!" He was making an appeal to this instinct of imitation, which is one of the most powerful as well as one of the most useful.

Emulation, a fourth native endowment of the human being, is imitation carried a little further. To imitate is a sort of copying. To emulate is to copy from a desire not to appear inferior. We may emulate our former self, that is, try to be at least as good; or we may emulate someone else. To some extent the element of rivalry enters into this instinct.

And so we have a sixth form of this native tendency to action in pugnacity. By pugnacity we mean the fighting quality, or instinct, in us. Pugnacity has often been condemned as a working motive, but since it is a God-given endowment it must be good for something. As a

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matter of fact, it is a great spur to effort in almost everyone. "It need not be thought of merely in the form of physical combativeness. It can be taken in the sense of a general unwillingness to be beaten by any kind of difficulty." A Bishop once told a boy, "Your widowed mother will never have a new house if she waits for you to build it." This roused all the pugnacity there was in the boy. "I'll build my mother a new house, Bishop," he answered, "and you shall dedicate it, too." And the boy was as good as his word. He did build her a new house, and the Bishop dedicated it.

We come, next, to love, the highest source of appeal in the human being. In every pupil there is the instinctive desire to please those whom he loves. "The teacher who succeeds in getting herself loved by the pupils will obtain results which one of a more forbidding temperament finds it impossible to secure."

Finally, there is the instinct which is not usually included in the list and which

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may be termed the tendency in childhood to believe. There is good authority for the statement that belief is more deeply ingrained in human nature than doubt. Perhaps it would not be putting it too strongly to say that whereas belief is a native reaction, doubt is largely an outgrowth of personal experience. At all events, the childish nature is trustful. It will believe what it is told unless it has reason for disbelief. Care must therefore be exercised not only to give the child no cause for doubting what it is taught, but to take pains that nothing is taught it which will have to be outgrown in later life. "Fitch," says G. Stanley Hall, urges teachers of religion very strongly "to inculcate only that which they believe themselves with all their hearts and to shun all concerning which they have private misgivings * * *

Aboslute candor, sincerity, teaching out of a full heart is necessary to prevent a sense of unreality and insincerity in the young."

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But what is the practical value to the teacher of knowing what these instincts or native reactions are?

The business of the teacher, as we saw in section two, is to start activity in the pupil through certain ideas, which it would most probably not receive in any other way. But these ideas must find such appeals in him as will start this activity. Now, such appeals are found in fear, curiosity, imitation, emulation, pugnacity, love, belief, and so on.

To put this thought in a different way, suppose you have a class of twenty boys. You are to teach them, say, the duty of always telling the truth. Now, you cannot, most probably, find a response in all the boys through the same appeal. To one, the mere fact that God has enjoined truth-telling as a duty may be a sufficient incentive to activity. Another boy, to whom that would not appeal at all, might tell the truth out of a desire to imitate the example of Christ. A third might be induced to be truthful through a sheer

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determination to conquer a bad habit. A fourth, it may be, is susceptible to the higher appeal of doing right because of his desire to do the right. A sixth may find an appeal only in the fear of evil consequences that invariably come from lying. And so on.

VII

HOW TO MAKE A NEW IDEA PLAIN

HOW does the mind receive new ideas? For if we can but find this out and then make use of this knowledge in teaching, we shall experience little difficulty in having our pupils understand their lessons.

Two instances will help to make this process clear.

The first is taken from childhood. Two children were playing together, a little girl and her younger brother. "Are you going to smoke when you get a man?" the little girl asked. And when the boy replied that he was not, she added sagely, "Cause if you do, you'll get soot all over your insides!"

Here, as will be seen, was an experience already in possession of the child mind—

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that smoke passing through a stove-pipe tends to coat it with soot. Then there was the new experience—that of a man smoking tobacco. And the small mind readily and naturally concluded that the effect in the one case was the same as the effect in the other.

The second instance is taken from the way in which our Savior, the great Teacher, made ideas clear. It is found in the thirteenth chapter of Matthew. Jesus is here explaining the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven by means of parables, and He makes use of a wide variety of occupations with which His hearers are familiar. For instance, we have the sower mentioned, the bread-maker, the merchant, the fisherman. The entire chapter may be studied with profit by the teacher, from this point of view.

The sum of the matter, then is this: Our pupils come to us with what we may call the background of experience, comprised of ideas and feelings which they have gathered at the home,

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on the playground, at school, at work, in the mission-field, and elsewhere. And up against this background the teacher is to put the new idea. Now, if such background as the child, the youth, or the grown-up has, will not enable him to grasp the new idea, then the new idea cannot be taught to him. That is all there is about it. Or, to put the same thing in another way, if there is nothing in the pupil's mind by which to interpret, or catch hold of, the new idea, then he will have trouble to learn it. Where there is sufficient background the old experience reaches out to meet the new idea as it strives to be understood.

That is why a professional teacher, when his nine-year-old child came home one morning from Sunday school asking to be shown the second chapter of Genesis because her teacher had assigned it for the next lesson, refused to let her read it, because he knew that there could not possibly be enough background of experience in her life by which to understand

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that very abstract chapter ; and not understanding it, she would naturally and surely form a distaste for the Bible.

So much for the principle itself. But how are we to apply it in actual teaching?

In the first place, the teacher must make a study of the pupil. He should know, as accurately as may be, what is his experience-range. What things has he actually come in contact with in his life? The pupils of a certain school in an Eastern city had never seen a pig. What is the meaning of this fact, educationally? Why, merely this, that they would not understand if you said that such and such an animal resembled a pig. You would have to use some other term of comparison, else the idea would be lost. Dwellers in the city and dwellers in the country do not experience altogether the same things. Those who live in this home have a wider range of ideas and feelings than those who live in that home. And so it goes. To know what things and ideas our pupil has ex-

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perienced is, therefore, to have the means of making ideas clear to him.

In the next place, a determined effort should be made to apply this principle in the preparation and the presentation of every lesson. To begin with, the teacher should get as clear an idea as he can of the particular thought he wishes to leave with the class. After that his specific problem is how best to get them to understand the thought. The successful teacher spends much time and thought in an effort to get the point of contact between the new idea and the ideas already in the minds of the class. If the class be children, the means must be concrete and simple; but if the pupils be older, there will not be such a demand for concreteness and simplicity. But in every case care must be taken that the idea to be presented be not such as will find nothing in the background of experience of the individual class members with which to interpret that idea.

On the necessity of thus adapting the

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material of the lesson to the experience of the class too much emphasis cannot be placed. Some of the material which we give the children and young persons in our religious organizations is above their experience, and they cannot, therefore, understand it. Not understanding it, they are not interested, and not being interested they may grow to dislike religion. Where the lesson covers a great deal of ground in the "outline" we happen to be following, our business should be to select the idea in it which will find the greatest number of points of contact with the experience of the class.

As an illustration of the whole idea we have tried to set forth in this section we cannot do better than refer to the method followed by the Lord in His dealings with the Prophet Joseph.

One of the ordinances of the gospel concerning which new instruction was necessary was baptism. Now, presumably the Lord could have given this in-

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struction immediately after the first vision. But he did not. He waited till Joseph's mind had been prepared for the reception of it. That preparation came when, during the course of the translation of the Nephite plates, he found there an account of baptism, which caused him to think about it. Then was apparently the most opportune time for the revelation, and then was when John the Baptist was sent to him to explain what Joseph should do respecting this ordinance. We cannot think that this and scores of other similar instances in our own dispensation where we have the exemplification of educational principles, were accidental, but are inclined to think that even the Lord observes natural principles in His revelations of truth to man.

In this case the Lord was the teacher, Joseph Smith the pupil, and baptism by immersion for the remission of sin the truth to be taught. The first thing the Teacher did was to prepare the mind, and then to give the lesson in the most

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concrete and simple manner. No teacher can improve on this divine example of teaching.

This example is what we may well imitate whenever we have new ideas to teach. We must be sure, however, that what we have to give is a new idea.

VIII

WHAT WE LISTEN WITH

IF, as we have already learned, the mind cannot stop thinking in its waking hours, then it must be on something all the time. But the teacher's concern is that the pupil's mind, for the recitation period at least, shall be on the subject of the lesson rather than on something else. And as he can not get and hold attention merely by calling for it, he must know and apply some of the principles according to which the mind naturally attends. Which is the object of the present section.

Suppose you lift your eyes from this page and fix them on some object in the room, say, a picture on the wall. You can tell what the picture is because your mind is on it. At the same time, however,

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you are aware of objects on each side of the picture and above and below. But you cannot tell much about them, except perhaps that they are other pictures or a rug on the floor. If you wish to see the picture on the right, say, it will be necessary for you to move your eye. In that event, the first picture will be more or less indistinct, though you are still aware of it, and you can tell the details of this second picture.

Here, then, is what is known as your field of consciousness. The centre, or heart, of it is the picture you are looking at. The other objects you are aware of but are not looking at are, as we say, in the margin of consciousness.

Now, what is true in this particular case of putting the mind on the picture, is true whenever we put our mind on anything. There is always the centre or heart of consciousness. But here and there and all over on the outside of that centre are objects clamoring for recognition. Now it is an idea, now a sound, now a smell,

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now a thing to be seen or heard. Always there is something on the outside trying to get in, so to speak, through one or more of the roads to the brain—touch, taste, smell, hearing, sight—to steal away the heart of consciousness. If you are trying to teach your class an idea, your idea will have all sorts of rivals in the sights and sounds either in the class room or on the outside of the building. What you are endeavoring to do is to get the heart of their consciousness for your idea—to keep other objects in the margin, where they belong just now.

Two interesting facts about attention should be noted.

In the first place, the heart of consciousness may readily shift from what it is on at any given moment to what is in the margin. That sound outside the class room, for instance, may be a band playing. In this event, doubtless, the heart of consciousness will be shifted from your idea to the music.

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In the next place, the heart of consciousness soon tires. Naturally it keeps going from one aspect to another. But it can be kept on different phases of the same object for a considerable time. You may prove this for yourself by drawing a square on a sheet of paper and trying to keep your mind on it for a minute or even for half a minute. It will be seen that in this brief space other objects have stolen the heart of consciousness from the square. But suppose you return your attention to the square and answer the following questions about it: How long are the sides? Are they crooked or straight? Are they all of the same shading? Are the angles right angles? It will be discovered that not only has the heart of consciousness been on the object for a longer time but that it has not once been stolen by any other object of thought.

Out of this fact of the brevity of attending we get two very important helps in teaching.

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The first is the necessity of taking advantage of this flitting of the attention by calling up different aspects of the subject. If, for example, the idea to be presented be truth-telling, the teacher might relate an instance in which is shown the good effects of this principle in a given person, then have the class relate similar instances from their own experience, and finally help them to see situations in their lives where they may apply it. One reason why the story holds the attention so well is that in it a fresh aspect or phase is constantly appearing.

A good example of the application of this idea that attention requires a shifting of aspects is seen in the Religion Class organization and also in the Seventy's class. In the Religion Class we have two songs, or parts of songs, two prayers, a memory gem, a short incident, four or five testimonies by the children—all serving usually to bring out a single truth. So with the class work of the Seventies. Here, besides the lesson, which is itself

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broken up into well-defined phases, we have singing, scripture reading, a gem of thought, and the lesson—all on the same subject.

Care should be taken, however, that the lesson in any particular case be on one subject and not on many subjects.

The second practical suggestion growing out of this brevity of attending is, Short sessions for children and young persons.

The Religion Class, already instanced, follows this idea, for it has established the general rule that recitations must not exceed forty minutes for the older children and thirty for the younger. Most Sunday schools dismiss the primary department before the rest. It is so with the quorums of the lesser priesthood in many wards. Meetings and class recitations for adults, of course, may be longer than for children and older boys and girls.

The question of how to get the atten-

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tion will be left for the following section. But two suggestions may be ventured here by way of preparation for that discussion. One is this: That the class should take on the physical attitude of attention.

We have been told of President Brigham Young that no matter who came to see him at his office he gave him his undivided attention. "Sit down there, Brother," he would say, pointing to a chair near him. Then the President would face the visitor, hands on knees and body leaning slightly forward in a naturally attentive attitude, and then he would listen to all he had to say. By the time the visitor had ended, President Young would have the answer ready. "Do this or that, Brother," he would add. The person was dismissed, and another took his place, who was likewise listened to.

Now, part of this concentrated attention in President Young arose from the fact that he put himself in the proper physical attitude to begin with. Simi-

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larly the teacher should insist that his class assume an attitude of attention. They should sit up straight, instead of leaning lazily on one another or on the desk. This fact of proper physical attitude will go a long way toward putting the class in the path of attention.

Then, too, a device to revive flagging attention is to have the class answer in concert, where it can be properly done. An example of this device may be found in the Religion Class, where children repeat the prayer after the one who is mouth.

Since attention on the right thing is what we wish to get in the class, it is important to know how to get it. To do this there are two ways: we may first demand attention or secondly we may attract attention. While these may get attention they may not hold it. In order to hold it, the pupil must feel that he is getting some satisfaction. In demanding, you merely ask the pupil to

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will his attention to your thought; in attracting it, you offer something that calls for his attention. Interest is therefore the next principle to be considered, which will be done in the following section.

IX

HOW TO MAKE A LESSON INTERESTING

JUST as there are some things we do without being taught by anyone, so there are things we are natively interested in. And just as, in order to make a new idea clear, we must associate it with an idea already in the mind, so, in order to make an idea interesting, it is necessary to graft it on, so to speak, to something in which the mind has already an interest. This general statement it is the purpose of the present section to make plain.

Everything we do is interesting to us, or else we would not do it. It is interesting, that is to say, either as a means or as an end. If we pay our tithing because we think it the proper thing to do, this principle has interest for us as an end; if we pay tithing because we wish to be

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married in the temple, then the principle has interest for us as a means.

There are two kinds of interest, native and acquired. By a native interest we mean any object, or situation, outside of the mind that attracts our attention. Children have an interest in things, as opposed to abstract ideas or qualities, especially in things that move. Every normal young man has an interest in some particular young woman, and every normal young woman has an interest in some particular young man. So, too, parents have an interest in their children. These are all native interests because they exist independently of any teacher or teaching.

An acquired interest is one that we get through experience and training. In working we learn to care for animals, to build houses, to sell goods over the counter. At school we learn to read, to write, and to cipher. At home we learn to be responsible, as when a man, who

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was to leave home for a few weeks, asked his ten-year-old son to see that the winter coal was ordered. These all are acquired interests for the reason that we have to learn them.

Now, the aim of the religious teacher is to make religion a permanent interest for the young persons of the Church, and this can be done, if it be done at all, only by grafting this interest on an interest already in their possession, either native or acquired. This work may be helped on by the application of two or three practical suggestions.

First, use should constantly be made of the native and acquired interests. In the case of children the senses must be employed. Pictures, whenever possible, should be used, and drawings on the blackboard. Stories and incidents, of course, should be told, as furnishing things and persons in action. And these ought almost invariably to be told rather than read.

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In the youth the love-interest may be employed to advantage. A particular young woman is the object of his interest. He wishes to be in her society always. Now, the principle of marriage as taught by the Church exactly coincides with this desire in the young man. But the marriage ceremony, which must be performed in the temple, has to be preceded by a certain kind of conduct. The young man must not use tobacco, he must be moral, he must pay tithing, and so on. His interest in the young woman of his choice, however, may lead him to find an interest in these religious principles. And so it may be with other spiritual truths.

Again the teacher should make use of what we called the native reactions as a means of creating an interest in religion.

There is, for example, curiosity, or the desire to learn something new. Naturally we acquire an interest in a thing by learning something about it, by studying it. It would not be difficult, for instance, to

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induce the average boy to read Parley P. Pratt's Autobiography, one of the most entertaining books in our home literature, by talking about the book itself and the author and by reading some of the most interesting and appropriate parts, so that the boy would want to read the book for himself. What is true of a book is true also of a principle. The mere fact of getting information on it may excite an interest in it, which may bear fruit in practice. Knowledge breeds interest.

Also imitation may be made use of as a means of acquiring spiritual interests. Sometimes our boys go on missions because a friend or relative has gone on one. The example of a good Sunday school, a good Religion Class, or a live quorum of the priesthood has often either created or greatly increased interest in others.

A third way of obtaining interest in religion is to have the young persons do something. It is often the case that we

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acquire an interest in a thing by merely doing it. Any one can point out young men in his neighborhood who have acquired a strong interest in religion by going on a mission. In some wards the priests administer the sacrament assisted by the deacons, and this is bound to create an interest in religion. The Religion Class organization is based on the idea that to do a thing is to acquire an interest in it, and thus far has been successful in a high degree.

It follows from all that we have said in this section that the teacher should study at least as carefully the interests his class already have, native and acquired, as he does the subject to be taught them. For always it is interest that pulls the heart of consciousness, or attention.

X

ON CERTAIN DIFFERENCES IN PUPILS

IN the preceding seven sections we have set before the reader some fundamental things in the nature of the mind with a view to getting principles to aid us in teaching. But this knowledge is not to be applied to every learner in the same way and under all circumstances. An educational system is not a hopper where pupils go in at one end, big and little, and come out at the other end all of a size. Because we look somewhat alike it does not follow that we have no differences. As a matter of fact, no two persons can be dealt with in quite the same way. To point out these differences is the task undertaken in this section.

Some differences are constitutional.

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First of all, we differ in our capacity or intelligence—our power to think. And this natively and not by reason of differences in our opportunities for education. The Lord showed Abraham “the intelligences that were organized before the world was,” among whom “were many of the noble and great ones,” showing that there were differences in this respect even in the pre-existent state. And this for the reason that “there are two spirits, one being more intelligent than the other.”

In the next place, we differ in our power to do. Of this difference the Apostles Peter and John, in the ancient Church, are good examples. Peter no sooner got an idea than he acted it out. He it was that first answered when Jesus asked a question of the disciples. John, on the contrary, was meditative. It is significant that Jesus chose Peter for president of the Church and John for counselor.

A third difference lies in the power to

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feel. Some persons, like the musician, are highly sensitive. Others there are who are not so sensitive. Some feel very strongly on things that concern them. Others are more or less apathetic and cannot be easily aroused.

Fourthly, we differ in the strength of our instincts. In some persons fear is more pronounced than in others. So with the instinct of love, curiosity, pugnacity, and the rest.

Finally, we differ greatly in the interests we have in things, and this without regard to whether these interests are native or acquired. One will be wholly absorbed in making money, another in literature, another in being helpful to others. In school we find some children who are strongly interested in drawing, others in arithmetic, and others in manual studies.

These all, as we stated, are constitutional differences. But there are acquired differences also.

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We have already pointed out the differences there are in our environment in the home, at the school, and at work and play. Some homes are places of culture and refinement, whereas others lack these qualities almost entirely, and there are the various degrees between. Books are plentiful in some homes, in others they are scarce or perhaps wholly absent. Usually the schools in the centres of population differ from those in rural districts. It makes a difference whether one is reared in the city or the country. Dr. G. Stanley Hall declared, after a careful investigation, that children in the country have more ideas than children in the city, because they have come in contact with more things—have had more experiences. So, too, with our surroundings at work and on the playground. Any given occupation throws us into the society of a certain class of persons with certain ideals of life. Thus it makes a difference whether you are a farmer, a carpenter, a clerk,

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a doctor, a lawyer, a teacher, and so on.

The point in all this is that this difference in our environment compels us to take on certain differences in consequence of our environment, whereas were we all reared under exactly the same circumstances the only differences we should have would be constitutional, that is, by reason of our native, individual character. But these, it must be remembered, are differences in degree, not in kind.

Now, this fact that every person in the world differs from every other person in the world by reason of his inborn character and of his acquired characteristics, becomes very helpful when we attempt to teach or to have anything to do with people.

It is of service to presiding officers. Some one, for example, must be chosen as president of the deacons, and some one as president of the teachers. Now, with the knowledge of the fact that this boy

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likes to do things while that boy likes to think, to reflect, surely one might make a better selection of officers for these quorums than without this knowledge. For, most likely, the boy of action, other things remaining the same, will make a better president, and the boy of thought a better counselor, than the reverse.

It is of service also to parents, this fact that people differ in constitutional and acquired characteristics. Few parents but have observed more or less difference between their children. The trouble is that these differences are sometimes not observed early enough, Parents sometimes have only one way of dealing with their children, whereas with a knowledge of these differences constantly in mind, they will look about for a fit means of reaching each child, and will not attempt to use the same means with all alike. It is necessary, therefore, for the parent to take notice of the differences in their boys and girls and adopt such ways as

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will bring the necessary results in each case.

A knowledge of this difference in the natural and acquired characteristics is helpful to the teacher. No teacher but wants an orderly class. But to have an orderly class is quite another thing, as everybody knows. And yet all children and young persons in their hearts like order better than disorder. The trouble, most likely, is that the right appeal has not been made to them. Some will yield to kindness, some to ridicule and harshness, and some only to fear of punishment. At all events, the same appeal will not find response in them all.

The successful teacher, then, knowing that his pupils differ in their constitutional and acquired characteristics, will study them at least as much as he does the subject he teaches, with a view to getting as many avenues to their hearts as will be necessary to help them in acquiring an interest in the gospel.

XI

HOW WE STORE AWAY FACTS FOR SUBSEQUENT USE

WHEN you stop to think about it, you cannot but wonder at the fact that a person can enter a room, listen to a recitation, and then go away with an idea which he may carry for the rest of his life. A wonderful thing!

Now, this power of mind by which we remember, differs in different persons. In some it is "like wax to receive and marble to retain." In others it is like water, which receives an impression easily, but as easily rises to obliterate it.

With memory the teacher has much to do. He wishes his pupils to remember the ideas gained during a recitation. Hence, there are some things about this power which he must know and make

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use of so that the process of storing up ideas in the mind and of calling them up afterwards, shall be made easier. The teacher's problem, then, so far as memory is concerned, is this: How can I teach this lesson so that my pupils' minds shall be sure to retain and be quick and sure to recall?

To answer this question is the purpose of the present section.

Memory, as has been suggested has two phases. First, there is the power of retaining an idea, of keeping it in mind, as we say. And, secondly, there is the power of calling it up after it has been stored there.

Doubtless you have often said something like this to yourself: "I know my thimble (or my tax receipt) is here in the house, but I can't just lay my hand on it." Similarly you may have had occasion to remark, "I know what his name is, but I can't get it off my tongue's end. It begins in 'w.' If you'll just go over

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some names beginning in that letter, I can tell it when you name it." And so when your friend goes over a lot of names "beginning in w," you all at once cry out, "That's it—Winfield!"

Now, since in educational work an instructor always wishes his pupils to be quick to recall, and sure, how can he help along this process. The answer, in a word, is, Put together what belongs together and keep apart what should be separated. Let us see in detail what this means.

Suppose, for example, you have a lesson on repentance to give. Your task, so far as memory is concerned, is to associate the word "repentance" with its meaning, so that whenever the word comes to the mind of any of the class the meaning will come with it. This implies, of course, that the meaning will have been made clear to them.

In the same way a thing must be connected with its name. A boy was asked by his mother what he had learned at

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Sunday school that morning, and he replied that he had learned how Joseph Smith had found a set of dishes in the Hill Cumorah. The word "plates" had called up in his mind pieces of chinaware instead of the leaves of the Nephite volume. Also a principle must call up its related facts. In Matthew, chapter eighteen (verses 21 and following) Jesus tells us of a man who was himself forgiven of a debt of about a million dollars, but who would not forgive one that owed him a trifling sum. The principle of forgiveness did not come to his mind with the name—that was his trouble. So, too, one line or passage of Scripture should be related with its context; as "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased"—spoken to John Baptist; but to Joseph the Prophet, "This is my beloved Son, hear him," because of the different circumstances under which these passages were given.

That, then, is one way of helping to make remembering easy, to put together

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what logically belongs together and make an association so that in our pupils' minds one shall call up the other.

Another way to bring about this same result is to take advantage of what we called, a few sections back, the heart of consciousness, or attention. This may be done by recalling instead of merely repeating. For when we recall, we put our whole mind upon the subject—which will naturally make it more vivid than mere repetition. But since we gave an entire section to this subject we need not discuss it further in this place. It would be well for the teacher to turn to that discussion now, so that it may be fresh on his mind.

In nearly all our religious organizations there is properly more or less memory work. Hence we shall treat briefly of the value of learning by heart and some of the best ways of teaching it.

Memory work has both an educational and a practical value. Educationally it gives a stock of ideas and at the same

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time an adequate expression of them. Every gem of thought we learn by heart is an idea which may at some time be useful in influencing our conduct. Also it is often expressed in choicer language than we may have at our command.

As for the practical value of this sort of work, that is even more obvious than its educational value. Almost every one who belongs to the Church will have frequent occasion to quote the exact words of Scripture. To the missionary—and this term includes practically the whole male membership of the Church and a good many of the female membership—the ability to quote exactly is almost indispensable.

And so there is ample justification for memorizing in our classes. But, of course, it must not be forgotten that there can be too much of it, and there is an effective and an ineffective way to do this.

What is the best way to learn by heart?
How can any given gem of thought best

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be taught? Following are the steps to be observed.

It is necessary, first, that those who are committing to memory should know the meaning of what they are learning. This thought evidently was not kept in mind in the case of the little boy who went home from Sunday school and told his mother he had learned a new song, which he proceeded to repeat in this astonishing manner: "Master, the temple is raging, the pillars are tossing high," or in the case of that other lad who said the hymn sung at church was, "The wonderful cross-eyed bear," whereas it was, "The wonderful cross I bear!" Equally ludicrous mistakes are made by some older persons also, as a good many instances we could relate would testify. So, we repeat, care must always be taken to see that the substance, the meaning, of what is learned by heart should be got as well as the words.

Incidentally it might be remarked that the practice begun recently at Ogden of

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having some capable person, at special song services, explain the meaning of the several hymns rendered, is to be highly commended for the reason that the hymns and songs we sing have a great deal more significance for us when we know their history and significance.

Now, in order to get this meaning of what we learn by heart the passage to be learned should be analyzed carefully. We should first think of the main parts and then fill in the various phrases and words.

An illustration will make this clear. Suppose we are to teach the ninth article of faith.

We first quote the article: "We believe all that God has revealed, all that he does now reveal; and we believe that he will yet reveal many great and important things pertaining to the kingdom of God."

Next we ask these two questions: First, what is this article about? The answer, no doubt, would be, "It is about revelation." Second, what revelation does it concern? And the answer would bring out

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this thought: "It concerns what God has revealed, namely, in the Bible, the Book of Mormon, and the Doctrine and Covenants; what He does now reveal, through the "living oracles"; and what he may yet reveal. Here, then, are the main parts of the article—three in number.

We are ready now to fill in the phrases that belong to the expression of each part, which we proceed to do. Having done this, the article of faith is ours in a sense that it could not possibly be by mere iteration of the words till we can say them. To call up in the mind thus and to fill in, are far more effective than simply to repeat the words.

XII

HOW TO PREPARE A LESSON

IT goes without saying that a teacher should prepare any lesson he may have to present. For how shall he teach unless he have something to give and how shall he give unless he have first received?

But to teach, as we have already stated in another section, implies a knowledge of what is to be taught and also of the natural workings of the mind in those who are to be instructed. In the preparation of lessons, therefore, we have these two things to remember: What we are to teach and whom we are to teach it to.

The first question the teacher should think about when he sets out to prepare his lesson is, How can I best prepare the minds of my class to receive what I have

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to give them? For the more alert and receptive those minds are the better.

Now, the best possible way would be for each member to come with a question in his mind, of which the whole recitation should be the answer. In other words, if we had the use of some power by which, during the week before our class met, we could get our pupils to thinking upon the subject-matter of the lesson to be presented, we should have an ideal preparation of their minds.

But since we cannot do this, we have to do the next best thing; namely, to start their minds to thinking, to make use of the ideas they already have. Hence the first question of the teacher, in preparing his lesson, becomes, How can I set their minds going, so to say, in the direction of the lesson?

The second step in lesson-preparation is to get something to give the class. Not a hundred things nor a dozen things, but one thing. Sometimes the teacher

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has to choose this out of a body of material found in an outline, sometimes he has to make up the lesson. That is immaterial; the thing to remember is that he must have some one thought or idea which he is to elaborate into clearness. The recitation should be so conducted as to leave some one impression, so that every member shall be able to say at the close, the recitation was about such-and-such topic or subject. And it will not be so unless the lesson has been carefully prepared for.

It is best always to set this down as the aim or purpose of the recitation. Here the teacher's problem is, what thought do I want my class to get out of this lesson? Writing this aim on paper requires little time and fixes it in the teacher's mind.

A third step in the preparation of a lesson is to get the thought of the lesson well in hand.

As guides in selecting the material the instructor has, first, the aim and, secondly,

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the class. Whatever does not help to bring out the thought of the lesson should be left out of consideration. And then, too, it may be that some material which would help to bring out the thought would be too hard or too simple for the class which he happens to have—in which case it should be left out.

Sometimes the material to be used in developing the lesson is narrative, in which event our task is comparatively easy; sometimes, however, it is a body of facts, in which case our task is more or less difficult. In either event, though, it must be mastered. The preparation of the lesson requires also the selection of other narratives or bodies of facts with which to compare and contrast the thought of the lesson. What these shall be, depends, of course, on the ages of those who belong to the class. Where we are dealing with young or immature minds the material must be concrete. For adult members it may be ideas or facts.

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After this, as a fourth step in the preparation of the lesson, comes the question, How can I get the minds of my class, now, to infer the main thought of this lesson—how can I lead them to infer the idea for themselves as a result of their reflection on the material presented?

Note that this general idea is the last to come to the class, although, in the form of the aim, it was the first in the teacher's mind. In other words, he chooses the aim and then selects the material for its development, while they get the material first and out of that deduce the general truth of the lesson; for the teacher rarely states to his class what the aim of the recitation is, except in the form of the general question with which he starts their minds to thinking on the lesson at the opening of the recitation.

Finally, the teacher asks himself how best to apply the lesson to the lives of the pupils.

All along in this book we have emphasized the need of conduct, behavior, as a

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result of teaching. Indeed, the general aim of every lesson should be modification of conduct in those whom we teach. But every lesson presents also the specific question of how to modify conduct by the application of the particular idea developed in the lesson.

This application of the lesson-thought, again, should involve a knowledge of the particular members of the class we are teaching and what their special temptations are, so far as the point in any given lesson is concerned. Generally when we know our class well and our community sins and virtues, we can tell how to apply our lessons.

So much for the theory of preparation on the part of the teacher. How shall we do this in any given case? The following illustration from the practice of our Savior, the greatest of all teachers, will serve to show this, not indeed as an example of preparation for a lesson, but as an example of His teaching, from which

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we may imply something as to the preparation of our lessons. It is taken from the twelfth chapter of Matthew (verses 1-8) and the second chapter of Mark (verses 23-28), which should be read.

The minds of the contentious Pharisees are prepared to understand the truth He declares by a question, Is it lawful to pluck ears of corn on the Sabbath day? In the next place, Jesus has something to give them, which is a definite truth about the proper observance of this day. His aim might have been, What is the proper observance of the Sabbath? The third step is apparent—He was master of His material, for He used two other incidents familiar to them with which to compare this incident of the plucking of the corn—that of David and that of the priests. The fifth step is equally obvious, the general truth, which He expresses for them, that the Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath or that Christ is Lord also of the Sabbath. And the last step, the application, is left to His hearers.

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The teacher who reads this section on how to prepare a lesson is no doubt by this time asking himself, what place is left for the operation of the Holy Spirit?

The answer is, More place than there would be if the teacher had not prepared his lesson. Nothing can be surer than that God places no premium on ignorance or laziness. The Lord helps those who try to help themselves. Roughly speaking, there are two kinds of teachers using preparation or non-preparation as the basis of classification: The one class prepare without any thought of divine aid; the other class leave everything to the Lord, or more strictly speaking, to the impulse of the moment, which they frequently mistake for inspiration. The proper attitude in lesson-preparation is to seek divine aid in the preparation, to do one's utmost to think out the lesson with the mind open to the operations of the Holy Spirit. There is nothing inconsistent with the operations of the Spirit in the orderly process of thought, and when

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something suggests the abandonment of orderliness and coherence, the chances are that it is a mere impulse and not inspiration. The keynote of every teacher should, therefore, be: Careful preparation of every lesson, the light of human reason, labor, and experience being supplemented by the light of the Holy Spirit.

XIII

HOW TO CONDUCT A CLASS

IN nearly all that we have said thus far on the principles of education, the thing we have had in mind all along as one of our objective points was the class recitation. The class recitation, therefore, is very important and should be conducted in the light of the best knowledge the teacher can get, not only of the subject to be taught but also, and especially, of the way in which the mind learns.

To make this thought clearer, we have but to call to mind some of those principles we have considered.

One of them was how to make a new idea clear. We learned that, in a word, to make a new idea plain to the class it is necessary to connect it somehow with the ideas they already have in mind. Now, this principle is useful mainly in prepar-

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ing the minds of the class for what we are about to give. It is directly useful, that is to say, in the recitation.

Another of those principles was that there are individual differences in the members of our class and that we must employ various appeals accordingly. This also is of use in the recitation.

Again, we were told how to get attention in the class. We have no particular use for this information till we come to conduct a recitation. This is true also of interest and the other educational principles discussed.

We repeat, therefore, that the class recitation is the place where we need to apply whatever principles we have been studying.

As a matter of fact, however, all teachers apply one or more of them in their classes, even though they may not have studied any of these principles. Common sense and experience lead them to do many things in their teaching which books on teaching tell them they should

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do. Besides, some persons are born teachers and have successful recitations, often without knowing that they are doing their work in harmony, for the most part, with the principles of teaching.

Still a knowledge of these fundamental principles always makes teaching more effective. It gives a confidence and a sureness that can come in no other way. And then, too, even the best teachers make errors, which a knowledge of the principles of teaching may correct.

In general, there may be one or more of three purposes of a recitation. Sometimes we may wish to test the class in what they have studied, with a view to seeing whether they understand clearly the matter covered. Or, secondly, we may wish to introduce a new idea. Or, in the third place, we may wish to get the class to reflect on the subject of the lesson. Clearly the third purpose is of the most importance in teaching religion, even where the class may have carefully prepared the lesson.

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The recitation, in the main, should follow the plan worked out by the teacher in the preparation of the lesson. But it should not be followed so rigidly as not to admit of change in any respect where a change would seem obviously necessary. If, for instance, we have miscalculated the experience of our class, then we should not hesitate to change the plan to suit the situation as we find it. Every change, however, is a change for the worse—if the lesson has been thoughtfully planned—unless there is a good reason for it. Teachers should not allow a mere impulse or whim to alter their plans.

The instructor is now ready for the various steps of the recitation.

The first one is the preparation of the minds of the class for what is to be developed in the recitation. Every recitation really begins with a problem. This problem is the aim of the lesson, stated, however, in the form of a question. Here, as already said, is the place where what

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we said about how to make a new idea plain is of special use. Always there is an idea to make clear. Always too, something in the minds of the class should go out to meet the idea which the teacher is to give. This opening question will serve to start thought in them on the subject of the lesson. If it has done so, their minds will have been prepared for the subject.

Secondly, comes the probable solution of the problem stated by the teacher in the opening question. That is to say, in reply to his question, will come answers from the class. Some of them will be correct, some incorrect, but whatever they are they constitute an attempt at a proper solution of the problem to be solved.

In the third step, the teacher endeavors to get light on the problem from the lesson for the day. Having started the minds of his pupils lessonward, he may now say in effect, Let us see whether our lesson will help us to arrive at a

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conclusion on this matter. Here, therefore, he gets from the class or gives to them such material as he or they may have prepared. If the lesson be a story, he has an instance where So-and-so solved this problem for himself, and his other incidents will give other situations in other lives. Sometimes one of these may be an instance of contrast, where someone has failed to solve the problem.

Next comes the inference, by the class, of the general truth to be got from the lesson. This, all along, has been in the instructor's mind as the goal pointed out in the aim. But the class must nevertheless think it out for themselves. They will be more interested in doing so, and, besides, it will be a means of helping them to reason and do things for themselves. Now, if the teacher should have a passage of scripture or a stanza from one of the poets which exactly and beautifully expresses that truth, it may fittingly be given here and learned by the class as a memory gem.

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All this done the instructor is ready for the application. Every recitation, as stated already more than once, has conduct as its objective point. Merely to get an idea has little value; practice of ideas is what we want. And so we should here endeavor to get the class to do something by way of carrying out the idea they have just learned. In what way, then, can this general truth be applied in the lives of the class? How can they be inspired to do something? What are the sins or virtues in our ward that call for the application of it? All these questions can best be answered by the teacher and the class together.

As in the section on the teacher's preparation of the lesson, we go to the practice followed by Christ, the Great Teacher, for an illustration, and this time from the eighteenth chapter of Matthew (verses 21-35).

The lesson is on forgiveness. Peter has come to Christ with a question, "Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me,

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and I forgive him?" Peter presently gives the probable answer, "Until seven times?" All this has started thought. Then Jesus gives the true answer—discusses the lesson, so to speak—in which He relates a parable about the debt owing the king and a smaller debt owing the servant of the king by a third person. The inference from the incident is obvious: We ought to forgive our brother as often as he repents and asks forgiveness. Here, as in the other, the application is left to the hearers.

XIV

HOW TO QUESTION A CLASS

A DISCUSSION of the art of asking questions rightfully belongs in the section on the class recitation, but the topic is so important as to require separate treatment.

There are three purposes in asking questions of a class.

One purpose is disciplinary. If a pupil is inattentive during the recitation, a question may wake him into attention.

A more important function of the question is to test the pupil's knowledge. A lesson has been given, for instance, which the class was to prepare. At the next recitation the teacher is able to tell, by means of questions, whether the ideas in the lesson have been grasped.

A third purpose of the question, more

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important still, especially in religious work, is to get the pupils to reflect. Elsewhere we stated that the main purpose of the recitation is to get the class to thinking. One of the most effective means of doing this is the question.

In forming questions the following points should be kept in mind.

First, the teacher should be as free as possible from textbook, manual, or outline. He ought to be free in two respects. He should not be dependent on the text-book for the wording of his questions, neither should he follow the wording of the book in making his questions. Careful preparation of the lesson on his part will leave him free to give his whole mind to the recitation. And, besides, teaching will thus be more pleasant.

Secondly, every question should be clear. This principle of clearness requires (1) that it have but one meaning and be specific. (2) that it have no word in it the members of the class are not likely to

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understand, and (3) that it be reasonably brief, the briefer the better provided it be clear.

Here the principle we discussed under the title "How to make an Idea Plain," may be useful, for what is clear to a grown-up may not be so to a child. Or the question may deal with matters beyond the child's grasp—in which case it should not be asked. A long, involved question is always more or less hard to understand; the mind has to make too much of an effort to follow the thought. Where we have a long question in mind, it is better to break it up into two or more short ones.

In the third place, questions should be definite. A question may be indefinite by reason (1) of being too general, (2) of having more than one meaning, and (3) of containing words that are themselves vague. What did Joseph Smith become? may mean to bring out the answer that he became an educated man, but that he became a martyr would be equally cor-

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rect. Whenever your questions are indefinite or vague, you may know that generally speaking the lesson is not very clear in your own mind.

Fourthly, questions should lead somewhere. Questions are asked, not to keep the class busy, but to develop the lesson. Every lesson, as we have already learned, should be about one thing not three or four things. There is some thought we want the class to get as a result of the recitation. Therefore the questions asked should lead up to that thought. This means, again, that the instructor must know exactly what he is going to teach and how he is going to teach it.

As an illustration of what we mean by this last statement, let us suppose we were to teach a lesson from the New Testament on what defiles a man, found in Mark, Chapter 7 (verses 1-23).

“Then came together unto Him the Pharisees, and certain of the scribes, which came from Jerusalem. And when they

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saw some of His disciples eat their bread with defiled (that is to say, with unwashen) hands, they found fault. (For the Pharisees and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders. And when they come from the market, except they wash, they eat not) * * * Then the Pharisees and scribes asked Him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands? He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoreth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For, laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. And He said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition. For Moses said, Honor thy

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father and thy mother; and, Whoso curs-eth father or mother, let him die the death. But ye say, if a man shall say to his father or mother, It is Corban (that is to say, a gift), by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; he shall be free. And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother, making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered. And many such like things do ye.

“And when He had called all the people unto Him, He said unto them, Harken unto me every one of you and understand. There is nothing from without a man, that entering into him can defile him, but the things that come out of him—those are they that defile the man. If any man have ears to hear, let him hear. And when He was entered into the house from the people, His disciples asked Him concerning the parable. And He saith unto them, Are ye so without understanding also? Do ye not perceive that whatsoever thing from without entereth into

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the man, it cannot defile him; because it entereth not into his heart, but into the belly, and goeth out into the draught, purging all meats? And He said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemies, pride, foolishness. All these things come from within, and defile the man."

Now, such questions as the following would at once develop the lesson, test the pupil's understanding, and create thought:

- (1) What action here described did the Pharisees find fault with?
- (2) What custom of the Jews had the disciples disregarded?
- (3) Where did the Jews get this custom?
- (4) With what practice of theirs did Jesus answer their complaint?
- (5) What commandment of the Lord did their practice violate?
- (6) Why were these Scribes and Pharisees hypo-

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crites? (7) What lesson is taught in this incident?

These are the main principles governing the art of questioning a class. There are also others, of less importance.

First, questions should be asked in a pleasant, natural, conversational tone, not made as a demand by the instructor.

Secondly, in general, questions should be addressed to the entire class. That is, ask your question first, and then call on some one to answer it. Don't wait for the pupils to raise their hands, but call on them indiscriminately; for otherwise only a few in the class will be active. Remember that non-preparation is not the only reason why some of the class do not raise the hand. It may be modesty.

Thirdly, ask questions, mainly, which demand more or less thought on the part of the pupils. Rarely should a question be asked that can be answered by Yes or No.

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Finally, don't repeat the answers of the pupils, unless you need to do so in order to call special attention to it.

Let the teacher study carefully this section with a view to improving his questioning of the class.

XV

HOW TO TELL A STORY

WE have several times in these pages had occasion to point out the value of the story, or narrative, in the recitation, especially in the teaching of children and young persons. It is equally valuable as a means of interest and instruction in the home.

But, as in everything else, there is a poor way of telling stories and there is a good way. A story, to be effective, must be well told. That goes without saying. But a well told story follows pretty closely certain principles of art. Hence both the teacher and the parent should give special attention to the question, How can I best tell this particular story that I want to use?

And so it is deemed proper in a book like this to discuss some points that can profitably be kept in mind in story-telling.

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Only recently, comparatively speaking, have we come to realize the great power of the story in the education of our youth. So far as stories are concerned, we are now doing for our young folks practically what the old poets did for the common people in ancient nations before reading and writing was general. Like the bard in early Greece, the minnesinger in early Germany, the troubadour in early France, and the gleeman in early England, who sang or chanted his ballad, epic, or other narrative poem, for the entertainment and edification of the populace, so educators have in recent years begun to urge strongly the importance of telling stories, in the school and in the home, as a means of arousing interest, gaining knowledge and awakening activity.

That the wholesome story has this power has always been more or less felt, if not consciously used in education.

The "love of the story" says Hamilton W. Mabie, "is one of the expressions of the passion of the soul for a glimpse of

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an order of life amid the chaos of happenings; for a setting of life which symbolizes the dignity of the actors in the play; for room in which to let men work out their instincts and risk their hearts in the great adventures of affection or action or exploration. Men and women find in stories the opportunities and experiences which circumstances have denied them; they insist on the dramatization of life because they know that certain results inevitably follow certain actions, and certain deeply interested conflicts and tragedies are bound up with certain temperaments and types of character.”

In this strong native liking for the story chiefly lies its educational value. Boys and girls, men and women will listen to a story when nothing else can hold their attention. The story has action in it; the story has figures in it, moving about and playing their part—and this is the secret of its power over the mind. And, then too, wholesome stories teach indirectly. The qualities of frank generosity, of hardy

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prowess, of courageous endurance, of stainless character tend naturally to be translated by the youthful reader into qualities of his own life, and so uplift him into better living. Besides, being concrete and suggestive rather than dogmatic, the story furnishes one of the clearest and most impressive ways of conveying truth to the mind. Jesus, the great Teacher, made constant use of the story in the form of the parable. The parables of the good Samaritan, the sower, and the prodigal son have become enshrined among the great classics of the world.

The story, therefore, should be employed by the teacher of religion and also by the parent in the home as an effective means of interest and instruction.

Two forms of the story the teacher of religion among us will have use for. There is, first, the story which is ready to hand, written out for him; and all he has to do is to tell what is there set down—no invention of details, to any apprecia-

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ble effect, being required of him. Then, secondly, there is the story which he has to make up. He has merely the suggestion of a story in mind, the details and the order of the details he has to build into a well-rounded, united whole, with such art as he can call into use. And then both the story already made and the story of his own making have to be told in such a way as will catch and hold the attention of whoever is to hear it. Let us therefore ascertain some of the principles according to which stories are to be constructed and afterward such points as may help us in the telling of them.

The first thing to think of in making the story is the purpose which it is to serve. What do you want the narrative for? Because, in religious instruction, it is not a good thing to tell a story merely because something has to be done in the class and telling stories is the easiest way of keeping the class interested. There ought to be some aim or purpose in telling it besides keeping the class quiet and

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their minds occupied. The story should be used mainly to illustrate the truth to be imparted by the lesson. Say, then, that your lesson is on prayer or patience or courage in truth-telling, the teacher should be looking for material which he can build into a narrative to illustrate prayer or patience or courage in telling the truth.

Having chosen his purpose and found his first suggestion of a story, the teacher proceeds to build it into one. In doing this he must keep three ideas in mind.

The first is to get a central point. This central point coincides with his purpose in telling the story. If, say, his object in giving the story be to teach truth-telling, then the central point of the story is the place where the character tells the truth where he might have told a falsehood.

Secondly, the teacher must select from a mass of details only those details which help to bring out the point in the story. Pick up anywhere the first hint of a story

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and you will soon learn that it is in the midst of a thousand other facts, some of which bear on the story but most of which do not. The task of the story-teller is to choose from the mass those which bear on his idea and rigidly to reject all those that do not so bear upon it. And this is by no means as easy as one would think. It requires thought, discrimination, and a firm hold on the purpose of the story or the central point.

Lastly, all these details that have been separated from the mass of details must be carefully arranged with a view to bringing out the point of the narrative. And this too requires thought. What must the hearer know before he can understand the story? what are the details of the action? and how shall I make these point forward to the end and bring it out?—these are questions that every story-teller must answer, each in his own way.

Two concrete instances—one from the Bible and one from the life of a modern

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Church leader—will illustrate these steps in story-building.

The Hebrew Scriptures furnish us with a great deal of material for stories. But rarely do we find stories there already made for us, especially if we are teaching children. The Bible was not written specifically for children. And, besides, the language of the Bible is not in many respects, the tongue of to-day, but that of three hundred years ago. So, if we choose stories from that volume, it is necessary for us to leave out, to fill in, and to adapt material before children can understand them. Now, this matter of filling in, leaving out, and adapting is really not difficult. It is not necessary to invent details. The filling in should be by way of giving the historical setting, of which there is not only a need, but an ample supply. All this gives the story body. But care must be taken that in the selection and arrangement the point is not obscured.

Suppose, then, we are to give a lesson

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on returning good for evil and are looking for a story from the Bible to illustrate it. An incident in the story of Joseph who was sold into Egypt, let us say, comes to mind. But that is in the midst of a mass of details from which it will have to be extracted. Obviously if the story is to illustrate the idea of returning good for evil, the central point will be the place where Joseph gives food and a home to his father and brothers. Attention must therefore be given to the mistreatment of him by his brothers and the cause—jealousy. One way to build up these details is found in the following arrangement.

- (1) The hatred of his brothers for Joseph;
- (2) the cause of this feeling in them—Joseph's dreams;
- (3) what they did in consequence of this hatred—sold him;
- (4) the famine in Palestine and in Egypt, including a statement of Joseph's power in the latter place;
- (5) the meeting of Joseph with his brothers; and
- (6) Joseph's treatment of them and his father's household.

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It will be noticed that much is left out of the story as it is given in Genesis. Having taken the purpose we have, the details omitted here are not necessary. The imprisonment of Joseph in Egypt really has no value in our story. The only facts in his Egyptian life that are of value here are that God was with him and that he rose in the king's favor.

Another illustration is from the life of President Anthon H. Lund. In his biography we find the statement that after he joined the Church, while a mere boy, he preached a good deal, and that in answer to an offer of a free college education, made by a rich mill-owner and being made his heir, if he would become a Lutheran preacher, he replied, "You have not money enough to buy my allegiance to the Church of God."

Suppose we were in search of a story to illustrate integrity to the truth and that we knew of this incident, how could we work it up into a good illustrative narrative? Having chosen that excellent

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answer as the point and perhaps the ending, we would proceed to select such details out of President Lund's early life as would help to bring out the point. Clearly facts about his birth and parentage would have no business in our story; neither would any facts in his subsequent life. The following points in the main would be all we need: First, it might begin with the boy knocking at the door; proceed with a conversation between him and the miller, which could bring out Anthon's desire for education and his lack of opportunity; and end with the offer and the refusal.

This incident in President Lund's early life may be found in the "Young Woman's Journal" for May, 1912.

And now what points should be kept in mind in the telling of stories?

One very helpful suggestion is that the story, whether given in the home or in the class, would best be told rather than read. "The power of the story-teller lies

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in his opportunity to let his message come from his eyes as well as his lips, a thing which is possible since he has neither book nor memory of printed page to burden him." But it lies also in his earnestness, his belief in what he is telling, his soulfulness and feeling; for if his soul and feeling do not enter into the story; there will be little result from his telling it.

We do not say that stories should never be read, for the beauty of some stories lies in the form in which they are told—in which case it may be better to read them. Then, again, some persons can read well who talk but poorly, and here, too, it might be permissible to read them. But the rule should be, Tell the stories rather than read them.

"The gift of telling stories is an endowment of nature, like a beautiful voice or a talent for painting." But everyone, even the most gifted can improve in the power of good narration. We spend long years and much money in learning how to write and how to preach. Why not spend

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a little time and, if necessary, some money in learning to tell stories—the art that carries so much joy with it? That this can be profitably done by any one who wishes to cultivate the art, consideration of two simple points will show.

First, study the art. Take some good stories, like “Ruth” and “Esther” in the Bible, or the “Great Stone Face” by Hawthorne, and notice these features about them: the point, what is said, the bearing of everything on the point, and, especially, what is not said that could be said. On this last head it might be added that more trouble arises from saying what is not needed than in leaving out something that should be said.

And, secondly, avail yourself of every opportunity to hear the best story-tellers. “Hearing stories told by artists” is one of the best ways of acquiring unconsciously the ideal of the story-teller.

The work recently undertaken by the Improvement Associations in story-telling contests cannot be too highly com-

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mended. This beautiful art has been too long neglected among us. There is just as much place for the story-teller as for the preacher, as witness the stories of "Ruth" and "Esther" and "Joseph" in the Bible. Encouragement could be given this art in the home also. How many parents nowadays take the time and pains to cultivate it with their children as compared with parents in the olden time? And yet there is no people on the earth to whom the art of telling stories could be more serviceable.

That is one suggestion—tell rather than read the story. Another is this: Don't patronize the boys and girls when you tell them stories.

Not long ago we heard an eleven-year-old girl say that she didn't like to go to Religion Class. When asked for her reason, she answered, "Because the teacher always talks to us as if we were little!" And she wasn't little—she was eleven years old! She objected to be talked down to. Dr. Winship, a New England

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educator, used to tell of the humiliation and embarrassment of a boy when his father called him "Willie," and of his immediate elevation to self-respect on being called "Bill" or "Mr. Thompson."

As a matter of fact, no one is keener in detecting that condescension, that patronizing air so characteristic of some teachers, than children. It embarrasses them. It angers them. It at once plunges them into a plane consciously below the teacher. Children must always be treated as human beings—men and women. Anyway, treat them as such, and they endeavor to respond. If the teacher makes them feel that he is treating them as equals, their souls expand to meet the occasion.

This does not mean, of course, that one must not use simple language, must not choose such material as will be of interest only to children. Simplicity does not necessarily imply condescension. One can speak to children in a manly and womanly fashion without being maw-

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kish; can be child-like without being childish. This childishness, this patronizing air, this mincing tone, characterizes also much of the literature written for children. And it is to be avoided in both the oral and the written word.

XVI

AN ILLUSTRATIVE LESSON

WE have given, in the preceding sections, an idea of what the teacher of religion is expected to do, some of the main qualifications he should possess, the chief educational principles which he ought to know in order to teach to the best advantage, and the specific application of these to his particular work. There remains but one other thing that may be helpful to the practical teacher, and that is to take him before a class and illustrate in a particular case how a lesson, according to these principles we have studied, should be conducted from first to last.

The lesson we purpose to take is on charity, or love, defined in the Book of Mormon as the pure love of Christ. The teacher is supposed to have made such careful preparation as he is capable of,

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following the suggestions we made in Section XII. He is now about to begin the recitation.

The first thing he does is to connect, in a brief way, the thought which he is about to present with something which he has given in some previous lesson. It does not matter when that other lesson was given—last week, two weeks ago, or some months past;—the chief point is the association of this new idea with that old one.

And so the instructor says, “At such and such a time”—naming the day or evening when the lesson was given—“we learned something about faith. Please tell us of an incident in which your faith has been strengthened.” And he calls on Brother A to relate an incident. “On such and such an occasion”—again naming a specific time—“we had a lesson on hope. Can you tell us something out of which your hope has come brighter?” Here he asks Brother B to respond.

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After which he is ready to introduce the new idea, the lesson for today.

“The Lord has given many instructions to his chosen people at various times in the history of the world. Many of these are called commandments. Now, anyone who thinks, knows that these commandments are not all of the same importance. Some are of greater importance than others.

“For instance, Christ said that to sin against the Holy Ghost will not be forgiven in this world nor the next. The commandment which we are to take up to-day is the greatest of all—it is the one which is more vital to us than any other.

“What commandment do you think that is?”

He pauses to give the class time to set their minds to work, for, observe, the question is directed to the whole class; the teacher does not first call on some one and then give his question. The class having had a little time in which to think, the instructor calls on Brother C to an-

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swer it. Brother C, then, (or in the event that he cannot, some one else) proceeds to give what we have called the probable solution.

This question should have awakened thought looking in the direction of to-day's lesson. Then the answer given is developed, drawn out into sufficient detail to emphasize the fact that this particular commandment is the most important that God has given us. Let us suppose—which is very probable—that the words of Jesus (Mark 12:29-31) have been given as an answer to our question, the pupil may have only used verbal memory. To make sure that the words are understood, we enlarge upon the answer till it is clear.

The purpose of that opening question and its answer was to set the whole class to thinking. The next thing to do is to make use of the background of their experience as a means of making plain our new idea. The instructor therefore says:

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“Let us look at love as it shows itself in our own lives. In what way does love influence a young man in his relation to his sweetheart—Brother D?” This should bring out such qualities as kindness and gentlemanliness. “What influence does a mother’s love exercise on her actions towards her son—Brother E?” This would probably bring out the qualities of patience and long-suffering charity. “Loving yourself, how do you treat your body—Brother F?” To bring out the care we give ourselves in the choice of the best food, clothes, care in sickness, etc. Such questions having brought out familiar qualities as the result of the personal experiences of the class, Brother G might be called on to summarize the result of the discussion.

We are now ready for the further development of the lesson-thought.

“Let us compare now,” the teacher says, “what we have seen in our own lives with what the Savior teaches in the para-

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ble of the 'Good Samaritan.' Will you relate the incident, Brother H?" In the event that this lesson has not been assigned and the class has not been asked to prepare it, Brother H may be asked merely to read it. And, indeed, it may not be out of place to have it read anyway, since it is one of the most beautiful narratives in the language.

The teacher then says, "State the several things which the good Samaritan did for the unfortunate man—Brother I. What influenced him to do it—Brother J? Compare what the good Samaritan did for his fellow with what Brother F said he would do for himself—Brother K. What commandment of the Lord did the good Samaritan keep—Brother L?"

"Now," continues the teacher, we have seen what loving our neighbor consists of. What reward do we get in this world for loving our neighbor thus—Brother M? What reward do we get in the next world—Brother N?"

After which the teacher proceeds: "We

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have seen how love influences our actions in respect to ourselves and in respect also to others. How does it affect us in respect to God—Brother O?” The answer to this question will bring out what John says, “For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments.” (I. John 5: 8.) “What did Christ say to Peter on this point of love, just before His ascension—Brother P?” (See John 21:15-17.) “What commandment accompanied the Savior’s question—Brother Q? Give instances to show Peter’s sincerity—Brother R.”

By way of contrast somebody might now be called on to tell or to read the incident about the rich young man, related in Mark 10:17-25. After which the teacher asks: “In what was the young man’s heart centered—Brother S? How did it affect his attitude toward the Savior’s invitation—Brother T? What was Christ’s comment—Brother U? Compare the young man’s actions with those of the Priest and the Levite in the

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incident of the good Samaritan—Brother V. Contrast his action with that of Peter—Brother W.”

Next, attention may be called to what Paul says concerning the value of charity, or love. And here the teacher calls on some one to read the thirteenth chapter (verses 1-8) of First Corinthians. After which—“Name those things than which Paul says love is greater—Brother X. In what way does he say love manifests itself—Brother Y?

“Now,” continues the instructor, “we have studied how love manifests itself in our conduct towards ourselves, toward our fellow-man, and toward God. Let us now enquire how it manifests itself in what the Lord does for us. In what great event in the history of the world does the love of the Father and the Son show itself—Brother Z?” (See John 3:16; and 15:13.)

“In whom, now, have we studied the manifestation of love—Brother J? How does it modify our actions—Brother B?

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What, then, does it mean to love God and our neighbor—Brother S?"

Finally, comes the application of this lesson-thought to the individual lives of the class. Each one of them should be led to look into his own life with a view to squaring his conduct with this greatest commandment. The lesson concludes with the practical question, "What can each of us do now by way of putting this lesson into use?" For, knowledge of a commandment only increases our responsibility, and our condemnation if we do not live according to its teachings.

XVII

A CHAPTER FOR THE PARENT

NO work written for teachers could properly treat the parent with neglect. For, in the first place, were it not for parents, we should not need teachers at all, and, secondly, the teacher can get along so much better in his work when the parent helps him. But this book, as already stated, was written partly for parents. And so there is a double reason for the present section. We shall endeavor in it to point out ways in which the parent may apply the principles we have here been discussing.

Nothing can be plainer than that the parent, not the teacher, is held responsible for the children. The parent may, all unconsciously, more and more shift this responsibility to the shoulders of the teacher. But it is not really shifted. The Lord

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will hold the parent accountable, not the teacher, should the child go wrong, through neglect. Two passages, the most striking on the subject in our literature, will bring this thought home.

“Inasmuch as parents have children in Zion, or in any of her stakes which are organized, that teach them not to understand the doctrine of repentance, faith in Christ the Son of the living God, and of baptism and the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands when eight years old, the sin be upon the heads of the parents * * * And they shall also teach their children to pray and to walk uprightly before the Lord.”

And that the Lord does actually hold parents responsible for their children is evident from this second passage.

“I have commanded you to bring up your children in light and truth. But verily I say unto you, my servant Frederick G. Williams, you have continued under this condemnation; you have not taught your children light and truth, ac-

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ording to the commandments, and that wicked one hath power, as yet, over you, and this is the cause of your affliction.” (Doc. & Cov., 93:38-42.)

So much for the responsibility of parents in the spiritual training of their children. And now as to how this responsibility may be carried.

What is true of the teacher is even more true of the parent, namely, that he can train his children more effectively by knowing something about the natural operations of the mind. Besides, the parent has more and better opportunities for training his children than the teacher has. The teacher meets his class once a week, the parent meets his children not only every day, but is with them for a good part of every day. The parent, therefore, can see to their conduct, help them in carrying out the counsel, and learn whether or not they are succeeding and how well.

Take the principles of education we

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have explained in this book, for instance. Suppose the parent wishes to train his children in responsibility and choice—and what parent does not? He has a hundred chances to enforce this idea where the teacher has one. For it must be remembered that what we are endeavoring to get as parents is the actual choosing and being responsible by the children, not merely having the idea. The parent can therefore lie in wait for opportunities in which a sense of personal responsibility and the necessity of choosing for himself, and of choosing rightly, may be cultivated, so that when the young man who has thus habituated himself to the exercise of this quality, leaves home for an outing or for school in the distant city where other temptations will try to allure him from the path of right, the probability will be that he will choose safely and well, or choosing wrongly, will immediately see his error and correct it. And what is true of this idea of choice and responsibility is equally true of such prin-

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ciples as the cultivation of judgment, taking advantage of interest, habit formation, and the others discussed here.

Now, these principles of education may be applied under three circumstances.

First, in helping the teacher. The parent should know what his children are taught at the various organizations of the Church, in order that he may take advantage of any opportunity that may come in his way to help them apply in their lives the teachings, since it is practice of the idea that counts rather than the mere idea taught.

That it should do something to help father or mother, it would be a good thing for the parent to know that it had been given that idea, for then he might encourage the expression of it in some act. Similarly, if the priest in his quorum had been taught the necessity of taking his part in administering the sacrament, the parent, if he knew this, might help the

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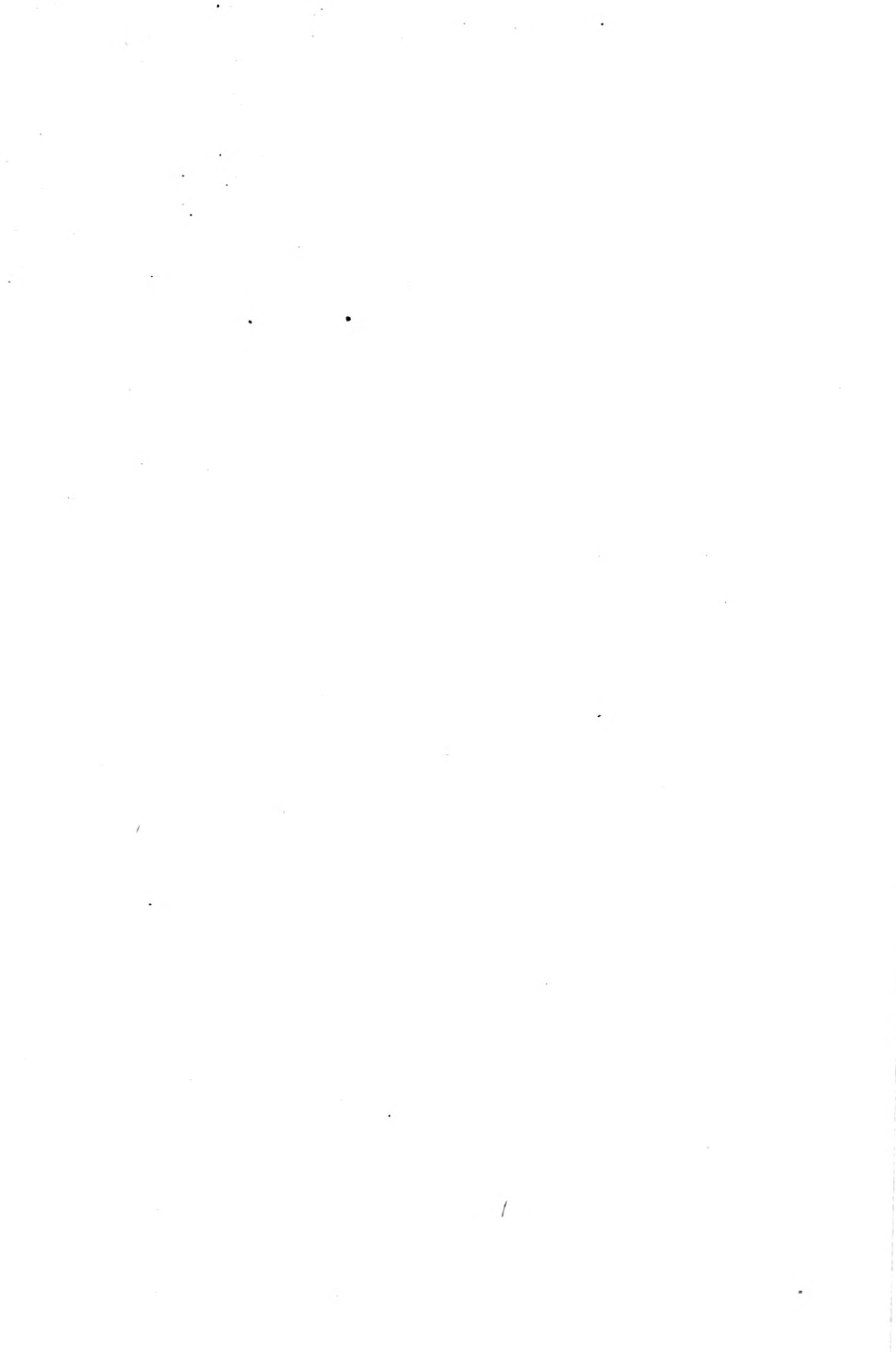
teacher in getting the boy to perform this duty, which maybe he would not otherwise do.

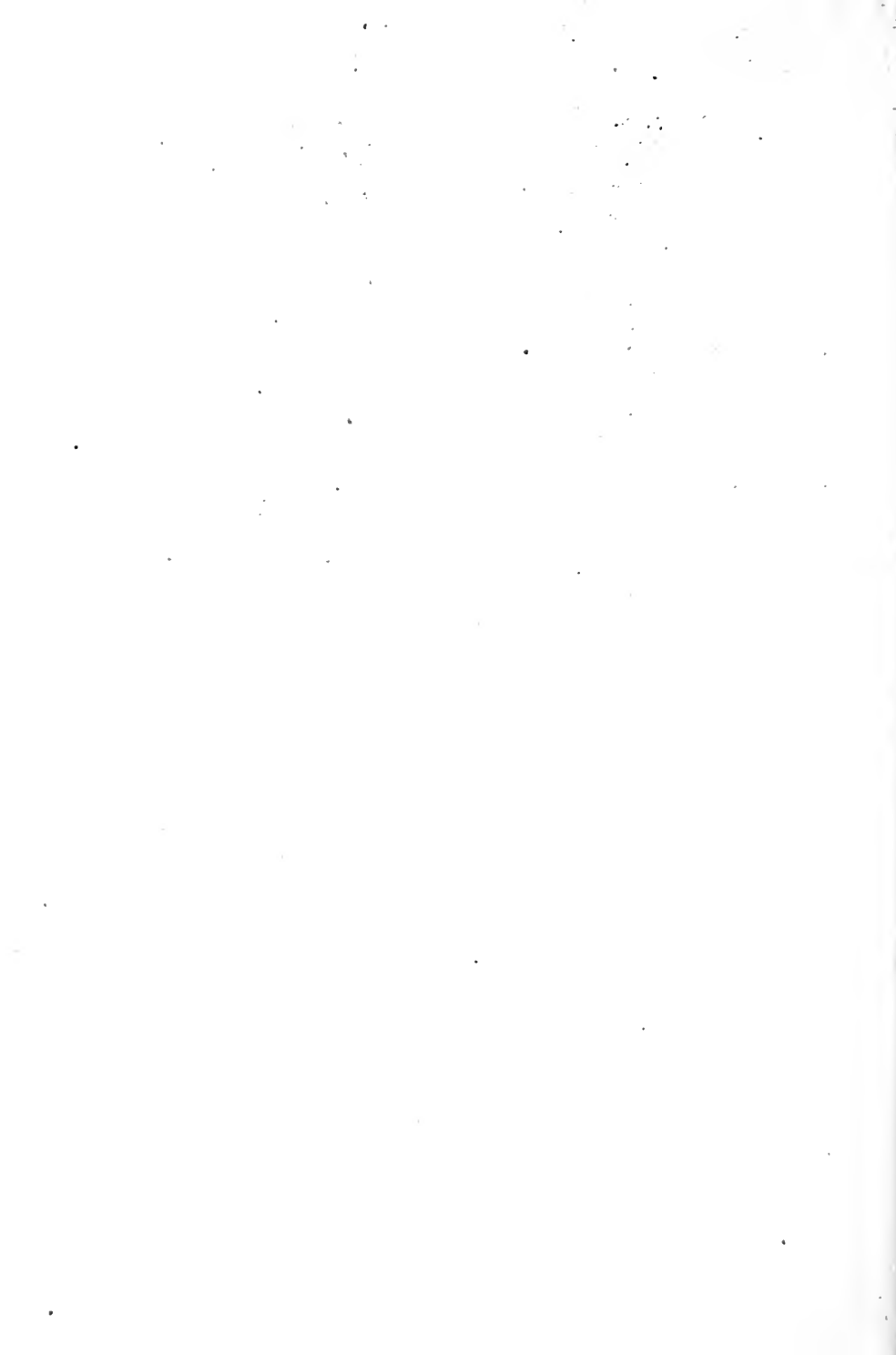
In the next place, the parent might take up systematically some educational work, either not done in any of the organizations his children go to or not sufficiently emphasized. In the Granite stake, for instance, every Tuesday evening is set apart as a home night, when every member of the family is supposed to be at home, and the authorities of that stake urge parents to adopt some line of work, partly religious, partly social, on these occasions. Here is a splended opportunity for the sort of thing we are contending for. No doubt there is a strong tendency among our people for making the home a greater centre for our religious and social life, of which the rise of the parents' classes in the Sunday school and the movement in this Granite stake, are evidences.

Let the parent, then, work in closer

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sympathy with the teacher for greater economy and efficiency in the training of our children and young people, so that these may express in conduct their highest possibilities.





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