

Storytelling

Well-Educated Mother's Heart Learning Library

Libraries of Hope

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Compiled by
Marlene Peterson

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THE CHILDREN OF THE FUTURE

BY

NORA ARCHIBALD SMITH

JOINT AUTHOR WITH KATE DOUGLAS WIGGIN OF "THE REPUBLIC OF CHILDHOOD," "THE STORY HOUR," AND "CHILDREN'S RIGHTS"

"The will of the present is the key to the future, and moral character is eternal destiny."



"TELL ME A STORY"

"Since they be children, tell them of battles and kings, horses, devils, elephants, and angels, but omit not to tell them of love and such-like."

If you follow the dusky track of the twilight as it tiptoes round the world, in land after land you and the twilight together will steal upon a little circle of children gathered about the knees of a story-teller. It may be where the stars are lighting their tapers in the deep sky above the desert sands; it may be by the flickering blubber lamp in the ice hut; by the firefly's torch in the green gloom of the tropic forest; where the feathery bamboos wave and the tea-plant blossoms white; or by the wigwam blaze on the lonely prairie.

Earth is circled with this vast company of story-tellers, nightly surrounded by their little ones, black, and white, and red, and

brown, and yellow; their eager, upturned faces and eloquent voices all uttering the same plea, "Tell us a story, oh, tell us a story!"

So it was in the plains of Mamre when Abraham told tales of mighty kings and warriors of old to his dearly beloved Isaac; so it was in Egypt when the waiting-maids of the Princess poured their folk-lore into baby Moses' listening ears; so it was in the Garden of Eden probably, though really Eve must have been a person of such slight experience and scanty information that it is difficult to imagine what kind of stories she could have told to little Cain and Abel.

So it is, so it has been, so shall it always be, for the love of stories is inherent in the race. With some children a calm delight, with others an absolute passion, yet it exists in all in fair measure, and for ages past has been a great moral and educational agency. We of to-day, who live in a world of books, and who insist that our children shall be early taught to read, that they may the

sooner, as Seguin wittily says, "cover the emptiness of their own minds with the patchwork of others" — we hardly realize, perhaps, the marvelous effect which a well-told story may produce upon the virgin mind and soul. It can but seem vastly more real and vital than the same thing seen in cold type on a printed page, and it has the added charm of look and movement and fitting gesture, in short, of dramatic expression. Before the days of book-knowledge, all the simple learning of the race was gained at the feet of the story-teller, who was the conserver of history and the repository of scientific fact. "The household story," as has been very well said, "was the earliest ethical study in the educational curriculum of the race;" and the extent to which it was used for this purpose may be measured by the strong moral sentiment pervading most of the nursery tales and childish legends which have come down to us from the olden time.

In these days of the thoughtful study of

childhood it has come to be pretty generally felt that educational training, to be successful, must be suited to child-nature, and that any exercise in which the normal, and for that matter the abnormal child takes unvarying delight must therefore, and on that account, be the one which may be made most serviceable to him. From the days of Eve the instinctive mother has ministered to the love of stories; but she cannot, in every case, be trusted to do so wisely until she knows the reasons for its existence and the purposes it may be made to serve.

What is the secret of the charm which story-telling has for the child? Is it not, first, perhaps, the fact that it interprets life — wonderful, mysterious, fascinating life — to him, and places in his hand a sort of telescope, through which he eagerly peers into the world across the threshold of his nursery? Is it not, again, that it addresses the imagination — his dominant power, his delight, his way of escape, that he may be able to bear the dullness, the denseness, the

want of comprehension, of the grown-up world? Stories satisfy, too, his impatient feeling of justice, which the slow march of earthly events so often irritates, while they gratify his love of novelty and variety and his healthy curiosity. Froebel asserts that they arouse the inner life of the listener, that their flow carries him out of himself, and he thereby learns to measure himself more truly.

Fortunate, indeed, are we that what is so dear a delight may at the same time be used as an agent in mental and spiritual uplifting. Consider the story-teller, for instance, merely as the humble workman who rolls up the curtain that the drama of literature may begin. The curtain must be raised, else the play will remain a mystery, and an occasional half-heard voice only serve to tantalize the unfortunate audience.

Regarded in its proper light as the beginning of literature, the story assumes a more important position, and the duty at once becomes clear of selecting it wisely,

that it may serve to lead to higher things. Because a child has a fresh, youthful appetite for tales of any kind, it does not follow that they will all give him equal nourishment. There are certain essentials which must always be considered in selecting a story. First, it must be true; by which I mean true when "ideally interpreted." The incidents need never have really occurred; indeed, some of the truest things have never yet happened, for "Fact at best," as George Macdonald says, "is but a garment of truth, which has ten thousand changes of raiment woven in the same loom." Then it must be suitable in length, for the art in this is like that of a letter — to leave off so that the hearer shall wish there was more of it. Should it not also keep in touch with the dominant interest of the day, if this be one appropriate to childhood? Indeed, if it is not appropriate, better seize the interest and turn it to nobler uses, for when the town is ringing with excitement over the outcome of a prize-fight

it is idle to suppose your boy will be deaf to the echoes.

Why not take the occasion to introduce him to some of the grand figures of mythology, to the real heroes of history, or to recite some stirring ballad of doughty deeds which will make him feel what courage really is, and how a true knight uses his strength. So Mazzini advised mothers to do in the twilight hour, — to tell the children tales of great men who had worked and fought, and loved the people.

That the story should be clothed in well-chosen, fitting words, and narrated in as graceful a style as possible, goes without saying if you agree that the germs of literary taste begin to grow under its influence. I sincerely believe, however, that it is better to tell a story most clumsily and with a halting tongue than not to tell it at all. If it have a vital interest and hold a kernel of truth, the child will appropriate from it what he needs, in spite of its rude setting; for familiarity with good English and literary

taste, valuable as they are, are not the only things developed by story-telling, — they are merely the beginning of the long category. We cannot teach a child by maxims, for instance (and I doubt if we can the adult until he has seen experience illustrate them); but pour the truth they hold into the mould of an attractive story, and watch the effect upon the mind. The tale is often asked for, if it is a really good one, and by and by the truth it enfolds takes root and grows, and will keep on growing though adverse winds of doctrine blow. By means of these narratives the child is confronted with actions and situations quite new to him, but upon which he must perforce pass unconscious judgment, and thus his discrimination is aroused and his ideals are strengthened. "Thus," as Mr. Hamilton Mabie says, "the individual life learns the lessons which universal life has learned, and pieces out its limited personal experience with the experience of humanity." You may spend hours, for instance, in moralizing to a child upon

the beauty of unselfishness, and not produce a thousandth part of the effect which you might have made by telling him the story of gallant Philip Sidney and the cup of cold water given to one whose necessities were greater than his.

We must never neglect the purely imaginative tale when dealing with children, for, though we grown folk may live in a matter-of-fact world, the little ones are still by choice in the realm of fancy, and their place of residence must be considered when we select their literature. If imagination be the strongest element in the child's nature (and who can doubt it who really knows him), then it obviously needs wise guidance rather than repression. We may be sure the power is there for some good purpose, and that we ignore one of our highest possibilities for influence when we pass it by.

The fairy tale, with its simple, uninvolved plot, its transparent personages, its poetic atmosphere, and its hazy, indefinite time of action, is absolutely suited to children, who,

as Mr. Howells says, "do not very distinctly know their dreams from their experiences, and live in a world where both project the same quality of shadow." Doubtless there are fairy tales entirely unfit for children, which have been perverted since they trickled long ago from the spring of universal myth; but the same objection may be made to absolute historic happenings, and the story-teller above all other persons needs constantly to exercise his judgment and his critical faculty.

Nor can there be any fear of telling the fairy tale too often when we reflect that the great stream of literature at our command has a host of branches, of which this is only one, and that "the earth is full of tales to him who listens."

There are the science stories, which may be made most valuable and interesting, and the patriotic ones, especially appropriate to the nation's holidays, which deal with the beginnings of history, and, by leading the child to admire, gradually bring him to love

his country. Then there is perhaps now and then some tale which will develop sympathy with our kinsfolk the animals, or some wise little fable which will instruct as well as amuse. And why, in the name of all that is beautiful, do we confine ourselves so largely to prose when talking and reading to children? They are a hundred, a thousand times more susceptible than we to the linked sweetness of cadenced syllables, to the musical fall or martial swing of verse. I have seen many a stolid, lumpish child sit, breathing heavily, staring at the opposite wall, quite vacuous and unimpressed during the recital of an ordinary story, and yet if a line or two of poetry has fallen on his dull ear he has slowly turned toward the speaker, his glazed eye brightening, and animation transforming his whole expression. This he will do oftentimes, though the poem be almost entirely beyond his comprehension; and he will even rouse from his lethargy sufficiently to give a feeble encore, though he has never before been known to express any form of emotion.

One great drawback to the telling of stories, either in prose or verse, is that there are so few that can be bought ready-made, as it were. There seems to be a very general misconception on the part of authors as to what the child really likes, doubtless due to a mere bowing acquaintance with him, or to a superficial observation of the workings of his mind. Many collections of stories are *about* children rather than *for* them, and are much more appropriate for the adult in their careful delineation of character and accurate painting of emotions. Others are patiently written down to the child's level, as the saying goes, there being some general misunderstanding as to where that level is, and a failure on the part of the author to comprehend that it is frequently quite above his own head.

If one has had long experience with children, however, and knows them as well as one can know beings of another star, it is comparatively easy to adapt literature to their needs, to shorten here, to lengthen

there, and generally to fit the garment to the wearer. Again, one may lack experience entirely and yet have an innate fitness for the work and an intuitive comprehension of and sympathy with childhood, which is in effect a kind of genius; and for these two classes of people the work of story-telling is easy.

But if one have neither natural adaptation nor experience, still I say, Tell the stories; tell the stories; a thousand times, tell the stories! You have no cold, unsympathetic audience to deal with; the child is helpful, receptive, warm, eager, friendly. His whole-hearted interest, his surprise, admiration, and wise comment, will spur you on to greater efforts, and when the story is concluded you will wonder which of you has been the greater gainer.

SOME GREAT STORIES AND HOW TO TELL THEM

BY

RICHARD THOMAS WYCHE

ORGANIZER AND PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL STORY TELLERS' LEAGUE

USE OF THE STORY—AN EXPERIMENT

Once upon a time the writer undertook to teach a little school in a far-off seacoast town in the South. The little village was on a sandy bluff overlooking the sound and the sea. Cut off from the main land by an impossible swamp in the rear, yet shut out from the great Atlantic by an ever-shifting sand bar that lay for leagues along the sea coast, it gave the little town an ideal harbor of shallow water, the home of fishermen and oystermen whose cottages were scattered for miles along the sea coast.

Being isolated, the inhabitants were compelled to rely upon themselves and in doing this had developed a solidarity of community life and a manhood and womanhood of purity and simplicity that was as refreshing as the breezes that ever swept its shores.

Amid such surroundings I began to teach, and it was one of my early experiences. Not

having libraries or lectures to help me, I too must depend on self.

I had never studied pedagogy and knew nothing of teaching except that which I had seen in the university lecture rooms. The teacher who preceded me "heard" lessons and the children "said" lessons. That seemed an easy proposition, for the questions were in the book and the children could memorize and say the answers.

But I soon discovered that the children found no interest in the fact that one word was a verb and another a noun. They memorized the rules and repeated the lessons, but they were not at all interested in the subject. They were bored by this mechanical process, and so was the teacher. Something must be done. One day I told the class the story of "Hiawatha's Fishing." Every child listened with rapt attention. I had found something that they were interested in. I requested the children to write the story out for their lessons the next day. The majority of them did so, and read the story as they had understood and written it down. One little fellow said, "I ain't got no pencil,"—which meant that he didn't write it. "Tell it then," I said. He told it in such a

vivid and realistic way that the class applauded. I had found something that the child liked. The second day I told the story of "Hiawatha's Fasting," then "Hiawatha's friends," and so on, two stories a week, until we had told the whole story of Hiawatha.

But you ask "What did that have to do with grammar?" From the story we got the nouns and verbs we studied and the sentences that the advanced classes analyzed and studied. (The whole school heard the story, it being an ungraded school with classes ranging from primary to high school.)

What else did we do with the story? Let us see. When the children told the story orally or on paper it was creative work, and better for expression than memorizing "Mary had a little lamb." The child received a mental picture. He heard the story, and re-telling it in his own words he created afresh the picture, thereby becoming a creator and an artist himself. In reciting "Mary had a little lamb" he was dealing with words. In telling the story he was dealing with mental images.

One day I saw the children playing out on the campus, and on making inquiries they said, "We are playing Hiawatha and Mondamin

and Old Nokomis." They were dramatizing the story. It was taking effect. Had I been a trained teacher I would have let them do it in class as a part of their work. Twice a week we got the words for our spelling lesson from the story. The children were so much interested in Hiawatha that they wanted to make pictures of Hiawatha. Then I let them illustrate the story, writing in their composition books the story and illustrating it. As we studied geography the upper Mississippi Valley and the Lake Regions all took on new meaning because Hiawatha had once lived, toiled, and suffered there.

But what had I done for those children most of all? I had fed their souls,—given them a masterpiece of literature. Starting with the childhood of Hiawatha we had followed him and admired him. We had roamed through that fairy land of dark green forest; heard the whispering pines, saw Hiawatha when he caught the King of Fishers, "Slew the Pearl Feather," prayed and fasted for his people, punished "Pau-puk-kee-wis," wooed and won Minnehaha, and when his task was done, sailed away into the fiery sunset.

That something inexpressibly sweet and

beautiful that I felt in the vision hour, and longed to impart to the children and heretofore had not been able to, I had at last found incarnate in a hero, while the music, meter, and imagery of poetry had awakened the sense of the beautiful and revealed a new world to the children. New life had come into the school. It had been born again and born from above.

Two months had passed. I had made an experiment. It had succeeded. Grammar, language, composition, spelling, drawing, story telling had been taught by that method. Formal language had become linked to literature and thereby to life. The formal had become an expression of the spiritual.

Where could I find another such story? The little goody-goody sissy-prissy stories could not interest us. They all seemed tame in comparison to the sustained effort of a story like Hiawatha. I had discovered that the children could fully appreciate a great story told to them in a living, creative way, and that interest grew each day as we told the long story in sections to the end. The only other hero in literature that I knew in these first years of my experience in teaching was revealed in the story of King Arthur which I had recently

studied in a university; but, were the Idyls of the King suited to the children? That was the only source of the story available to me at that time and it was more modern, more complicated in every way, and far more difficult to tell than the one we had just finished.

After hearing a number of the Hiawatha stories the children could and did read Longfellow's versions, but not so with the Idyls of the King. While the children fully enjoyed the stories of the Idyl, the style of Tennyson was not suited nor intended for children. All the imagery, heroic deeds and idealism of Hiawatha were there, but in telling this story much must be omitted. Involved plots must be made direct, and the story simplified. This required much more preparation on the part of the teacher, but we must have another story. It would not do to let the school fall back into the dead rut of lesson hearing, and though I feared they could not appreciate the Arthurian story yet I would try. I began with the finding of a naked babe on the beach, the childhood of Arthur, Merlin's work, the sword Excalibur, and Arthur's coronation.

At first the children were not so much interested. Their minds were still on Hiawatha

and his deeds; they were loath to leave him. But gradually as I told of Arthur and his deeds, Gareth and Lynette, Geraint and Enid, Lancelot and Elaine, the Quest of the Holy Grail, The Flight of Guenivere, the Passing of Arthur, the interest grew, and at times became intense, especially among the larger boys and girls. The story was coming home to them. King Arthur was a man like ourselves, of our own race. The whole story had brought the children face to face with a great ideal, Arthur, the blameless man. Pure himself, he demanded it in his knights, and bound them by vows of obedience to their conscience and their king. He defended the weak against the wicked; broke up the robbers' dens and cleansed the land; led his knights in brave deeds, for it is said that when the fire of God filled him none could stand against him in battle. He enjoyed the athletic sports and the tourneys, yet was so gentle, they said his ways were sweet.

As with Hiawatha the story was reproduced, illustrated, correlated with English history and geography, and at the same time it furnished the most excellent material for ethical and æsthetic culture. After the last story was told,

the Passing of Arthur, and the children saw with Sir Bedivere, the King pass with the three tall queens in a barge over the sea, they stood in wonder gazing on the splendor of his passing. Defeated in the last weird battle in the West, yet he was victorious in his ideals for he became spiritual king of his race.

"From the great deep to the great deep he goes," the children heard but did not quite understand. It was the better for that because it awakened in the child something of the mystery of life and death. In that it served the highest purpose. It helped the child to realize that there are things in life that eye has not seen nor ear heard. Let it not be forgotten that while we use these great stories for formal work, the formal was always the result of the creative. "The letter killeth; the spirit giveth life." Thus it was that children and teacher left the low plains of the "lesson hearer" and hand in hand walked the upland pastures of the soul.

This is not offered as a model method for teaching, but to reveal the source of the author's inspiration. The great interest of the children in the story, and a vision of its possibilities for education and culture, led me to

make a further study of the subject which, at that time, received little attention by the schools. That was some years ago and were I to teach again such a school, I would not and could not use exactly the same methods to-day. The underlying principle, however, that I stumbled on at that time, is still true, but I should apply it differently.

For one thing I do not think I should teach technical grammar to children until they had reached the philosophic period. Then I would make it a pure science. I would give them much of the best story literature, both orally and in printed form. And perhaps I would speak of the grade as a story grade rather than a grammar grade, and say story school instead of grammar school. I would encourage and teach them to motive the story in all legitimate ways, such as dramatization, re-telling, illustrating, singing, clay-modeling, in wood, metal and in their daily intercourse with one another and in the world outside of the school.

THE USE OF THE STORY IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

BY

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THE USE OF THE STORY IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

CHAPTER I

WHAT IS A STORY?

THE little child says, "Tell me a story," and we begin, "Long, long ago there lived a beautiful princess in a castle by the sea." The boy of ten asks for a story and we begin, "In the land where Jesus later lived, there was a boy whose only playmate was a big, big shepherd dog." But when the boy of fifteen wants a story, we are ready with, "In the days of good King Arthur, when knights were bold and brave." The Camp Fire girls gathered about their ceremonial fire with their guardian in the center of the circle wait eagerly for their story which is likely to begin, "In the mountains of Kentucky, there once lived a girl who had for a grandmother a real queen whom she had never seen, but whom she very much wanted to be like." But if one goes to the Old Ladies' home and is ready with a story, none of these things will appeal. To be most satisfactory it must lead back to the days when, "There was a little house in the country over which the roses grew and the honeysuckle climbed and in the house lived a mother, a father and a brood of little children."

All these are parts of stories. But what is a

story? A bit of fairy land, a tale from the Bible, a fact from history, an account of a love making, a dream of days that are gone? How shall we define it? St. John, in his book "Stories and Story-Telling," says, "A story may be said to be a narrative of true or imaginary events which form a vitally related whole, so presented as to make its appeal chiefly to the emotions rather than the intellect."

Sara Cone Bryant, in "How to Tell Stories to Children," goes even farther than does this definition and says, "A story is essentially and primarily a work of art and its chief function must be sought in the line of the uses of art." She is classing the story-teller with the sculptor and the painter and the writer as an artist. How far removed this second definition is from what one would usually get from a class of students!

A work of art—that which God has placed in the soul of a person and which that person longs to give to the world. Does not the artist see in his soul the picture that he paints if it is to be a great picture? It is no copy; it is a part of himself.

A story is a great life message that passes from one soul to another. It steals as quietly as a canoe into the hidden places where naught else can go; it is as soothing as a song sometimes and at other times it cuts like a two-edged sword. It is quickly given, but it lasts in the life through eternity. It has power to bless and it has also power to curse.

A story is a mind picture painted by the human voice, and the voice is far more wonderful than the hand. The centuries have come and gone, but the "Iliad," the "Odyssey," the "Tales of King Ar-

thur," the stories of our Bible are as vital as ever. They were given to the world by an artist, and the children through the centuries have loved them and been inspired by them.

Of course, you may teach facts by telling a story, you may amuse a crowd by giving them a tale of the great war or of love and valor, but you have failed if that is all that you have done. A well-told story should stir the emotions, create a deep desire to be like the hero of the tale; it must speak to the soul life of the hearers.

The children to whom you tell the story of George Washington and the colt may forget the details of the story, but if, in the telling of the story, there has been created the desire to be always brave enough to tell the truth, then you have been an artist. You have brought a great gift to the child and because you have made the mind picture a beautiful one, he has received it and made it a part of himself and his character building. God speaks to the child through stories and happy the teacher or mother who learns to work with God.

The story has been used as an instrument in religious education since time began. It is the oldest art in the world. In those olden days when there was no written language, not even picture-writing, the story was doing its work in educating the people and teaching them great ideals. Study the history of the older nations of the world. In all of them you will find folk-stories and usually one great epic story. You will find that their worship of the gods is linked inseparably with their stories of the gods. The ideals of the race are shown in the

stories, but the telling of these same stories from generation to generation helped to make these same ideals.

By various names we know the men who helped to preserve them for us: bards, minstrels, rhapsodists, poets, saga-men and many others. Their task was to inspire the race as they told the stories of Ulysses, Beowulf, Siegfried, Lancelot, King Arthur, etc. It was all essentially religious education.

But if the story is a great gift which we bring to our hearers, what is the purpose of the gift? Why is there today such a great emphasis being placed on the value of story-telling? The story has a rare purpose—the very same purpose that a great painting or a piece of sculpture has; its purpose is to give pleasure or joy. Above every other purpose this stands. It may teach history, it may amuse, it may be a help in teaching language—a great picture may do the same—but its one great purpose is to bring joy to the life. Recently I was telling a story to a little four-year-old. When I had finished, her hand patted my face and she said, "Booful story. Tell anudder." What a rare opportunity it is to bring joy and pleasure that shall be lasting and satisfying!

And this happiness which comes to the hearer of the story may be expected to do several things:

a) to arouse the emotional or soul life and cause it to hunger for better things.
b) to correct unfortunate habits by showing through the story what the consequence of the habit might be.
c) to help in the making of decisions by re-

membering what the result of a choice was in the life of the hero.

d) to develop a sense of humor.

e) to develop the imagination and lead it into proper channels of thought.

f) to cultivate a taste for literature, art and music.

g) to create a desire to pass on the stories they have learned to love.

h) to relax mental tension.

i) to better the thought and expression in language.

j) to give a true knowledge of life.

k) to promote a broad sympathy between pupil and teacher; a child is always a friend to a story-teller.

l) to create a desire to know of the world and its people—hence a desire to travel.

m) *To create a desire to serve.*

I have used the italics in the last statement because I should like to emphasize it over and over in religious work. Too long we have tried to teach missions by giving statistics and clippings to the pupils. Some months ago I told the story of Bunga by Anita Ferris to a group of Junior girls. A few weeks later, I had a letter from one of those girls who is twelve years old and whose home has all that heart could wish for. And this is a clipping from her letter: "I have said over and over and over to myself, 'If this will send a teacher, then I give it with my heart.' But money seems so little. I have had it all my life and I can give and not feel it as Bunga did. But I have begun to earn some of my own that

will help to send a teacher now, and some day I am going to say to you after all my school work is done and I am ready, 'If my life can help any, then I give it with my heart.' I have told mother, and she says, 'I should hate to lose you, but I should be glad to know you were where God needed you.'" The story creates the desire to serve as no other one factor does—to serve in the home, in the church, in the community and in the world.

The Christian church has always utilized stories in its work, but it has not taken the pains to train its workers in the art of story-telling. Van Dyke, Moody, Luther, Brooks—these were born story-tellers, and they did a wonderful work through their stories. So today in our churches we have some born story-tellers, and fortunate the child who gets into their classes. But the great need is for teachers who have learned how to tell stories, even though they do not naturally have the gift of telling them. Not long ago a boy said to me, "When Miss M. gets through telling us about the places where Jesus had been, I feel as if I had been right there myself. Then when father comes in drunk at night, I just creep under the bedclothes and make believe I am away out there in Palestine and I can see Jesus smiling at the boys and me." Probably he will never travel farther than the city where he lives, for his chances in life are few, but in storyland he is going where Jesus is and he can see him smile when trouble is all about. Isn't it a great opportunity that we have as we lead the boys and girls over this beautiful and magic road of storyland?

Every real story is a picture of life. In "Cedric, the Knight," the child sees himself. In "Epaminon-

das," the funny, he sees himself again. In the boy giving his lunch to the Christ, he sees himself. Stories are the very language of the child—the one great and beautiful way in which he comes to find himself and his ideals. They come to him as a recreation and a pleasure, but he feeds on them, he grows through them, he longs for them.

As religious teachers we should feed our own life on the best of stories that we may be able to give the very best to those under our care. We should tell them in such a beautiful way that the reaction may be higher thoughts, cleaner motives and a greater desire to be and to do. The story is one of our greatest assets, for it is God's own way of building a character.

The story—a work of art, a message of beauty, a creator of ideals.

The story-teller—the one who comes bearing the life message in the child's own way.

The result of the story—a deep sigh, a quiet moment that tells that the message has given joy and gladness which the hearer is loath to disturb. Then "as he walked homeward through the night, the story sank deep into his soul and he loved the God who could do such kindly deeds and say such beautiful things. The stars were bright overhead and as he came to the stile, he rested his head on the top round and looking into the sky, he said, 'And I will love thee, too, and I will be like Peter; I will follow thee, O Lord! my God.'"

CHAPTER II

THE PARTS OF THE STORY

EVERY story that is to be told has four very distinct parts or divisions, and each is vital to the success of the story. (*a*) the beginning or introduction; (*b*) the succession of events or body of the story; (*c*) the climax or moral issue of the story; (*d*) the conclusion.

Each of these parts needs to be carefully studied by the one who plans to learn to be a teller of stories. Over and over, well written stories should be examined in order to gain new power in planning each part.

The introduction of the story is very important, for in these one or two short, concise sentences, the hero or heroes of the story are introduced in such a way that the hearers are eager to know more of them and their deeds. Here one must arouse a desire to hear the story. Recently I visited a Bible School in the South end of Boston. In the first class I found a group of restless ten-year-old boys whose teacher greeted them thus, "Good morning boys. Today we are to continue the story of David, though, I am sure, you thought we had learned all we could about him last Sunday." And no one heard or cared about her or about David. In another class, the teacher stood at the door as the boys of thirteen came into the room. As the last boy came in, she patted him on the shoulder and said, "Had you

boys heard that David had decided to go to Boy's Latin School in the fall? Do you know, David, I thought of you as I read the story of a boy this week who went from Tarsus,—here (pointing to a map on the wall) to Jerusalem—here—just because he wanted to study more than he could in his own home town and because he could study with one of the greatest teachers of the time, Gamaliel. You want to study under Professor W—; he wanted to study under Gamaliel." And on she went and the boys were with her.

An easy way to study an introduction is to see if it answers three simple questions—Who? When? Where? Most introductions do. For instance—"Long, long ago (when) in an island across the sea (where), there lived a man who had only four black cats for company (who)." It is not necessary at all that all these facts should be in the introduction however. It is only necessary that the hero or heroine be introduced in such a way that the little children will be interested and curious to know what is coming while the older people will probably be running ahead, in mind, and trying to figure out the plot for themselves.

It is at this point that so many teachers fail. They think that any introduction will do when it is time for the story to begin. And then they begin in a careless way and no one is interested. A good story does not begin with an excuse (as many teachers do), or a long discussion of the things that led up to the story, or even an interesting fact concerning the hero at some other time in his life—a good story-teller introduces the hero at once in the very

most interesting way possible, and then goes on with the story.

But there are some characteristics of a good introduction which it will be well to note. Usually the introduction gives a hint as to the story that is to follow: "Once upon a time there was a great king named Midas who cared for nothing but gold, gold, gold." Evidently the story will tell how he got the gold and what he did with it. "Once upon a time in a country far across the sea, there lived a mother hen with her brood of chickens, all yellow but one and he was half yellow and half black; he had one eye and one leg and one wing so he was called Half-chick." The children will know at once that they are to hear about the adventures of this little chick who was curiously made and they will wonder how such a chick could possibly live. Here interest and curiosity are aroused, a setting for the story given and a hint as to what is to follow. It tells who he was, where he lived and when he lived.

Perhaps there is no more vital way of gripping an audience in the introduction of a story than with a sense appeal: cold, hunger, beauty, sorrow, sympathy, disgust, etc., as we characterize the hero. Think back to the childhood stories. "It was a bitter cold night and the little match girl blew on her hands and stamped her feet as she wandered up and down calling, 'Matches, matches; Please buy my matches.'" Every child who has been cold is at once full of sympathy for the little girl. "Once upon a time there was a woman who had five hungry boys and she was frying a pancake for them." "Hungry boys." "One pancake." How is it to be done?

Here is a sense appeal of hunger and also of curiosity. "Every afternoon when the children were coming from school, they used to play in the giant's garden." Weren't they afraid? How dared they play there? Children are full of imagery and they picture to themselves very quickly the background that you give in the introductions of the stories. If they do not "see," they do not listen.

We have been thinking in terms of little children. Is the same thing true with the "grown-up" stories? Listen. "The road was long and hard and steep but at the side grew the beautiful, sweet arbutus peeping from beneath the covering leaves; the little brook tinkled as it ran down to join the lake below, and the breezes played about the boy's hair as he gathered the fragrant flowers for the sick mother in the cabin on the hill." Can you not see the flowers and the cabin? Can you not hear the brook and feel the breezes? Can you not see the road? Would you not like to climb it? You have been introduced to it by a sense appeal.

The introduction must find a common interest and arouse a curiosity as to the story that is to be told. Then involuntary attention will be given and that is the only attention that is worth having in story-telling. From the introduction all unnecessary description must be taken—and directness must be the thought of the maker. Interest must be gained the moment the story begins even as interest must begin in a play the moment the curtain is lifted.

Not long ago, I heard a story-teller use this introduction for a story on a gymnasium floor, "He had red hair, a freckled face, a pug nose and his name was John, Frederick, Nicholas Bistricky—but

the boys called him 'Nick of the Alley' for short." The name alone was enough to arrest the attention of the boys and the adventures of Nick were most interesting to me as well as to the boys, especially when they found that Nick was in the hospital near by and needed a friend.

The introduction is a real test of a story-teller's ability. After it has been written and rewritten and is satisfactory, it is a good plan to memorize it and make it your very own.

After the introduction, there follows a series of actions which form a simple plot, that is they lead quickly and simply to a crisis in the life of the hero, a place where he must decide between two courses of action, an obstacle which he must overcome to be successful, a giant which he must conquer. Then comes the trial and often the outcome is what he and we least expect it to be, but a moral lesson is taught by the result. The whole succession of events leads to this one act or choice which is called the climax of the story. Any description or act which does not point to it, weakens the story. In a written story there may be several short stories included but not in the story that is to be told. All but the one thought and purpose must be sacrificed for the sake of the strength of the story. "That which does not help, hinders," is a sentence which the story-teller needs to place where she can see it often for it is most important. Many stories have to be abridged and remade because of this very fact. In fact, very few written stories are ready to be told.

The climax is the heart of the story—the meat of the nut. All else, even the introduction, helps to make it. It comes when the struggles and trials

of the hero have reached their highest point, when the listening child feels that he simply must win because he has been so faithful, has tried so hard, has become so tired. It is the turning point of the story. Failure here to bring this out effectively means that the story has failed. Have you ever heard a person repeat a funny story that was not at all funny as they told it? They failed in their climax. It is absolutely essential in the humorous story. To be most effective, it should be of a surprising nature. Read again the climax of the "Ugly Duckling" which is a most ingenious one. "'They will be angry if I come near them,' said the lonely duckling. 'But I must speak to them.' So he bent his head to receive the blows they should give and glided toward them. But they swam to meet him, they caressed him with their beaks, they bowed before him. 'Oh,' cried the little child who was throwing crumbs to the birds! 'See! there is a new swan and he is the most beautiful of them all.' The other birds wheeled about him saying, 'You are the most beautiful of us all. You must never leave us.' Then he bent his head and looked at his reflection in the water. And lo! The ugly gray feathers had become white like the birds he had loved and dreamed of, and he, too, was a swan."

The moral lesson is taught in the climax in picture language and whatever tends to weaken this point must be eliminated. The scenes leading to it must be so clear and concise that in hearing the story, the children will forget time and place and story-teller and follow only the hero in his struggle or pleasure. It is well to study model stories and see how these steps leading to the climax are planned

and how the suspense is held to the very end. Children demand mind pictures. They care nothing whether the story be long or short,—they chafe at detail. The story must move and move rapidly if it would hold their interest. The more direct the movement, the better.

Sometimes the conclusion is found in the same sentence as the climax and sometimes it is contained in one or two sentences that follow it. Its purpose is very definite. The story has carried the minds of the group to a high point and pointed out a life message. Now the mind must be set at rest in order that it may reflect on the thought of the story. Any indefiniteness as to the ending of the story is weakening to the story. As we listen to a great orchestra, they carry us up and up and up to the finale—but they do not leave us there. A few beautiful strains at the close bring us back to the things about us and we heave a sigh of satisfaction at the evening's pleasure. So with the story. There is a tension at the climax that must be relieved by the conclusion. The hero has made his choice and won his victory and we must know the result. In fairy land it reads, "And they lived happily ever after." If we would be honest with ourselves, we should have to own that it is thus we still want our stories to end—happily. Turn again to the "Ugly Duckling" for a conclusion. "Then a great happiness filled his heart. He was no longer unloved and alone. He had found his own at last."

The unity of the story is upheld by the conclusion. The story must seem to end. The conclusion must not detract from the climax neither must it suggest another story. It must end the story that

has been told. Children's stories end very quickly. They want no long drawn-out ending after their tale is told. This is a lesson that teachers and preachers need to have told and retold to them. When the story ends, STOP. A moral tacked to the end of a story is an outrage. If the story has been well told, it has taught its own moral much more effectively than a teacher can possibly tell it. And no teacher knows what lesson that story has taught to the child. Even the child does not know, but it has been taught the lesson and now needs time to make it a part of himself. Once I heard the story of the "Star Child" told. It has a wonderful ending. "And they fell on his neck and kissed him, and brought him into the palace, and clothed him in fine raiment, and set the crown upon his head and the scepter in his hand. Over the city that stood by the river he ruled. Much mercy and justice did he show to all. He banished the evil magician; to the Woodcutter and his wife he sent rich gifts and to their children he gave high honor. Nor would he suffer any to be cruel to bird or beast but taught love and kindness and charity. To the poor he gave bread; to the naked he gave clothing and there was peace and plenty in the land." A long conclusion but a very fine one. When the teacher had finished, she began asking questions, twice startling a little girl who finally began to cry. Later when I asked her why she had cried, she said, "Oh, I was having such a lovely story about that city and it was so mean of her to spoil it all. But she always does it and I want to keep still."

A good story stops at the conclusion. A good story-teller usually stops with a short conclusion.

A carefully planned introduction that arouses interest and curiosity, a concise arrangement of the events that are necessary to a strong climax and a restful conclusion. These are the qualifications of a good story to tell. By these points one judges written stories, one condenses or enlarges stories and one learns to take the little everyday occurrences of life and weave them into stories that often are more effective in teaching the lessons of the Bible School than all the quarterlies ever prepared. A life story is worth a number of stories that begin, " I read." One can learn to quickly judge the value of a story and make it their own by becoming thoroughly familiar with these four parts of the story.

CHAPTER III

PREPARING A STORY TO TELL

A LATER chapter will discuss the choosing of the right story for the right group and the studying of local conditions which may affect the story. So in this chapter we will presuppose that this has been done and that you have either chosen a story or had one assigned to you to be told. How shall it be prepared in the most satisfactory way?

The very first thing to do is to put yourself into sympathetical relations with the story, for the message comes, not so much from the story itself, as from the life and sympathy that is behind the story. The message comes from within you and the story is only the medium through which you work. The story is only a help to you in interpreting life to your group. You must believe in a story, the story must have a message for you before you can give it to others. But, you say, how can I put myself into sympathy with a story that I do not believe? This has been the question that many a Sunday School teacher has asked me. Perhaps you can not agree with the viewpoint of the writer of the story, or, of the writer of the quarterly, if you are trying to teach a Bible lesson, but still you can get a life message out of the story if you will search for it. Every story is capable of teaching many lessons.

You may not choose to teach that the earth was created in seven days of twenty-four hours each;

but the first chapters of Genesis teach a lesson that you do believe and are eager to have the pupils believe: that God made all things. If you will read over the chapters with the thought in mind, "How can I best show the pupils that God was the creator?" you will find there plenty of materials on which to work.

When ready to prepare a story read it over and over to get yourself into the mood of the story and find there a life message. If you cannot find it, do not tell the story for the hearers will know that you are only giving them words. Your life and personality must be the background for what you say. It is well just here to remember, too, that often a story that has little of inspiration at one time may be full of power at another. Two years ago I heard John R. Mott, at the close of an address, tell the story of Pershing's visit to the tomb of Lafayette. I had read it before and heard it before, but it had only seemed to be like an interesting bit of history. But Dr. Mott had been making a plea for every Christian to be standing where he ought to be in the time of crisis in the church. When he finished the story, he changed the climax in only one word but it changed the whole story. I had heard it given, "Lafayette, here we are." Dr. Mott said, "Lafayette, we are here." And the audience was spell-bound by the way he said the words. I have never wanted to hear another tell the story since, lest they spoil it for me. It meant volumes because of the man who was telling it and the cause for which he was using the story.

Let me repeat—read the story over and over till it speaks a message to you and then prepare to give

that message. After this is done, close the book; if you are alone, close your eyes and live the story with your own experience as a background. Ever since I spent a month in Grand Pré, I have loved to tell the story of "Evangeline" because I can see the little old church with the stiff-backed, high pews, the quaint little town, the old French willows and many other things spoken of in the story. Put the story into your own life, for remember you must give of yourself when you tell the story. If the story is part of a longer story, you should read the whole story before trying to give the part. Every line added to your own appreciation of the story makes the telling more effective.

When you can feel it and see it, you are ready to begin the analysis of the story. First make sure of the theme you want to use. Shall it teach honesty, or self-mastery, or courtesy or loyalty? What is the purpose of telling the story? This must be very clear in your mind because every part of your preparation is based on it. In some stories it is hard to decide just what theme you shall use. Take the story of David for instance. In the story of the fight with Goliath, shall it be the athletic or the social or the spiritual message that you will leave with the boys? His outdoor life had prepared him—he knew his task so he was unafraid. This is a great message for adolescent boys. He saw the danger of his country, he saw the perplexity of his king, he saw the need of some one who would volunteer to do the hard thing and perhaps lose his own life. He would be that one. But he had learned to have faith in God so he said to the soldiers, "Who is this that dares to defy the living God?" and he said to the

giant, "Thou comest to me with a sword but I come to thee in the name of the Lord God of Hosts, and he will give thee into my hands this day that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel." Which theme will you use? You can't use them all in the one lesson, though many seem to try—and so make a hash of the story. And some, who know nothing of story-telling, would make the killing of the giant the theme of the story. That is one of the very least of the things to be emphasized. It can come in quietly and leave little impress on the mind for we are not anxious to emphasize that men should kill one another. "Of course, he killed the giant of whom the rest were afraid, for he used the little sling which he knew so well how to use and he trusted in God. And David became a great power in the land of Israel and afterward became their king."

Choose your theme and then you are ready to choose your climax. Which is the great moral crisis? Where is the high point of the story when that theme is used? Be very sure that you find it, for all your events preceding it must lead to it. Then begin to pick out the events that naturally make the foundation for this event. Perhaps many events told in the written story must be eliminated. Here you must be the chooser. What do you need for your purpose? Use no other. There must be no side lines of thought, for, if there are, the minds of the hearers will go off into those lines and your story be less effective. Every natural crisis that can be introduced, in leading to the climax, will add to the suspense and, of course, suspense creates interest.

The story-teller who is a novice at the work will do well for a time to make a written outline of the events to be used. After a time, this will be unnecessary but at first, it gives one confidence and much help in making the rest of the work complete.

Now comes the conclusion and the introduction. How can you end it without detracting from the climax and in a restful way? How can you begin it in such a way as to create the most interest? You will need to think just here of the group to which you are to tell it. What have they in their lives in common with the hero about which you are to tell them, or in common with the setting of the story? Are they foreign or American? Are they from homes of refinement? Do they think in terms of alley and street-car or do they think of green field and mountain and roadside flower? This must help to determine what your introduction shall be. The story will become more permanent in their minds if it is linked with things of their own daily life. Again the novice will find it well to learn both the introduction and the conclusion of the stories she is to tell. There are many distractions in a Sunday School class. But if your introduction is all ready, by the time you have said that much to your class, the rest of the story will follow much more naturally and easily. First and last impressions count for much in life. By doing artistic work on these two parts of your story, you can cover a multitude of sins in the rest.

After theme, events, introduction and climax and conclusion are all prepared, the story is ready to tell. To the class? Not a bit of it. It is ready to tell to your family, to a group of children, and if no one else is ready to listen to it, to yourself. How

are you going to know if you can tell it well if you do not hear your own self tell it? You will be less afraid of the sound of your own voice in the story if you have heard yourself tell it several times. The words given in the book were out of the life of the authors. Fill your story in with your own words. Then after you have told it, criticize it yourself—Did you put in anything that was distracting to the attention? Did you use any unknown words over which the children must climb in thought and, when they have climbed over, find that you are far away in the story and they have lost some of it? No words must be used that are unfamiliar unless the context shows immediately what the meaning is that you desire to leave. Did you use the best of English? The children are learning to use it by hearing you tell the story. Could you not have used words that made the descriptions more beautiful? For instance, we might say, "John went up the hill with the sheep," but the children would appreciate the story much more if we said, "Then out of the gate he led the sheep, down the long lane, across the little singing brook and then up and up the green hillside where the ferns grew, and the daisies nodded, and the little birds sang in the treetops." Make your word pictures as beautiful as you can.

This telling and retelling of the story is all for the purpose of bettering the finish of it. Often reread the author's story, even though you have told it many times. You will find little suggestions for change for the better. If you see the pictures and love the story, you will find that it grows and grows on your mind. Choice bits of direct discourse may be taken verbatim from the written story and, rarely,

a bit of description, but it is the work of the reader to repeat; it is yours to interpret.

The connecting words in your finished story may need a little attention. One is liable to use "and" too frequently, forgetting that there are other words that can be used very effectively—but, also, indeed, so, thus and many others. They all help to make the story run smoothly and should be carefully studied. The story-teller's art comes with the care of the details of the making of the story. At first they seem cumbersome. It seems a long time to spend in the telling of one simple story—but if that story has the power of making or marring a life it is worth much time.

Many years ago, I had a class of older adolescent boys. The lesson for the day was the sin of Achan and somehow, as I studied, I found the Bible lesson hard to prepare. There were points where I knew the boys would take issue with me. So I prepared as well a story told me by a New York banker. "He was a little bank errand boy and in his home he had an invalid mother and a little sister who could not walk. The father drank up all he could earn and so John had to be the support of the two at home and it took every cent he could possibly earn. Now the doctor had been to the home recently and had told John that unless the mother could get into the country where there was plenty of fresh air, that she was going to grow worse and perhaps would be gone in the fall. So John had tried and tried to find some way by which he could send the two away, but there seemed none at all and his little heart seemed almost ready to break as day after day his mother grew less and less strong.

"One day when John was sweeping under the table of the bank, he found a roll of bills—a big roll and he could see some yellow-backs in the pile. He picked them up and started to go to the office of the president but he stopped. 'Just think what those bills will do,' he thought. 'They will send mother and Millie away for the whole summer and then they will be well. No one knows I have them and they don't belong to the bank. They were in the waste paper. I'm going to keep them. Finding is keeping and they are mine.' So into his pocket they went and he finished his sweeping and started for home. But somehow the roll didn't feel good. He put them into his inner pocket, and then in his hip pocket, and then shifted them to his coat pocket. He felt sure that every one must see them. About an hour after John had gone home, he came back to the bank, knocked for admittance and went to the office of the president. He threw the bills on the desk saying, 'I found them when I swept,' and then with a cry of pain, he fled from the bank.

"Next morning he was there at his work and after the bank had opened, he was called to the president's room. 'John,' said he, 'I wish you would tell me why you brought those bills back last night. I know why you wanted them and what they would have done at home. We didn't know you had them. Why did you bring them back?' Away over the desk leaned John and looking straight into the eyes of the man, he said, 'Sir, as long as I live, I have to live with myself and I don't want to live with a thief.' A few days later the mother and Millie went to the country but not alone, for John went with them for the whole summer as the

appreciation of the bank for the nobility of the boy."

That was the story. In the class was one boy who was much of a trial. Later he left the class to leave town. At intervals of months, I would have a card from him. Then came the war and when our boys were in France there came a letter from him which said, "Years ago on a wet rainy day when the ice was dangerous on the side walk, you came to class and told us a story about a boy. I can't remember it all but I can't forget the end, 'As long as I live, I have to live with myself and I don't want to live with a thief.' It has kept me from lying and stealing and from being a coward and here in France, it has kept me from being untrue to my manhood. I have a class in the barracks—you would never believe it, would you, but I have—and some of my men need that story. I want it all for them, for all that I am I owe to that story and from the bottom of my heart, I thank you for it." The theme of the story of Achan on that day was dishonesty. The boy forgot the story of Achan but he remembered the story from boy life. Was it worth the time I spent in preparing it?

You never know when you prepare a story but that in your class there may be some boy or girl who will take your story and build their future career on it. Can you play with such a responsibility?

Read your story, make friends with your story, find the hidden message or theme of your story, mark the place where you are going to make your big appeal for the higher things of life, then build the frame work, add the beautiful things that shall make it something to be used, introduce it with a great

desire to give and finish it with a silent prayer that it may be used. Permeate the whole with a love of the story, a love of the child to whom it is to be given and gratitude that to you has come the opportunity to carry the great gift—and the result will be "Please tell us another." You have been an artist and a teacher.

CHAPTER IV

HELPS IN TELLING THE STORY

If in the telling of a story to a group, one must forget self and content in order to be successful and think only of the message, then one must master the details of telling a story in such a way that they become natural and spontaneous. In this chapter are given some very commonplace suggestions, suggestions which perhaps every one knows, yet which it is wise often to recall to mind for they are very necessary details. To a born story-teller, many of them come naturally but the born story-tellers are few and far between.

Short sentences are much preferable to long ones in any told story, but short sentences are necessary in little children's stories. When one is reading, the eye helps the mind to keep the thought complete. In the telling of a story, the thought must be made as simple as possible. This does not mean simple sentences are always to be used—then the story would sound unfinished. Use complex sentences freely to relieve the monotony of the compound but do not make them too long or difficult to trace. The word "and" is a great temptation to the story-teller. It is well to remember that there are others that can be used which will make the story much smoother. Try using—while, also, but, hence, thus and many other similar words.

Use the best English at your command. You owe

it to yourself as well as to the hearers. Seldom, if ever, should any slang be used unless it is necessary in a quotation from the direct discourse. You are a builder of ideals and slang is far from ideal. Try to imagine some slang inserted into some of Henry Van Dyke's masterpieces and you will at once see that it has no place in story-telling. There are idioms in the English language which now may be used carefully where they could not have been used ten years ago. But plan to use correct musical English. Little children like especially words containing the letter L and the letter T. The filling in of your outline in your own words is your opportunity to show your command of your own language.

Eliminate all description that is not necessary. Suppose in the story of "Red Riding Hood" one should stop to describe the red cape: when and where and how it was made. Immediately the children would be restless. All they need to know of the cape is that it was a pretty little cape which she wore when she started for her grandmother's. Make all the description vivid as to details but use none that is unnecessary.

Use direct language. Note the difference in strength. "Then the lion asked the mouse why he had wakened him." "Then the lion said to the little mouse in his big, big voice, 'How dare you wake me when I am asleep!'" Children really see in their mind the characters as they talk back and forth to each other. Don't rob them of the pleasure. Sometimes the Bible stories have no direct discourse but make it up for yourself. It is not irreverent to say what you think Jesus might have said when he took the little ones on his knee or when he took the lunch

from the hands of the boy. It makes the story live.

Be careful of your voice. Some are pitched too high, some too low. Some are nasal and some are very loud. You must find the happy medium. Not long ago, I went to a lecture, but I had to leave the room for the voice of the speaker fell on my ear drums in such a way that it was painful indeed. Children like a soothing tone that is full of cheer. Sometimes the nervousness in a group is directly traceable to the tones of the teacher. Pitch your voice for the ones farthest away from you, but this does not necessarily mean a loud tone; it means a distinct, carefully modulated one. There are times in some stories when one needs to use a slight amount of drawling or of slurring in the voice but it is only in mimicry. Watch yourself to see how you say some of the expressive words in the story. There needs to be harmony between your voice and the words used.

Rhythmic phrases are helpful in children's stories. Do you not remember the "Hippity-hop, hippity-hop" of the Half-chick as he went to see the king, and the "trit-trot, trit-trot" of the troll as he went over the bridge? They are like old friends to the little ones as they meet them over and over. In "Life at its Best" by Edwards there is told the story of the Forty Wrestlers. Boys of the adolescent age seem to like much of the repetition in this:

> "Forty wrestlers wrestling for thee, oh Christ,
> Forty wrestlers wrestling for thee.
> For thee we claim the victory,
> For thee we claim the crown."

Vary the time of the story. Study the effect of a pause, for it is one of the most effective ways of giving emphasis. A pause after the introduction is quite necessary in working with little children in order that they see clearly the setting. Do not use a monotone or a sameness of time. As you near a crisis, you should move at a slower pace for the suspense adds to the interest.

Study the effect of different times of the day in telling stories. On Mother's day in 1918, I went to Camp Sherman to tell Mother Stories to the men at the request of the Y.M.C.A. At 7.30 in the morning, I told them to the men at the Detention camp as they were lined up against the green of the hillside, making a wonderful picture in their khaki suits. One would hardly have known how to ask for a greater inspiration than the theme, the setting and the men, who on the next day were to go to France. In front of me were great piles of roses to be given to them with the Mother-message. But at night I was at the hut. The day was over, thousands of letters had been written to mothers, the roses on their coats were faded. And again I realized the truth of the statement that the ideal time for stories is the night-time and the dim firelight or lamplight. If you have told stories to a group of boys and girls at a summer camp around the camp fire, you too have felt it. The glow of the fire seems to put them in the most receptive mood and the story-teller seems to fade more easily into the background.

If you have the choice of the time when your story is to be told, choose the evening and the firelight. The reader must have spot lights and prefers to be

seen. She must have setting; but you must have atmosphere and mood. The real story-teller conceals her art. Simplicity is her watchword.

Be sparing in the use of gestures unless they are very natural to you, and then be careful. Their use in story-telling is two: to help the imagination to travel on its way and to appeal to the emotions. We say, "The steeple went up and up and up" and a gesture of the hand, quietly done and immediately ended, helps them to see the steeple. Then if we are using a sentence of direct discourse and wish to help to show fear, joy, surprise, a gesture, held until the emotion is stirred, will help. But there is a suggestive posture of the body that is very helpful in story-telling. The curving of the shoulders to show witchery and craftiness; the drawing away to show fear and distrust—these all help if well done. But these must be done, not as the elocutionist does them—to show a skill in portrayal—but because you feel them yourself and your whole nature is responding to the appeal of the story. Learn that suggestion is often more powerful than action. A smile across the face when a humorous situation is appearing will bring an answering smile and a quiver of excitement to know what is to happen. If you are living the story as you tell it, you cannot keep the soulfulness from the voice nor the sympathy from the poise of the body.

Do not long for a big audience. A small group where you can look every one in the eye, where perhaps you know each life and some of its needs, is much more worth while. The story grows less and less impressive usually as your audience grows in size. Perhaps they may get as much from you but

it is hard for you to feel the comradeship which is necessary in good story-telling.

Learn well a few good stories and then tell and retell these. What has brought a great message to you, you can probably give better than one that has been chosen for you. If you hear a good story, jot down the outline. Then when you have reached your office or home, fill it in in your own words. In this way you will get many of your most effective stories. Not long ago a lady wrote asking me for the publisher of three stories that she had heard me tell. Two of those stories were built out of incidents that I had seen when riding in her car with her by my side. The other I had heard told in a sermon in the church which we both attended. Not the number of stories you can tell, but how well you tell those that you have, marks you as a success in the work.

Use sense appeals. This has been brought out in another chapter so it need only be referred to here. If a child has felt pain, the story of William Rugh is alive to him. If he has felt hunger, he can sympathize with the Ugly Duckling.

Be leisurely. Do not consent to tell a story if it must be hurried and poorly done. You yourself can not get into tune with the story and be hurried—neither can the children. For the time being you are "stage manager." Take your time—but do not drag.

Be careful of your dress and manners. A button from a dress, a color that does not harmonize, a flashy bit of ornament, and the child's mind is with that and not with your story. That is why I urge

that churches build cloak rooms where both pupils and teachers shall remove their wraps. What school teacher would think for a moment of teaching for two hours with her hat and coat on? But we spend nearly two hours in the Bible Schools with the children. I well remember the disorder that I saw in a class one day and the teacher could not understand why. She had a new, bright red hat and the boys were interested in it as the feather waved back and forth to attract their attention. Not long since I heard a teacher who had a mannerism that was most annoying. She held her hands very tightly together as she told her story and one little finger kept moving back and forth over her dress. Just nervousness, you may say. Certainly it was, but it was worse for her work than many mistakes in the story would have been. It put her person into the foreground and the story was less effective. Simplicity of dress and manner are requisites.

Use comparisons from life. Then many times a day the lesson you have taught will be brought to the mind of the child. A friend told me of riding through the country with a little child who was all enthusiasm over the things they were seeing. Suddenly he slid from the seat to the floor of the car and hid his head. When he finally was persuaded to come up he said, "There was a big pig and I didn't mind mother and wash my face before I came." Evidently some one had been telling him the story of "The Pig Brother," told by Laura Richards in "Golden Windows."

Keep old, well known stories very much as you were told them. Children resent changes in their

favorite story. Sometimes we question the wisdom of some of the fairy and folk stories. Do not tell them if you have to remake them too much for later the child will find them in the epic stories.

Perhaps one of the greatest helps in story-telling is a rich personality. And how can this be obtained? By loving the beautiful, by reading the worth-while, by filling the mind with those things that are worth passing on, by cultivation of a cheery disposition, by striving toward high ideals. To aim to be an interpreter of life is to aim high. You must have high ideals if you wish the message of the story to be filled with the best. You must have a background in your own life through which the story may pass and be electrified.

But the greatest way of winning a rich personality is to live near to the great story-teller and let him purify and clarify your ideals. You may know every principle of story-telling, you may study with all your mind but if the Master is not working in your life and through your life, you can not tell the Bible stories in such a way that their message will grip the lives and hearts of the boys and girls. The men of old said of the Christ, "He speaks with authority and not as the Scribes." Now the scribes "knew" but they did not "feel." Jesus felt the power of God in his own life and he went out to carry the message of the love of the Father. If you feel the power of God in your own life, you will carry the message and you will do his will. Your own life must be in harmony with the Christ if you would teach the great lessons that he taught. His stories are some of the most treasured that we have and you are to tell them. You will need an historical

background and a social background to be sure. But you must have the personal background also for the story and right here is where many of our Bible School teachers fail. They ask me, "Why can't I tell the stories and make them live? Why can't I make the children love the Bible stories?" Do you love the Bible stories or do you teach them just because they are the assigned lesson of the day? When you teach them, do the children feel that you know so much about the stories that you can give and give and still have more, or are you looking for the bell to ring for the close of the lesson? Is your life a background for the story?

Some years ago I heard an old man tell the story of the man who went down to Jericho and fell among thieves. He knew nothing of story-telling but he knew his Bible and he loved the story. He told the story beautifully and I remember so well when he said, "And he poured in oil and wine," I thought to myself, "That is what you are doing every day —pouring in oil and wine to help some one who is hurt." He made the story live because he lived the story.

Take any good story of the Bible and learn to tell it well, test it by the helps mentioned in this chapter, let it live with you for a month before you give it to another, then tell it to a group as if they had never heard of it before. Criticize your story and then tell it again to a different group. Watch your own story grow in power and usefulness. A girl once told me that her whole Bible study had been transformed by thus studying the story of the "Prodigal Son." Today she is a social worker and I am sure that is where she gained her desire to do the work.

She found that it was in her own personality that she was lacking, and that is a most serious lack in story-telling.

"Study to show thyself approved unto God—a workman that needeth not to be ashamed."

CHAPTER V

HINDERANCE TO THE SUCCESS OF THE STORY-TELLER

PERHAPS one of the greatest hinderances in story-telling is the failure to appreciate the spirit of the story. Is it an heroic story or is it a pathetic one? Should it, if told well, call forth a hearty laugh or a desire to go out and fight? Is the story an absurd one? If so, why should we tell an absurd story? Take for instance the story of Epaminondas. Is it funny? If so, why? Its very absurdity makes it funny. I have told Epaminondas to a grown-up audience many times and seen them enjoy it fully as much as do the children and they never tire of it. It is well occasionally to tell an absurd story, for boys and girls as well as grown folks cannot always be at high tension. They need to relax. To learn to see the humor in a story is to learn to see the brighter side of all life. He whose sense of humor is lacking is not fit for human companionship. Wyche says, "To the extent that we can relax and let down, to that extent can we rebound to higher things." Sometimes the whole object of a humorous story is to create a good feeling among a group of children who, because they are tired or the day is hot, are not being companionable. Catch the spirit of the story.

Just here lest it should not chance to come later in the book, a list of some of the best humorous stories may not be amiss. The two authors who are

most noted for their simple stories of fun and frolic are Joel Chandler Harris and Albert Bigelow Paine. Both have given us animal stories—The "Brer Rabbit Stories" told by Uncle Remus and the "Hollow Tree Nights and Days." In the "Brer Rabbit Stories," the little rabbit is harmless and helpless, yet he wins in the tests by his quick wit and his craftiness.

"The Gingerbread Man," "Black Sambo," "Epaminondas," "The Wolf and the Kids," "Tar Baby," "Chicken Little," "Johnny Cake"—These are a few of the favorite humorous stories loved by all children who hear them. In telling these stories the story-teller should take the story seriously. No matter how funny it may be, if it is worth telling it is worth telling well.

Lack of definite thinking is another cause of failure. "Oh I have known that story for a long time. I can tell that," is often the cause of an unhappy class and teacher. No matter how long you have known a story, it needs study every time you tell it. Your theme may be changed, you may need the story for one particular child in the class, and if so you will need to study much more carefully than usual. Always study your story and do it many days before you are to use it.

Self consciousness has been called the root of all evil in story-telling and surely it is evil. To think of your own self when you should be thinking of your message is very selfish, to say the least. Being thoroughly prepared eliminates much of this. Thinking of your audience as children helps to drive it away. Realizing what the story can do if you tell it well will make you long to give the message

and forget some of self. Think what you are saying and not how you are going to say it. But I know of nothing that so helps one to conquer it as just facing squarely the trouble and saying, "I know my story better than any one else in the room knows theirs. Now I will not allow myself to be less useful than I might be. I will tell that same story over and over till I can do it well." And telling the same story is much easier the second time provided the audience or group is different. Get a group that is not at all critical at first if you can, for self consciousness is sure to be there if you feel the criticism of what you are doing. Stop pitying yourself for the thing for which you have no need of pity and be glad of the opportunity.

Memorizing of the text is a hindrance; for then you have to be thinking words instead of message. Once in a long time you will find a story that might be memorized because of the beauty of the English, or because the simplicity of the story seems to be just fitted to your need. I have memorized several of the parables because they are gems. I like to tell Laura Richards' "The Angel of the Wheat Fields," just as it is, but usually to memorize hinders your thought. Your imagination has no chance to play and so your rendering is liable to become more or less stilted and mechanical. You see words instead of pictures as you go along and if your memory chance to fail you in a moment of self consciousness, you are at a complete loss. Memorize what you wish to quote from the story and let the rest be your own.

Limited vocabulary hinders many. Study children's expressions and phrases if you will tell chil-

dren's stories. But a limited vocabulary is much less of a hinderance than a vocabulary that can not be made to fit the needs of the children. A study of Junior Church stories will show this. Your vocabulary simply must be made to fit your audience and the spirit of the story. Can the same person tell well "The Other Wise Man," or "A Lump of Clay," and also tell a Brer Rabbit story? Yes, if she can fit her vocabulary and mood to the stories, but the dignified words of the one will not do at all for the other. There must be no unknown words in children's stories. Many a minister has no child's vocabulary and so can not tell children's stories. Pure English should always be used but it should be very simple and direct.

A study of synonyms will help greatly here. For instance, can you tell how to use the following words: pretty, beautiful, grand, splendid, gorgeous, magnificent, lovely and sweet? How do they differ? How many could be used with the word man? Could you use more of them with the word "girl?" Do you use them correctly as you commonly talk? When your story is ready to tell and you are describing the hero could you not find a more expressive adjective than the one you had planned to use?

Now study for a moment your use of comparisons in the story. You say "as green as grass," "as white as milk," "as strong as a lion." Suppose you were to use the words in an adolescent story. Could you better them? It is well here again to use comparisons from everyday life. But a word of caution is needed. In a near-by town, a teacher was telling a story and she said, "He was as swift as Carl Steen," who was a baseball player of growing fame

and whom the boys were idolizing. Later she asked one of the boys to tell her something about the story and he said, "I guess I didn't hear that. I think I was out on the diamond with Carl Steen about the time you were telling that." Her comparison had brought a more interesting picture than the one she was giving. Use everyday suggestive comparisons but do not let them suggest a side line of thought. Our comparisons are likely to receive local and national color also. In a recent examination I asked for a filling in of the following blank (with others) for adolescent stories—"as mean as——" and over half the class filled it with "the Kaiser." Evidently they felt that that was what the boys were thinking at the time.

Failure to enunciate and articulate clearly are hinderances. We enunciate one letter or sound. Articulation means the putting together of two or more sounds. Do you leave the g's from the end of your words ending in "ing?" Do the boys and girls fartherest away from you hear all your words or only parts of them? A noted writer was brought half way across the continent to speak to a gathering of young girls. The meeting was well planned and the church was full, but back of the sixth row of seats no one could understand the address. To be sure the church was somewhat at fault but the speaker was much more at fault. Speak each word clearly and finish one word before you begin another. Listen to yourself.

"Speak clearly if you speak at all,
Carve every word before you let it fall."

Open the mouth and send the words to the very end of the room. Practise deep breathing and learn to use chest tones rather than those of the nose and throat.

Sometimes a story-teller will suddenly find that she has forgotten something that she meant to tell and she will say, "Oh, I forgot." Then she brings in an event that should have come into the story much before this time. It is a very useless thing to do. If the forgotten part cannot be brought into the story naturally leave it out. The children will not miss it and then you will not have interrupted the train of thought in the story. Usually it can be worked into the story, however. Suppose you had meant to say that the child in the story had no mother or father but you had forgotten it. You are almost to the climax and you need that fact. What shall you do? "Then Donald, whose mother and father had died many years ago,——." It is all there and you have not hurt your story. Weave the forgotten thing in or leave it out.

Listen to the self conscious person telling a story and you will hear at the beginning of sentences, "And—a-a-a," or perhaps a little exclamation prolonged into "Uh——." Why is this? It shows a poorly prepared story. She is trying to find out what to say next. It is very annoying and grows to be a habit of speech. Listen to the people with whom you talk and you will find it very prominent in some conversations. In Esenwein's "Children's Stories and How to Tell Them" you will find this suggestive advice of the Irish drill sergeant, "Now sthep out and look at yerselves." I like that advice for story-tellers.

HINDRANCE TO SUCCESS OF STORY

A sentimental tone is a drawback, and it is very common in talking to children in religious work. I heard a mission worker begin in this way: "Now my dear little children, I know you will love to hear of my beautiful children across the sea." After a time, she showed some pictures of those beautiful African children. If you have seen pictures of the schools there when first they are established, you will remember that they are far from beautiful in form or face. Near me sat two boys who had wriggled and twisted for eighteen of the twenty minutes she had talked. When the picture went on the screen of "my beautiful children," the little fellow next to me leaned over and said, "If that's what she calls beautiful, I must be an angel." "Oh, no," said the first boy, "she didn't say you were an angel, she said you were a "dear," and into the word went all the scorn of a Junior boy who has been called "dear." Children dislike a patronizing air and a sentimental tone. Treat them in your story-telling as little men and women and use a tone that is full of life and vigor and cheerfulness.

If you really want to know what your chief difficulties are, get the children to tell you. Once in a Sunday School where I was asking each teacher to give me a year's estimate of each child in her class, I asked each child these three questions to be written out and handed in. "Would you like to have me promote your teacher with you to the next grade? If you would, you must give me a good reason why. If you would not, you must give me a reason why. Do you like the Bible stories you have had this year? Which one would you like to tell for me?" The answers that came from those questions told

me more about the teachers than anything else I had done during the year. I quote a very few answers to show you some of the hinderances to good story-telling. "I like the beginning of her stories but she takes so long that I want to go into a shorter class." "She thinks we are all girls and she tells girls stories to us." "She takes so much time fixing her dress that we do not have time for the lesson." "I could listen all night to her tell stories, but her prayer at the end is nicer than the story for she knows just what we boys need to pray about." "I like his Bible stories pretty well but he tells fine baseball stories first." "I could tell you Daniel and Moses and I'd like to know more about Nehemiah for that day Miss S. had a headache and only told us a little but I liked him." "Sure I want her to go on for we are in the middle of Paul and the other teacher might not know about him."

These are only a few taken from a whole Junior and Intermediate department. They are hinderances that would be hard to put into words but the children know about them. "And a Little Child Shall Lead Them."

CHAPTER VI

THE CHILD AND THE STORY

WE have been talking about the teacher's part in the telling of a story but the children too have a very vital part. An irresponsive group will harm the most carefully prepared story.

In a Bible School class, yes, in any class, it is always best to prepare the children for the story. Sometimes a cheery word and a pause for complete silence will do the work but there are other times when questions concerning the things that are on their minds will have to precede the story in order to clear the atmosphere. A field day in a neighboring city was held on a certain Saturday, so of course the boys were full of it when they came to Bible School on Sunday. The story for the day was Elijah, one in a course of summer lessons. So I listened to hear how one of my teachers would introduce her lesson. "I haven't heard in how quick time the run was made yesterday. Can any of you tell me?" "Well, that was surely a fine run and he deserved the medal. Do any of you know of a longer run than that that was made in very quick time that is told about in history? Elijah was up on Mount Carmel——" and then followed the story of Elijah running ahead of the chariot of Ahab and the lesson brought out the fact that because Elijah was a man of the out-of-doors and clean habits, he had the wonderful powers of endurance. By link-

ing with their interests, she had caught their attention and they were ready to do their part in the story.

But what is the part of the child in the story? First of all it is listening with a receptive mind. But not always can you tell the receptive mind by the eye that is fixed on your face nor the body that is still. Some children deliberately conceal the fact that they are listening. You must learn to know by the subtle lights and shades in the face and postures. I was telling stories in the South End of Boston one night. Most of the children were very attentive. But in the front seat was a little, homely, red-headed boy who had mischief written in every line of his face. Not by one sign, except the fact that he was not talking, did he show that the story was reaching him. He was a challenge to me and I was trying in my own mind to find a sentence I could give next that he would like. I was telling the story of Jim, the drummer boy, and when I came to the part where Jim asked the great burly soldier if he would follow wherever his drum should lead, the little fellow in the front seat stood right up and said, " Please hurry, I am afraid he didn't go into the icy water and get 'em across." Not only was he listening but he was far ahead of the story.

Shall we let them comment? Sometimes but not often for it will spoil the story for others. Comments should come afterward if there are any. Oftentimes a child is not quite clear on a given point and wishes to ask questions afterward. This should always be allowed. But there are times when the comment in the story is quite involuntary and shows how deeply the child is living in the story. In this

case simply ignore it and go on with the story. Perhaps the other members of the group have hardly noticed it. Deliberate commenting in the story must be dealt with outside the class hour.

Little children often like to join in when a rhythmic phrase occurs in the story. This is good, for all know the part and all feel that they can help in the story.

Shall we have the story retold in the class? Not immediately. A story is the giving of a message, not the repeating of words. No one would care to give the same story to the same audience in the same hour. Teach the children to see that when they tell a story, they too are giving a real gift. Make them see pictures as they give and not words. A Bible story can well be repeated on the following Sunday as a review if you prefer it so, though I am of the opinion that a few well-directed questions concerning the story will do quite as well, and let the pupils tell other stories of the same hero that they have found by assignment. Reproduction as a task is not good for the future of the story.

And if they reproduce it, what shall we expect of them? Should they tell it just as we told it? Indeed not. That is mimicry and not the telling of the story. Let me tell what appealed to them. If you ask them to repeat the story, they will struggle for words; they will mind the laugh of the rest when they fail; they will end by disliking the story unless it has been so well told to them that they have seen every picture distinctly. Be very sure that if the child can not give the lesson of the story, it is because you failed in telling it. As you gave the story, you told what you thought was necessary to

bring out your moral. Give him the same opportunity. If there are points left out which you deem necessary to review, let them be given by another after the teller of the story has finished. *Do not stop him to remind him of these things.* Do as you would be done by.

Watch for the pupils in your class who never want to tell the story. Perhaps it is because they feel their lack of vocabulary. Perhaps it is because they are a bit nervous at the sound of their own voice. Perhaps it is because you have never happened to ask them to tell a story that has just appealed to them. Co-operative story-telling helps here. I should try it with secular stories rather than Bible stories until the class can do it well. Make an outline on the board of the events that they remember in the story. Then let one pupil fill in the first and another pupil begin with no announcement to tell the second as soon as the first is through. In this way the part they have to take is very definite and short. Sometimes it is well to have a pupil who can tell a given lesson story well go into another class and give the story. This is often the beginning of the desire to some day teach a class. One winter I had a class of adolescent boys who were studying "Heroes of the Faith." They were intensely interested in the heroes and we were making a co-operative notebook. Each Sunday one boy took the book home and wrote the story of the life and illustrated it. I found some splendid stories so I asked them if they thought that each week the boy who wrote the story could also tell it in a Junior Boy's club that we had in the church. It worked splendidly and the boys never failed me once. Every boy in the class

was telling stories and that is something to be desired in Bible School work, for one of the reasons why we have so few men teachers in the Bible School is because they do not learn how to teach as they go through the school. We use the girls when we lack a teacher, but we fail to realize that the boys can help as well if we will give them opportunities.

There should be a chance for the children to invent other stories suggested by your story. Their imagination should be put to work. We were having a lesson on courtesy and I told a story of a boy who helped a woman across the street when she was trying to cross with a big basket of clothes. It ends in this way, "Say, fellers, I ain't got any mother and I ain't never had one, but every old lady that needs help is somebody's mother, and I kin help that somebody and call her mother, when I am helping, all to myself. Cause you see I wish I had one myself." The following Sunday the boys were to report whether they had seen any one help "Somebody's mother," during the week. One after another the original stories were told, wonderful stories that showed how they had not only been looking for, but living the message of the story. But the one that has stayed with me longest was this, "My sister is only five years old and we have three babies. So her back aches sometimes. But when mother tells her she can go and play after they are in bed, she runs right down the street to help another mother who hasn't any big girls. I just watched her this week and—and—and—well, she's worth having."

Sometimes the reproduction may be done in other ways than by words. Paper-tearing and cutting, scroll work, burnt work, and plasticene or clay all

serve a purpose. Once I had a little foreign boy who could make a whole story in plasticene. I remember telling them some of the stories of the life of Dr. Grenfell. He made the canoe, the dog team, the little huts, the orphanage and even the little figures in the molded work. It was the one thing he could do well. He had no vocabulary to retell the story but he told it in his own way. Some day I am sure the world will know of Paul as one of its sculptors if only the chance to study is his.

Dramatization of stories is another part of the child's work in story-telling but that must have a chapter by itself later on. It is one of the very important parts with little children.

We have no right to rouse the emotions of the child, to create the desire to do and to be and then not put in the way of the child the opportunity to satisfy those desires. If you tell a mission story and the child feels, "I should like to help," he should be allowed to help and urged to help. Stories to succeed must be put into practise. See to it that in your church work there is a place for the child to serve no matter how small he may be. This is the way he grows through the influence of the story in his life. Tell your stories of the needs of the community and even though the work done be only picking up bits of paper and glass from the street, or killing flies in the home, let it be because he, too, wants to be a little citizen. Do not misunderstand me. I do not mean to have you point a moral to the stories you tell but in the discussions that follow, in the friendly talks that you have together, you can suggest ways of living the story.

Often the still small voice speaks to the child

but he does not know how to answer. You must show him HOW he can answer in practical ways, "Here am I. Use me." The story to be useful to him must be carefully heard by him; it must be relived within him and it must become a part of his everyday life. Christ said, "I am come that ye might have life and that ye might have it more abundantly." That is precisely what the interpreter of life—the story-teller—should aim to do—To give to the children a more abundant life.

CHAPTER VII

WHAT SHALL WE TELL?

A TEACHER of story-telling is often at a loss to know what to answer to this question which is asked over and over again. No one can lay down a list of stories for another to tell because stories must be a part of one's own self and what appeals to me may not be at all satisfactory for another. One may prefer to tell the little children's stories while another is looking for those rare stories known as adolescent stories. But there are some general suggestions that can be found in almost any book on story-telling which may guide the one who is seeking to become more proficient.

Stories should make an appeal to the conditions under which the child lives. The Alaskan does not appreciate the twenty-third psalm as we do because there is so much that is foreign to him in it. The child in the country must have some element of his own home life in the story of city life before it appeals to him. "The Tin Soldier," by Anderson, is a fine example of this fact. Read it through and see how much of material there is in it that is known to the child.

Stories which bring out the beauty of God's world and the child's part in that world—good-will stories, nature stories, stories of home life are a very necessary part of your list. Many Bible stories will come

in here for the stories of the Old Testament are full of these three qualities.

Stories that illustrate commonsense and resourcefulness. The Brer Rabbit stories are noted examples. The little rabbit always has a way out of every difficulty. Fairy stories teach this also and the youngest child or the step-sister is usually the heroine of the story.

Stories that give the beliefs and customs of the primitive people. The chapter on Folk Stories and Myths will discuss the need of these stories in the life of the child.

Stories that bring in the unusual, the mysterious. The "Tell Me Why Stories" have been a great help to many mothers in telling of the natural phenomena that is so puzzling. These stories not only cultivate the imagination but they also cause an interest in things that otherwise might produce fear.

Stories that develop humor. The story awakens mirth, usually because of the stupidity of the hero, but it also teaches practical lessons of choice and discretion. Primitive stories are full of humor.

Stories that are positive in their teaching. This must eliminate many of the fairy stories. In the end of the story, wrong-doing must be punished. To be sure there may be wrong-doing as a part of the story leading up to the climax but in the end, right must win. I can well remember how I used to shudder at the story of Bluebeard. But Bluebeard never appears on a list of good stories for children today. There should never be suggested a premium on bad deeds. Cruelty must be punished and wicked thoughts and deeds be put down. In the "Frog

Prince" the child must be taught to keep her word, so the father insists that the frog be taken into the home. The teaching of each story must be something that will correct faults and implant ideals.

Stories of heroic action. Under this heading will come many of the biographical and historical stories. Perhaps that is one reason why the great epic stories have lived through the ages. They are full to the brim with heroic action.

Legends. Some of the finest stories you can find are these old stories containing an idealization of person or place. Sometimes they are based on an historical fact and sometimes not, but a simple fact is enlarged or abridged until it carries a great spiritual truth. "Why the Chimes Rang," "The Legend of Cathay," "The Bell of Atri," all good legends, are great helps to the story-teller. Oftentimes in our historical stories, it is difficult to decide what is fact and what is legend, but the message remains the same whichever it may be, and it does no harm at all to call the disputed fact a legend.

Grotesque stories have a place as an antidote to some of the sentimental stories told to children. They have a place with humorous stories in creating imagination and giving relaxation.

There has been much discussion as to the value of telling stories concerning death. Stories with deathbed scenes should surely never be told. But death is one of the things of which children are afraid and some stories may help to eliminate this. Proserpine is the death of the flowers told in a beautiful way. Molly Cottontail in Ernest Seton Thompson's story of Raggy-Lug and his story of the death of Lobo have value for the child. But any story told

should leave with the children the thought of the naturalness of death and the restfulness of it all. Not a punishment but a finish of life and work. The death of Baldur is a classic story.

Stories that have life. Children insist on flesh and blood stories. Some stories that otherwise would be very good are too slow in movement. These may do for reading but not for telling.

Stories which show the beginnings of life. But we should beware of stories that mix fairy tale and science. Many books of stories have been written to teach scientific facts in this way with no thought of the deeper message of the story. These are not good.

Fairy stories which show the play of the good and bad in the world and teach the child to live happily in surroundings that may be unhappy. Stories which cultivate the child's imagination concerning the life about him. Our city children need these especially. Such stories keep the child hopeful of the future.

Stories to cultivate the love of beauty. Sometimes these are fairy stories; sometimes they are heroic stories; sometimes they are Indian stories, but we should see to it that there are many such stories told to the children, for the love of the beautiful gives them a vast amount of happiness as they go through life, and so many of our men and women seem to have none of it at all. Watch the passers-by in the Public Gardens to see the truth of this statement. I sat for nearly an hour near the wonderful bed of pansies in the Boston gardens this spring just to watch the passers-by. Fully one-half of them just went rapidly on their way, never realizing that a look at the beautiful flowers would rest their body,

divert their mind and give inspiration to the better life. Just before I left, a little child came by. She was poorly dressed and dirty but she bent down by one purple pansy, patted its face, and then quickly kissed it, saying to her mother, "I love this little pansy and I wish it could live with me." Covet this love of the beautiful for the children with whom you work.

Animal stories. Many of the stories for little children are animal stories for they seem to be full of appeal. There is no finer story to teach brotherhood than these. To be a little brother to all living things is to cultivate the gentle spirit and the helpful deed. Think of the influence that "Black Beauty" has had. Often the magazine published by the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals contains rich material here. One cannot read "Raggy-lug" or "Brer Rabbit" without wanting to pass on the stories to the children of the street and the farm.

Bible stories of course would be included here, but they will be discussed later in the book.

It might be useful also to guard against some of the stories that ought not to be told.

Stories of "Goody-Goody Children." This was the type of Bible School story book of some years ago. Stories should teach children as they are and be true to life. Often serial writers start out with a fine ideal of story but somehow as the books keep coming out, they grow less and less effective.

Sentimental stories. This does not mean that love stories should not be told. There comes a time in adolescence when they are a very vital part of the work. But they should be of high type and call out

the very best of the life of the individual. Perhaps there is no place where short stories are more needed in the work today than here. In missionary literature, there are some fine stories—notably in "Love Stories of Great Missionaries." "Ann of Ava" should be in the library of every story-teller for it shows so beautifully what love of a woman will do. But most of the books for adolescent boys and girls have much of sentimentality and little of virility.

Many stories that at first sight seem to be good, will, on study, be found to be coarse in thought and full of misrepresentation and exaggeration. Leave them alone. Do not try to re-make them. There are too many good things to waste your time on them. Our war stories are very liable to fall in this class.

Stories that teach by sarcasm. It is a dangerous tool. Such stories leave a sting in the mind of the child and should never be told. They are like some of the funny papers and posters which the children use so freely—they live when the parents least expect them to.

Stories that may cause fear. A ghost story may be fun for half the children in the room but the other half may be harmed by it. It may teach the fear of ghosts rather than making light of it. A friend was discussing this very point with me and she held to the belief that the way to dispel such beliefs was to tell the stories to all children. A few nights later she was at a hallowe'en party where some great ghost stories were told. The guests started for home, joking and laughing as they went. She had turned the corner near her home when the wind caused the maple tree to creak with an un-

earthly noise. And she ran as if her life depended upon it. Later she said to me, "If that is the feeling that fear of ghosts gives to children, I'll never tell another lest I help it along." Take care that your trolls and your witches and your giants are not so ugly as to cause fear.

One more story that should never be told is the one that in any way causes mirth concerning any race of people. Rather seek for stories that shall show the nobility and possibilities of every race. A little Jewish boy was made very uncomfortable in a Vacation School till we had a lesson on "Jesus, the little Jewish Boy" and wove a story about Hoffman's boy Christ. There are so many stories that cause a smile to cross the face of the hearers when a race is mentioned. One of the boys came in with one of them to my office. It was a joke, but a joke is a story in miniature sometimes. The next Sunday morning in worship hour, we had the story of the little Italian whose life was made so unhappy in an East Side street in New York. Oh, yes, he was funny looking. His hair was too long, his pants were too long and his hat was so big. Taunts and sneers made his life miserable even in school. Then came the day when he saved the life of one of those same mean boys but was himself bitten as he carried the cripple from the reach of the mad dog. To the hospital they carried him, and then came days and months of pain. The boys of course went to see him now and, to their surprise, they found that he knew much more than they. That he had travelled through country after country. Story after story he told them and in one of them he chanced to speak of "My great-grandfather Garibaldi." Garibaldi

whom the teacher had told them was the great hero of Italy—his grandfather! Then those same boys went back to school ready to boast that they knew —oh, no! not the boy with the long hair and the funny hat. Not a bit of it. Now they knew him as a grandson of Garibaldi.

Some weeks afterward the boy who had told me the joke came again to the office and this time he said, "I thought you might like to look at this picture which the boy who lives in our house drew for me. His father was an artist and he can do things, but he is like that little Garibaldi boy. He looks as if he didn't know a thing." The leaven was working. Mayhap it may make a social worker some day of the boy who is learning to be interested in other races.

What shall you tell? Tell any story that will bring to the child a great life message and which has first spoken its message to you. Where shall you find them? Everywhere—in books, in magazines, in addresses, on the street, anywhere so long as they be your own stories which you love to give and which will leave no weakness in the minds of the little ones to whom you tell them.

"My strength is as the strength of ten,
Because my heart is pure."

CHAPTER VIII

TYPES OF STORIES NEEDED IN GROUP WORK

WHEN the stories are to be told in the home, it is comparatively simple to choose the kind of stories needed for a child of a given age for we know their possibilities and their limitations. But in telling stories in the different departments of the Bible School we must be guided more or less by the characteristics of that general group. One cannot say, "A child of six needs fairy stories," for many children of six are not ready for them. The progress of the child is the final determining factor as what ought to be told and not the age. However, there are universal characteristics which may help materially when one goes to the library to find a story that would appeal.

The little child under four years old lives in a very small world. He knows only the home. He loves the sound of words and is learning to put them together. He has no power of reasoning as yet. Hence, the stories used here are mostly rhythmic stories. We call them Mother Goose rhymes. Usually an animal is the center of interest and domestic animals are largely used. The stories feed his love of rhythm, they help his self-expression and they fill him with happiness. The words are simple and such that he will be able to use them continually. After a time he helps with the little jingles, thus exercising his tiny memory: "Run, run, as fast as you

can; You can't catch me, I'm the Gingerbread man."

As the child begins to grow in reasoning and in vocabulary, the jingles grow into stories and "The Three Bears," "The Three Pigs," etc., come to the forefront. Still there are animals and animals in his tales. They are related to his home life in some way usually. He might be afraid of the three bears were it not for the fact that they live in a house and sleep in a bed and, best of all, there is a baby in the home. These are apperceptive stories. They go from the known in his life to the unknown. He begins to feel his relationship with animal life.

From six to nine years of age the fairy story comes into its own. His imagination grows rapidly during this time and the fairy stories are food for it. They foster—indeed they teach—a belief in the unknown world which later is useful in teaching the great religious truths of the Bible. They teach a love of nature, a love of the beautiful and a dim consciousness of the struggle between good and evil in the world. Primitive tales are woven and interwoven into these early fairy tales. Child life in this and other lands presents many charms for this Primary child.

There are five requirements of stories for children up to the Junior age as follows: The story must be child-like and use child language. It should be simple and full to the brim with fancy. It must form morals. The child does more than just get the pleasure from the story—he approves or disapproves of the details and thoughts of the story. On this choice, he builds his own choices. Hence it must clearly teach some moral lesson.

It must be instructive, leading him from the little

that he knows to the much that he does not know. The content of this instruction will be largely the lives and habits of the people among whom he lives and the world in which he lives. The hero stories of Bible and Epic are both essential. Build on the growing sense appeals.

It must have permanent value. If he does not ask to have it repeated, the story either has not gripped his life or else he has received it carelessly as you gave it. Stories should be worth telling over and over. And lastly, it must form a connected whole. To be sure there may be more of the epic, but the story told must seem to be finished and thus become a part of his education.

In the Junior period the realistic story is emphasized. "Is it true?" is a common question. Now the hero must really do something worth while; for each Junior boy is a hero worshiper and each girl is becoming critical. It is the great memory age and stories told now are very vivid in later years. Bible stories should be selected with great care looking especially for the heroic. Great legends are appreciated. "King Midas," "King of the Golden River," "Tales of Sleepy Hollow," "King Arthur," "The Great Stone face"—these are common property of the Junior child. But the true and the legendary must be distinguished. The appeal of the heroic will be the same, but he wants to know which he is hearing about by the time he is ten years old usually. One needs to be careful here not to give stories that seem little children's stories. They are beginning to feel their importance and they want stories of their very own. Stories of adult life-especially missionary stories—appeal.

STORIES NEEDED IN GROUP WORK

With early adolescence come the stories of chivalry, self sacrifice, romance and heroism. The parts of the epic stories have been given through the other groups. Now the whole epic can be given and the ideals which caused it to live and grow will influence the making of the adolescent ideal. History and biography are sought for but with this difference: the adolescent searches the theme and life of the story; not the heroic deed, but the personality of the hero and the ideals for which he worked. "King Arthur Tales" just fit the twelve-year-old boy but a little later they have been outgrown. Stories to develop the powers of attention are needed —longer stories than before; stories with a well hidden climax that causes the suspense to be greater. Enrichment of the mental life and the desire for better books should be one of the results of the story-telling in this period of work. Stories of poor boys and girls who have made good appeal, especially to the boys and girls of the foreign sections.

Any one who can do things—even though those things may be bad—has a charm for the boy here. Hence the appeal of some of the cheap literature that is read so eagerly. The train robber, the thug, the detective, all can really do things. He will find a hero, and the pity is that his mind just here is not stored full of great heroes so that there might be no place for the evil ones. Emphasize the character that makes a man do things and the results of these choices in future life, in the stories. Lives of missionary explorers make attractive reading for them after a thrilling story of the life has been told.

Perhaps it could all be summarized thus—The adolescent hero must be a hero—he must do a great

heroic act and he must be willing to sacrifice even life itself.

When the teen age pupil is entering High School or beginning to think about going to work, his story interests again change. He begins to become interested in the people and the world about him. The social appeal begins to be felt. Love begins to be an influence and new ideals have to be formed. This strange new force seems to sweep away many of the ideals which have been a factor. Stories of romantic love and of altruistic service must be given and right here comes a serious difficulty. The boys and girls of this age want the person who tells them these stories to be their leader, their ideal of a friend. They will not take some of these lessons, even in stories, from the worker who is unpopular. Note the difference often between the power of the Scout Leader or Counseller in a boy's camp and the Pastor. See what the Camp Fire guardian can do around the ceremonial fire. They must feel the comradeship of the one who is to tell them these stories—for now they are conscious of self and they realize that stories are told them for their help as well as for their pleasure.

Not a great many stories are ready for tellers of adolescent stories. Books are beginning to be numerous for Camp Fire Tales, but these are not always suited for Club work, for extra material in the Bible School work, etc. One must learn to glean them from various sources. Usually they are imbedded in the heart of a book. Three come to my mind from Annie Fellows Johnston's books in the "Little Colonel" series: "The Three Weavers," "In the Desert of Waiting," and "The Road of the Loving

Heart." All make good adolescent stories. I have found many Indian Tales to be good in teaching the higher ideals of love. One good story of a pure love and what it accomplished will do much toward molding the budding love life. "The Heart of the Rose," by Mabel McKee, has a thought of purity that I have found very helpful in Camp Fire work. Making stories out of literature and biography will be the most fertile field for this period.

But love stories are not all of love between the sexes. Love stories for the adolescent may include love of country, of home and of the Christ. There is no better place to show what love will do than in the mission literature. Eleanor Chestnut, Geo. Cornwall, Dr. Grenfell, Marcus Whitman—there is an unlimited field here for good stories. Put them into artistic form without the word "Mission" added to them and they will serve a double purpose. They will teach the boy power of a great ideal and also interest him in the work of the kingdom. Chivalry, love and life! What a trio to be emphasized! What an opportunity for service! Capture the imagination of this budding man or woman with this thought: "Others have—I can—I will."

And Later Adolescence! About what are they thinking? Friendship, love, life, home, organization, work. The more serious things of life begin to appear. This is the time when Student Volunteers are numerous. "What shall I do with my life?" is a big question. He is courageous to the extreme; he is strong of body; he is eager to get ahead.

Emphasis must here be given on deep appreciation of the values of life; there must be an intensity

of thought and spirit not perhaps needed before. The stories must be full of human interests. They must be life stories. They must be broad and deep and long in their meanings. They must be very social—stories that try to solve some of the great problems of life. I well remember telling, "The Lost Word," by Van Dyke, to a crowd of boys about twenty. It is a wonderful story of the value of the word "Christ." The boys listened so well and sat for nearly an hour after the class discussing the truth of the thought. Later one of the boys said to me, "I think that story must have been written for me, for I have been so unhappy over the fact that I was losing my grip on the deeper side of my life. I see now and I am so glad." Van Dyke is a treasure trove for stories that will appeal to the Young People. Ten or more of his stories can be well adapted to the telling.

Heroic service, biography, history, the life of Christ, love as shown by service and sacrifice—these are some of the things for which to search. George Macdonald, Mary Austin, Tolstoy, Ralph Connor, Eugene Field, Jane Addams, Hawthorne, Victor Hugo, George Eliot—these are a few of the great writers who have given me stories for my Young People's work.

Telling stories to the Young People's Division of the Church school in class, in club, in Camp Fire and Scouts is a great challenge. To me it is one of the greatest needs in our church life today for our churches are losing their young people in a startling way. Why? Because they have not been able to implant ideals which will tide them over the middle adolescent years. Because they have not made them

see the vision of service; because they have not put them to work. And what is the greatest power known in religious work for the implanting of ideals? A STORY. It is not that the young people do not love stories as well as ever they did. They will tease for a story much more than the little ones will if they know you have stories to tell them. The fault is with the teachers. We need teachers who will specialize in the adolescent work so that they can get for themselves a fund of these great stories and use them year after year. We need teachers who will learn to tell stories so that they can fill the need. Be honest with yourself and search to see how many great stories you know for this age. Suppose some one asked you to go to Camp Devens and tell a group of stories to the High School boys who are there in the Reserve Officers' Training School. What stories would you choose when every boy was a stranger to you? I studied long before I knew what to use there, for think of the possibility of the story you might tell. I built my group around the story of Robert Louis Stevenson's, "The Road of the Loving Heart," and I shall never forget the faces of the group before me. As we were leaving the hut, a little fellow came to thank me and lingered behind the rest. "Thanks for coming," he said. "I wish I could hear stories like that oftener. We boys need them." The greatest praise you will ever get is to have a teen age boy or girl say, "You have helped me."

"The harvest truly is plenteous but the laborers are few," and often forgetful of their opportunity.

CHAPTER IX

THE PRIMITIVE STORIES

FOLK and fairy tales, myths, legends, allegories and fables! What a host of gods and heroes, witches and elves those words bring to our mind. Ulysses, Siegfried and Arthur, the fairy princess, Red Riding Hood and the old sarcastic fox,—all people with whom we lived and played in childhood, all of them imaginary or, as classified in story books, idealistic. Tales that have lived and grown through the centuries and which tell of the longings and the ideals, the warfare and the work, the customs and the religion of races that have lived and molded the ideals of the world.

They are all largely imagination. Why do we tell them? What use have they in religious education? Should the Bible School teacher know and use these old stories or leave all that kind of work to the public school and libraries?

Primitive stories arose out of an attempt to explain some phenomena of nature and as these little tales grew and became fit for the use of the adult minds, they became what we call today myths. For better study, we may divide them into two classes; explanatory myths and aesthetic myths. The explanatory myths are the nature myths and are typified by Pandora (to explain the fact of trouble in the world), Proserpine (change of seasons), Arachne, Apollo and many many others with which

we are familiar and references to which are found in all our literature and art. Aesthetic myths, whose purpose is more directly to give pleasure and to teach a deeper moral lesson may be found in Jason and the Golden Fleece, Uhalanta, Perseus, and the like. Some of the stories grew through the centuries and were the product of many minds. There are many of them that should not be told to the children because of the low moral standards, but there are many that can be slightly re-edited or shortened and made into splendid stories for the growing American child. The difference between these myths of different countries make a most interesting study. The Greek myths are filled with nature lore while the Norse myths are full of the hardihood, the ruggedness of the northern climate. In no other myths do we find such tales of the conquering of the long winters, the cold and the darkness. Intermediates like these particularly while the little children prefer the simple Greek myths.

Greek and Norse, German, Persian, Hebrew, Egyptian, Japanese, Finnish, Hindoo, Celtic, all these myths have added to the stories of the world and our own American literature is full of them. They are all full of nature but they are also full of religion—primitive religion to be sure with all kinds of gods and goddesses—but religion nevertheless, for they teach that behind creation is a God, and that right prevails over wrong in the end. As they have been told by bard and seer, by minstrel and sagaman, those parts which have not been of interest to the race and which have not carried a vital lesson have little by little been eliminated until today they stand as type stories through which we teach the

struggles and the ideals of the primitive races to the coming generations and through them the child learns of the great lessons of life. Their Gods were men of higher type than the rest of the people and consequently a hero and not a God to our children as they are told. As they learn of their life, they see more clearly the nobility and the greatness of the God in whom they have been taught to believe.

As time goes on and national ideals come to be higher and more to be desired, the stories begin to cluster about a national hero and his life is embedded in the stories that are told. Usually he is an imaginary person but he is the representation of national ideals. Thus the epic is formed from the myth and we have the Iliad, Odyssey, Niebelungenlied, Kalevala and other epic stories. It is really the humanizing of a story which up to this time had been largely of a religious nature. None of the religion is taken out but the hero is put in. And this hero! Just recall Ulysses and Siegfried and Perseus and Roland. They were strong in body, perfect in form, pure in heart, protectors of the weak and wrought vengeance on the wrong, they were protected by the Gods. They were heroic in every particular as the boy of today knows a hero. They could run and fight and die for a cause. They had superhuman powers, yet they were human; for they could be overcome with sorrow and taken away by death. You will find in the epics very clearly brought out the belief in a future life and the triumph of the right.

The collection and editing of these stories has been a gift to the child world that is hard to estimate. Some of the epics have been available for

many years but others are more recent. The Kalevala, the Finnish Epic, is perhaps the most recent. When one realizes that some of these stories date back between two and three thousand years, one realizes that they give a great background to Finnish life and history. I like particularly the Niebelungenlied, the Norse epic. It corresponds more nearly to the ideals of the American child. Several shorter epic stories are included in it and its ideals of valor and strength, chivalry, worship and home life are full of inspiration. Some one has called it the great nature religion, because it is the only race that has ever won a victory over northern nature. This is taken as the enemy of the people and a thing which must be conquered. All the epic stories mentioned early in the chapter may be procured in the English and should be read by teachers of stories to children, not only because of the value to the teacher, but also because of the many ways in which they can be used in religious work. Robin Hood, King Arthur, Glooscap, Hiawatha:—these are all true epic stories.

The epic stories contain some sagas, some legends and some true stories besides the myths around which they were formed. The poetic form came as the finish of the epic story. At first they were collections of simple stories.

A legend is an idealization of a person or place. A myth sweeps over a vast area. A legend centers about a small one. Myths have to do with immortals and legends with mortals.

A legend is usually based upon fact, but that fact has been magnified until it has to be classed with the idealistic rather than the realistic. Legends

teach vital truths and are strong stories. "Why the Chimes Rang," is built about the giving of a simple gift by two little children but it teaches the value of giving with the heart. The beautiful White Gift service that is coming to be so common in our churches, and which is revolutionizing the kind of Christmas the churches shall have, is built on a simple legend—"The Legend of Cathay." The imaginary in the story is made a minor part and the real lesson is very clear. Scott has used beautifully some of these old legends in his poetry. Religious history is full of legends of the saints and heroes of the church which will some day be much more utilized than they are today.

I had been telling the legend of "The Bell of Atri" to a class of Junior boys while they were waiting to go on a picnic. Later in the day a boy began tormenting a toad in the brook. Twice his teacher told him to stop, which he did for the time being. After a while I noticed that a group of boys were having an interesting time by the brook, so I went to see and found the boy who had been bothering the frog covered with mud and wet from head to foot. On inquiry, I found that the boys who had heard the story earlier in the day had made the sound of a bell till they had called a number of the boys around them. Then they had been a court of Justice and had decided that he who tormented an innocent frog should go into the brook himself, and into the brook he had gone. Bad for the boy, of course, but good for the rest of the boys who had seen the lesson of Justice.

But what shall the religious worker do with these

stories? First of all she should make them a part of her own equipment. Hebrew history was not the first history of the world. When you study these old epic stories you will be amazed to find how many times they illumine some of the hard places in your Bible teaching. You read in the quarterly that the stories in Genesis were folk tales, and you resent it. But that is because you do not know what a folk tale really is. Their belief in a God had to begin somewhere; it did not grow out of space. It was based on what they knew and heard, but when you have studied some of the old myths and legends and have seen the quarreling and fighting, the hate and the jealousy of the story of the Gods of the other nations, you come back to the story of Genesis with a deeper reverence, a finer conception and a firmer faith that God revealed himself to the Hebrew nation. You need to know the growth of the religious life among other primitive peoples before you can teach the growth of your own religion.

Shall they be taught to the children? Certainly. In Sunday School? Yes, when they will illumine some lesson which you are trying to bring out. Over and over and over my boys have asked me to tell the story of Sir Galahad and to repeat to them the old quotation, "My strength is as the strength of ten, Because my heart is pure." Some time ago, one of the boys with whom I had loved to work in the hills of Maine was burned to death when just completing the High School, which he had worked so hard to attend. His mother told me of finding in his room the little card on which it was written. It took me back at once to the day when I had

given it to him. A group of the boys had come to the camp for stories around the Camp Fire or out in the boats on the lake as they had done each Saturday for several years when I was in camp. It was the last night of stories for the year and I could see the earnestness on the faces of the boys as we sat around the fire and I told them of Sir Galahad. Then I gave to them the little cards with the quotation printed on it to take with them into the town to which they were to go to begin that new road, the High School. As Carroll turned to leave the camp he said, "I may not finish High School but I will do this, I will come out pure." Four years later he wrote to tell me of a little class of boys whom he was teaching in the Sunday School in the town. "I know I must be more of a Galahad now than ever if I am to be an example to them. How glad I have been of that story!" Had you read the papers after the fire, you would have known that he was living his story—an old legend which said to him "Be a Christian at heart."

It is the fault of the teacher if she cannot weave these old myths and legends into her work and make them live and teach Christianity. They are taught in the school but not in connection with our own religious struggle. They teach their lessons there but there are deeper lessons hidden in them than can be brought out in the secular classroom. Read the great epics all through. Let them speak the message to you. Then take the best, the ones that carry the great lessons needed by boys and girls, and weave them into the life and thought of the children. If you have a child of any of these nationalities in your class, this may be the point of contact

for which you have been looking. Let them see the great lessons that have come out of their mother country.

Two High School girls were out on a lake as the sun went down watching a most gorgeous sunset. "And now the gates of the west will open to let the Sun God through and all the land shall be dark," said one. "The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth his handiwork. Let all the earth fear the Lord and all the inhabitants of the earth stand in awe of him. For he only doeth wonderful things," said the other. "I can see the Old Apollo and smile. I can see the great God there and wonder that he cares for a girl when he can make that." The old myth and the present-day religion. There is no clash between them when they are seen together in their right relation. The one is a foundation and an imagination—the other is a structure and a reality.

"They robbed him not of a golden shred
Of the childish dreams in his wise old head.
'And they're welcome to all things else,' he said,
When the robbers came to rob him."
RILEY in "The Lockerbie Book."

CHAPTER X

FAIRY STORIES, FABLES AND ALLEGORIES

In the last chapter we saw how the primitive story of the battle with nature and animal life grew into a myth, then a legend perhaps, and then into a great epic story. Later there came from these stories a form of ethical story in which the gods and goddesses give away to fairies, goblins, elves, dwarfs and all sorts of imaginative creatures. They grew out of the religious stories and although many of them seem to be far from religious now, still there is hidden in the story a deep religious truth as well as a moral or ethical truth. It is because virtue is rewarded and wrongdoing punished and somehow, somewhere things come out right for the one who does his best that they make such an appeal to the child who is learning to obey. They are told of the most common things of life—walking, playing, working, sleeping—and so they are vitally related with the child's everyday life. They people the world with numberless little fancies or fairies, if you will, all of which love the little child and care for him. They teach him a security in Nature and a search for the hidden things there.

One day I was going through the city street with a bunch of wild violets in my hand when a little one came to me. I expected to hear her say, "Please give me one," as is so often the case. Instead she said, "Oh, please let me find him. I am sure he

is there." Then to herself I heard her saying,

"Deep, deep within—look all by yourself,
In the heart of the flower, lives a dear little elf."

When she could not find him she said, "Well I guess he must have fallen out when you carried the violets home. I am sorry for I want to see one." Living in fairy land. Gaining an interest in things about her through stories. Fairies are a comfort to the child who is lonely, friends to the child whose life is hard, and the stories lead one to have a hopeful outlook on all life.

But fairy stories should be carefully chosen. There are those that are best left untold, those that lead the imagination in wrong directions. Teach only those that build the child's ideals. Be careful of the characters to whom you introduce the child. If I name some adjectives, I am sure you could name the fairy story in which I found them if you read your fairy story book as thoroughly in the days gone by as I did. "Helpful, jealous, kind, loving, ill-mannered, brave, merry, sad, pretty, impudent, saucy":—They are synonyms for some of the characters. See to it that the stories you tell show that kindness pays, that animals have rights and are friends, that often the small creature may overcome the large through thought and wit, that they foster a feeling of safety in nature.

Some of the less desirable fairy stories today are those that have been written for the children in later years. They have not the strong, virile quality that those do which are the heritage of the child from the past. There is much less of the supernatural in them and more of pure fancy. Many of

them are built about nature but with an intent to teach facts and at the same time fancy. This is not the purpose of the real fairy story. It teaches something as real fancy and from the imaginative story gains a deep moral lesson. St. John says, "The one essential for idealistic stories is not that they should be true but that they should clearly and impressively set forth a truth."

For those who are interested in fairy stories, there is an interesting study in the way they are built. There are three quite distinct structures. (*a*) The use of the number three in the story. "There were three sisters. The first went—then the second one went—then the third one went." "Cinderella," "The King of the Golden River": these are types of this story. (*b*) Two opposite kinds of people: lazy and industrious; pretty and ugly; large and small. "Why the Sea is Salt" and "Mother Holle" are types. (*c*) Then there is the structure known as cumulative where the story adds to itself as it goes along: such a story as the "Cat, the Rat and the Malt House"; "The Wolf and the Seven Little Kids."

One who has had the fairy stories as a part of her education never questions the value of passing them on. To rob the child of good fairy stories is to take away something which makes all literature more pleasurable, all art more full of meaning and all life more full of fancy. And fancy is one of the recreations of life most worth while.

Fables are stories whose real aim is to teach something that differs from the content of the story. We do not think of the fox when we think of the

fable, " The Fox and the grapes." We think of the moral, " sour grapes." They are usually very short; and animals, plants and sometimes inanimate things are given mortal characteristics. The animals and flowers talk and point out weaknesses in men and women. When the purpose of the story is merely instruction, a fable will often be used, but they are not favorite stories as a rule. Their lesson might better be taught by a deeper story when teaching little children. Fables only cover the top.

Allegories, parables and fables all belong to a class of stories known as purposive stories, because they purposely aim to teach a moral lesson. There is no hidden meaning. It is clearly brought to the surface. They teach consciously rather than unconsciously. Some of them can hardly be called stories. Partridge calls them " shorthand expression of longer stories." But they have been used in the education of the race for centuries. They are Eastern in origin and are popular in some countries of the world today. It is quite evident that some of them originated in the myths, and probably were written because the author doubted the value of the impressional method of teaching truth. Æsop is known as the greatest writer of fables. Felix Adler says, " The peculiar value of the fables is that they are instantaneous photographs, which produce as it were, in a single flash of light, some aspect of human nature, and which excluding all else, permit the entire attention to be fixed on that one."

When one mentions the word allegory, the mind flies to " Pilgrim's Progress " and it is well that it does, for it is a vivid example of what an allegory

aims to do. It is a higher form of the story than the fable, and usually much longer, and all through the story there is a substitution or personification of objects. In "Pilgrim's Progress," Pilgrim repre-sents not a man but a journey of men. Vanity Fair, the Slough of Despond, the Lions, all these are sub-stitutions for states of being or qualities.

The difference between some fairy stories, some parables and some allegories is not easily distinguishable. Parables, however, never give to animals, powers or habits which they do not ordinarily have. In the parable of the lost sheep the shepherd talks but not the sheep. But in the parable there is also a substitution as in the allegory. "I am the vine and my father is the husbandman."

Jesus used the parable so much in his teachings that we connect the word almost entirely with the Bible. But there are older parables than those of the Christ. He simply used the method that he thought the most impressive. Christ's parables are, however, some of the finest in the realm of literature. Often one can tell them just as they are more effectively than one can try to change them, for there seems to be nothing one can change without hurting the story. The parable of the prodigal son is one of the finest that he gave and one of the best to study for telling. Parables are dignified allegories.

Laura Richards' little book called, "Golden Windows," is full of purposive stories that are good to study. In it are some lessons that are well worth giving to the men and women as well as the boys and girls of today.

The religious teacher needs to have a foundation of these purposive stories, for often they will be able

to just supply the illustration she needs in a short, concise way. Then, too, the children have a background of some of them and she can use for reference the thought of the story and thus find new points of contact with the everyday and school life of the child. Some of the great allegories must first be taught in the church school or club work. Every child, some time, should hear or read "Pilgrim's Progress" yet the reading is hard for the average child unless an interest is created in the story before it is read. Pictures on the screen are sometimes an introduction to it, but I prefer to tell it simply and then have the pictures afterward in order to visualize the story more clearly.

The parables need all the study of a realistic story for they can be made very real to the child if they are well told. The parable of the lost sheep is a most effective story especially if used with some of the more recent slides. In the story hour which I have with my early adolescent pupils on Sunday afternoons, we use a reflectoscope and often have the picture illustrating the parable thrown on the screen first. After looking at it silently for a moment, I tell the story as a story and not as a parable. Then after the story time is over I tell them just where they can find the story in the Bible if they want to read it just as Jesus himself told it. Make your parable live. It is much more effective.

CHAPTER XI

TELLING REALISTIC STORIES

THERE is a vast amount of story material known to the story-teller as realistic material. Bible stories will be discussed in chapters separate from this. How shall we use the historical, biographical, missionary and personal stories that we find? Are they more or less valuable than the idealistic stories which we have studied in another chapter?

The call for a true story is a very insistent call from the time the child is ten years old. They are not insistent that it be absolutely true—they are quite willing that you "think it might be true,"—but they want stories that have the semblance of truth, stories that might happen to them, stories of everyday happenings in life. Perhaps this is the reason why the teachings of Jesus are so full of meaning to the adolescent. He was teaching of things and people right about him. Jesus, the teacher, is quite different from Abraham, who might have been a man and might have been a tribe. But the teacher is in trouble when she tries to tell stories for true that do not come up to the standards of a true story as children see it. We shall have more boys in our Bible Schools when we stop trying to make them believe what they do not feel that they can believe and give them a chance to find the meaning of some of the Bible stories rather than the facts of the story.

Sometimes a person narrates facts of history and

biography and feels that they have told a story. There is a wide difference between the two. Facts must be kept in the background while the moral lesson comes to the front. There is a current story of Lincoln and his yellow dog and the way they succeeded in both getting to the new home in Missouri. It makes a fine story with the theme "Loyalty to one's friends," but it is usually a bit of biography. If the moral lesson is brought out, the narration of facts may be a story. The result must be emotional rather than educational.

The story you tell as true must remain true as long as the child lives else he will lose faith in you or in the things which you have taught him that were true. The pleasure is just as great, the inspiration is just as great if the hero be imaginary—only the application is more direct and hence more potent if the story be true. The boy may say, "Sir Galahad might be pure and true and do great things, but he lived in the long ago. I can be like him and *try*. But Lincoln lived right in this country on a farm. He was poor and had little education. If he succeeded, I can." The application of a true story is much easier for the young people of today.

Literature is the great life-story book, but history is the record of deeds that inspire. We are moving away from dates and into stories in studying history. I remember the three pages of dates that I had to prepare for an examination in High School: both sides of three sheets of tablet paper. I suppose it was good for me as a memory drill but I should hate to show my ignorance of those dates today. But in the study hour, our professor had a class in the front of the room reciting Greek history. He

was a master story-teller and I can see those old Greek stories that he told as clearly as if it were yesterday. I was supposed to be studying but I was learning by the story method. History, as such, is dry and uninteresting to the average student. It must live through the stories. And teachers in the Church schools can not only help the pupils but help the public school work by making the characters and events of history become alive and interesting.

Make the children see that when a boy is brave about his work and makes a bushel of corn to grow where a peck grew before, he is making history. Help him to see that history is making every day and that he is to make his part of it. Tell stories of common everyday life as history. Did you read of the bravery of a boy in the water? Use it to show that the bravest deeds are not all on the battle field. For a few years there will be a tendency to use many stories of the war—too many. We must help to lead the minds of the children away from the strife of the past few years and to see the greatness of little deeds in common life, teaching them to do the things that come into their life as if they were great things. This is real religious education, for whatever broadens a child's spirit life, whatever creates a feeling of good will for his associates, whatever tends to make him a part and parcel of the world's work and helps him to do that work nobly and gladly and thoroughly—that is as truly religious education as to teach him Bible stories and studies in the Christian life.

In myth, in legend, in history and in Bible, the child needs to see the struggle of man toward better things. The difference is just here. History, in

itself, aims to show how the country has moved as a nation—that is from without. Legend, myth and Bible, aim to show how a person or a nation grows from within, grows also from without, and that the life of the nation depends on the ideals of each boy and girl. This is the relation which historical stories bear to the religious work. It is a splendid task to so interpret history.

These historical, biographical and missionary stories are seldom gathered from books of stories. You find them as you read the magazines, you find them in the newspapers, you find them as you talk with your friends. And how shall you keep them? The only way I know is to have a file where you will keep them. A few days will suffice to forget the thing which you thought you would surely remember. Have a big manilla envelope where you place anecdotes, etc., that are short and pithy. File your stories in other envelopes according to the way you plan to use them. If you work with all sorts of children, perhaps they will be fairy stories, historical stories, animal stories, hero stories, etc. If you work with young people, they will probably be classified according to virtues they will incite and the faults they will correct—loyalty, generosity, truth, patriotism, great deeds, etc. I use a card index and when I find a story that I like in a book I make a note of it on the card, telling the name of the book, the page and the theme of the story. If I hear a story told that I think I can use, I make an outline of it and then fill it in at my first leisure time. Sometimes the story as told illustrates another theme than you think it is best fitted for. Change it to suit yourself. Use direct discourse, only never give

to an historical character or a biographical character, a quality that you are not sure they were likely to possess. This is one of the places where the story-teller needs to have a big background of history and biography and geography. Stories live so much more vividly if one has a fund of surrounding facts. If a teller likes to tell stories of the colonists, she should read many books on the early history of our country so that she can see their life in all its danger, its picturesqueness and its worth.

Personally, I like to tell missionary stories as well as any of the realistic stories. Anita Ferris and Mary Stewart have done much in helping in this field. There is so much of the life of the real heroes that is underpinned with the most sincere love of God. The child life of the mission fields is so attractive to the children, and there is much of the appeal to service and life consecration for the Young People. In all of the mission board rooms, there will be found little pamphlets each containing a story and costing less than five cents. A little study of these pamphlets will reveal the fact that there is much of worth. Some of the stories have been dramatized for little children. A few fine stories came out in the literature of the Armenian and Syrian Relief, and the Red Cross magazine has also contained some good material for the story-teller. "Pavlos," one of the Armenian stories, has been very much a favorite with the boys. "The Gift," written by Anita Ferris, and published in 1917, by the *Everyland*, is a splendid story for girls. All of the children's magazines of the mission boards aim to have good stories for the telling.

It is not because there is so little, that one hesitates to make lists of books or stories that are helpful for realistic stories. It is because there is so much that one doesn't know where to end. Learn to be a collector and you will soon have many, many stories that are your own possession—not only of mind, but of heart.

CHAPTER XII

WRITING AND TELLING ORIGINAL STORIES

WHEN one first mentions original stories to a person who has never done such a thing, it seems to be the impossible, but it is one of the very best ways of getting practise in visualizing stories. What one does not see, one can not tell in an impressive way. If you can come in from the street and tell a story of what you have seen on the street, why can you not see other things to tell by imagining the setting?

Three ways seem to me very helpful in doing this first original work; first by picture work. Not telling what you see in the picture but seeing a picture behind some one thing in the picture. Because I can illustrate better by using an original story than by words, I shall give one written by a member of my Malden Class in Story-telling, Miss Grace Richardson. It was her first original story and shows how her imagination played about a picture. The picture she used was a very small one and it only showed a branch of pussy-willows on a dark background.

"Once upon a time, there were some pussy-willows who lived in the country by the roadside. Mother Nature had given them a very beautiful song to sing just as the Winter went away and the Spring came. When they saw some one coming down the road, they would sing their merriest, 'Who will sing the song of Spring?' and then answer

their own question, 'Pussy-will—Oh!' This made the passers-by very happy for, at once, they thought of green fields, and sweet flowers, and singing birds.

"'If I could only make some one smile every day,' sighed one little pussy-willow to his brother, 'I should be so happy. I love to see people smile.' 'Oh we shall be here for weeks doing what Mother Nature has sent us to do and making smiles. Then we shall get our reward and our work will be done,' said the other. 'Oh dear,' said the other, 'I want to live on and on and on through all the bright summer. I wish some one could tell me how to do it.'

"Now it chanced that a little butterfly who had lived all winter in his funny little house, in a room of a lady near by, came flying out of the window just at this time and lighted on the branch where the pussy-willow lived. 'Oh, beautiful butterfly,' said the pussy-willow, 'How happy you look and what a wonderful dress you have on. Where did you get it?'

"'Listen to me, little pussy-willow. Once I was discontented too, for I was only an ugly worm and had to crawl on the ground. I crawled about on the ground for food and sometimes when I would get on a leaf I would hear the dear little children cry for fright when they looked at me. Sometimes I would hear a big brother say, "Do not cry; the worm will not hurt you. See! he is running away." Then I was so unhappy for I wanted the children to love me as they did the birds and flowers. I would just crawl into my house as fast as ever I could and wonder how I could make them like me.

"'One day when I was thinking, I fell asleep

and when I awoke, it was all dark. I tried to move but my house seemed so tight. I worked and worked and at last broke a hole in the walls and crawled out. How funny I felt! I had great things on my back, and when I had moved them a little, I found I could fly. Come, little pussy-willow, and I will whisper what had happened to me. A dear, kind fairy had turned me into a butterfly. I flew about the room in the house yonder, and when some little children came into the room to play, they cried for joy and said, "Isn't it beautiful. How happy we shall be to have it here in our room." Now perhaps, little pussy-willow, that same kind fairy could do as much for you. Goodbye! Tis so cold here that I am going back to the warm room and the little children. Remember, the fairy came while I was asleep. Goodbye! goodbye! good luck to you.'

"Night came and the pussy-willows were asleep —all but one—he was wide awake and watching. 'Twas very lonely, but he wanted to see the fairy if she should happen to come that night. Just at midnight, he heard a soft little sound and there stood before him a tiny creature, all in white and shining like the stars. 'Hello, dear little pussy-willow,' said the fairy. 'I heard you talking to the butterfly this morning though you could not see me. Now tell me what it is you really want and we will talk it over. Perhaps I can help you.'

"'O fairy,' said the little pussy-willow, 'I would like to live and love and be loved, all this bright, long summer. But I don't want to live here on this branch. I want to be a live thing and make some little children happy as the butterfly does. I would not scratch them or bite them. I would love to play

with them all the day and keep them from being in mischief. Please fairy, will you change me while I am asleep?'

"'Because you want to do good and bring gladness into other lives, you may have your heart's desire,' said the fairy. Then she laid the golden wand across the branch of pussy-willows and out jumped —why a real live pussy cat, all soft and gray and singing. 'Your name is Fluffy,' said the fairy, 'and now we will go to the place where you will find the children to love and to play with and they will all love you, too.'

"Oh! Oh! how happy the pussy was! He purred and purred and ran around the fairy thanking her over and over as she led him up the steps of a little home. Opening the door a tiny bit, she bade him lie down by the fire till his little playmates should come.

"If you want to know how happy he was and what a delightful surprise he was to Betty and Bobby, just look at the picture below" (and here Miss Richardson had made a composite picture of two dear little children and a frisking kitten).

Perhaps your imagination would not see all that she saw, but it would see something; and every time you wrote down or told what you saw, you would find it easier to see more. I am urging this not because there is a dire need for new stories—that is true in some fields of story-telling but not all—but because the teacher needs it in telling the old stories. Every story that is told from your own imagination should be built on the principles stated in the first chapters of this book. Sometimes you may have to invent a story and tell it just as you

see it, but usually it should be carefully prepared after you have seen the picture.

Suggestive words will often help in giving ideas for an original story. Again I shall give a story written in the Malden class by Miss Joy Craighead. I had given the three words, blueberry, mountain and bear, as the basis of a story and this is what she saw.

"Once there was a little Indian boy who had a real Indian name, 'Fraid-of-the-Dark,' and he lived in a tepee far to the West. It was a pity that any little boy should have such a name, and especially an Indian boy, for Indians, you know, are very, very brave and the boys are taught when small not to be afraid. But this little boy was always afraid of the dark and so he got his name. Sometimes at night he would lie awake for hours as he listened to the screech owl out in the woods, and be afraid of little noises that he never heard in the day time. If his mother tried to send him out of the tepee at night time to get some firewood, he would cling to her skirts and cry, 'I don't want to go. Something will catch me. I am afraid.'

"Of course, he was only a little boy, but the other Indian boys made fun of him on account of this one thing and often they would not let him play with them. 'We don't want any fraid cats around here,' they would say. 'Go home and play with the girls.' So little 'Fraid-of-the-Dark' would have to play with the girls or wander about by himself. Then, when the day was gone and it was dark, he would run home and stay near his mother in the tepee.

"One day his mother sent him with a great basket to pick blueberries—for the Indians would get a

lot of blueberries together and then take them to the nearby town to sell. Many of the Indian boys and girls were with him as they started. Now the best blueberries grew on the mountainside, so they all climbed up a little way and began to pick busily. 'Fraid-of-the-Dark' was a good worker and picked rapidly. Soon the bushes around him were stripped bare and he started to climb farther up the mountain. 'Don't go up much further,' one of the big boys called after him, 'I heard father say that a big, black bear had been seen on the mountain top.' 'I'll look out,' he replied. 'I won't go far.'

"As he went on, one of the boys laughed and said, 'Fraid-of-the-Dark' would be scared to death if he saw the black bear. Wouldn't it be fun to creep up behind him and growl and make believe we were the bear?'

"'Fraid-of-the-Dark' picked steadily on. It was fun to find so many berries, all hanging in bunches, all fat and juicy just ready to fall into his hand and swell the pile of berries in the big basket. Little by little, without realizing it, he wandered farther away from his companions up the mountainside where the berries grew even bigger and thicker. He forgot all about the bear, and bears like blueberries too.

"Finally to rest his back, he stood up and looked around. It was a glorious summer day. The sun was warm and bright but up there on the mountain the air was fine. He could look away off in the distance and see his own Indian village of tents and the Indian ponies grazing near by, looking only like dogs in the distance. Beyond the trees, he could see the village where white men lived in log houses. There was a pretty curl of white smoke which he

watched sailing up and up in the sky until it faded from sight. Away off down the mountainside, he could see the other berry pickers. They were having a good time and he could hear their voices as the breeze came his way.

"He was just going to start down to join them again when he suddenly stopped, and shielding his eyes with his hand, stared intently at something big and black which he thought he had seen moving in the pathway in front of him toward the group of children. He looked and looked until he made sure that the moving object was a big, black bear, the bear from the mountain top, who had heard the noise of the merry children and was going to see what he could find.

"What could 'Fraid-of-the-Dark' do? The bear hadn't seen him so he was safe, but he wanted to warn his playmates. Even if they saw the bear though, they had no weapons. They could only run and then the bear might get angry and run after them. The Indian boy knew that the bear could easily catch them even if he was big and clumsy. 'I wish I could frighten him away,' thought 'Fraid-of-the-Dark.' 'I'd like to make him run.'

"Then an idea popped into his head as his eye fell on the big basket of berries. Quick as a flash he dumped the berries on the ground and put the big basket upside down on his head. It reached almost to his shoulders and looked very funny indeed. Then 'Fraid-of-the-Dark' took some branches of the blueberry bushes in his hand and started running, full speed, down the trail, waving the branches all around, and whooping the Indian cry at the top of his lungs. He could scarcely see where he was go-

ing for the basket covered his eyes but he ran on and on and kept yelling.

"The berry pickers looked up in astonishment when they heard the racket, and they saw this queer creature tearing down the mountain path. It looked like a basket with legs, or else a blueberry bush that had come to life. Just then they saw the big black bear and how they did scream!

"The bear stopped in his tracks to see what the dreadful noise behind him was, but he couldn't make out. Just then 'Fraid-of-the-Dark' stumbled and fell head over heels. But he didn't stop going nor yelling. He just rolled over and over down the path at great speed. You see he couldn't have stopped if he had wanted to do so. Mr. Bear took one more look at the thing which was making straight toward him with such a noise, and decided that he had never seen anything like it before. 'I guess I had better be going pretty quickly,' thought he, and he turned one side and scampered off through the bushes as fast as ever he could go.

"'Fraid-of-the-Dark' continued his mad roll till one of the boys grabbed him and helped him to gain his feet, and pulled the basket from his head. To be sure he was fearfully scratched and his berries were gone. But the bear was gone too and the children were safe, so he was happy.

"Such a story as the children had to tell when they reached home. 'Fraid-of-the-Dark' was praised for his quick wit and his bravery in frightening the bear away. 'You have been such a brave boy,' said his mother, 'that your name shall be no longer 'Fraid-of-the-Dark.' You shall be called 'Bear-Chaser.' And when the boys played at

games, 'Bear-Chaser,' now not even afraid of the dark, was Chief."

Old family traditions make a very fertile field for stories. Recently I found a lady who had scores of splendid Indian stories which her mother, who had lived in Dakota for many years, had told her. Take these old anecdotes and stories and make them live for others.

Sometimes imaginary stories are the very best way of teaching the little child the difference between truth and untruth. We are all familiar with the stories which little children tell which seem to be deliberate lies but which are only the imagination at work. Let the mother or teacher of such children have a time of the day when the two shall tell "Make-up" stories. First mother will tell one and then the little one—as big bears and as ugly dogs and as wonderful accidents as can be, can be used here. Just a make-up story but it gives the little imaginative mind a chance to give vent to the pictures there. A friend told me of his little girl going to school and telling the teachers that sister, who really had a hard cold, had fallen down the stairs, broken her leg and three doctors had come to set it. When the teachers came to investigate the accident, the story came out and the mother was very much worried. When she asked the little one why she had done it, she replied, "I love to see teacher's eyes grow big and hear her say, 'Is that so? How dreadful!'" Now she had not meant to tell a lie. Mother's eyes would have done just as well if they had been telling a story together. And she would have loved to hear mother's story of something that

would make her eyes grow big. Let the child understand that these kind of stories are not wrong if told at a time when she and mother or teacher are alone and seeing funny things, but that at other times things must be just as they really are. To curb the imagination of a child is a serious thing; to train it is an opportunity. You may have the making of a Hawthorne, or an Irving, or an Edison, or a Marconi, all of whom used their imagination.

Just a suggestion or two of little things that may be suggestive in original stories. Look at nature and see things. Do the birds talk together? What do they say? Does the little brook whisper? Do the mountains hide things? Learn to see. Read the faces of the people who travel with you. Can you see the stories in their faces? It is one of the best ways of passing time when on the street car. Let the holidays suggest stories, let mission literature show you a plot that might help the children. Learn to see stories all about you. It will make your life much more happy and will change many hard things to easy ones.

CHAPTER XIII

TELLING BIBLE STORIES—OLD TESTAMENT

THE Bible is essentially a book of stories and the part of the Bible that you and I know best is the story part. Perhaps if our teachers had been wise enough to visualize the books of Nehemiah, Ezra, Job, Amos and others of the prophetic books, we should have known more of them; for there are wonderful stories hidden away in them. I know no Bible story that so captivates the adolescent boy as the story of the return of Nehemiah to Jerusalem and the rebuilding of the walls. But it must be told in a dramatic and very vivid way so as to catch his imagination. Joseph and Daniel and Abraham are well known by every Bible School child, but I have found that Trustworthy Joshua, and Bold Amos, the story-teller, and Deborah, the leader, are almost never visualized.

You can find in the Bible every known kind of stories—primitive story, fairy tale, myth, epic, biographical story, historical story, legend, allegory, parable, romantic story, love story, all are there, all are in good order for the telling and all are built into the warp and woof of our religion. If you add to the stories in the Bible, the stories connected with the Church history, saints, martyrs, missionaries, reformers, crusaders, etc., you will have a wonderful array from which to choose.

Perhaps the great fault that has been found with

the teaching of the Bible stories is the fact that principles taught in the preparation of other stories were not thought necessary here. Teachers have felt that because they knew the facts of the story, they knew how to tell the story and this is not true. Not one person in five in our Bible School knows how to tell a story well, yet the most of the work that they do in a given hour on Sunday is to teach a Bible story or more.

Every principle which is needed in the study of secular stories is needed here if the story is to live. The introduction is just as necessary, and perhaps more so, for often the children feel that they know what you are to tell them before you begin, and you must make them want to know The conclusion, the elimination of the moral, the direct discourse, the strong climax, every one of these things are necessary in telling Bible stories. But does not this often make one change the story from the way it was written in the Bible? Certainly it does. Often you have to read the whole book to find the background or the setting or the introduction. Note that I did not say that you had to read the whole quarterly to find it. Quarterlies are fine in their place but their place has been most mightily mistaken. Teachers of the Bible need the Bible as well as the quarterly.

How differently we teach the Bible from the way we teach other great stories. Did any one ever give to you in one sitting the wonder of the life of St. Paul—his boyhood, his education, his conversion, his work as a great teacher, his magnetism, his exile with the incidents that surrounded it, and his martyrdom? It isn't a long story and it is a wonderful

one. No epic story has more of adventure or more of the heroic.

Tell your Bible stories in the language of today. Create an interest in the Bible itself by showing and loaning to the pupils different versions of both Bible and Testament. Study Mrs. Houghton's book on telling Bible stories and also Dean Hodges' "Bible Stories." Note how much he uses the old Hebrew phraseology, yet in a way that is attractive.

In the beginning of this book, I urged you to learn to love a story before you told it. Now I am emphasizing this fact again, for you simply must love your Bible stories if you would teach the children to love them. Study each story in the light of what it can bring to you, and then see what it can bring to the pupils whom you are to teach.

Teach what you believe and believe what you teach. Teachers say to me: "Next Sunday I have to teach a certain lesson. How can I teach it? I don't believe it." If you teach what you do not believe, you are a hypocrite. You are in the Bible class to show through your life and teaching "THE TRUTH." Not necessarily the fact as given in the lesson as it seems to read, for we are coming to see that many of the things we used to teach for fact were allegories and parables and epics. The lesson is every bit there no matter which they are. You must find the truth in each story and then teach it. Some of the miracles are very hard to understand and much harder to teach—especially those of the Old Testament, but the truth is not hard to understand or to teach. FIND THE TRUTH AND TEACH IT.

Of what use is it to teach the early stories of the

Bible as fact stories and later have the boys and girls read similar stories in other ancient literature that antedate the Bible, and then, in their thoughtlessness, think that because one story may not be as told, all Bible stories are to be judged in the same way? In a recent conversation with a worker among the Portugese, he stated that their great problem was to get their people to see that the Old Testament heroes were great because they were leading their race toward the true God. They insisted that they were not great if they did some of the things of which the Bible tells. Our task today is to learn to interpret Hebrew history to the children in such a way that they may keep their belief as they grow older.

But teaching what you believe does not always mean teaching ALL that you believe. You may have studied the modern books on the Bible and think quite differently from what your church teaches. Shall you create difficulties for this belief? Learn to find the great essential truth and teach it in the very best way you know remembering that your task is to teach the children to think for themselves and to study for themselves and not necessarily to believe just what you do.

Remember when you are teaching the Bible stories to teach as many as you can of positive stories—not "Thou shalt not," but "Thou shalt." When you have come to the climax of the story there should be in the minds of the children, "I should like to be like him." If you keep this thought in mind you will be more careful as to what you make the climax of your stories—not killing and cheating, but faith in God and work for God and helpfulness for one

another. Where is the climax of the book of Ruth? It depends on whether you want to teach loyalty to one's friends or the results of a wise choice. In the first case, it would be the words we like to quote so well: "Where thou goest, I will go," etc. And the story can end in two short sentences. But if the second theme is chosen, you will need to carry the story to the marriage with Boaz and the birth of the baby whose lineage was to be so wonderful.

Sometimes the theme of the story as told in the quarterly is not the one that is fitted to your class. The writer of the lessons must think in general terms when writing them. Learn to study those Old Testament heroes in the light of your class. Not long ago a teacher wrote asking me to send her a story that would teach a certain boy to be interested in building a strong body. On inquiry I found that they were studying David. Where could you find a better story for that? David, who could endure nights on the ground, who was strong enough to fight wild beasts, who could sling a stone with accuracy, David who could go the long journeys, who was reported to the king for his strong ruddy body. There are many many parts that are admirable for teaching physical endurance. "Athletes of the Bible," might be very suggestive to teachers who find it hard to teach these heroes to boys. It can be found at any of the large publishing houses.

The attitude toward the Bible School teaching in the minds of young men was brought very forcibly home to me when I was teaching a large class of boys about eighteen years of age. They continually were saying, "I do not believe this and that." Finally at the close of the year I said, "For a time

we will study the things that you do not believe till we clear the atmosphere a little." So they brought their questions and dropped them in a box if they chose. Each Sunday we studied a different thought and we went from Adam to the present time. It took us a year; but at the end of the year, we at least knew why we didn't believe things, and never in all my years of teaching have I had a year when every member of the class was so ready to talk in class. Often we should be in the classroom from one half to an hour after the school had closed. But the pathetic thing was this: In almost every case, he had been taught the belief as a child in Bible School, and then had found it contradicted by history or science or human life. In the days when High schools and colleges were less common, it was easier to make the students believe as the church did but not now. What they learn as fact in school weighs more, usually, than what they learned in Bible School.

So my plea in teaching the Old Testament is not that you change the content—the Bible is the greatest book in all the world and the content does not need changing. My plea is that you study how to teach the truth that the Bible teaches. That you be willing to let the Bible be judged as other books are judged. It is not all history. It was not written as history. It was not meant to teach history. It is the struggle of a race toward their God and that struggle begins as every other nation began—in the days of folk lore and story.

Show the weaknesses of the heroes as well as the strength and let the children judge for themselves how much of a hero they were. Place much em-

phasis on the geography and social setting of the story and when you have finished, let there be in the minds of the pupils not that thing which is the center of dispute and doubt—the raising from the dead, the falling back of the waters, etc., but the great quality for which that hero stood. Daniel in the lions' den—let that be an incident of the story. Daniel who would not let the fear of any one make him forget to ask God to bless and use him—that is the lesson which that story is fitted to teach. Tom Brown at Oxford—Daniel at prayer—Two stories that, linked together, bring a great message to the boy who is forgetting to pray.

The Old Testament stories are some of the finest in the world but one needs much time and thought to make them live in the right way. And the wrong way is the way that leads to disbelief. The teachers of the Bible School are responsible for much of the leakage from the Christian church.

May I repeat the statement with which I started. The teacher of Bible stories should teach what she believes and believe what she teaches. But that very thing has caused untold damage. Underlying the teaching must be an honest, sincere study to know the Truth and its application to the child life of today.

CHAPTER XIV

TELLING NEW TESTAMENT STORIES

RELIGION ought to be a very vital part of the adolescent life of today but the fact remains that it is not. 'Tis easy to hold and to interest them till they near fourteen years of age and then they seem to drop from the church rolls by magic. Why? It is the age when doubt is very common. Up to this time they have been very sure that father and mother "knew" but now they are very sure that they do not know all the things that they ought to know. They were sure that school was the place for a boy or girl—and then suddenly they were not so sure. What shall we do just here in our Bible School work to help interest them? I prefer to give this chapter largely to telling the New Testament stories to adolescent pupils, for it is there where it should be emphasized and in a very careful way.

Just to tell the stories from Sunday to Sunday is not enough. Let us think again of the needs of the adolescent group as we studied them in a preceding chapter. Chivalry, love, altruistic service, sacrifice and all the rest. Can we find these things in the life of Jesus and Paul and Peter and Stephen? Indeed we can, and stories that are full of power and conviction. Then how shall we make them ready for this group? You must teach Christ as a great heroic character with less emphasis on what we believe he was, and more emphasis on what he

believed, and what he did as he lived here. It must be taught in its broad setting with much that is historical and geographical. Teach the divinity of Christ, not by miracle—for they are not eager for the miraculous—but by what he has done to the world, and by what his character still stands for after nineteen hundred years of study.

Bring out the manhood of the Christ, the sympathy with those who suffered, the comradeship with those who worked, the love for his mother and his friends, his fearlessness, the inspiration of his life as he walked and talked with his disciples. Always and everywhere this thought—"What was Jesus' attitude toward these everyday tasks?" And what will you do with the great number who doubt the miraculous? Don't try to force it down and say, "Because the Bible said it, it must be so," or "Jesus could do anything." The moment you do that you add to their doubt. Show them miracles today—the wireless, the wonderful things done by the doctors during the war, the remaking of men and many other things. Then arouse in them the wish that they knew just how he did the things. Let them very frankly discuss how it could have been done. And when you have done all you can, then show them that the truth of the story is the same however the deed was done.

I well remember a discussion we had been having over Jesus walking on the water. The boys couldn't see it at all. Finally one boy who was a good swimmer said, "Well now, I can see, for last summer a man was drowning at the summer place where I stayed. I swam as far as I could but I just had to tread water for the longest time before I

could help him. Now if I could tread water where another, who didn't know how, would have drowned long before, I can believe that Jesus could walk on water just because he knew how. I like to think that Jesus was a young man who knew how to help at any time and he was helping here. Sometimes a fellow knows how to help when he sees danger better than he does at any other time." Then another boy said, " Well, I needed some money once and I didn't see a way in the world by which I was to get it, but I finally prayed for it. And the next day I had a letter from a man who had owed father some money. He enclosed five dollars thinking I might need it now that I was at school. I don't think it was any harder to walk on the water than it was to get that money to me. I should say with Will that it was because he knew how." And so the discussion went. I did little and they did much. They were getting the life-lesson out.

The birth of Christ, the bodily resurrection, the ascension—these are the places where the teacher of adolescent boys and girls often feels perfectly hopeless. But do you know that they are eager for just the lessons that those things teach? The story of the birth belongs to the Junior children as a study, but the adolescent needs to be reminded again that Christ was born as they were born, that he grew as they grew, and hence he is an example for their lives. When I said to a class a short time ago that they would find many very serious questions in their classes concerning the resurrection if they were real teachers and knew what their pupils were thinking about, some doubted the statement. One young man said, " Well I surely hope I have been a good enough

teacher so that they never question the bodily resurrection at least." I only answered, "Just listen and see for yourself." The cloud burst the next Sunday with one of the pupils asking the question, "How did it happen that Mary did not know Christ?" and he was surrounded by questions that he did not dream were there.

Teachers! It is that unanswered question that causes the trouble. "How can these things be?" is still a live question. And what shall you do when they ask you? Study it with them. Search the resurrection story for all the evidence. Tell the story both ways for them and let them see the two accounts if you will but be very sure that they find at the end that one thing was very certain—Christ lived. The rest is only the shell which held the precious kernel—Christ lived. Christ was born of a mother, he lived the life of sacrifice and of service, he died the heroic death and he lived again. These are the things which appeal to the adolescent. Jesus had temptations as the rest had, but he conquered. That is a powerful appeal to the boy if the story is carefully told. Do not raise knotty questions; you have enough to do without them but when they come, study them and then bring out the great truth of the story as you tell it.

Paul is a wonderful character if you study him in the light of the needs of this group. Chivalrous to the extreme, full of self sacrifice, so thoughtful and earnest, so heroic at the end especially. Never mind how many days he stayed in a place. Spend your time in your story either in showing what he did of helpfulness there and the results of his visit, or else what he was teaching.

NEW TESTAMENT BIBLE STORIES

Right along with your Bible lessons teach stories of missionaries, and social workers, so that they will see these men of the New Testament in the light of modern work. Too often I feel that the children think the making of religion stopped with the Bible.

Search your Bible for new stories or old stories told in a new way. Make the Bible a live book to them. Dramatize many of the stories. Make pageants based on the Bible stories.

In your stories, make Christ live. Not as a being who was so different from the modern boy, not as a miracle worker, not effeminate as some would have us think, but as a man who, if he were on earth today, would be the friend of the boy and girl. One in whose face there was no sin; in whose life there was no conscious wrong; in whose speech there was nothing unclean; in whose daily life there was toil and trouble; in whose school life there was success; in whose home life there was helpfulness. Can you not see how these things are the very things where the adolescent needs the Christ? If he needs him there, then you should build your stories in such a way that he finds him there.

CHAPTER XV

STORY GROUPS

THIS chapter must take up several lines of thought as to groups where the religious worker can be of use, outside of the work in her Bible School class. There is a call everywhere for story-tellers who are willing to give an occasional hour to the work.

There is the playground story hour. The children have romped and played to their hearts' content in the city playground and then they are ready for recreation of a different kind. The story is one of the best things for this time. But the leader of the playground, often a man, finds it difficult to tell these stories. Every one can relate facts but every one can not tell a story. Volunteer helpers are gladly welcomed by all workers in playground, gymnasium, social settlement, etc.

Usually three stories will be sufficient for these groups. That is the number usually told in the library story hours where the professional story-teller is doing such fine work. The stories told are somewhat dissimilar however. The library aims to lead the child to the book shelves by telling stories which they would like to read later. The theme of the stories and the message of the stories are carefully studied, of course, but the teller has almost no opportunity to know the particular needs of the children of the group. This is not true of the story-teller in the playground. How long does it take to

tell the selfish child, the petulant child, the leader in mischief, the leader in real work? Here the story can be built for the needs of the child more especially. Hence the habits and ordinary virtues of life take a prominent place: cleanliness, truth, brotherliness, honesty, etc.

The number of stories for this kind of work is unlimited and the one who would tell them must have many well prepared, for on a given day there may be need for a story of a special type to be given without time for preparation.

Of the three stories in a group, the first must be so well told and have such a strong introduction that it will at once command involuntary attention. Attention that is forced by saying, "Now you must sit still or I will not tell you a story," is not worth having. It should be an apperceptive story, building on a very well-known thought in child life. Usually it is one of the shorter stories. After a moment of relaxation—and this should always be a part of the story hour—there comes the strongest story of the three and this is liable to be the longest one. This should be a thoughtful story, a story in which the suspense is well sustained, one in which the power of attention is developed. The third story is usually the lightest story of the three—often it is a humorous story. It should be quite different from the rest, for if it is not, there is likely to be restlessness in the group. All three stories are built about a common theme, unless there is need for a special story, although each story is quite different in content.

Suppose for the day you chose to emphasize "helpful work". "The Lion and the Mouse,"

would make a good beginning; the "Stone in the Road" for the second, and "The Little Red Hen" for the third. A good rule for the novice to follow is that the story that makes a child think is best followed by one that makes him do.

One use of the story group in recreation centers also is to socialize the group. Hence stories of countries and of heroic deeds of those countries are good. Sometimes it is well to take all three stories from the literature of a country and make some special use of the children of that country during the story hour. Oftentimes carrying a flag of the country of which the story is told will do much to create an atmosphere that is desirable. Common ideals should be one of the aims of the story-telling hour here.

A few suggestions as to details may be of help. Thirty minutes is long enough for a story hour, even though you be a very good story-teller. Seat the group as nearly as you can in a semi-circle with your own chair at the center of the circle  thus. Never sit in the circle itself. Always have the children where they can look you directly in the face. Always select a theme—home, animal, play, helpfulness, etc. Tell the better stories several times in a season so that the pupils become familiar with them. Do not try to tell stories for the tiniest ones. Tell usually for the average age but occasionally give a special story for the older as well as for the younger. Tell the children where they can find some of the stories you tell if they go to the library. The librarians will put special books on the shelves or tables for you if you will tell them what you are using.

Occasionally use a poem that is musical. "Hiawatha" used with a group of Indian Tales is very much worth while, for instance. Some children, especially the Italians, will love the music of the poem better than the story.

In some of the cities of the country there have been formed story groups of those who loved to hear and to tell stories. These are formed of teachers, mothers, club leaders, etc. These groups are productive of great good for they not only emphasize the principles of good story-telling but they also give to the members a fund of the best stories, at the same time furnishing them with a very satisfactory semi-recreational club. Many times they meet in the public libraries so that needed books may be right at hand.

One of the places where a person who loves to tell stories can be of real worth is in Old Ladies' Homes, children's wards of the hospitals, convalescent wards and homes, poor-houses, etc. I have found more sincere appreciation in these places than in many places where one would expect it. They are often so lonely and the days are so long. The little children come to know one as the "Story-Lady," and the stories you tell can ease many an hour of pain and make life easier for the nurses. Not to go spasmodically, but to go regularly so that you will be, not a visitor, but a helper, is a real Christian work. The stories told should be bright and cheerful, often humorous and all far away from the thought of sickness and home. Old ladies want the stories of little children and of cheery homes and country life. They love to live in the happy days that were theirs before age made them useless.

THE STORY IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Perhaps this is the logical chapter in which to dis-cuss briefly the story festival. It differs from the pageant and drama in the fact that the story-teller is the center of all. There is very little of movement or dramatization—sometimes none. The stage is so planned as to give the setting—Indian, primitive, mountain, fairy, etc., and into it the story-teller fits with the dim lights and the quiet of the scene. Oftentimes the out-of-doors makes an ideal setting. I well remember an evening with Scott in a little amphitheater in the mountains with the blue of the sky and the shimmer of the lake to heighten the effect. If very carefully planned, soft music may help. The setting remains the same for the whole story. Occasionally a fairy dance or a short tableau will visualize a part of the story, but rarely can it be used with effect. It is done, not for itself, but as a part of the story, and must not take away from the movement of the story. The story is usually one that takes the whole of the allotted time, though often it is told in parts. Usually its sole purpose is to give pleasure.

There still remains the group known as the "Story-Telling Class," a group of those who are in the class to learn. These are found in our churches, our clubs and our Community schools. One need not be a professional story-teller to teach such a class. If you know the principles of story-telling and have a few carefully selected stories that you can do well, you can probably help others to be better story-tellers. What teachers need is not for you to tell stories to them but to teach them to tell stories, to show them the power of the story, to inspire them with a desire to do it well and to

carry the gift to the children. Of course, a well-told story helps in the class, but there is need of many who will study, and then go out and gather a little group about them and spread the infection. If you can do this, then you can be a helper indeed in the religious work of today, for we must improve the story in the Bible School. We must raise up people for the recreational work who can tell stories; we must give to young people that knowledge which shall make them story-telling mothers, a rare thing today. Perhaps this is the place where you can be of most service.

CHAPTER XVI

JUNIOR CHURCH STORIES

I HAVE thought that perhaps in this book would be the place for the discussion of this question which is such a vital one today. As the type of stories varies in the different kinds of Junior Churches, it may be well for a time to think of the church itself.

There are three quite different types of Junior Churches. In the first and most satisfactory method, the children come to the regular church service. If they do not sit with their parents, they sit in a group in the front of the church where it will be easy for the minister to talk to them. Possibly in the worship service of the morning a part is assigned to them, a song by the group or by the children's choir; a responsive reading with the congregation, or perhaps a special lesson is read for them. Then, before the sermon to the older congregation, the minister preaches? Oh, no, he doesn't, for if he does, they do not continue to come. He tells the children a story or teaches them an object lesson. Then during the singing of a hymn, they pass quietly out and go home. Children, who sit with the group, who have left the Junior department, are supposed to stay. This is the Junior Church which leads most naturally to attendance at the Senior Church and membership in the same.

But there are ministers who feel that they simply cannot tell the stories to the children and who frankly say so. They want the children in the church but they cannot give the story as it ought to be told. And when one listens to some ministers tell stories to children, they wish that a course in story-telling for children were a required course in the seminary. It certainly should be, for the minister who cannot talk to children has lost half his power for usefulness in the church. Some ministers feel that they cannot give the time necessary to the preparation of the story and so the following plan is used. The children come to the worship service, and then pass to the chapel where the assistant or some teacher gives the story. This may mean a much better story but it at once creates a feeling of separateness between minister and children and creates a " why " in their minds. Then, too, in the confusion of the passing, they lose the mood which had been prepared for the story by the worship hour, and they lose the feeling of reverence which the church auditorium accentuates.

A third type of Junior Church is found where the whole service for the children is held in another room. The worship service is planned similar to the church service, is dignified, the hymns are of the best and the great hymns of the church are learned, a Junior Choir furnishes the music perhaps and they have their own officers. Perhaps they have a little pledge and become members of this Junior Church. They have their own offerings and plan where they are to be used. It is a miniature church where there are no older people except the leader and some helpers. But although there are many ways in

which this is ideal, yet again the children lose. They need to feel the presence of the older people, they need to worship in the common place. They need the dignity of the church auditorium. They need to become accustomed to the more dignified service. The Junior Church of this type is apt to fail in its real purpose of leading the child to the love of the church and its worship because they will not be willing to be transferred when they should be. This is what happens. They graduate from the Junior Church when they are ready to join the Senior Church. They have occasionally gone with the group to the special services of the year but now they are to go to the older church all the time. The Junior Church leader has very carefully trained them in the duties of church membership and a beautiful service is planned when they shall join the church with the Junior Church there, happy that they are to do so.

They join and they begin to go—but they miss the simplicity of the prayer, the spontaneousness of the songs, the story is so different from the long sermon and they can't quite understand it, but most of all they miss the cordiality of the Junior Church. They say no one cares whether they are there or not and soon they come back to the Junior Church and beg to be helpers there.

In the days that are gone by, Mr. Eggleston had a most successful church of the first type with over a hundred members at one time and the whole church work felt the impetus of the Junior Church. Then I worked for a time with the second type and for four years I was leader of a Junior Church of the last type. Much depends, of course, on the kind

of minister as to how each shall succeed. But given the right conditions, the first is much to be preferred.

But what shall be the type of stories used in these churches? They should be taken from all sorts of sources, but they must be carefully chosen with the thought of the needs of the group in mind, and they must be very carefully studied. The minister who is not willing to spend three-fourths as much time on his junior sermon as he does on his senior sermon had better leave it alone. I well remember the first sermon that Mr. Eggleston wrote for the children. He naturally thought in terms of older people, than would do for them. He wrote the story and brought it to me (because I had been a teacher of children) to correct. And away went the blue pencil with a big line through big words and the moralizing at the end. Thirteen times he wrote that sermon and ten times there was a black line at the end. He just couldn't leave off the moral. But he conquered in the end, though for one whole year he spent more time each week on that 10-minute talk than on the 35-minute one that followed. For six years he had his church and in the files of his study when he had gone, I found 270 stories all written out and classified. Junior Church stories take time and strength. The minister must be willing and glad to give it.

There are books and books of Junior Church stories, but in some of them the mixture of object and story-telling is exceedingly bad. Some of them have a little story and a lot of preaching and a few rare ones contain a collection of worth-while stories that are a great help to the minister or leader. In

the list given later, not all the stories are usable, but the books will be valuable for your library.

The hardest part of the task for the minister will be not to tack a moral to the tale. Preach if you must, but preach first and then tell your story as an illustration of what you have preached and stop with the conclusion of the story.

Not always should a story be used. Sometimes a bit of constructive work is good. How we got our Testaments and how the Bible was put together; the meaning of the sacraments of the church, a bit of Bible History or news from the mission field may all be used, but the leaders should remember that the object of telling a story is identical with the object that underlies the Junior Church—to give pleasure, to create ideals, to form character, to interest in things that are noble and beautiful. Hence the story method is naturally the method to be used in the Junior Church. Sometimes an object lesson may well be used, but it takes a skillful story-teller to use an object in the midst of a story and not detract from the value of the story. Object lessons are much better used in the classroom than in the pulpit of the Junior Church.

Shall a text be used?—yes, if one can be found that will fit the theme of the story and you can work it in naturally, but not a text because you have to have one. The theme of the story is good enough for a text if no other suitable one is found.

It is well for the teller of Junior stories to remember that if they are told in the Senior Church, the seniors get as much from the stories as the

children, and sometimes more. Many a theme that could not be taken for a sermon without causing hard feeling, can be used and driven home through the story to the children. I remember once when a large amount of money was to be raised for missions, a wealthy man was asked to contribute and refused, saying he had enough to do to support the work at home and did not believe in missions. The following Sunday, the Junior sermon was concerning the life of Cornwall, the missionary, who not only stayed with the Chinese coolies when the boat was sinking and all the passengers and crew had deserted them, but swam with a line the next morning to the shore, fastened it securely, and then went back along the rope to the ship to show the coolies how to use it and to reassure them as they risked their lives in the heavy sea. The text was, "Greater love hath no man than this that he lay down his life for his friends." During the week a check came to the office and the card accompanying it simply said, "If he can be willing to risk losing his life, I can be willing to risk losing some money. Thank you." And it was signed by the wealthy man. Plan your stories for the children and for them alone, but remember that you are not working alone for the children when you prepare them.

Use stories from any source as long as they are creative stories of great ideals as to what a Christian boy and girl ought to do and to be. One of the greatest opportunities that a minister has in his work is in his Junior Church. And if the minister does not do the work, then it may well fall to the director, the superintendent or the teacher.

A FAVORITE JUNIOR CHURCH STORY

The Little Brown Rat

Theme—Love never faileth

Big John lived in a very large building surrounded by high walls on which at times there could be seen walking a man with a gun. In front of the building, there was a big iron gate at which stood a sentry who looked at the little piece of paper that was carried by every stranger who entered the gate. There were many windows in the walls of the big house, but every one was crossed and re-crossed by iron bars. Looking through the gate one could see many men, but they were not talking to each other or smiling at each other, and their faces looked either sad and lonely or hard and ugly. Many of them were wearing suits with stripes running around the body,—such queer looking suits as they were! Now over the door of this big house were two words: "State's Prison," and all these men had been sent from the towns and cities around to live here and work for months or years or maybe for their whole life.

Big John had been here when just a boy and then had been let out again. Then he had done more things that were not right and had come back again for two years. Three times he had been let out, and three times he had had to come back, each time with a face that had less smiles and more ugliness in it. And now every one in the prison was afraid. He had tried to saw his way out of the windows; he had tried to kill the keepers and he had even

tried to kill himself. So he was continually being watched by the guards lest he do some dreadful thing.

One day when Big John was in the yard the keeper saw him smile. He was so surprised that he had to go and tell another keeper about it. "Watch him," said this man, "he probably has something ready to do and is smiling to think of the trouble he is going to cause." So that night a double guard was walking along the gallery where John slept. But there was no trouble and John slept quietly through the night as usual. Then the keepers noticed that he was much less quarrelsome than he had been and that he did his work in much better shape, but they noticed, too, that when the other men were in the yards John often preferred to stay in his cell. He had been such a bad man that the keepers could not help but feel sure that he was bent on mischief so they changed his cell, and when he objected they searched and searched the old one for some trace of what he was doing but not a thing could they find.

One day when John thought no one was looking he unbuttoned his coat and looked down at something that was hidden there. Then he put his hand inside and smiled. But a keeper saw it, and thinking he had a knife or a pistol, perhaps, two keepers caught his hands and started to take away the thing that he had hidden. But it wasn't a gun or a pistol or a knife, it wasn't even a saw. It was a little brown rat. It had come into his cell at night to get the crumbs of bread that had fallen when the prisoner had eaten his supper in the cell and John had made friends with it. Finally it had become so tame

that it would ride about in the pocket of his coat, and then he had placed it inside to keep it safe and warm. So every afternoon it stayed there and slept. But when it awoke and scratched with its little feet at John's shirt, he would smile to think how good friends he and the little rat had become.

The keepers of the prison were going to take it away and kill it, but John begged so hard for its life that they finally gave it back to him and let him keep it. "'Tis the only thing that ever loved me in all my life," said Big John. "I hadn't any mother or any folks ever. And now it is the only thing in all the big world that has faith in me and believes I will do what is right. Let me keep my friend and I will give you no more trouble, for the little rat will help me to be good."

So they lived together in the cell for months, the man who had been so wicked and the little rat who loved him. Then the man grew kind and gentle and loving and helpful as the days went by. And when at last the governor sent a pardon to the prison for Big John he refused it, saying, "I would rather stay here where the men need a friend than to go out into the world where I might find none. I will stay and be a friend."

(This story was told me by a warden of a prison, and I have only reproduced it as he told it to me.)

M. W. EGGLESTON.

CHAPTER XVII

THE BED-TIME STORY HOUR

THE task of the religious educator is not done when the needs of the children have been met with in the school and club. We must go into the home and as far as possible inspire the parents to better things there. Many of the mothers and fathers of the children with whom we work are foreign and our manners and customs are foreign to them, but no matter whether American or foreign, every parent has a background of some stories which can be used in child training. But many of these parents do not realize that stories are a part of the education of the child. To them it seems like a waste of precious time to spend the time which is needed for sewing or cooking in telling stories. And so they need the outside influence to show them what a great help this one factor can be in the training and discipline and rearing of the children of the home.

> "Between the dark and the daylight,
> When the night is beginning to lower,
> Comes a pause in the day's occupation
> That is known as the Children's Hour."

Longfellow had children of his own to whom he told stories, and this is a bit of his own home life that he gives us in the poem. But it is a bit of philosophy which we can hardly afford to forget. The bed-time hour! The impressionable time of the day. The time when it is easiest to tell of the

things that have been wrong or harmful and then go to bed with a clear conscience. The time when the story has a chance to bring its message in the quiet that precedes sleep. The time when the fairies and heroes chase away the thoughts of the day that are unhappy.

But what do we find in most of our homes? The older members of the family coming home from work; the supper where the children have little part; the dishes to wash and the hurry, hurry, hurry to get the little ones to bed and out of the way, or else the sending of them on the street to play till it is too late for them to have any time of their own. All day mother has been too busy to give them a play-time, or a story-time, and father has been away; but at night there is still no time for them. The years roll by and then the parents wonder why the children seem to grow away from them; why they have lost their confidence; why they fail to talk over with them the things which they are planning to do or be. Social workers could tell you pitiful tales of the girls who have longed to have a bit of mother that was not given.

Look for a moment at the other side where there is a bed-time hour, a real bed-time hour. A little talk "about today"; no scolding, no fretting, but a little talk filled with love and sympathy. Paul has made ready for bed with hands and face dirty—just a little thing but a very lazy habit. But mother doesn't like to kiss a boy with a dirty face and so they talk it over and laugh about it—and then he slides out of bed and comes back sweet and clean. Then mother tucks him under the covers and she tells him the story,—funny to him at the time,

of " Pig Brother," and leaves him for the night. And what is on his mind? The story. Was he going to be a little brother to a pig? He wouldn't like one to call him brother. No, indeed—and the message sinks in. Or perhaps she tells him of the ten little soldiers (fingers) who always take their hats off (the black tops) if ladies are to be about. Then, in fun, they look at Paul's soldiers. Mother could have said, " You must clean your nails," many times and still find them unclean. But now, when he looks at them, they are little soldiers with their hats on.

Kate has said unkind things to the mother during the day and mother has been hurt. She has said so, but Kate has been angry and the rebuke has been worth little. But when night comes she begins to think about it. If there were a chance, (and she were used to doing it) she would say she was sorry —not when the others were about—but when she and mother were alone. And the sweet relationship between mother and daughter would have been cemented. But there is no time, and little by little she thinks there is no need to tell mother that she is sorry and she becomes one of the girls whom all grown people wish they could have the chance to train. If she and mother had had a visit—a bed-time talk—and then there had followed the story perhaps of Mother Holle (if she were younger) or Garfield's appreciation of his mother (if she were older) or any of the beautiful mother stories that are so easy to find, it might have resulted in a different attitude.

I have tried bed-time stories in my own home and I know their worth. Their help in discipline is with-

out measure. A quiet conscience, a mind full of helpful things and pretty pictures and a feeling of the sweetness of mother-love—these are the rights of every child at bed-time. And what can the church do to promote this? Her workers, as they go in the home, can tell the mothers how to tell the stories, where to find the stories and the value of the stories. They can show the mother the worth of the folk tales of her own mother country as well as our own stories. They can give to the child books of stories which perhaps will be used at the bed-time hour. They can tell to the older children —little mothers, many of them, in our institutional churches—stories which perhaps they will give to the little ones at the bed-time if the mother can not or does not. The church can have clubs of mothers who shall learn to tell stories. At the regular meetings of mother's clubs, a bed-time story can be told each month. The pastor in his work can show to the mothers—and many of the mothers from our homes of refinement and wealth are as guilty of robbing the child of its birth-right as are the mothers of the poorer sections—he can show all mothers that they are neglecting a great duty and privilege.

It will make little difference ten years from today whether the dishes were washed just at the minute supper was over or not; it will make little difference whether mother went to the whist party on time or not; it will make little difference whether the new dress was finished for the older daughter to wear to the party or not, but it will make all the difference in the world whether the children know of Hans of Holland, the great King Arthur, Nahum Prince, the Little Match Girl, Pandora, Little Daf-

fadowndilly and Mr. Toil and the many, many other fine, helpful characters who shall live with them and influence them and help them to be fine and true. It will make all the difference in the world whether John goes to sleep planning the mischief which the gang are ready to do on the morrow or whether he is living with Sir Galahad.

This chapter has been placed in this book in the hopes that it may send the church-workers out to be believers in the power of the bed-time hour.

A BED-TIME STORY

The Fairy's Gift

Long, long ago in a land where the flowers were always in bloom and the trees were full of birds, there lived a little girl named Natalie. She had a little kitten, and a big, big dog and a dear little pony, but she was not happy even with all that. Her papa gave her everything she wanted and her mother did so many nice things for her, but still she was not happy. She wanted one thing—she wanted to see a fairy.

She looked under every big stone, and she looked in every flower. When the wind whistled in the trees, she would go out and look and look and look up into the leaves—but there was no fairy there. Then she would watch in the coals as they flew up the fire-place, for they looked sometimes as if they were alive, but no fairy came.

One day when Natalie was playing out in the garden she became very tired, so she sat down under a tree to rest. Just then she heard a little

voice saying, "Natalie, Natalie! Where are you?" "Right here under the tree," said the little girl. "Where are you and who are you?"

"Look under the stone and right there will be
The dear little fairy you've wanted to see,"

said the voice.

Oh, how happy Natalie was! As quick as a flash she ran to the big stone and sure enough there sat a fairy. Such a dear little thing as she was! Natalie wanted to put her arms about her and kiss her but the fairy held up her hand and said, "I am very busy today looking for the very nicest thing to give to a little girl I know, and I haven't a moment to waste. Would you like to come with me?" "Indeed I would," said Natalie.

Then away they went, with Natalie's hand fast held by the fairy. After a time they came to a little house where there were toys of every kind—dolls that could talk and walk, great lines of cars with a track on which they could run, tricycles, balls; just everything that a boy or girl could wish for. Natalie looked them all over and chose two or three that she would have liked. But the fairy shook her head and said, "Oh, no, this is not the nicest thing in the world for a boy or girl to have. We must hurry on."

Next they came to a big, big farm where there were all sorts of animals, and Natalie just loved the little white goats that were hitched to the carts and ready for taking to some one. She was sure this was the gift which the fairy would choose. But the fairy looked at the dogs and the kittens and the ponies and the goats and all the rest of the things

and said, "These are fine, and they are all alive so they could love the boys and girls but this is not the best, I am sure. Something tells me I can find something better than these."

'Twas a long fly they took after they left the farm, but at last they came to a beautiful building and here there were all the books one ever heard of. Stories of Red Riding Hood and the Three Bears with bright-colored pictures; stories of boys who had wonderful things and of girls who became queens and princesses; stories of fairies and giants and animals. Natalie wished the fairy would let her stay right there and read all the day. A dear little lady was in charge of the books, and she tried hard to get the fairy to choose them, for she said, "You know if you take the little girl this gift she cannot break it or have it run away from her. It can be hers for always and always." But the fairy shook her head and went on.

Then they came to another house and in this house there were beautiful things to wear: dresses and hair ribbons and shoes and parasols and all sorts of things that little girls like. "This is the right place," thought Natalie. "Now I am sure she will find just the thing that a little girl would want most of anything in the world. I am sure these are the nicest things. I hope she will choose that pretty little pink dress with the shoes and ribbons to match." But the fairy only laughed when Natalie told her her choice and said, "No, indeed, I shall not take those things for they would make the little girl very unhappy and selfish. I am sure I know just where to look. I have just thought of the very place."

Down through the wood they went and across the meadow, and then over a little, singing brook to the home where the Mother Fairy lived. When she heard them coming she came to the door, looking so sweet in her pretty white dress and white cap, with her curls peeping out from beneath it. "Have you just the gift for a dear, little girl that I know?" said the fairy. "It must be sweet and dear to play with, and something that will last; something that she can care for and love. Something that will love her and make her happy. I know that is hard to find, but I love the little girl and I want to give her the very best gift in all the world."

Then the Mother Fairy smiled and said, "Yes, I have just the gift. Wait a moment and I will bring it to you." She went into the house and Natalie just held her breath, she was so anxious to know what it could be that was nicer than toys or animals or books or pretty things. When Mother Fairy came back, she held in her arms a bundle which she gave to the little fairy, who in turn gave it to Natalie, saying, "Look, dear, and see if you like the gift, for you are the little girl I was thinking of." Then Natalie lifted the cover and there lay a dear little baby sister with blue eyes, yellow hair and little blue bonnet strings tied under her pretty chin.

And Natalie liked her so well that she took her home to mother and they were all very sure that she was the dearest gift in all the world.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE USE OF STORIES IN MAKING GREAT PICTURES AND HYMNS LIVE AND GROW

ALL will readily agree that children should be taught to appreciate the beautiful in art and song, but how? Rarely do you find a child especially interested in any picture in particular as you pass through the museum, unless it is striking in color, is a picture of animals or has been in some way emphasized in their school life. Just as one must be well introduced to a person in order to have an interest in them at first sight, so the child must be introduced to the great art productions of the world. The victrola has done much to make known the great music of the world by putting it within reach of the poorest and by making it popular. But even then the deeper side of that great music is still hidden from the child.

Back of the great art pictures, the great pieces of sculpture and the great music there are wonderful stories, some of them true and some of them legendary, which will be of great pleasure to the youth of the land and arouse an interest in these works of art that will be lasting and lead to deeper study. It is the privilege of the Bible School teacher to help here also.

A hymn should never be taught without first being introduced in some way. Why should they want to sing the hymn just because it is the one the leader

chooses to sing? If they know nothing about it, they care little about it. Hence it has come to be that much of the music that is popular with the Bible School pupils today is written to dance-time and with meaningless words or catchy music that has caught the ear but has left the soul-life untouched. Music in the Church School is for the purpose of worship, and no worshipful music suggests the dance hall. It is only because we have not introduced the better music to them and then shown them the beauty of that music as it was devotionally sung that they have chosen the other. They have taken what we have chosen to give them, and now the Bible school is suffering the results in a school in which reverence has seemed to be leaving for parts unknown. Not always does this need to be a story. It may be a little fact from the life of the composer or the author, or it may be an interesting incident that caused the writing of the hymn. Just something to catch the attention of the pupils and cause them to want to sing the hymn and to appreciate the spirit of the ones who wrote it perhaps. But any one who has imagination can take the facts of a life and weave them into an interesting little fact or story which will serve the purpose well. For instance:

"When he was fifteen years old, Charles Wesley had to choose whether he would be adopted by a wealthy uncle, a member of Parliament, or not. The mother wisely left the choice wholly with the boy and he decided to stay with his fifteen brothers and sisters in the Epworth Parsonage. The cousin who was adopted in his place became grandfather of the great Duke of Wellington and so has made a name in history. But Charles Wesley also made

a great name for himself. He did not grow up to be a fighter; he was a singer and he wrote more than 6,000 hymns. This hymn which we are to sing this morning was written by him when the Methodist Church was less than one year old."

Then sing, "Hark the Herald Angels Sing." or this:

"Once, a few years ago, there lived in Boston a minister who tried to live as nearly as he could just as he thought the Christ wanted him to live. And this is how the newspapers thought he succeeded. The note, printed in the daily paper, read: 'Phillips Brooks walked down Newspaper Row yesterday, nodding to acquaintance here and there. And though the heavens and the pavements were moist, the street was filled with sunshine.' I wonder what kind of a hymn a man like that would write. It is this,—one of our favorite Christmas hymns, —'Oh, Little Town of Bethlehem,' and it was written after he had spent Christmas on the hills near Bethlehem."

These are not stories in the true sense of the word, yet they have a story background and are used in such a way as to give pleasure and cause interest in the hymn. Once you teach hymns in this way you will never go back to the old way. You have only a moment or two in which to do it, yet you can show a picture and bring a gift.

And how shall we make pictures live? In the same way, by telling of the artist, the place where it is hung, a story as to the love of the people for the picture or of its value,—anything that will make it live. Sometimes it is well to tell a life-story connected with the picture. The story I am to give was

told to me from life. I have never seen it in print and can find no trace of the authorship, hence I give it here in that way:

He was only a boy to his mother, yet he was going away from the home to live and work in the distant city. He was glad to go, eager to leave the watchful care of the home, but his mother felt as if she could not let him go alone, not even sure that he was consciously taking God with him, though she had tried, as best she could, to lead the boy to him. 'Twas only a day or two before he was to go and the mother longed to find the right message to give him before he should leave her.

One day when he came in toward evening, his mother said to him, "John, down in the H—— store there is hung a wonderful picture that I should like much to have you see. Will you go down tomorrow and see it?" "Oh, mother," said the boy, "what do I want with a picture? I don't care about it and I don't want to take the time to go."

"Son," said the mother, "in a little while you will be where I shall not be asking you to do things to please me. I should like you to do this for me."

"Well," answered the boy, "if you put it in that way, I suppose I must go." And so he went.

He was directed to the room where the picture was hung and opened the door to enter. But he stepped back. On the platform at the front of the room was a man praying. He waited for a time and then opened the door again, but still he was at prayer. When he opened it the third time and found it still the same, he decided to enter and investigate. Then he found that the man at prayer

was the picture he had come to see. It was the Christ in Gethsemane, a very large, life-size picture, wonderfully lighted and framed in black velvet. Eagerly he went forward and studied the picture which could thus mislead him. That was a fine face! But it seemed very full of care. Why? His mother had told him that the Christ was not afraid to die, that he had done no wrong. Why then did he look so worried?

After a time he went out but he wanted to see the picture again and he wanted to ask some questions about it. So he said to his mother, "I should like to see that picture again. Will you come down wth me tomorrow?" And with a glad heart the mother went to the gallery with the boy. This time he went toward the picture with his hat off and with quiet step. Silently they stood and looked at it, and then he asked the question which seemed to him so important, "Why does his face look so worried and why do his hands seem to be pleading?" "Son," said the mother, with a silent prayer, "he had only been a teacher for three years and there was so much he wanted to teach and to do. But now he was to die and leave it all undone. I think he was worried for fear the work would not be done, for even the men whom he loved and trusted were asleep when he needed them. I think he wondered if people all down the years would do the work that he could not do. He was thinking of that, I am sure, as he prayed."

For a long time the boy stood there, his hands moving one over the other and his face sinking lower and lower as his eyes looked steadily into the face of the man at prayer. Then he straightened

his shoulders and quietly said, " Oh, Man of Galilee, if there is anything that you left undone that I can do, you can count on me."

And he went out to live like the Christ.

We need to interest the boys and girls in these great works of art, and I know of no better way than to give to them in story form something of the artist or author or composer. If this is not possible, then turn to an incident connected with the picture or hymn, and make it live by telling that in the very best way you can. There are very many stories connected with the early life of some of these great men and women that are most interesting to children. If you can create a friendly feeling before you try to show the picture or teach the hymn, you have laid the foundation for an abiding interest.

CHAPTER XIX

DRAMATIZING THE STORY

In our religious education work we have for a long time used the re-telling of the story in class, and the writing of it in the notebook as forms of expressional work that are worth while; but dramatizing the story has been slow in growth in our Church Schools. Yet it is one of the very best forms of impressing the truth of the story. We have had all sorts of entertainments where the children were fairies and flower children, and where parts have been assigned to be learned and repeated. Pageantry is coming to the front as one of the things which is well worth while for our work, but here again, the parts are repeated, though there is less of repetition and more of spectacular effect. But there is a simple dramatization of stories, and Bible stories are particularly good for the work, which takes no rehearsal, little if any costuming and much imagination. So they are most effective in the school.

Let us suppose we have had the story of Lot's Choice in the Bible School class and the children are alive to the selfishness of Lot and the big heartedness of Abraham. Suppose we play it for the club meeting during the week or for the review of next Sunday's lesson. Who will be Abraham and who will choose to be Lot? Immediately they begin to live the situation. You will find many eager to be Abraham but many who will not care to be selfish

Lot. Then we shall need some herdsmen and some sheep. Are there any other persons needed in the story? Not a person but a voice, for in the story there is the voice of God speaking to Abraham, and if the story is to move to the finish with no suggestions from the teacher and no break, we must plan for every detail. In dramatization, the person of God or Christ is never represented, but from behind a curtain, or in another room, we may have the voice of God.

When thinking the story through without ever having seen it done, you may think there will be much confusion in the class when some are sheep and some are quarreling herdsmen, and perhaps for the first time or two there may be. It will be determined by the attitude which the teacher has been able to create concerning the story. I have seen thirteen-year-old boys give this same story in their own class with no spectators as reverently as if they were in the church auditorium. If they are living the situation, there will be no difficulty.

Shall there be a rehearsal? No. But there must be preparation, for the boy who is to be Abraham must know what Abraham is to say, and so with Lot. It will drive them to their Bible as no other homework will do. At first they will give much of the conversation in their own language, but gradually they will come to see the beauty and nobility of the Hebrew and they will put it in. During the last year, I had two brothers who were continually quarreling. So one day I told the story of Lot, and then we decided to dramatize it. Deliberately I allowed the older brother to choose to be Abraham and the younger one Lot. You will remember Abraham said

to Lot, "Let there be no strife I pray thee between me and thee and between my herdsmen and thy herdsmen. For we are brethren." When the story was ready to be given, Abraham had learned the Hebrew words as they were and as he stood and gave his hand to Lot and repeated the words, I wondered if their message would sink in. Several days later he said to me, "I like that story of Abraham but I hate that man Lot. I should hate to be as mean as he. But I like to say those words of Abraham, 'Let there be no strife I pray thee between thee and me for we are brethren,' and every time I have started to quarrel with Bill this week I have heard them."

A very few details should be thought out before the children are ready to begin the dramatization. Where shall the herdsmen stand? Which shall be the plain over which they are looking? etc. After a time you will find that they will bring a paper cap, or an old shawl, or a roll of paper to represent the ancient scriptures when they are to give a story, but not at first, and I am inclined to think there is less chance for the foolish ones to make trouble at first if there is no costuming. After all the details are ready, the teacher becomes one of the group, often taking part in the dramatization so that there may seem to be no spectator. Then the herdsmen quarrel, Abraham comes, finds Lot, draws him to one side, tells him of his proposition. Lot goes to the window, perhaps talking to himself about what he sees, and then comes to Abraham and makes his choice. The herdsmen slowly disappear (into their seats) and Lot follows, but Abraham remains till all are gone. Then he goes with bent head and

looks across the plain, realizing that Lot has made a foolish choice, Lot whom he loves as a son. Then there comes the voice of God and Abraham drops on his knees and listens, and then he, too, passes quietly to his seat.

The teacher makes no suggestions unless absolutely necessary. Each pupil takes his part as he sees it. Some will live the story at once, and facial expression and voice will show that they have entered into the spirit of the story. Others will be slow, and some will never be able to fully grasp the play-thought. But perhaps there are others who would like to be Abraham, or who feel that the story could be very much bettered if repeated by others. The first time the parts are chosen by the children. Perhaps now some one will make a suggestion that as John is older, he should be Abraham. Perhaps John would not have thought he could take the part, but he is flattered at being chosen and so he tries. If it is to be re-done it is well to have suggestions made by the children as to which parts were not quite right and could be bettered. Perhaps the story is dramatized several times. Then it might be given for an entertainment for a Mothers' club or another class. In this case, those who had done the best work in their parts would be chosen for the dramatization. But the practise dramatization is done for the children's work and not for outside entertainment.

And why is this better than learning parts and rehearsing the story? Because in the dramatization they are not acting; they forget that as they try to live the situation. They are not only learning lessons which are necessary in their own life, but they

are putting themselves into the life of the Hebrew people and will appreciate more of the worth of the characters. Children all love to make believe, and this is a method by which they can give expression to their own appreciation of certain stories. It helps the child to see the events, and especially to feel the climax. In the story of Lot, there comes involuntarily, even as you watch the children give it (and the power over the one who is taking the part must be vastly greater) there comes the realization of the meanness of being selfish with an older person. You hate selfishness. The situations are real and they themselves are helping to try to solve the life problem involved. Once we were ready to dramatize the story of the prodigal son. The boy who was to take the part of the elder brother came to me just as we were beginning and said, "Would you mind if I changed the end a little? After the whole story has been given, I would like to come in and say, 'Father, I am sorry I was so mean, I am glad to see him back.'" "But," I said, "we are giving the story just as Jesus told it and we could hardly do that." "Well," he said, "then let some one else do it for I feel mean every time I think of it, for that is no way to treat a brother."

Living a situation! Thinking through a problem of life and putting yourself in a mean place just to see how it feels, or living the part of one who was noble and kind and good! The very fact that they are playing the parts with other children, some of whom see these very characteristics in the children who play, the fact that they are at liberty to interpret the parts as they choose, all these things make this method of expression very much worth while.

Oftentimes we forget as we train the children to be workers and leaders that we aim, not at a finished product at the time, but at a leader some day. The entertainments we give in the churches are aims unto themselves but they should be planned with the thought that they are making the children. We dramatize with the children in the Bible work not for mere pleasure, not to teach the children to act, but to develop an interest in and an understanding of great and noble Bible characters; to develop their powers of expression in a natural way and to stimulate worthy ideals and motives. We care little for the finished product for we are making characters and not actors.

To be successfully dramatized, a story must be well told with the scenes very vividly presented. It must be a story where there is action that can be easily represented and which is not foreign to the child. And the teacher who is leading the work must be one who sees the possibilities of the work. It should be done, not because required, but because desired.

Many of the parables, Esther, Daniel and his three friends, Moses in the Bullrushes (for the children) and Moses before the King (for the adolescents), Ruth, Esther, Abraham and the Three Guests,—these are only suggestions. The imaginative teacher will prefer to choose her own stories to dramatize.

Just a word of caution concerning dramatization in story-telling classes. See that your pupils do it as they wish their classes to do it. A finished dramatization with the parts all learned may be a fine entertainment, but it has not taught your class

to dramatize the story. Make them be original. Have a dramatization party. Assign a group to work together and prepare a story of any kind. At a recent party of this kind the following stories were given: "The Three Bears," "Mrs. Jarley," "The Unfinished Prayer,"—an original story,—"Brer Rabit and the Fox," and several others. Let the teacher know nothing of the story till it is given at the party, and then let a vote be taken to see which group most nearly represented the story in life. Whenever I have told the story of the "Three Bears" since the above party, I have seen the little white bear dressed in white bath towels from head to foot and very representative of a bear, hopping along toward the chairs which were to be the bear's bed.

And dramatization can be a very vital part of the home training also. Neighborhood groups may represent the stories told on Sunday, or even the children in a home. The following story was told me concerning some little children whose mother had told them, as beautifully as she could, the story of little Samuel. Then she asked them if they would like to play the story. Of course they would. So they chose their parts. The older boy would be Eli and the younger boy would be Samuel. Then the mother could be the voice of God. So the children made ready for bed. Soon the voice called "Samuel," and the little fellow answered by running to the bed of Eli and saying, "Here am I, for you called me." But Eli sent him back to bed. Again the voice called and again he answered, and Eli said, "It is God that is calling you. Ask him what he wants you to do." Again the voice called.

What would the little fellow do? He was such a baby. Would he understand? He hesitated only a moment and then slipped from his little white bed, knelt on the floor and clasping his hands said, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." Did the story live? I leave it for you to answer. I am wondering if some day when there comes the voice of God to the grown boy if he will remember the story of his home life and answer, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth."

CHAPTER XX

TELLING STORIES TO ADULTS

THIS book has largely dealt with the study of stories for children. But there is a large field for the story-teller in the telling of stories for adults. The stories are harder to find perhaps but there is a need for just this work. It has, however, been a source of much annoyance to me to find how many of the adults seem to feel that a story-teller is like an entertainer, always ready with some words to give out in the form of a story. This is not true. There are times when a story-teller feels that she simply cannot tell a story. The mood of the audience, the surroundings of the group, the physical health of the teller, these all must help the message. A headache is a sufficient excuse any day for one to say she cannot tell a story to a promiscuous group, for the message is sure to be hindered and the story may be a failure.

Mission study classes are often dry and uninteresting, and missionary meetings are more so, because of the failure of those in charge to put the material at hand in shape to create interest. Here is a place where a story-teller can be of service. Why not take charge of the programs for one month or six months with the purpose in mind of making those meetings so interesting that the members will want to come? Here is a good chance for you to do some work on original stories. The president

will hand you a letter saying that the society is asked to help support a little girl whose father died of the flu, and who was one of the Christian mem-bers of their church. If the letter is read in the meeting those who are interested in missions will want to help at once. But the rest will shrug their shoulders and say, "This is a hard year and we have all we can do now." They have said it ever since there was a missionary society, even when the cost of living was half of what it is now. Why not take that little fact and weave it into a story? Describe the little girl, her home, her hard life since the father died and her longing to get into the school. You can even put a little letter at the end, if you wish, that will make its appeal. And some of those interested will want to give more, and the uninterested will want to give some. Perhaps your Bible Class is uninteresting. Get the leader to let one person each Sunday bring an interesting bit of world or mission news to the class or tell a Bible story in connection with the lesson. Begin yourself to make collections of these stories and take this for your work. If you know how to tell stories, help the others to do it well. I have heard some fine accounts of the revival of a Bible Class in this way. If your leader is not up-to-date and is losing the class, just let story material fill up a third of the time.

Invalids and shut-ins need your stories. Get a book of Henry Van Dyke's stories and prepare several. Then ask the pastor to give you a list of people who would like to hear them. Sometimes it is wise to read, but remember that telling a story is much less tiresome to the old or sick than is reading

it, for they watch the expression of face and eyes as you talk to them and so the words seem less monotonous. To the aged you can tell many of the children's stories, and the sick like stories of people who did things in spite of a handicap. One must be very careful not to suggest by the story that there is any chance of their being handicapped, however, for they are quick to see the suggestion.

When telling stories to groups of mothers, it is well to find stories that will help them in their problems with the children rather than stories which will be a personal help. Discipline, impudence, untruthfulness, sex-infatuation, etc.—all these things can be helped by stories. Either tell stories that they can tell to the children or else stories showing that the way to deal with wrong is by love and patience. Mothers of adolescent girls need this particularly.

But over and over I have been speaking about mothers. Do the fathers need stories? Is there any place where we can reach them in this way? They surely do need them and they enjoy them as much as the mothers. Occasionally the School Mothers' Club has a night for Mothers and Fathers. A story here is very helpful and it can be easily woven into the program as given. Father and Son Banquets have become quite common in the churches. One of the finest programs that I have ever seen given at one of these banquets consisted of stories told by the diners. First a boy told a story, prepared, of course, about a father who had made his son what he was; then the father told a story of the son who had honored his father; then a story of how a father and son had worked together to keep the little home when the mother had gone; then a story of a father's

sacrifice that the boy might have an education. Every one was a story that had been sought for by some one and the stories were very well told. After all were finished, a judge told a story called, "The One to Whom We Boys and Men Owe It All." It was a deep, true mother story and after he had finished the judge said, "Now, all who are ready to honor this woman who is different in every home but the same the world over in love and sacrifice, just pin to your coat the little flower at your place —a carnation—and then go home and tell her why you wear it." Do men like stories? You should have seen their faces.

Men in the wards of the hospitals like stories and they need stories. They are impatient to get out and worried as to where the funds are coming from with which to carry on the home. I have found that there they like "Brer Rabbit," and "Wild Animals I Have Known," and the "Call of the Wild," and the "Ruling Passion" Stories.

In the early part of the book, I referred to stories told at Camp Sherman on Mothers' Day. I want to give an incident that occurred there showing the great power of the story in a strong man's life.

Just in front of me, as I began the stories of Mother-love and care, stood a big Armenian. His face and hands seemed so large and his face looked careless and indifferent.

I knew when I began that he did not care to listen but thought he had to do so. At first the doggedness on his face seemed to increase and twice I saw him shrug his shoulders and turn aside. Then I saw that he was thinking and his eyes had left my face. Then his hands began to move, his face grew

whiter and whiter till I thought he would surely fall, and I was sure that he must feel very ill, but to the end he stood there and listened.

After the stories, the men came past the place where I stood and, one after another, I pinned the white rose on their coat with a mother message. When the Armenian came, he grasped my hand till the pain was intense, and he just stood and looked in my face till those at my side wondered why he was so long in moving on. As I pinned the rose, I said, "I am sorry you feel ill. Let the little rose tell you how gladly mother would care for you if she were here. I am glad to give it to you for her."

Late in the afternoon the boys were having a feast with a whole tableful of home-made pies that had been sent to the Detention Camp by some thoughtful mothers, and I was helping to serve them when I saw the Armenian. Drawing me to one side he said, "Please, may I have another rose and will you pin it on?" "Did you lose the other?" I said. "No," he answered quietly, "here it is," and he pulled a little box from his pocket. "It is going home to mother. If you will come to my tent," he said, "I would like to tell you a story." So we walked down the street and he told me of a quarrel with mother years before, of his leaving home with never a word then or since; of his determination to go to France and let his mother wonder where her boy was, and so pay her for what he thought injustice. "When you began," he said, "I hated her and I hated you for saying they were all our best friends. I may have to go over the top; I may be wounded, but I never expect to suffer as I suffered as you told the second story and as you said

you were giving me the rose for her. But I have fought it all through and I am so sorry for all I have done. Here is a letter to her asking her to forgive, and here is the little rose as a promise that I will be clean and pure, for that is why we quarreled. But I want a rose to take with me to remind me of the stories and the promise. I shall carry it all through."

So I gave him the rose and we went our different ways. In my possession I have three letters and a card that I value highly. The card is from France and says, "Dear Foster Mother: The little rose and I are here and helping." One letter was from him in the hospital after he was wounded. Another letter was from the nurse saying that he had asked her to let me know he was to be buried in France; and the third letter was from his mother telling me of the end of the life, and ending, "To know that some one cared for him, to know that he was helping, to know that he loved me—these are my comforts now that he is gone."

The children need stories to help them build ideals. The adults need stories to help them brush away the dust that has accumulated on those same ideals; to bring relaxation to tired bodies and minds; to arouse enthusiasm in things that are around them and need their help and to inspire them to greater usefulness.

CHAPTER XXI

PERSONAL STORIES IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

I HAVE hesitated long about adding this chapter to this book. I have told the story that it will contain several times, but telling a personal story to those whom you feel are friends and publishing that same story in a book for strangers is quite a different thing. But over and over my students have asked that I give it in the book and I realize that a teacher who is not willing to give what will help others is not worth the name of teacher. Just within a week I have received a letter from a member of one of the classes, a young man of great promise, and he writes, "I want to thank you for the story of the 121st Psalm. You will never know what it means to me to know that some one today really knows there is a God when there is so much of question about the Bible and its teachings. Gladly would I have taken the year's course for that one story." The letter has decided me and I give the story at the end of the chapter out of the heart of my personal life with the prayer that it may come to the students of this book as a little closing message of the power of a story, and that it may send them out to give, not only of myth and legend, of history and nature, of mission and of Bible, but of self as well.—The Author.

Shall we use personal stories in teaching the Bible?

Is it any use for the boys and girls to see that we too have doubted and conquered, have wondered and been answered, have listened and heard? I believe that the teacher who has the most magnetism and power is the one who teaches what she knows and has seen, as well as what she has read and studied, and that this is true in Bible Study as in no other place. Hebrew history and biography are full of tradition and mysticism, but Christian living is full of grave questions and stern reality. How shall we meet the growing wave of doubt and incredulity? Can we meet it by teaching the Bible in the way our grandfathers taught it, or must we use common sense and everyday experience? Shall we be honest or shall we be methodical and historic?

One day I went into a class of boys of sixteen years of age. They were boys from the lower part of the city. Their teacher was a young man who was earnest and sincere, but who did not understand the adolescent boy. In the course of the lesson the question had arisen, "Is there a God?" and boy-like, one had asked the teacher, "How do you *know?*" He had been battling with the question in the light of Moses, and Ezra, and Jesus, and the flowers, and the sunsets, and the Psalms—every way he knew, but still the boys insisted that that was no proof. "Did *any one* know that there was a God?" It was plainly to be seen that he was glad to see me when I appeared. "The boys want to know how we know there is a God," said he. "They don't seem to think I have a proof."

I looked about the group, their faces showing that they thought they had won a victory, and said quietly, "Yes, boys, I know there is a God. But it

is closing time. If you will all be here next Sunday, I will tell how I know. But I assure you that I do know." On the following Sunday they were all there when I entered the room, and two boys whom I had not seen for a long time were there with them. Knowing they lived in the house with the boy who had asked the question, I was sure why they had come. And this is the story I told them —and the result.

Away up in the hills of Maine there is a little lake named after the Indian word for the West Wind—" Keewaydin "—and on the lake in a dear little tent of three rooms I had lived for four summers. All around us there were mountains, and the birds and chipmunks played right around the door. It might be very hot in the city, but at night the little breezes played about the waters of the lake and cooled the tent so that we could sleep. The woods were full of flowers and berries were plentiful on the hills. One could hardly find a more beautiful place to live.

But this summer we were not very happy, for in the springtime the father of our little family had been taken very ill and the doctors had ordered me to take the little girl of seven and the sick father and go to camp for months where all was quiet. No one was to visit us. We must stay alone with the beautiful things about us. So there we were, just the three of us with strength gradually coming to the sick one.

But there came a dreadful day when a worse sickness came and we were so worried. In the morning the doctor came from the town nearly

twenty miles away, shook his head, left some medicine and went away. But the day went much better than we had expected, and at night we were all asleep when there came a sound at the tent door and I found the doctor there. Calling me to one side, he told me that analysis had found poison all through the system of the sick one and that the medicine which he had left was not the best, that he had come with all speed when he had found the poison. A little while the doctor stayed, but he had other very sick patients and had to go. He could leave me no word as to what the morning might find. The patient might be alive but he might go in a flash. I must give him the medicine every fifteen minutes during the night and hope for the best.

No neighbors could be called, though they would gladly have come had they known. He must be absolutely quiet and have no worry. And so I stood at the door of the tent and watched the little light disappear through the trees to the road, and then I was alone with the little girl, the one who was fighting death and the darkness.

How should I spend the time? I would write to his mother, but when I tried my hand shook so that I could not hold the pen. I would read, but I could not see. The whole night was before me. The whip-poor-will and the owl were both behind in the trees and the frogs were making noises in the swamps. The stillness was so oppressive, and for the first time in my life I began to be afraid.

After about two hours had gone by and I had given the medicine over and over, I walked to the flap of the tent. Before me, just at the front of the tent, was the lake so still in the moonlight, and be-

yond a fine mountain, rearing its peak to the sky. To steady myself, I had to hold to the tent pole with both my hands, but the breeze was comforting. Something was there if it was only a breeze.

Suddenly there came into my heart a message—the same one that came into the heart life of the Psalmist.

"I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help.

My help cometh from the Lord who made heaven and earth. He will not suffer thy foot to be moved. He that keepeth thee will not slumber. Behold, he that keepeth Israel will not slumber nor sleep. The Lord is thy keeper. The Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand. The sun shall not smite thee by day nor the moon by night. The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil; the Lord shall preserve thy soul. The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth and even forever more."

A second time I heard the message through, but this time I repeated it softly aloud. Then I turned to the tent. The fear was all gone, the weakness was all gone, and I was ready to face the hard thing with God. But God had spoken to me and I knew that though the night was hard and lonely, yet God was right there. "He that keepeth thee will not slumber." I knew there was a God.

The night passed, the letters were written, the dawn broke red over the sky and the death angel had passed by for the time.

God had spoken, I had heard, and he had kept

his promise and had preserved me from all evil while the rest of the world slumbered.

So I know there is a God.

There was silence when I had finished and, though the hour was not over, I dismissed the boys and watched them go their own way home. Each boy was thinking as he went. The following Sunday morning I found a group of older boys from the street in the hallway—more than half a dozen of them. With them was the boy who had first asked the question. I went up to welcome them and asked my boy if he had found them and brought them to the school. "Oh, no," he answered, "they go to all sorts of churches but they all live around here. I told them your story and they said they would like to see a woman who really knew there was a God, and so I knew you would like to see them 'cause they were boys who wanted to know, so I brought them. Now, boys, you see I told you the truth. It was a real story." A little while we talked and I invited them to come whenever they felt like it, for we wanted to be friends with the boys in the neighborhood. Then they went their way. Occasionally I would meet one of them in the street, and always there was the same glad smile as they stopped to speak to me. Always I knew what they were thinking of, and always it reminded me of the statement made to me by my old professor, "Boys long to feel God, to know God and to love God, but the trouble is, they do not like the God we have chosen to show them. Some day we shall find the boy's ideal of God and then we shall win them, for we shall tell them stories that show that

kind of God. They are waiting for that person and how gladly they will follow some day."

Under a white cross in France, the little newsboy who came with that group on that Sunday is sleeping. Often I have wondered if God was there on the battlefield to help him as he helped me. I only hope he, too, heard the voice that said, "The Lord is thy keeper."

HOW TO TELL STORIES TO CHILDREN

BY

SARA CONE BRYANT



INTRODUCTION

Not long ago, I chanced to open a magazine at a story of Italian life which dealt with a curious popular custom. It told of the love of the people for the performances of a strangely clad, periodically appearing old man who was a professional story-teller. This old man repeated whole cycles of myth and serials of popular history, holding his audience-chamber in whatever corner of the open court or square he happened upon, and always surrounded by an eager crowd of listeners. So great was the respect in which the story-teller was held, that any interruption was likely to be resented with violence.

As I read of the absorbed silence and the changing expressions of the crowd about the old man, I was suddenly reminded of a company of people I had recently seen. They were gathered in one of the parlors of a women's college, and their serious young faces had, habitually, none of the childlike responsiveness of the Italian populace; they were suggestive,

rather, of a daily experience which precluded over-much surprise or curiosity about anything. In the midst of the group stood a frail-looking woman with bright eyes. She was telling a story, a children's story, about a good and a bad little mouse.

She had been asked to do that thing, for a purpose, and she did it, therefore. But it was easy to see from the expressions of the listeners how trivial a thing it seemed to them.

That was at first. But presently the room grew quieter; and yet quieter. The faces relaxed into amused smiles, sobered in unconscious sympathy, finally broke in ripples of mirth. The story-teller had come to her own.

The memory of the college girls listening to the mouse-story brought other memories with it. Many a swift composite view of faces passed before my mental vision, faces with the child's look on them, yet not the faces of children. And of the occasions to which the faces belonged, those were most vivid which were earliest in my experience. For it was those early experiences which first made me realize the modern possibilities of the old, old art of telling stories.

It had become a part of my work, some

years ago, to give English lectures on German literature. Many of the members of my class were unable to read in the original the works with which I dealt, and as these were modern works it was rarely possible to obtain translations. For this reason, I gradually formed the habit of telling the story of the drama or novel in question before passing to a detailed consideration of it. I enjoyed this part of the lesson exceedingly, but it was some time before I realized how much the larger part of the lesson it had become to the class. They used — and they were mature women — to wait for the story as if it were a sugar-plum and they children; and to grieve openly if it was omitted. Substitution of reading from a translation was greeted with precisely the same abatement of eagerness that a child shows when he has asked you to tell a story, and you offer, instead, to "read one from the pretty book." And so general and constant were the tokens of enjoyment that there could ultimately be no doubt of the power which the mere story-telling exerted.

The attitude of the grown-up listeners did but illustrate the general difference between the effect of telling a story and of reading one.

Every one who knows children well has felt the difference. With few exceptions, children listen twice as eagerly to a story told as to one read, and even a "recitation" or a so-called "reading" has not the charm for them that the person wields who can "tell a story." And there are sound reasons for their preference.

The great difference, including lesser ones, between telling and reading is that the teller is free; the reader is bound. The book in hand, or the wording of it in mind, binds the reader. The story-teller is bound by nothing; he stands or sits, free to watch his audience, free to follow or lead every changing mood, free to use body, eyes, voice, as aids in expression. Even his mind is unbound, because he lets the story come in the words of the moment, being so full of what he has to say. For this reason, a story told is more spontaneous than one read, however well read. And, consequently, the connection with the audience is closer, more electric, than is possible when the book or its wording intervenes.

Beyond this advantage, is the added charm of the personal element in story-telling. When you make a story your own and tell it, the listener gets the story, *plus your appreciation*

of it. It comes to him filtered through your own enjoyment. That is what makes the funny story thrice funnier on the lips of a jolly raconteur than in the pages of "Life." It is the filter of personality. Everybody has something of the curiosity of the primitive man concerning his neighbor; what another has in his own person felt and done has an especial hold on each one of us. The most cultured of audiences will listen to the personal reminiscences of an explorer with a different tingle of interest from that which it feels for a scientific lecture on the results of the exploration. The longing for the personal in experience is a very human longing. And this instinct or longing is especially strong in children. It finds expression in their delight in tales of what father or mother did when they were little, of what happened to grandmother when she went on a journey, and so on, but it also extends to stories which are not in themselves personal: which take their personal savor merely from the fact that they flow from the lips in spontaneous, homely phrases, with an appreciative gusto which suggests participation.

The greater ease in holding the attention of children is, for teachers, a sufficient practical

reason for telling stories rather than reading them. It is incomparably easier to make the necessary exertion of "magnetism," or whatever it may be called, when nothing else distracts the attention. One's eyes meet the children's gaze naturally and constantly; one's expression responds to and initiates theirs without effort; the connection is immediate. For the ease of the teacher, then, no less than for the joy of the children, may the art of story-telling be urged as preëminent over the art of reading.

It is a very old, a very beautiful art. To think much of it carries one's imaginary vision to scenes of glorious and touching antiquity. The tellers of the stories of which Homer's Iliad was compounded; the transmitters of the legend and history which make up the "Gesta Romanorum;" the traveling raconteurs whose brief heroic tales are woven into our own national epic; the grannies of age-old tradition whose stories are parts of Celtic folk-lore, of Germanic myth, of Asiatic wonder-tales, — these are but younger brothers and sisters to the generations of story-tellers whose inventions are but vaguely outlined in resultant forms of ancient literatures, and the names

of whose tribes are no longer even guessed. There was a time when story-telling was the chiefest of the arts of entertainment; kings and warriors could ask for nothing better; serfs and children were satisfied with nothing less. In all times there have been occasional revivals of this pastime, and in no time has the art died out in the simple human realms of which mothers are queens. But perhaps never, since the really old days, has story-telling so nearly reached a recognized level of dignity as a legitimate and general art of entertainment as now.

Its present popularity seems in a way to be an outgrowth of the recognition of its educational value which was given impetus by the German pedagogues of Froebel's school. That recognition has, at all events, been a noticeable factor in educational conferences of late. The function of the story is no longer considered solely in the light of its place in the kindergarten; it is being sought in the first, the second, and indeed in every grade where the children are still children. Sometimes the demand for stories is made solely in the interests of literary culture, sometimes in far simpler and vaguer relations, ranging from

inculcation of scientific fact to admonition of moral theory; but whatever the reason given, the conclusion is the same: tell the children stories.

The average teacher has yielded to the pressure, at least in theory. Cheerfully, as she has already accepted so many modifications of old methods by "new thought," she accepts the idea of instilling mental and moral desiderata into the receptive pupil, *via* the charming tale. But, confronted with the concrete problem of what desideratum by which tale, and how, the average teacher sometimes finds her cheerfulness displaced by a sense of inadequacy to the situation.

People who have always told stories to children, who do not know when they began or how they do it; whose heads are stocked with the accretions of years of fairy-land-dwelling and nonsense-sharing, — these cannot understand the perplexity of one to whom the gift and the opportunity have not "come natural." But there are many who can understand it, personally and all too well. To these, the teachers who have not a knack for story-telling, who feel as shy as their own youngest scholar at the thought of it, who do not know

where the good stories are, or which ones are easy to tell, it is my earnest hope that the following pages will bring something definite and practical in the way of suggestion and reference.

HOW TO TELL STORIES TO CHILDREN

CHAPTER I

THE PURPOSE OF STORY-TELLING IN SCHOOL

LET us first consider together the primary matter of the *aim* in educational story-telling. On our conception of this must depend very largely all decisions as to choice and method; and nothing in the whole field of discussion is more vital than a just and sensible notion of this first point. What shall we attempt to accomplish by stories in the schoolroom? What can we reasonably expect to accomplish? And what, of this, is best accomplished by this means and no other?

These are questions which become the more interesting and practical because the recent access of enthusiasm for stories in education has led many people to claim very wide and very vaguely outlined territory for their possession, and often to lay heaviest stress on

their least essential functions. The most important instance of this is the fervor with which many compilers of stories for school use have directed their efforts solely toward illustration of natural phenomena. Geology, zoölogy, botany, and even physics are taught by means of more or less happily constructed narratives based on the simpler facts of these sciences. Kindergartners are especially familiar with such narratives: the little stories of chrysalis-breaking, flower-growth, and the like. Now this is a perfectly proper and practicable aim, but it is not a primary one. Others, to which at best this is but secondary, should have first place and receive greatest attention.

What is a story, essentially? Is it a textbook of science, an appendix to the geography, an introduction to the primer of history? Of course it is not. A story is essentially and primarily a work of art, and its chief function must be sought in the line of the uses of art. Just as the drama is capable of secondary uses, yet fails abjectly to realize its purpose when those are substituted for its real significance as a work of art, so does the story lend itself to subsidiary purposes, but claims

first and most strongly to be recognized in its real significance as a work of art. Since the drama deals with life in all its parts, it can exemplify sociological theory, it can illustrate economic principle, it can even picture politics; but the drama which does these things only, has no breath of its real life in its being, and dies when the wind of popular tendency veers from its direction. So, you can teach a child interesting facts about bees and butterflies by telling him certain stories, and you can open his eyes to colors and processes in nature by telling certain others; but unless you do something more than that and before that, you are as one who should use the Venus of Melos for a demonstration in anatomy.

The message of the story is the message of beauty, as effective as that message in marble or paint. Its part in the economy of life is *to give joy*. And the purpose and working of the joy is found in that quickening of the spirit which answers every perception of the truly beautiful in the arts of man. To give joy; in and through the joy to stir and feed the life of the spirit: is not this the legitimate function of the story in education?

Because I believe it to be such, not because

I ignore the value of other uses, I venture to push aside all aims which seem secondary to this for later mention under specific heads. Here in the beginning of our consideration I wish to emphasize this element alone. A story is a work of art. Its greatest use to the child is in the everlasting appeal of beauty by which the soul of man is constantly pricked to new hungers, quickened to new perceptions, and so given desire to grow.

The obvious practical bearing of this is that story-telling is first of all an art of entertainment; like the stage, its immediate purpose is the pleasure of the hearer, — his pleasure, not his instruction, first.

Now the story-teller who has given the listening children such pleasure as I mean may or may not have added a fact to the content of their minds; she has inevitably added something to the vital powers of their souls. She has given a wholesome exercise to the emotional muscles of the spirit, has opened up new windows to the imagination, and added some line or color to the ideal of life and art which is always taking form in the heart of a child. She has, in short, accomplished the one greatest aim of story-telling, — to enlarge and

enrich the child's spiritual experience, and stimulate healthy reaction upon it.

Of course this result cannot be seen and proved as easily and early as can the apprehension of a fact. The most one can hope to recognize is its promise, and this is found in the tokens of that genuine pleasure which is itself the means of accomplishment. It is, then, the signs of right pleasure which the story-teller must look to for her guide, and which it must be her immediate aim to evoke. As for the recognition of the signs, — no one who has ever seen the delight of a real child over a real story can fail to know the signals when given, or flatter himself into belief in them when absent.

Intimately connected with the enjoyment given are two very practically beneficent results which the story-teller may hope to obtain, and at least one of which will be a kind of reward to herself. The first is a relaxation of the tense school-room atmosphere, valuable for its refreshing recreative power. The second result, or aim, is not so obvious, but is even more desirable; it is this: story-telling is at once one of the simplest and quickest ways of establishing a happy relation between teacher and

children, and one of the most effective methods of forming the habit of fixed attention in the latter.

If you have never seen an indifferent child aroused or a hostile one conquered to affection by a beguiling tale, you can hardly appreciate the truth of the first statement; but nothing is more familiar in the story-teller's experience. An amusing, but — to me — touching experience recently reaffirmed in my mind this power of the story to establish friendly relations.

My three-year-old niece, who had not seen me since her babyhood, being told that Aunt Sara was coming to visit her, somehow confused the expected guest with a more familiar aunt, my sister. At sight of me, her rush of welcome relapsed into a puzzled and hurt withdrawal, which yielded to no explanations or proffers of auntly affection. All the first day she followed me about at a wistful distance, watching me as if I might at any moment turn into the well-known and beloved relative I ought to have been. Even by undressing time I had not progressed far enough to be allowed intimate approach to small sacred night-gowns and diminutive shirts. The next morning, when I opened

the door of the nursery where her maid was brushing her hair, the same dignity radiated from the little round figure perched on its high chair, the same almost hostile shyness gazed at me from the great expressive eyes. Obviously, it was time for something to be done.

Disregarding my lack of invitation, I drew up a stool, and seating myself opposite the small unbending person, began in a conversational murmur: "M—m, I guess those are tingly-tanglies up there in that curl Lottie 's combing; did you ever hear about the tingly-tanglies? They live in little girls' hair, and they are n't any bigger than *that*, and when anybody tries to comb the hair they curl both weeny legs round, *so*, and hold on tight with both weeny hands, *so*, and won't lèt go!" As I paused, my niece made a queer little sound indicative of query battling with reserve. I pursued the subject: "They like best to live right over a little girl's ear, or down in her neck, because it is easier to hang on, there; tingly-tanglies are very smart, indeed."

"What 's ti-ly-ta-lies?" asked a curious, guttural little voice.

I explained the nature and genesis of tingly-tanglies, as revealed to me some decades before

by my inventive mother, and proceeded to develop their simple adventures. When next I paused the small, guttural voice demanded, "Say more," and I joyously obeyed.

When the curls were all curled and the last little button buttoned, my baby niece climbed hastily down from her chair, and deliberately up into my lap. With a caress rare to her habit she spoke my name, slowly and tentatively, "An—ty Sai—ry?" Then, in an assured tone, "Anty Sairy, I love you so much I don' know what to do!" And, presently, tucking a confiding hand in mine to lead me to breakfast, she explained sweetly, "I didn' know you when you comed las' night, but now I know you all th' time!"

"Oh, blessed tale," thought I, "so easy a passport to a confidence so desired, so complete!" Never had the witchery of the story to the ear of a child come more closely home to me. But the fact of the witchery was no new experience. The surrender of the natural child to the story—teller is as absolute and invariable as that of a devotee to the priest of his own sect.

This power is especially valuable in the case of children whose natural shyness has been

augmented by rough environment or by the strangeness of foreign habit. And with such children even more than with others is it also true that the story is a simple and effective means of forming the habit of concentration, of fixed attention ; any teacher who deals with this class of children knows the difficulty of doing this fundamental and indispensable thing, and the value of any practical aid in doing it.

More than one instance of the power of story-telling to develop attentiveness comes to my mind, but the most prominent in memory is a rather recent incident, in which the actors were boys and girls far past the child-stage of docility.

I had been asked to tell stories to about sixty boys and girls of a settlement club; the president warned me in her invitation that the children were exceptionally undisciplined, but my previous experiences with similar gatherings led me to interpret her words with a moderation which left me totally unready for the reality. When I faced my audience, I saw a squirming jumble of faces, backs of heads, and the various members of many small bodies, — not a person in the room was paying the

slightest attention to me; the president's introduction could scarcely be said to succeed in interrupting the interchange of social amenities which was in progress, and which looked delusively like a free fight. I came as near stage fright in the first minutes of that occasion as it is comfortable to be, and if it had not been impossible to run away I think I should not have remained. But I began, with as funny a tale as I knew, following the safe plan of not speaking very loudly, and aiming my effort at the nearest children. As I went on, a very few faces held intelligently to mine; the majority answered only fitfully; and not a few of my hearers conversed with their neighbors as if my presence were non-existent. The sense of bafflement, the futile effort, forced the sweat to my hands and face — yet something in the faces before me told me that it was no ill-will that fought against me; it was the apathy of minds without the power or habit of concentration, unable to follow a sequence of ideas any distance, and rendered more restless by bodies which were probably uncomfortable, certainly undisciplined.

The first story took ten minutes. When I began a second, a very short one, the initial

work had to be done all over again, for the slight comparative quiet I had won had been totally lost in the resulting manifestation of approval.

At the end of the second story, the room was really orderly to the superficial view, but where I stood I could see the small boy who deliberately made a hideous face at me each time my eyes met his, the two girls who talked with their backs turned, the squirms of a figure here and there. It seemed so disheartening a record of failure that I hesitated much to yield to the uproarious request for a third story, but finally I did begin again, on a very long story which for its own sake I wanted them to hear.

This time the little audience settled to attention almost at the opening words. After about five minutes I was suddenly conscious of a sense of ease and relief, a familiar restful feeling in the atmosphere; and then, at last, I knew that my audience was "with me," that they and I were interacting without obstruction. Absolutely quiet, entirely unconscious of themselves, the boys and girls were responding to every turn of the narrative as easily and readily as any group of story-bred kindergar-

ten children. From then on we had a good time together.

The process which took place in that small audience was a condensed example of what one may expect in habitual story-telling to a group of children. Once having had the attention chained by crude force of interest, the children begin to expect something interesting from the teacher, and to wait for it. And having been led step by step from one grade of a logical sequence to another, their minds — at first beguiled by the fascination of the steps — glide into the habit of following any logical sequence. My club formed its habit, as far as I was concerned, all in one session; the ordinary demands of school procedure lengthen the process, but the result is equally sure. By the end of a week in which the children have listened happily to a story every day, the habit of listening and deducing has been formed, and the expectation of pleasantness is connected with the opening of the teacher's lips.

These two benefits are well worth the trouble they cost, and for these two, at least, any teacher who tells a story well may confidently look, — the quick gaining of a confidential

relation with the children, and the gradual development of concentration and interested attention in them.

These are direct and somewhat clearly discernible results, comfortably placed in a near future. There are other aims, reaching on into the far, slow modes of psychological growth, which must equally determine the choice of the story-teller's material and inform the spirit of her work. These other, less immediately attainable ends, I wish now to consider in relation to the different types of story by which they are severally best served.

First, unbidden claimant of attention, comes

THE FAIRY STORY.

No one can think of a child and a story, without thinking of the fairy tale. Is this, as some would have us believe, a bad habit of an ignorant old world? Or can the Fairy Tale justify her popularity with truly edifying and educational results? Is she a proper person to introduce here, and what are her titles to merit?

Oh dear, yes! Dame Fairy Tale comes bearing a magic wand in her wrinkled old fingers, with one wave of which she summons up that

very spirit of joy which it is our chief effort to invoke. She raps smartly on the door, and open sesames echo to every imagination. Her red-heeled shoes twinkle down an endless lane of adventures, and every real child's footsteps quicken after. She is the natural, own great-grandmother of every child in the world, and her pocketfuls of treasures are his by right of inheritance. Shut her out, and you truly rob the children of something which is theirs; something marking their constant kinship with the race-children of the past, and adapted to their needs as it was to those of the latter. If there were no other criterion at all, it would be enough that the children love the fairy tale; we give them fairy stories, first, because they like them. But that by no means lessens the importance of the fact that fairy tales are also good for them.

How good? In various ways. First, perhaps, in their supreme power of presenting truth through the guise of images. This is the way the race-child took toward wisdom, and it is the way each child's individual instinct takes, after him. Elemental truths of moral law and general types of human experience are presented in the fairy tale, in the

poetry of their images, and although the child is aware only of the image at the time, the truth enters with it and becomes a part of his individual experience, to be recognized in its relations at a later stage. Every truth and type so given broadens and deepens the capacity of the child's inner life, and adds an element to the store from which he draws his moral inferences.

The most familiar instance of a moral truth conveyed under a fairy-story image is probably the story of the pure-hearted and loving girl whose lips were touched with the wonderful power of dropping jewels with every spoken word, while her step-sister, whose heart was infested with malice and evil desires, let ugly toads fall from her mouth whenever she spoke. I mention the old tale because there is probably no one of my readers who has not heard it in childhood, and because there are undoubtedly many to whose mind it has often recurred in later life as a sadly perfect presentment of the fact that "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." That story has entered into the forming consciousness of many of us, with its implications of the inevitable result of visible evil from evil in the heart,

and its revelation of the loathsomeness of evil itself.

And no less truly than this story has served to many as an embodiment of moral law has another household tale stood for a type of common experience. How much the poorer should we be, mentally, without our early prophecy of the "ugly ducklings" we are to meet later in life! — those awkward offspring of our little human duckyard who are mostly well kicked and buffeted about, for that very length of limb and breadth of back which needs must be, to support swan's wings. The story of the ugly duckling is much truer than many a bald statement of fact. The English-speaking world bears witness to its verity in constant use of the title as an identifying phrase: "It is the old story of the ugly duckling," we say, or "He has turned out a real ugly duckling." And we know that our hearers understand the whole situation.

The consideration of such familiar types and expressions as that of the ugly duckling suggests immediately another good reason for giving the child his due of fairy lore. The reason is that to omit it is to deprive him of one important element in the full appreciation

of mature literature. If one thinks of it, one sees that nearly all adult literature is made by people who, in their beginnings, were bred up on the wonder tale. Whether he will or no, the grown-up author must incorporate into his work the tendencies, memories, kinds of feeling which were his in childhood. The literature of maturity is, naturally, permeated by the influence of the literature of childhood. Sometimes it is apparent merely in the use of a name, as suggestive of certain kinds of experience; such are the recurrences of reference to the Cinderella story. Sometimes it is an allusion which has its strength in long association of certain qualities with certain characters in fairydom, — like the slyness of Brother Fox, and the cruelty of Brother Wolf. Sometimes the association of ideas lies below the surface, drawing from the hidden wells of poetic illusion which are sunk in childhood. The man or woman whose infancy was nourished exclusively on tales adapted from science-made-easy, or from biographies of good men and great, must remain blind to these beauties of literature. He may look up the allusion, or identify the reference, but when that is done he is but richer by a fact or two; there is no remem-

bered thrill in it for him, no savor in his memory, no suggestion to his imagination; and these are just the things which really count. Leaving out the fairy element in literary culture is a loss on the same lines as the omission of the Bible or of Shakespeare. Just as all adult literature is permeated by the influence of these, familiar in youth, so in less degree is it transfused with the subtile reminiscences of childhood's commerce with the wonder world.

To turn now from the inner to the outer aspects of the old-time tale is to meet another cause of its value to children. This is the value of its style. Simplicity, directness, and virility characterize the classic fairy tales and the most memorable relics of folk-lore. And these are three of the very qualities which are most seriously lacking in much of the new writing for children, and which are always necessary elements in the culture of taste. Fairy stories are not all well told, but the best fairy stories are supremely well told. And most folk-tales have a movement, a sweep, and an unaffectedness which make them splendid foundations for taste in style.

For this, and for poetic presentation of truths in easily assimilated form, and because

it gives joyous stimulus to the imagination, and is necessary to full appreciation of adult literature, we may freely use the wonder tale.

Closely related to, sometimes identical with, the fairy tale is the old, old source of children's love and laughter,

THE NONSENSE TALE.

Under this caption I wish to include all the merely funny tales of childhood, embracing the cumulative stories like that of the old woman and the pig which would not go over the stile. They all have a specific use and benefit, and are worth the repetition children demand for them. Their value lies, of course, in the tonic and relaxing properties of humor. Nowhere is that property more welcome or needed than in the schoolroom. It does us all good to laugh, if there is no sneer nor smirch in the laugh ; fun sets the blood flowing more freely in the veins, and loosens the strained cords of feeling and thought; the delicious shock of surprise at every "funny spot" is a kind of electric treatment for the nerves. But it especially does us good to laugh when we are children. Every little body is released from

the conscious control school imposes on it, and huddles into restful comfort or responds gayly to the joke.

More than this, humor teaches children, as it does their grown-up brethren, some of the facts and proportions of life. What keener teacher is there than the kindly satire? What more penetrative suggestion than the humor of exaggerated statement of familiar tendency? Is there one of us who has not laughed himself out of some absurd complexity of over-anxiety with a sudden recollection of "clever Alice" and her fatè? In our household clever Alice is an old habituée, and her timely arrival has saved many a situation which was twining itself about more "ifs" than it could comfortably support. The wisdom which lies behind true humor is found in the nonsense tale of infancy as truly as in mature humor, but in its own kind and degree. "Just for fun" is the first reason for the humorous story; the wisdom in the fun is the second.

And now we come to

THE NATURE STORY.

No other type of fiction is more familiar to the teacher, and probably no other kind is the

source of so much uncertainty of feeling. The nature story is much used, as I have noticed above, to illustrate or to teach the habits of animals and the laws of plant-growth; to stimulate scientific interest as well as to increase culture in scientific fact. This is an entirely legitimate object. In view of its present preponderance, it is certainly a pity, however, that so few stories are available, the accuracy of which, from this point of view, can be vouched for. The carefully prepared book of to-day is refuted and scoffed at to-morrow. The teacher who wishes to use story-telling chiefly as an element in nature study must at least limit herself to a small amount of absolutely unquestioned material, or else subject every new story to the judgment of an authority in the line dealt with. This is not easy for the teacher at a distance from the great libraries. In the largest cities, it is not so difficult, for the children's librarians of the greater libraries are often persons of definite information concerning the scientific standing of each new book. But even here it is a matter of time and thought.

It does not so greatly trouble the teacher who uses the nature story as a story, rather

than as a text book, for she will not be so keenly attracted toward the books prepared with a didactic purpose. She will find a good gift for the child in nature stories which *are* stories, over and above any stimulus to his curiosity about fact. That good gift is a certain possession of all good fiction.

One of the best things good fiction does for any of us is to broaden our comprehension of other lots than our own. The average man or woman has little opportunity actually to live more than one kind of life. The chances of birth, occupation, family ties, determine for most of us a line of experience not very inclusive and but little varied; and this is a natural barrier to our complete understanding of others, whose life-line is set at a different angle. It is not possible wholly to sympathize with emotions engendered by experience which one has never had. Yet we all long to be broad in sympathy and inclusive in appreciation; we long, greatly, to know the experience of others. This yearning is probably one of the good but misconceived appetites so injudiciously fed by the gossip of the daily press. There is a hope, in the reader, of getting for the moment into the lives of people

who move in wholly different sets of circumstances. But the relation of dry facts in newspapers, however tinged with journalistic color, helps very little in really entering the other life. The entrance has to be by the door of the imagination, and the journalist is rarely able to open it for us. But there is a genius which can open it. The man or woman who can write real fiction can do it; his is the gift of seeing inner realities, and of showing them to those who cannot see them for themselves. Sharing the imaginative vision of the story-writer, we can truly follow out many other roads of life than our own. The girl on a New England farm is made to understand how a girl in a New York sweat-shop feels and lives; the London exquisite senses the life of a Californian ranchman; royalty and tenement dwellers become acquainted, through the power of the imagination working on experience shown in the light of a human basis common to both. Fiction supplies an element of culture, — that of the sympathies, which is invaluable. And the beginnings of this culture, this widening and clearing of the avenues of human sympathy, are especially easily made with children in the nature story.

When you begin, "There was once a little furry rabbit," [1] the child's curiosity is awakened by the very fact that the rabbit is not a child, but something of a different species altogether. "Now for something new and adventuresome," says his expectation, "we are starting off into a foreign world." He listens wide-eyed, while you say, "and he lived in a warm, cosy nest, down under the long grass with his mother" — how delightful, to live in a place like that; so different from little boys' homes! — "his name was Raggylug, and his mother's name was Molly Cottontail. And every morning, when Molly Cottontail went out to get their food, she said to Raggylug, 'Now, Raggylug, remember you are only a baby rabbit, and don't move from the nest. No matter what you hear, no matter what you see, don't you move!'" — all this is different, still, yet it is familiar, too; it appears that rabbits are rather like folks. So the tale proceeds, and the little furry rabbit passes through experiences strange to little boys, yet very like little boys' adventures in some respects; he is frightened by a snake, comforted by his mammy, and taken to a new house,

[1] See "Raggylug," page 130.

under the long grass a long way off. These are all situations to which the child has a key. There is just enough of strangeness to entice, just enough of the familiar to relieve any strain. When the child has lived through the day's happenings with Raggylug, the latter has begun to seem veritably a little brother of the grass to him. And because he has entered imaginatively into the feelings and fate of a creature different from himself, he has taken his first step out into the wide world of the lives of others.

It may be a recognition of this factor and its value which has led so many writers of nature stories into the error of over-humanizing their four-footed or feathered heroes and heroines. The exaggeration is unnecessary, for there is enough community of lot suggested in the sternest scientific record to constitute a natural basis for sympathy on the part of the human animal. Without any falsity of presentation whatever, the nature story may be counted on as a help in the beginnings of culture of the sympathies. It is not, of course, a help confined to the powers of the nature story; all types of story share in some degree the powers of each. But each has some

especial virtue in dominant degree, and the nature story is, on this ground, identified with the thought given.

It shares its influence especially with

THE HISTORICAL STORY.

As the one widens the circle of connection with other kinds of life, the other deepens the sense of relation to past lives; it gives the sense of background, of the close and endless connection of generation with generation. A good historical story vitalizes the conception of past events and brings their characters into relation with the present. This is especially true of stories of things and persons in the history of our own race. They foster race-consciousness, the feeling of kinship and community of blood. It is this property which makes the historical story so good an agent for furthering a proper national pride in children. Genuine patriotism, neither arrogant nor melodramatic, is so generally recognized as having its roots in early training that I need not dwell on this possibility, farther than to note its connection with the instinct of hero-worship which is quick in the healthy child. Let us feed that hunger for the heroic

which gnaws at every boy's imagination and at more girls' than is generally admitted. There have been heroes in plenty in the world's catalogue, — heroes of action, of endurance, of decision, of faith. Biographical history is full of them. And the deeds of these heroes are every one a story. We tell these stories, both to bring the great past into its due relation with the living present, and to arouse that generous admiration and desire for emulation which is the source of so much inspiration in childhood. When these stories are tales of the doings and happenings of our own heroes, the strong men and women whose lives are a part of our own country's history, they serve the double demands of hero-worship and patriotism. Stories of wise and honest statesmanship, of struggle with pioneer conditions, of generous love and sacrifice, and — in some measure — of physical courage, form a subtile and powerful influence for pride in one's people, the intimate sense of kinship with one's own nation, and the desire to serve it in one's own time.

It is not particularly useful to tell batches of unrelated anecdote. It is much more profitable to take up the story of a period and con-

nect it with a group of interesting persons whose lives affected it or were affected by it, telling the stories of their lives, or of the events in which they were concerned, as "true stories." These biographical stories must, usually, be adapted for use. But besides these there is a certain number of pure stories — works of art — which already exist for us, and which illuminate facts and epochs almost without need of sidelights. Such may stand by themselves, or be used with only enough explanation to give background. Probably the best story of this kind known to lovers of modern literature is Daudet's famous "La Dernière Classe." [1]

The historical story, to recapitulate, gives a sense of the reality and humanness of past events, is a valuable aid in patriotic training, and stirs the desire of emulating goodness and wisdom.

[1] See "The Last Lesson," page 243.

CHAPTER II

SELECTION OF STORIES TO TELL

THERE is one picture which I can always review, in my own collection of past scenes, though many a more highly colored one has been irrevocably curtained by the folds of forgetfulness. It is the picture of a little girl, standing by an old-fashioned marble-topped dressing-table in a pink, sunny room. I can never see the little girl's face, because, somehow, I am always looking down at her short skirts or twisting my head round against the hand which patiently combs her stubborn curls. But I can see the brushes and combs on the marble table quite plainly, and the pinker streaks of sun on the pink walls. And I can hear. I can hear a low, wonder-working voice which goes smoothly on and on, as the fingers run up the little girl's locks or stroke the hair into place on her forehead. The voice says, "And little Goldilocks came to a little bit of a house. And she opened the door and went in. It was the house where three Bears

lived; there was a great Bear, a little Bear, and a middle-sized Bear; and they had gone out for a walk. Goldilocks went in, and she saw " — the little girl is very still; she would not disturb that story by so much as a loud breath; but presently the comb comes to a tangle, pulls, — and the little girl begins to squirm. Instantly the voice becomes impressive, mysterious: " she went up to the table, and there were *three plates of soup.* She tasted the first one " — the little girl swallows the breath she was going to whimper with, and waits — " and it was too hot! She tasted the next one, and *that* was too hot. Then she tasted the little bit of a plate, and that — was — just — right! "

How I remember the delightful sense of achievement which stole into the little girl's veins when the voice behind her said " just right." I think she always chuckled a little, and hugged her stomach. So the story progressed, and the little girl got through her toilet without crying, owing to the wonder-working voice and its marvelous adaptation of climaxes to emergencies. Nine times out of ten, it was the story of " The Three Bears " she demanded when, with the appearance of

brush and comb, the voice asked, "Which story shall mother tell?"

It was a memory of the little girl in the pink room which made it easy for me to understand some other children's preferences when I recently had occasion to inquire about them. By asking many individual children which story of all they had heard they liked best, by taking votes on the best story of a series, after telling it, and by getting some obliging teachers to put similar questions to their pupils, I found three prime favorites common to a great many children of about the kindergarten age. They were "The Three Bears," "Three Little Pigs," and "The Little Pig that would n't go over the Stile."

Some of the teachers were genuinely disturbed because the few stories they had introduced merely for amusement had taken so preeminent a place in the children's affection over those which had been given seriously. It was of no use, however, to suggest substitutes. The children knew definitely what they liked, and though they accepted the recapitulation of scientific and moral stories with polite approbation, they returned to the original answer at a repetition of the question.

Inasmûch as the slightest of the things we hope to do for children by means of stories is quite impossible unless the children enjoy the stories, it may be worth our while to consider seriously these three which they surely do enjoy, to see what common qualities are in them, explanatory of their popularity, by which we may test the probable success of other stories we wish to tell.

Here they are, — three prime favorites of proved standing.

THE STORY OF THE THREE LITTLE PIGS.[1]

There were once three little pigs, who started out to seek their fortune. The first that went off met a man with a bundle of straw, and said to him: —

"Please, man, give me that straw to build me a house."

Which the man did, and the little pig built a house with it. Presently came along a wolf, and knocked at the door, and said: —

"Little pig, little pig, let me come in."

To which the pig answered: —

"No, no, by the hair of my chiny-chin-chin."

[1] This version is taken from Joseph Jacobs's "English Fairy Tales."

The wolf then answered to that : —

" Then I 'll huff, and I 'll puff, and I 'll blow your house in."

So he huffed, and he puffed, and he blew his house in, and ate up the little pig.

The second little pig met a man with a bundle of furze, and said : —

" Please, man, give me that furze to build a house."

Which the man did, and the pig built his house. Then along came the wolf, and said :

" Little pig, little pig, let me come in."

" No, no, by the hair of my chiny-chin-chin."

" Then I 'll puff, and I 'll huff, and I 'll blow your house in."

So he huffed, and he puffed, and he puffed and he huffed, and at last he blew the house down, and he ate up the little pig.

The third little pig met a man with a load of bricks, and said : —

" Please, man, give me those bricks to build a house with."

So the man gave him the bricks, and he built his house with them. So the wolf came, as he did to the other little pigs, and said : —

" Little pig, little pig, let me come in."

"No, no, by the hair of my chiny-chin-chin."

"Then I'll huff, and I'll puff, and I'll blow your house in."

Well, he huffed, and he puffed, and he huffed, and he puffed, and he puffed and huffed; but he could *not* get the house down. When he found that he could not, with all his huffing and puffing, blow the house down, he said: —

"Little pig, I know where there is a nice field of turnips."

"Where?" said the little pig.

"Oh, in Mr. Smith's home-field, and if you will be ready to-morrow morning I will call for you, and we will go together, and get some for dinner."

"Very well," said the little pig, "I will be ready. What time do you mean to go?"

"Oh, at six o'clock."

Well, the little pig got up at five, and got the turnips before the wolf came (which he did about six) and said: —

"Little pig, are you ready?"

The little pig said: "Ready! I have been and come back again, and got a nice potful for dinner."

The wolf felt very angry at this, but thought

that he would be up to the little pig somehow or other, so he said: —

"Little pig, I know where there is a nice apple-tree."

"Where?" said the pig.

"Down at Merry-garden," replied the wolf, "and if you will not deceive me I will come for you, at five o'clock to-morrow, and get some apples."

Well, the little pig bustled up the next morning at four o'clock, and went off for the apples, hoping to get back before the wolf came; but he had further to go, and had to climb the tree, so that just as he was coming down from it, he saw the wolf coming, which, as you may suppose, frightened him very much. When the wolf came up he said: —

"Little pig, what! are you here before me? Are they nice apples?"

"Yes, very," said the little pig. "I will throw you down one."

And he threw it so far that, while the wolf was gone to pick it up, the little pig jumped down and ran home. The next day the wolf came again, and said to the little pig: —

"Little pig, there is a fair at Shanklin this afternoon; will you go?"

"Oh, yes," said the pig, "I will go; what time shall you be ready?"

"At three," said the wolf. So the little pig went off before the time, as usual, and got to the fair, and bought a butter-churn, which he was going home with when he saw the wolf coming. Then he could not tell what to do. So he got into the churn to hide, and by so doing turned it round, and it rolled down the hill with the pig in it, which frightened the wolf so much that he ran home without going to the fair. He went to the little pig's house, and told him how frightened he had been by a great round thing which came down the hill past him. Then the little pig said: —

"Hah, I frightened you, then! I had been to the fair and bought a butter-churn, and when I saw you, I got into it, and rolled down the hill."

Then the wolf was very angry indeed, and declared he *would* eat up the little pig, and that he would get down the chimney after him. When the little pig saw what he was about, he hung on the pot full of water, and made up a blazing fire, and, just as the wolf was coming down, took off the cover, and in fell the wolf; so the little pig put on the cover

again in an instant, boiled him up and ate him for supper, and lived happy ever afterwards.

THE STORY OF THE THREE BEARS [1]

Once upon a time there were Three Bears, who lived together in a house of their own, in a wood. One of them was a Little Small Wee Bear, and one was a Middle-sized Bear, and the other was a Great Huge Bear. They had each a pot for their porridge, — a little pot for the Little Small Wee Bear, and a middle-sized pot for the Middle-sized Bear, and a great pot for the Great Huge Bear. And they had each a chair to sit in, — a little chair for the Little Small Wee Bear, and a middle-sized chair for the Middle-sized Bear, and a great chair for the Great Huge Bear. And they had each a bed to sleep in, — a little bed for the Little Small Wee Bear, and a middle-sized bed for the Middle-sized Bear, and a great bed for the Great Huge Bear.

One day, after they had made the porridge for their breakfast, and poured it into their porridge-pots, they walked out into the wood while the porridge was cooling, that they

[1] Adapted from Joseph Jacobs's "English Fairy Tales."

might not burn their mouths, by beginning too soon to eat it. And while they were walking, a little girl named Goldilocks came to the house. She had never seen the little house before, and it was such a strange little house that she forgot all the things her mother had told her about being polite: first she looked in at the window, and then she peeped in at the keyhole; and seeing nobody in the house, she lifted the latch. The door was not fastened, because the Bears were good Bears, who did nobody any harm, and never suspected that anybody would harm them. So Goldilocks opened the door, and went in; and well pleased she was when she saw the porridge on the table. If Goldilocks had remembered what her mother had told her, she would have waited till the Bears came home, and then, perhaps, they would have asked her to breakfast; for they were good Bears — a little rough, as the manner of Bears is, but for all that very good-natured and hospitable. But Goldilocks forgot, and set about helping herself.

So first she tasted the porridge of the Great Huge Bear, and that was too hot. And then she tasted the porridge of the Middle-sized Bear, and that was too cold. And then she

went to the porridge of the Little Small Wee Bear, and tasted that; and that was neither too hot nor too cold, but just right; and she liked it so well, that she ate it all up.

Then Goldilocks sat down in the chair of the Great Huge Bear, and that was too hard for her. And then she sat down in the chair of the Middle-sized Bear, and that was too soft for her. And then she sat down in the chair of the Little Small Wee Bear, and that was neither too hard nor too soft, but just right. So she seated herself in it, and there she sat till the bottom of the chair came out, and down she came, plump upon the ground.

Then Goldilocks went upstairs into the bed-chamber in which the Three Bears slept. And first she lay down upon the bed of the Great Huge Bear; but that was too high at the head for her. And next she lay down upon the bed of the Middle-sized Bear, and that was too high at the foot for her. And then she lay down upon the bed of the Little Small Wee Bear; and that was neither too high at the head nor at the foot, but just right. So she covered herself up comfortably, and lay there till she fell fast asleep.

By this time the Three Bears thought their porridge would be cool enough; so they came home to breakfast. Now Goldilocks had left the spoon of the Great Huge Bear standing in his porridge.

"SOMEBODY HAS BEEN AT MY PORRIDGE!" said the Great Huge Bear, in his great, rough, gruff voice. And when the Middle-sized Bear looked at his, he saw that the spoon was standing in it too.

"SOMEBODY HAS BEEN AT MY PORRIDGE!" said the Middle-sized Bear in his middle-sized voice.

Then the Little Small Wee Bear looked at his, and there was the spoon in the porridge-pot, but the porridge was all gone.

"SOMEBODY HAS BEEN AT MY PORRIDGE, AND HAS EATEN IT ALL UP!" said the Little Small Wee Bear, in his little, small, wee voice.

Upon this, the Three Bears, seeing that some one had entered their house, and eaten up the Little Small Wee Bear's breakfast, began to look about them. Now Goldilocks had not put the hard cushion straight when she rose from the chair of the Great Huge Bear.

"SOMEBODY HAS BEEN SITTING

IN MY CHAIR!" said the Great Huge Bear, in his great, rough, gruff voice.

And Goldilocks had squatted down the soft cushion of the Middle-sized Bear.

"SOMEBODY HAS BEEN SITTING IN MY CHAIR!" said the Middle-sized Bear, in his middle-sized voice.

And you know what Goldilocks had done to the third chair.

"SOMEBODY HAS BEEN SITTING IN MY CHAIR AND HAS SAT THE BOTTOM OUT OF IT!" said the Little Small Wee Bear, in his little, small, wee voice.

Then the Three Bears thought it necessary that they should make further search; so they went upstairs into their bed-chamber. Now Goldilocks had pulled the pillow of the Great Huge Bear out of its place.

"SOMEBODY HAS BEEN LYING IN MY BED!" said the Great Huge Bear, in his great, rough, gruff voice.

And Goldilocks had pulled the bolster of the Middle-sized Bear out of its place.

"SOMEBODY HAS BEEN LYING IN MY BED!" said the Middle-sized Bear, in his middle-sized voice.

And when the Little Small Wee Bear came

to look at his bed, there was the bolster in its place; and the pillow in its place upon the bolster; and upon the pillow was the shining, yellow hair of little Goldilocks!

"SOMEBODY HAS BEEN LYING IN MY BED, —AND HERE SHE IS!" said the Little Small Wee Bear, in his little, small, wee voice.

Goldilocks had heard in her sleep the great, rough, gruff voice of the Great Huge Bear; but she was so fast asleep that it was no more to her than the roaring of wind or the rumbling of thunder. And she had heard the middle-sized voice of the Middle-sized Bear, but it was only as if she had heard some one speaking in a dream. But when she heard the little, small, wee voice of the Little Small Wee Bear, it was so sharp, and so shrill, that it awakened her at once. Up she started, and when she saw the Three Bears on one side of the bed, she tumbled herself out at the other, and ran to the window. Now the window was open, because the Bears, like good, tidy Bears as they were, always opened their bed-chamber window when they got up in the morning.

Out little Goldilocks jumped, and ran away home to her mother, as fast as ever she could.

THE OLD WOMAN AND HER PIG.[1]

An old woman was sweeping her house, and she found a little crooked sixpence. "What," said she, "shall I do with this little sixpence? I will go to market, and buy a little pig."

As she was coming home, she came to a stile; but the piggy would n't go over the stile.

She went a little further, and she met a dog. So she said to him, "Dog, dog, bite pig; piggy won't go over the stile; and I shan't get home to-night." But the dog would n't.

She went a little further, and she met a stick. So she said: "Stick! stick! beat dog! dog won't bite pig; piggy won't go over the stile; and I shan't get home to-night." But the stick would n't.

She went a little further, and she met a fire. So she said: "Fire! fire! burn stick! stick won't beat dog; dog won't bite pig; piggy won't get over the stile; and I shan't get home to-night." But the fire would n't.

She went a little further, and she met some water. So she said: "Water! water! quench fire; fire won't burn stick; stick won't beat

[1] This version is taken from Joseph Jacobs's "English Fairy Tales."

dog; dog won't bite pig; piggy won't get over the stile; and I shan't get home to-night." But the water would n't.

She went a little further, and she met an ox. So she said: "Ox! ox! drink water; water won't quench fire; fire won't burn stick; stick won't beat dog; dog won't bite pig; piggy won't get over the stile; and I shan't get home to-night." But the ox would n't.

She went a little further, and she met a butcher. So she said: "Butcher! butcher! kill ox; ox won't drink water; water won't quench fire; fire won't burn stick; stick won't beat dog; dog won't bite pig; piggy won't get over the stile; and I shan't get home to-night." But the butcher would n't.

She went a little further, and she met a rope. So she said: "Rope! rope! hang butcher; butcher won't kill ox; ox won't drink water; water won't quench fire; fire won't burn stick; stick won't beat dog; dog won't bite pig; piggy won't get over the stile; and I shan't get home to-night." But the rope would n't.

She went a little further, and she met a rat. So she said: "Rat! rat! gnaw rope; rope

won't hang butcher; butcher won't kill ox; ox won't drink water; water won't quench fire; fire won't burn stick; stick won't beat dog; dog won't bite pig; piggy won't get over the stile; and I shan't get home to-night." But the rat would n't.

She went a little further, and she met a cat. So she said: "Cat! cat! kill rat; rat won't gnaw rope; rope won't hang butcher; butcher won't kill ox; ox won't drink water; water won't quench fire; fire won't burn stick; stick won't beat dog; dog won't bite pig; piggy won't get over the stile; and I shan't get home to-night." But the cat said to her, "If you will go to yonder cow, and fetch me a saucer of milk, I will kill the rat." So away went the old woman to the cow.

But the cow said to her, "If you will go to yonder hay-stack, and fetch me a handful of hay, I 'll give you the milk." So away went the old woman to the hay-stack; and she brought the hay to the cow.

As soon as the cow had eaten the hay, she gave the old woman the milk; and away she went with it in a saucer to the cat.

As soon as the cat had lapped up the milk, the cat began to kill the rat; the rat began

to gnaw the rope; the rope began to hang the butcher; the butcher began to kill the ox; the ox began to drink the water; the water began to quench the fire; the fire began to burn the stick; the stick began to beat the dog; the dog began to bite the pig; the little pig in a fright jumped over the stile; and so the old woman got home that night.

The briefest examination of these three stories reveals the fact that one attribute is beyond dispute in each. Something happens, all the time. Every step in each story is an event. There is no time spent in explanation, description, or telling how people felt; the stories tell what people did, and what they said. And the events are the links of a sequence of the closest kind; in point of time and of cause they follow as immediately as it is possible for events to follow. There are no gaps, and no complications of plot requiring a return on the road.

A second common characteristic appears on briefest examination. As you run over the little stories you will see that each event presents a distinct picture to the imagination, and

that these pictures are made out of very simple elements. The elements are either familiar to the child or analogous to familiar ones. Each object and happening is very like everyday, yet touched with a subtle difference, rich in mystery. For example, the details of the pictures in the Goldilocks story are parts of everyday life, — house, chairs, beds, and so on; but they are the house, chairs, and beds of three bears; that is the touch of marvel which transforms the scene. The old woman who owned the obstinate pig is the centre of a circle in which stand only familiar images, — stick, fire, water, cow, and the rest; but the wonder enters with the fact that these usually inanimate or dumb objects of nature enter so humanly into the contest of wills. So it is, also, with the doings of the three little pigs. Every image is explicable to the youngest hearer, while none suggests actual familiarity, because the actors are not children, but pigs. Simplicity, with mystery, is the keynote of all the pictures, and these are clear and distinct.

Still a third characteristic common to the stories quoted is a certain amount of repetition. It is more definite, and of what has been called the "cumulative" kind, in the story of

the old woman; but in all it is a distinctive feature.

Here we have, then, three marked characteristics common to three stories almost invariably loved by children, — action, in close sequence; familiar images, tinged with mystery; some degree of repetition.

It is not hard to see why these qualities appeal to a child. The first is the prime characteristic of all good stories, — "stories as is stories;" the child's demand for it but bears witness to the fact that his instinctive taste is often better than the taste he later develops under artificial culture. The second is a matter of common-sense. How could the imagination create new worlds, save out of the material of the old? To offer strange images is to confuse the mind and dull the interest; to offer familiar ones "with a difference" is to pique the interest and engage the mind.

The charm of repetition, to children, is a more complex matter; there are undoubtedly a good many elements entering into it, hard to trace in analysis. But one or two of the more obvious may be seized and brought to view. The first is the subtle flattery of an unexpected sense of mastery. When the child-mind, fol-

lowing with toilful alertness a new train of thought, comes suddenly on a familiar epithet or expression, I fancy it is with much the same sense of satisfaction that we older people feel when in the midst of a long programme of new music the orchestra strikes into something we have heard before,—Händel, maybe, or one of the more familiar Beethoven sonatas. "I know that! I have heard that before!" we think, triumphant, and settle down to enjoyment without effort. So it is, probably, with the "middle-sized" articles of the bears' house and the "and I shan't get home to-night" of the old woman. Each recurrence deepens the note of familiarity, tickles the primitive sense of humor, and eases the strain of attention.

When the repetition is cumulative, like the extreme instance of the "House that Jack Built," I have a notion that the joy of the child is the pleasure of intellectual gymnastics, not too hard for fun, but not too easy for excitement. There is a deal of fun to be got out of purely intellectual processes, and childhood is not too soon for the rudiments of such fun to show. The delight the healthy adult mind takes in working out a neat problem in geometry, the pleasure a musician finds in follow-

ing the involutions of a fugue, are of the same type of satisfaction as the liking of children for cumulative stories. Complexity and mass, arrived at by stages perfectly intelligible in themselves, mounting steadily from a starting-point of simplicity ; then the same complexity and mass resolving itself as it were miraculously back into simplicity, this is an intellectual joy. It does not differ materially, whether found in the study of counterpoint, at thirty, or in the story of the old woman and her pig, at five. It is perfectly natural and wholesome, and it may perhaps be a more powerful developing force for the budding intellect than we are aware.

For these reasons let me urge you, when you are looking for stories to tell little children, to apply this threefold test as a kind of touchstone to their quality of fitness : Are they full of action, in close natural sequence ? Are their images simple without being humdrum ? Are they repetitive ? The last quality is not an absolute requisite ; but it is at least very often an attribute of a good child-story.

Having this touchstone in mind for general selection, we can now pass to the matter of specific choices for different ages of children.

No one can speak with absolute conviction in this matter, so greatly do the taste and capacity of children of the same age vary. A further difficulty is met in speaking of grade work in the schools in the fact that schools where foreign children predominate are on a different basis from those made up of American children; the age is much higher, the grasp much lower. The following are merely the inferences drawn from my own experience. They must be modified by each teacher according to the conditions of her small audience. In general, I believe it to be wise to plan the choice of stories about as indicated in the table given on page 53.

In the fifth grade, sometimes sooner, we find the temper of mind which asks continually, "Is that true?" To meet this demand, one draws on historical and scientific anecdote, and on reminiscence. But the demand is never so exclusive that fictitious narrative need be cast aside. All that is necessary is to state frankly that the story you are telling is "just a story," or — if it be the case — that it is "part true and part story."

In all grades I would urge the telling of Bible stories, as far as is allowed by the

school policy of the town concerned. These are stories from a source unsurpassed in our literature for purity of style and loftiness of content. More especially I urge the telling of the Christ-story, in such parts as seem likely to be within the grasp of the several grades. In all Bible stories it is well to keep as near as possible to the original, unimprovable text. Some amplification can be made, but no excessive modernizing or simplifying is excusable in face of the austere grace and majestic simplicity of the original. Such adaptation as helps cut the long narrative into separate units, making each an intelligible story, I have ventured to illustrate according to my own personal taste, in two stories given in Chapter VI. The object of the usual modernizing or enlarging of the text may be far better attained for the child listener by infusing into the text as it stands a strong realizing sense of its meaning and vitality, letting it give its own message through a fit medium of expression.

The stories given in pages 127 to 253 are grouped as illustrations of the types suitable for different grades. They are, however, very often interchangeable ; and many stories can be told successfully to all grades. A vitally

good story is little limited in its appeal. It is, nevertheless, a help to have certain plain results of experience as a basis for choice; that which is given is intended only for such a basis, not in the least as an exclusive list.

TYPES OF STORY SUGGESTED FOR CERTAIN GRADES

For Kindergarten and Grade I:

Little Rhymed Stories
(including the best of the nursery rhymes and the more poetic fragments of Mother Goose)
Stories with Rhyme in Parts
Nature Stories
(in which the element of personification is strong)
Nonsense Tales
Wonder Tales

For Grades II and III:

Nonsense Tales
Wonder Tales
Fairy and Folk Tales
Fables
Legends
Nature Stories
(especially stories of animals)

For Grades IV and V:

Folk Tales
Fables

FOR GRADES IV AND V, *continued*:

Myths and Allegories
Developed Animal Stories
Legends: Historic and Heroic
Historical Stories
Humorous Adventure Stories
"True Stories"

The wonder tales most familiar and accessible to the teacher are probably those included in the collections of Andersen and of the Brothers Grimm. So constant is the demand for these that the following list may be found useful, as indicating which of the stories are more easily and effectively adapted for telling, and commonly most successful. The stories from Grimm's Fairy Tales given are all contained in the small edition of the Riverside Literature Series (Houghton, Mifflin & Co.), which is at once the best selection and the best version, for oral purposes, known to me.

The Andersen stories are scattered through different volumes; a brief list of good Andersen publications is given on page 256.

It must be remembered that many of these standard tales need such adapting as has been suggested, cutting them down, and ridding them of vulgar or sophisticated detail.

From the Brothers Grimm:

The Star Dollars
The Cat and the Mouse
The Nail
The Hare and the Hedgehog
Snow-White and Rose-Red

SELECTION OF STORIES

Mother Holle
Thumbling
Three Brothers
The Little Porridge Pot
Little Snow-White
The Wolf and the Seven Little Kids
The Sea Mouse

From Andersen:

Little Tiny
The Lark and the Daisy
The Ugly Duckling
The Seven Stories of the Snow Queen
The Flax
The Little Match Girl
The Fir Tree
The Red Shoes
Ole-Luk-Oie
    Monday
    Saturday
    Sunday
The Elf of the Rose
Five Peas in a Pod
The Portuguese Duck
The Little Mermaid (much shortened)
The Nightingale (shortened)
The Girl who trod on the Loaf
The Emperor's New Clothes

Another familiar and easily attainable type of story is the Greek myth, given in Bulfinch's "Age of Fable," or any large collection of myths. Of these, again, certain

tales are more successfully adapted to children than others. Among the best for telling are: —

Arachne
Pandora
Midas
Apollo and Daphne
Apollo and Hyacinthus
Narcissus
Latona and the Rustics
Proserpine

CHAPTER III

ADAPTATION OF STORIES FOR TELLING

It soon becomes easy to pick out from a collection such stories as can be well told; but at no time is it easy to find a sufficient number of such stories. Stories simple, direct, and action-filled enough for telling, yet having the beautiful or valuable content we desire for children, do not lie hidden in every book. And even many of the stories which are most charming to read do not answer the double demand, for the appeal to the eye differs in many important respects from that to the ear. Unless one is able to change the form of a story to suit the needs of oral delivery, one is likely to suffer from poverty of material. Perhaps the commonest need of change is in the case of a story too long to tell, yet embodying some one beautiful incident or lesson; or one including a series of such incidents. The story of "The Nürnberg Stove," by Ouida,[1] is a good exam-

[1] In the Riverside Literature Series: Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

ple of the latter kind; Ruskin's "King of the Golden River"[1] will serve as an illustration of the former.

The problem in one case is chiefly one of elimination; in the other it is also in large degree one of rearrangement. In both cases I have purposely chosen extreme instances, as furnishing plainer illustration. The usual story needs less adaptation than these, but the same kind, in its own degree, condensation and rearrangement are the commonest forms of change required.

Pure condensation is probably the easier for most persons. With "The Nürnberg Stove" in mind for reference, let us see what the process includes. This story can be readily found by any one who is interested in the following example of adaptation, for nearly every children's library includes in its catalogue the juvenile works of Mlle. de la Ramée (Ouida). The suggestions given assume that the story is before my readers.

The story as it stands is 2400 words long, obviously too long to tell. What can be left out? Let us see what must be kept in.

[1] In the Riverside Literature Series: Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

The dramatic climax toward which we are working is the outcome of August's strange exploit, — his discovery by the king and the opportunity for him to become an artist. The joy of this climax is twofold: August may stay with his beloved Hirschvogel, and he may learn to make beautiful things like it. To arrive at the twofold conclusion we must start from a double premise, — the love of the stove and the yearning to be an artist. It will, then, be necessary to include in the beginning of the story enough details of the family life to show plainly how precious and necessary Hirschvogel was to the children; and to state definitely how August had learned to admire and wish to emulate Hirschvogel's maker. We need no detail beyond what is necessary to make this clear.

The beginning and the end of a story decided upon, the body of it becomes the trip from one to the other; in this case it is August's strange journey, beginning with the catastrophe and his grief-dazed decision to follow the stove. The journey is long, and each stage of it is told in full. As this is impossible in oral reproduction, it becomes necessary to choose typical incidents, which

will give the same general effect as the whole. The incidents which answer this purpose are: the beginning of the journey, the experience on the freight car, the jolting of being carried on men's shoulders, the final fright and suspense before the king opens the door.

The episode of the night in the bric-a-brac shop introduces a wholly new and confusing train of thought; therefore, charming as it is, it must be omitted. And the secondary thread of narrative interest, that of the prices for which the stove was sold, and the retribution visited on the cheating dealers, is also "another story," and must be ignored. Each of these destroys the clear sequence and the simplicity of plot which must be kept for telling.

We are reduced, then, for the whole, to this: a brief preliminary statement of the place Hirschvogel held in the household affections, and the ambition aroused in August; the catastrophe of the sale; August's decision; his experiences on the train, on the shoulders of men, and just before the discovery; his discovery, and the *dénouement.*

This not only reduces the story to tellable form, but it also leaves a suggestive interest which heightens later enjoyment of the origi-

nal. I suggest the adaptation of Kate Douglas Wiggin, in "The Story Hour," since in view of the existence of a satisfactory adaptation it seems unappreciative to offer a second. The one I made for my own use some years ago is not dissimilar to this, and I have no reason to suppose it more desirable.

Ruskin's "King of the Golden River" is somewhat difficult to adapt. Not only is it long, but its style is mature, highly descriptive, and closely allegorical. Yet the tale is too beautiful and too suggestive to be lost to the story-teller. And it is, also, so recognized a part of the standard literary equipment of youth that teachers need to be able to introduce children to its charm. To make it available for telling, we must choose the most essential events of the series leading up to the climax, and present these so simply as to appeal to children's ears, and so briefly as not to tire them.

The printed story is eight thousand words in length. The first three thousand words depict the beauty and fertility of the Treasure Valley, and the cruel habits of Hans and Schwartz, its owners, and give the culminating incident which leads to their banishment

by " West Wind." This episode, — the West Wind's appearance in the shape of an aged traveller, his kind reception by the younger brother, little Gluck, and the subsequent wrath of Hans and Schwartz, with their resulting punishment, — occupies about two thousand words. The rest of the story deals with the three brothers after the decree of West Wind has turned Treasure Valley into a desert. In the little house where they are plying their trade of goldsmiths, the King of the Golden River appears to Gluck and tells him the magic secret of turning the river's waters to gold. Hans and Schwartz in turn attempt the miracle, and in turn incur the penalty attached to failure. Gluck tries, and wins the treasure through self-sacrifice. The form of the treasure is a renewal of the fertility of Treasure Valley, and the moral of the whole story is summed up in Ruskin's words, " So the inheritance which was lost by cruelty was regained by love."

It is easy to see that the dramatic part of the story and that which most pointedly illustrates the underlying idea, is the triple attempt to win the treasure, — the two failures and the one success. But this is necessarily introduced by the episode of the King of the Golden

River, which is, also, an incident sure to appeal to a child's imagination. And the regaining of the inheritance is meaningless without the fact of its previous loss, and the reason for the loss, as a contrast with the reason for its recovery. We need, then, the main facts recorded in the first three thousand words. But the West Wind episode must be avoided, not only for brevity, but because two supernatural appearances, so similar, yet of different personalities, would hopelessly confuse a told story.

Our oral story is now to be made out of a condensed statement of the character of the Valley and of its owners, and the manner of its loss; the intervention of the King of the Golden River; the three attempts to turn the river to gold, and Gluck's success. Gluck is to be our hero, and our underlying idea is the power of love *versus* cruelty. Description is to be reduced to its lowest terms, and the language made simple and concrete.

With this outline in mind, it may be useful to compare the following adaptation with the original story. The adaptation is not intended in any sense as a substitute for the original, but merely as that form of it which can be *told*, while the original remains for reading.

THE GOLDEN RIVER[1]

There was once a beautiful little valley, where the sun was warm, and the rains fell softly; its apples were so red, its corn so yellow, its grapes so blue, that it was called the Treasure Valley. Not a river ran into it, but one great river flowed down the mountains on the other side, and because the setting sun always made its high cataract gold-colored, after the rest of the world was dark, it was called the Golden River. The lovely valley belonged to three brothers. The youngest, little Gluck, was happy-hearted and kind, but he had a hard life with his brothers, for Hans and Schwartz were so cruel and so stingy that they were known all about as the "Black Brothers." They were hard to their farm hands, hard to their customers, hard to the poor, and hardest of all to Gluck.

At last the Black Brothers became so bad that the Spirit of the West Wind took vengeance on them; he forbade any of the gentle winds, south and west, to bring rain to the valley. Then, since there were no rivers in it, it dried up, and instead of a treasure valley it

[1] Adapted from Ruskin's "King of the Golden River."

became a desert of dry, red sand. The Black Brothers could get nothing out of it, and they wandered out into the world on the other side of the mountain-peaks; and little Gluck went with them.

Hans and Schwartz went out every day, wasting their time in wickedness, but they left Gluck in the house to work. And they lived on the gold and silver they had saved in Treasure Valley, till at last it was all gone. The only precious thing left was Gluck's gold mug. This the Black Brothers decided to melt into spoons, to sell; and in spite of Gluck's tears, they put it in the melting pot, and went out, leaving him to watch it.

Poor little Gluck sat at the window, trying not to cry for his dear golden mug, and as the sun began to go down, he saw the beautiful cataract of the Golden River turn red, and yellow, and then pure color of gold.

"Oh, dear!" he said to himself, "how fine it would be if the river were really golden! I need n't be poor, then."

"It would n't be fine at all!" said a thin, metallic little voice, in his ear.

"Mercy, what 's that!" said Gluck, looking all about. But nobody was there.

Suddenly the sharp little voice came again.

"Pour me out," it said, "I am too hot!"

It seemed to come right from the oven, and as Gluck stood, staring in fright, it came again, "Pour me out; I 'm too hot!"

Gluck was very much frightened, but he went and looked in the melting pot. When he touched it, the little voice said, "Pour me out, I say!" And Gluck took the handle and began to pour the gold out.

First came out a tiny pair of yellow legs; then a pair of yellow coat-tails; then a strange little yellow body, and, last, a wee yellow face, with long curls of gold hair. And the whole put itself together as it fell, and stood up on the floor, — the strangest little yellow dwarf, about a foot high!

"Dear, me!" said Gluck.

But the little yellow man said, "Gluck, do you know who I am? I am the King of the Golden River."

Gluck did not know what to say, so he said nothing; and, indeed, the little man gave him no chance. He said, "Gluck, I have been watching you, and what I have seen of you, I like. Listen, and I will tell you something for your

good. Whoever shall climb to the top of the mountain from which the Golden River falls, and shall cast into its waters three drops of holy water, for him and him only shall its waters turn to gold. But no one can succeed except at the first trial, and any one who casts unholy water in the river will be turned into a black stone."

And then, before Gluck could draw his breath, the King walked straight into the hottest flame of the fire, and vanished up the chimney!

When Gluck's brothers came home, they beat him black and blue, because the mug was gone. But when he told them about the King of the Golden River they quarrelled all night, as to which should go to get the gold. At last, Hans, who was the stronger, got the better of Schwartz, and started off. The priest would not give such a bad man any holy water, so he stole a bottleful. Then he took a basket of bread and wine, and began to climb the mountain.

He climbed fast, and soon came to the end of the first hill. But there he found a great glacier, a hill of ice, which he had never seen before. It was horrible to cross, — the ice was

slippery, great gulfs yawned before him, and noises like groans and shrieks came from under his feet. He lost his basket of bread and wine, and was quite faint with fear and exhaustion when his feet touched firm ground again.

Next he came to a hill of hot, red rock, without a bit of grass to ease the feet, or a particle of shade. After an hour's climb he was so thirsty that he felt that he must drink. He looked at the flask of water. "Three drops are enough," he thought; "I will just cool my lips." He was lifting the flask to his lips when he saw something beside him in the path. It was a small dog, and it seemed to be dying of thirst. Its tongue was out, its legs were lifeless, and a swarm of black ants were crawling about its lips. It looked piteously at the bottle which Hans held. Hans raised the bottle, drank, kicked at the animal, and passed on.

A strange black shadow came across the blue sky.

Another hour Hans climbed; the rocks grew hotter and the way steeper every moment. At last he could bear it no longer; he must drink. The bottle was half empty, but he decided to

drink half of what was left. As he lifted it, something moved in the path beside him. It was a child, lying nearly dead of thirst on the rock, its eyes closed, its lips burning, its breath coming in gasps. Hans looked at it, drank, and passed on.

A dark cloud came over the sun, and long shadows crept up the mountain side.

It grew very steep now, and the air weighed like lead on Hans's forehead, but the Golden River was very near. Hans stopped a moment to breathe, then started to climb the last height.

As he clambered on, he saw an old, old man lying in the path. His eyes were sunken, and his face deadly pale.

"Water!" he said; "water!"

"I have none for you," said Hans; "you have had your share of life." He strode over the old man's body and climbed on.

A flash of blue lightning rose before him, and then the heavens were dark.

At last Hans stood on the brink of the cataract of the Golden River. The sound of its roaring filled all the air. He drew the flask from his side and hurled it into the torrent. As he did so, an icy chill shot through him;

he shrieked and fell. And the river rose and flowed over

The Black Stone.

When Hans did not come back Gluck grieved, but Schwartz was glad. He decided to go and get the gold for himself. He thought it might not do to steal the holy water, as Hans had done, so he took the money little Gluck had earned, and bought holy water of a bad priest. Then he took a basket of bread and wine, and started off.

He came to the great hill of ice, and was as surprised as Hans had been, and found it as hard to cross. Many times he slipped, and he was much frightened at the noises, and was very glad to get across, although he had lost his basket of bread and wine. Then he came to the same hill of sharp, red stone, without grass or shade, that Hans had climbed. And like Hans he became very thirsty. Like Hans, too, he decided to drink a little of the water. As he raised it to his lips, he suddenly saw the same fair child that Hans had seen.

"Water!" said the child. "Water! I am dying."

"I have not enough for myself," said Schwartz, and passed on.

A low bank of black cloud rose out of the west.

When he had climbed for another hour, the thirst overcame him again, and again he lifted the flask to his lips. As he did so, he saw an old man who begged for water.

"I have not enough for myself," said Schwartz, and passed on.

A mist, of the color of blood, came over the sun.

Then Schwartz climbed for another hour, and once more he had to drink. This time, as he lifted the flask, he thought he saw his brother Hans before him. The figure stretched its arms to him, and cried out for water.

"Ha, ha," laughed Schwartz, "do you suppose I brought the water up here for you?" And he strode over the figure. But when he had gone a few yards farther, he looked back, and the figure was not there.

Then he stood at the brink of the Golden River, and its waves were black, and the roaring of the waters filled all the air. He cast the flask into the stream. And as he did so the lightning glared in his eyes, the earth gave way beneath him, and the river flowed over

The Two Black Stones.

When Gluck found himself alone, he at last decided to try his luck with the King of the Golden River. The priest gave him some holy water as soon as he asked for it, and with this and a basket of bread he started off.

The hill of ice was much harder for Gluck to climb, because he was not so strong as his brothers. He lost his bread, fell often, and was exhausted when he got on firm ground. He began to climb the hill in the hottest part of the day. When he had climbed for an hour he was very thirsty, and lifted the bottle to drink a little water. As he did so he saw a feeble old man coming down the path toward him.

"I am faint with thirst," said the old man; "will you give me some of that water?"

Gluck saw that he was pale and tired, so he gave him the water, saying, "Please don't drink it all." But the old man drank a great deal, and gave back the bottle two thirds emptied. Then he bade Gluck good speed, and Gluck went on merrily.

Some grass appeared on the path, and the grasshoppers began to sing.

At the end of another hour, Gluck felt that he must drink again. But, as he raised the

flask, he saw a little child lying by the roadside; it cried out for water. Gluck struggled with himself, and decided to bear the thirst a little longer. He put the bottle to the child's lips, and it drank all but a few drops. Then it got up and ran down the hill.

All kinds of sweet flowers began to grow on the rocks, and crimson and purple butterflies danced about in the air.

But at the end of another hour, Gluck's thirst was unbearable. He saw that there were only five or six drops of water in the bottle, and he did not dare to drink. As he was putting the flask away again, he saw a little dog on the rocks, gasping for breath. He looked at it, and then at the Golden River, and he remembered the dwarf's words, "No one can succeed except at the first trial;" and he tried to pass the dog. It whined piteously, and Gluck stopped. He could not bear to pass it. "Confound the King and his gold, too!" he said; and he poured the few drops of water into the dog's mouth.

The dog sprung up; its tail disappeared, its nose grew red, and its eyes twinkled. The next minute the dog was gone, and the King of the Golden River stood there. He stooped

and picked a lily that grew beside Gluck's feet. Three drops of dew were on its white leaves. These the dwarf shook into the flask which Gluck held in his hand.

"Cast these into the river," he said, "and go down the other side of the mountains into the Treasure Valley." Then he disappeared.

Gluck stood on the brink of the Golden River, and cast the three drops of dew into the stream. Where they fell, a little whirlpool opened; but the water did not turn to gold. Indeed, the water seemed vanishing altogether. Gluck was disappointed not to see gold, but he obeyed the King of the Golden River, and went down the other side of the mountains.

When he came out into the Treasure Valley, a river, like the Golden River, was springing from a new cleft in the rocks above, and flowing among the heaps of dry sand. And then fresh grass sprang beside the river, flowers opened along its sides, and vines began to cover the whole valley. The Treasure Valley was becoming a garden again.

Gluck lived in the Valley, and his grapes were blue, and his apples were red, and his corn was yellow; and the poor were never

driven from his door. For him, as the King had promised, the river was really a River of Gold.

It will probably be clear to any one who has followed these attempts, that the first step in adaptation is analysis, careful analysis of the story as it stands. One asks oneself, What is the story? Which events are necessary links in the chain? How much of the text is pure description?

Having this essential body of the story in mind, one then decides which of the steps toward the climax are needed for safe arrival there, and keeps these. When two or more steps can be covered in a single stride, one makes the stride. When a necessary explanation is unduly long, or is woven into the story in too many strands, one disposes of it in an introductory statement, or perhaps in a side-remark. If there are two or more threads of narrative, one chooses among them, and holds strictly to the one chosen, eliminating details which concern the others.

In order to hold the simplicity of plot so attained, it is also desirable to have but few personages in the story, and to narrate the

action from the viewpoint of one of them, — usually the hero. To shift the viewpoint of the action is confusing to the child's mind.

When the analysis and condensation have been accomplished, the whole must be cast in simple language, keeping if possible the same kind of speech as that used in the original, but changing difficult or technical terms to plain, and complex images to simple and familiar ones.

All types of adaptation share in this need of simple language, — stories which are too short, as well as those which are too long, have this feature in their changed form. The change in a short story is applied oftenest where it becomes desirable to amplify a single anecdote, or perhaps a fable, which is told in very condensed form. Such an instance is the following anecdote of heroism, which in the original is quoted in one of F. W. Robertson's lectures on Poetry.

A detachment of troops was marching along a valley, the cliffs overhanging which were crested by the enemy. A sergeant, with eleven men, chanced to become separated from the rest by taking the wrong side of a ravine, which they expected soon to terminate, but which suddenly deepened into an impassable chasm. The officer

in command signaled to the party an order to return. They mistook the signal for a command to charge; the brave fellows answered with a cheer, and charged. At the summit of the steep mountain was a triangular platform, defended by a breastwork, behind which were seventy of the foe. On they went, charging up one of those fearful paths, eleven against seventy. The contest could not long be doubtful with such odds. One after another they fell; six upon the spot, the remainder hurled backwards; but not until they had slain nearly twice their own number.

There is a custom, we are told, amongst the hillsmen, that when a great chieftain of their own falls in battle, his wrist is bound with a thread either of red or green, the red denoting the highest rank. According to custom, they stripped the dead, and threw their bodies over the precipice. When their comrades came, they found their corpses stark and gashed; but round both wrists of every British hero was twined the red thread!

This anecdote serves its purpose of illustration perfectly well, but considered as a separate story it is somewhat too explanatory in diction, and too condensed in form. Just as the long story is analyzed for reduction of given details, so this must be analyzed, — to find the details implied. We have to read into it again all that has been left between the lines.

Moreover, the order must be slightly changed, if we are to end with the proper

" snap," the final sting of surprise and admiration given by the point of the story; the point must be prepared for. The purpose of the original is equally well served by the explanation at the end, but we must never forget that the place for the climax or effective point in a story told, is the last thing said. That is what makes a story " go off " well.

Imagining vividly the situation suggested, and keeping the logical sequence of facts in mind, shall we not find the story telling itself to boys and girls in somewhat this form?

THE RED THREAD OF COURAGE

This story which I am going to tell you is a true one. It happened while the English troops in India were fighting against some of the native tribes. The natives who were making trouble were people from the hill-country, called Hillsmen, and they were strong enemies. The English knew very little about them, except their courage, but they had noticed one peculiar custom, after certain battles, — the Hillsmen had a way of marking the bodies of their greatest chiefs who were killed in battle by binding a red thread about the wrist; when

a body was marked so, it meant the highest tribute of honor they could pay a hero. The English, however, found the common men of them quite enough to handle, for they had proved themselves good fighters and clever at ambushes.

One day, a small body of the English had marched a long way into the hill country, after the enemy, and in the afternoon they found themselves in a part of the country strange even to the guides. The men moved forward very slowly and cautiously, for fear of an ambush. The trail led into a narrow valley with very steep, high, rocky sides, topped with woods in which the enemy might easily hide.

Here the soldiers were ordered to advance more quickly, though with caution, to get out of the dangerous place.

After a little, they came suddenly to a place where the passage was divided in two by a big three-cornered boulder which seemed to rise from the midst of the valley. The main line of men kept to the right; to save crowding the path, a sergeant and eleven men took the left, meaning to go round the rock and meet the rest beyond it.

They had been in the path only a few min-

utes when they saw that the rock was not a single boulder at all, but an arm of the left wall of the valley, and that they were marching into a deep ravine with no outlet except the way they came. Both sides were sheer rock, almost perpendicular, with thick trees at the top ; in front of them the ground rose in a steep hill, bare of woods. As they looked up, they saw that the top was barricaded by the trunks of trees, and guarded by a strong body of Hillsmen. As the English hesitated, looking at this, a shower of spears fell from the wood's edge, aimed by hidden foes. The place was a death trap.

At this moment, their danger was seen by the officer in command of the main body, and he signaled to the sergeant to retreat.

By some terrible mischance, the signal was misunderstood. The men took it for the signal to charge. Without a moment's pause, straight up the slope, they charged on the run, cheering as they ran.

Some were killed by the spears that were thrown from the cliffs, before they had gone half way ; some were stabbed as they reached the crest, and hurled backward from the precipice ; two or three got to the top, and fought

hand to hand with the Hillsmen. They were outnumbered, seven to one; but when the last of the English soldiers lay dead, twice their number of Hillsmen lay dead around them!

When the relief party reached the spot, later in the day, they found the bodies of their comrades, full of wounds, huddled over and in the barricade, or crushed on the rocks below. They were mutilated and battered, and bore every sign of the terrible struggle. *But round both wrists of every British soldier was bound the red thread!*

The Hillsmen had given their heroic foes the highest honor they paid their own brave dead.

From these three instances we may, perhaps, deduce certain general principles of adaptation which have at least proved valuable to those using them.

These are suggestions which the practiced story-teller will find trite. But to others they may prove a fair foundation on which to build a personal method to be developed by experience. I have given them a tabular arrangement on the next page.

The preliminary step in all cases is

Analysis of the Story.

The aim, then, is

to *reduce* a long story or to *amplify* a short one.

For the first, the need is

Elimination of secondary threads of narrative,
extra personages,
description,
irrelevant events.

For the second, the great need is of

Realizing Imagination.

For both, it is desirable to keep

Close Logical Sequence,
A Single Point of View,
Simple Language,
The Point at the End.

CHAPTER IV

HOW TO TELL THE STORY

SELECTION, and, if necessary, adaptation — these are the preliminaries to the act of telling. That, after all, is the real test of one's power. That is the real joy, when achieved; the real bugbear, when dreaded. And that is the subject of this chapter, "How to tell a story."

How to tell a story: it is a short question which demands a long answer. The right beginning of the answer depends on a right conception of the thing the question is about; and that naturally reverts to an earlier discussion of the real nature of a story. In that discussion it was stated that a story is a work of art, — a message, as all works of art are.

To tell a story, then, is to pass on the message, to share the work of art. The message may be merely one of humor, — of nonsense, even; works of art range all the way from the "Victory" to a "Dresden Shepherdess," from an "Assumption" to a "Broken Pitcher," and

farther. Each has its own place. But whatever its quality, the story-teller is the passer-on, the interpreter, the transmitter. He comes bringing a gift. Always he gives; always he bears a message.

This granted, the first demand of the story-teller is not far to seek. No one can repeat a message he has not heard, or interpret what he does not understand. You cannot give, unless you first possess. The first demand of the story-teller is that he possess. He must *feel* the story. Whatever the particular quality and appeal of the work of art is, from the lightest to the grandest emotion or thought, he must have responded to it, sensed it, felt it intimately, before he can give it out again. Listen, humbly, for the message.

I realize that this has an incongruous sound, when applied to such stories as that of the little pig at the stile or of the greedy cat who ate up man and beast. But, believe me, it does apply even to those. For the transmittible thing in a story is the identifying essence, the characterizing savor, the peculiar quality and viewpoint of the humor, pathos, or interest. Every tale which claims a place in good fiction has this identifying savor and

quality, each different from every other. The laugh which echoes one of Seumas McManus's rigmaroles is not the chuckle which follows one of Joel Chandler Harris's anecdotes; the gentle sadness of an Andersen allegory is not the heart-searching tragedy of a tale from the Greek; nor is any one story of an author just like any other of the same making. Each has its personal likeness, its facial expression, as it were.

And the mind must be sensitized to these differences. No one can tell stories well who has not a keen and just feeling of such emotional values.

A positive and a negative injunction depend on this premise, — the positive, cultivate your feeling, striving toward increasingly just appreciation; the negative, never tell a story you do not feel.

Fortunately, the number and range of stories one can appreciate grows with cultivation; but it is the part of wisdom not to step outside the range at any stage of its growth.

I feel the more inclined to emphasize this caution because I once had a rather embarrassing and pointed proof of its desirability, — which I relate for the enlightening of the reader.

There is a certain nonsense tale which a friend used to tell with such effect that her hearers became helpless with laughter, but which for some reason never seemed funny to me. I could not laugh at it. But my friend constantly urged me to use it, quoting her own success. At last, with much curiosity and some trepidation, I included it in a programme before people with whom I was so closely in sympathy that no chill was likely to emanate from their side. I told the story as well as I knew how, putting into it more genuine effort than most stories can claim. The audience smiled politely, laughed gently once or twice, relapsed into the mildest of amusement. The most one could say was that the story was not a hopeless failure. I tried it again, after study, and yet again; but the audiences were all alike. And in my heart I should have been startled if they had behaved otherwise, for all the time I was telling it I was conscious in my soul that it was a stupid story! At last I owned my defeat to myself, and put the thing out of mind.

Some time afterward, I happened to take out the notes of the story, and idly looked them over; and suddenly, I do not know how,

I got the point of view! The salt of the humor was all at once on my lips; I felt the tickle of the pure folly of it; it *was* funny.

The next afternoon I told the story to a hundred or so children and as many mothers, — and the battle was won. Chuckles punctuated my periods; helpless laughter ran like an undercurrent below my narrative; it was a struggle for me to keep sober, myself. The nonsense tale had found its own atmosphere.

Now of course I had known all along that the humor of the story emanated from its very exaggeration, its absurdly illogical smoothness. But I had not *felt* it. I did not really "see the joke." And that was why I could not tell the story. I undoubtedly impressed my own sense of its fatuity on every audience to which I gave it. The case is very clear.

Equally clear have been some happy instances where I have found audiences responding to a story I myself greatly liked, but which common appreciation usually ignored. This is an experience even more persuasive than the other, certainly more to be desired.

Every story-teller has lines of limitation; certain types of story will always remain his or her best effort. There is no reason why any

type of story should be told really ill, and of course the number of kinds one tells well increases with the growth of the appreciative capacity. But none the less, it is wise to recognize the limits at each stage, and not try to tell any story to which the honest inner consciousness says, "I do not like you."

Let us then set down as a prerequisite for good story-telling, *a genuine appreciation of the story.*

Now, we may suppose this genuine appreciation to be your portion. You have chosen a story, have felt its charm, and identified the quality of its appeal.

You are now to tell it in such wise that your hearers will get the same kind of impression you yourself received from it. How?

I believe the inner secret of success is the measure of force with which the teller wills the conveyance of his impression to the hearer.

Any one who has watched, or has himself been, the teller of a story which held an audience, knows that there is something approaching hypnotic suggestion in the close connection of effort and effect, and in the elimination of self-consciousness from speaker and listeners alike.

I would not for a moment lend the atmosphere of charlatanry, or of the ultra-psychic, to the wholesome and vivid art of story-telling. But I would, if possible, help the teacher to realize how largely success in that art is a subjective and psychological matter, dependent on her control of her own mood and her sense of direct, intimate communion with the minds attending her. The "feel" of an audience, — that indescribable sense of the composite human soul waiting on the initiative of your own, the emotional currents interplaying along a medium so delicate that it takes the baffling torture of an obstruction to reveal its existence, — cannot be taught. But it can and does develop with use. And a realization of the immense latent power of strong desire and resolution vitalizes and disembarrasses the beginner.

That is, undoubtedly, rather an intangible beginning; it sets the root of the matter somewhat in the realm of "spirits and influences." There are, however, outward and visible means of arriving at results. Every art has its technique. The art of story-telling, intensely personal and subjective as it is, yet comes under the law sufficiently not to be a matter of sheer

"knack." It has its technique. The following suggestions are an attempt to state what seem the foundation principles of that technique. The general statements are deduced from manyconsecutive experiences; partly, too, they are the results of introspective analysis, confirmed by observation. They do not make up an exclusive body of rules, wholly adequate to produce good work, of themselves; they do include, so far as my observation and experience allow, the fundamental requisites of good work, — being the qualities uniformly present in successful work of many story-tellers.

First of all, most fundamental of all, is a rule without which any other would be but folly: *Know your story.*

One would think so obvious a preliminary might be taken for granted. But alas, even slight acquaintance with the average story-teller proves the dire necessity of the admonition. The halting tongue, the slip in name or incident, the turning back to forge an omitted link in the chain, the repetition, the general weakness of statement consequent on imperfect grasp: these are common features of the stories one hears told. And they are features which will deface the best story ever told.

One must know the story absolutely; it must have been so assimilated that it partakes of the nature of personal experience; its essence must be so clearly in mind that the teller does not have to think of it at all in the act of telling, but rather lets it flow from his lips with the unconscious freedom of a vivid reminiscence.

Such knowledge does not mean memorizing. Memorizing utterly destroys the freedom of reminiscence, takes away the spontaneity, and substitutes a mastery of form for a mastery of essence. It means, rather, a perfect grasp of the gist of the story, with sufficient familiarity with its form to determine the manner of its telling. The easiest way to obtain this mastery is, I think, to analyze the story into its simplest elements of plot. Strip it bare of style, description, interpolation, and find out simply *what happened.* Personally, I find that I get first an especially vivid conception of the climax; this then has to be rounded out by a clear perception of the successive steps which lead up to the climax. One has, so, the framework of the story. The next process is the filling in.

There must be many ways of going about

this filling in. Doubtless many of my readers have evolved personally effective ways of doing it, back in the days when it was their pet ambition to make a good recitation in school; for it is, after all, the same thing as preparing a bit of history or a recitation in literature. But for the consideration of those who find it hard to gain mastery of fact without mastery of its stated form, I give my own way. I have always used the childlike plan of talking it out. Sometimes inaudibly, sometimes in loud and penetrating tones which arouse the sympathetic curiosity of my family, I tell it over and over, to an imaginary hearer. That hearer is as present to me, always has been, as Stevenson's "friend of the children" who takes the part of the enemy in their solitary games of war. His criticism (though he is a most composite double-sexed creature who should not have a designating personal pronoun) is all-revealing. For talking it out instantly brings to light the weak spots in one's recollection. "What was it the little crocodile said?" "Just how did the little pig get into his house?" "What was that link in the chain of circumstances which brought the wily fox to confusion?" The slightest cloud of uncertainty becomes

obvious in a moment. And as obvious becomes one's paucity of expression, one's week-kneed imagination, one's imperfect assimilation of the spirit of the story. It is not a flattering process.

But when these faults have been corrected by several attempts, the method gives a confidence, a sense of sureness, which makes the real telling to a real audience ready and spontaneously smooth. Scarcely an epithet or a sentence comes out as it was in the preliminary telling; but epithets and sentences in sufficiency do come; the beauty of this method is that it brings freedom instead of bondage.

A valuable exception to the rule against memorizing must be noted here. Especially beautiful and indicative phrases of the original should be retained, and even whole passages, where they are identified with the beauty of the tale. And in stories like the "Three Bears" or "Red Ridinghood" the exact phraseology of the conversation as given in familiar versions should be preserved; it is in a way sacred, a classic, and not to be altered. But beyond this the language should be the teller's own, and probably never twice the same. Sureness, ease, freedom, and the

effect of personal reminiscence come only from complete mastery. I repeat, with emphasis: Know your story.

The next suggestion is a purely practical one concerning the preparation of physical conditions. See that the children are seated in close and direct range of your eye; the familiar half-circle is the best arrangement for small groups of children, but the teacher should be at a point *opposite* the centre of the arc, *not in* its centre: thus , not thus ; it is important also not to have the ends too far at the side, and to have no child directly behind another, or in such a position that he has not an easy view of the teacher's full face. Little children have to be physically close in order to be mentally close. It is, of course, desirable to obtain a hushed quiet before beginning; but it is not so important as to preserve your own mood of holiday, and theirs. If the fates and the atmosphere of the day are against you, it is wiser to trust to the drawing power of the tale itself, and abate the irritation of didactic methods. And never break into that magic tale, once begun, with an admonition to Mamie or Tommy to stop squirming, or a rebuke to "that little

girl over there who is not listening." Make her listen! It is probably your fault if she is not. If you are telling a good story, and telling it well, she can't help listening, — unless she is an abnormal child; and if she is abnormal you ought not to spoil the mood of the others to attend to her.

I say "never" interrupt your story; perhaps it is only fair to amend that, after the fashion of dear little Margery Fleming, and say "never — if you can help it." For, of course, there are exceptional occasions, and exceptional children; some latitude must be left for the decisions of good common sense acting on the issue of the moment.

The children ready, your own mood must be ready. It is desirable that the spirit of the story should be imposed upon the room from the beginning, and this result hangs on the clearness and intensity of the teller's initiatory mood. An act of memory and of will is the requisite. The story-teller must call up — it comes with the swiftness of thought — the essential emotion of the story as he felt it first. A single volition puts him in touch with the characters and the movement of the tale. This is scarcely more than a brief and con-

densed reminiscence; it is the stepping back into a mood once experienced.

Let us say, for example, that the story to be told is the immortal fable of the "Ugly Duckling." Before you open your lips the whole pathetic series of the little swan's mishaps should flash across your mind, — not accurately and in detail, but blended to a composite of undeserved ignominy, of baffled innocent wonderment, and of delicious underlying satire on average views. With this is mingled the feeling of Andersen's delicate whimsicality of style. The dear little Ugly Duckling waddles, bodily, into your consciousness, and you pity his sorrows and anticipate his triumph, before you begin.

This preliminary recognition of mood is what brings the delicious quizzical twitch to the mouth of a good raconteur who begins an anecdote the hearers know will be side-splitting. It is what makes grandmother sigh gently and look far over your heads, when her soft voice commences the story of "the little girl who lived long, long ago." It is a natural and instinctive thing with the born story-teller; a necessary thing for any one who will become a story-teller.

From the very start, the mood of the tale should be definite and authoritative, beginning with the mood of the teller and emanating therefrom in proportion as the physique of the teller is a responsive medium.

Now we are off. Knowing your story, having your hearers well arranged, and being as thoroughly as you are able in the right mood, you begin to tell it. Tell it, then, simply, directly, dramatically, with zest.

Simply applies both to manner and matter. As to manner, I mean without affectation, without any form of pretense, in short, without posing. It is a pity to "talk down" to the children, to assume a honeyed voice, to think of the edifying or educational value of the work one is doing. Naturalness, being one's self, is the desideratum. I wonder why we so often use a preposterous voice, — a super-sweetened whine, in talking to children? Is it that the effort to realize an ideal of gentleness and affectionateness overreaches itself in this form of the grotesque? Some good intention must be the root of it. But the thing is none the less pernicious. A "cant" voice is as abominable as a cant phraseology. Both are of the very substance of evil.

"But it is easier to *say*, 'Be natural' than to *be* it," said one teacher to me desperately.

Beyond dispute. To those of us who are cursed with an over-abundant measure of self-consciousness, nothing is harder than simple naturalness. The remedy is to lose one's self in one's art. Think of the story so absorbingly and vividly that you have no room to think of yourself. Live it. Sink yourself in that mood you have summoned up, and let it carry you.

If you do this, simplicity of matter will come easily. Your choice of words and images will naturally become simple.

It is, I think, a familiar precept to educators, that children should not have their literature too much simplified for them. We are told that they like something beyond them, and that it is good for them to have a sense of mystery and power beyond the sense they grasp. That is probably quite true; but it does not apply to story-telling as it does to reading. We have constantly to remember that the movement of a story told is very swift. A concept not grasped in passing is irrevocably lost; there is no possibility of turning back, or lingering over the page. Also, since the art of story-telling is primarily an art of entertainment, its very object

is sacrificed if the ideas and images do not slip into the child's consciousness smoothly enough to avoid the sense of strain. For this reason short, familiar, vivid words are best.

Simplicity of manner and of matter are both essential to the right appeal to children.

Directness in telling is a most important quality. The story, listened to, is like the drama, beheld. Its movement must be unimpeded, increasingly swift, winding up "with a snap." Long-windedness, or talking round the story, utterly destroys this movement. The incidents should be told, one after another, without explanation or description beyond what is absolutely necessary; and *they should be told in logical sequence*. Nothing is more distressing than the cart-before-the-horse method,—nothing more quickly destroys interest than the failure to get a clue in the right place.

Sometimes, to be sure, a side remark adds piquancy and a personal savor. But the general rule is, great discretion in this respect.

Every epithet or adjective beyond what is needed to give the image, is a five-barred gate in the path of the eager mind traveling to a climax.

Explanations and moralizing are mostly sheer

clutter. Some few stories necessarily include a little explanation, and stories of the fable order may quaintly end with an obvious moral. But here again, the rule is — great discretion.

It is well to remember that you have one great advantage over the writer of stories. The writer must present a clear image and make a vivid impression, — all with words. The teller has face, and voice, and body to do it with. The teller needs, consequently, but one swiftly incisive verb to the writer's two; but one expressive adjective to his three. Often, indeed, a pause and an expressive gesture do the whole thing.

It may be said here that it is a good trick of description to repeat an epithet or phrase once used, when referring again to the same thing. The recurrent adjectives of Homer were the device of one who entertained a childlike audience. His trick is unconscious and instinctive with people who have a natural gift for children's stories. Of course this matter also demands common sense in the degree of its use; in moderation it is a most successful device.

Brevity, close logical sequence, exclusion of foreign matter, unhesitant speech, — to use these is to tell a story directly.

After simplicity and directness, comes that quality which to advise, is to become a rock of offense to many. It is the suggestion, "Tell the story *dramatically*." Yet when we quite understand each other as to the meaning of "dramatically," I think you will agree with me that a good story-teller includes this in his qualities of manner. It means, not in the manner of the elocutionist, not excitably, not any of the things which are incompatible with simplicity and sincerity; but with a whole-hearted throwing of one's self into the game, which identifies one in a manner with the character or situation of the moment. It means responsively, vividly, without interposing a blank wall of solid self between the drama of the tale and the mind's eye of the audience.

It is such fun, pure and simple, to so throw one's self into it, and to see the answering expressions mimic one's own, that it seems superfluous to urge it. Yet many persons do find it difficult. The instant, slight but suggestive change of voice, the use of onomatopoetic words, the response of eyes and hands, which are all immediate and spontaneous with some temperaments, are to others a matter of

shamefacedness and labor. To those, to all who are not by nature bodily expressive, I would reiterate the injunction already given, — not to pretend. Do nothing you cannot do naturally and happily. But lay your stress on the inner and spiritual effort to appreciate, to feel, to imagine out the tale; and let the expressiveness of your body grow gradually with the increasing freedom from crippling self-consciousness. The physique will become more mobile as the emotion does.

The expression must, however, always *remain suggestive rather than illustrative.* This is the side of the case which those who are over-dramatic must not forget. The story-teller is not playing the parts of his stories; he is merely arousing the imagination of his hearers to picture the scenes for themselves. One element of the dual consciousness of the tale-teller remains always the observer, the reporter, the quiet outsider.

I like to think of the story-teller as a good fellow standing at a great window overlooking a busy street or a picturesque square, and reporting with gusto to the comrade in the rear of the room what of mirth or sadness he sees; he hints at the policeman's strut, the organ-

grinder's shrug, the schoolgirl's gayety, with a gesture or two which is born of an irresistible impulse to imitate; but he never leaves his fascinating post to carry the imitation farther than a hint.

The verity of this figure lies in the fact that the dramatic quality of story-telling depends closely upon the *clearness and power with which the story-teller visualizes the events and characters he describes.* You must hold the image before the mind's eye, using your imagination to body forth to yourself every act, incident, and appearance. You must, indeed, stand at the window of your consciousness and watch what happens.

This is a point so vital that I am tempted to put it in ornate type. You must *see* what you *say!*

It is not too much, even, to say, "You must see more than you say." True vividness is lent by a background of picture sensed by the listener beyond what you tell him. Children see, as a rule, no image you do not see; they see most clearly what you see most largely. Draw, then, from a full well, not from a supply so low that the pumps wheeze at every pull.

Dramatic power of the reasonably quiet and

suggestive type demanded for telling a story will come pretty surely in the train of effort along these lines; it follows the clear concept and sincerity in imparting it, and is a natural consequence of the visualizing imagination.

It is inextricably bound up, also, with the causes and results of the quality which finds place in my final injunction, to tell your story *with zest*. It might almost be assumed that the final suggestion renders the preceding one superfluous, so direct is the effect of a lively interest on the dramatic quality of a narration; but it would not of itself be adequate; the necessity of visualizing imagination is paramount. Zest is, however, a close second to this clearness of mental vision. It is entirely necessary to be interested in your own story, to enjoy it as you tell it. If you are bored and tired, the children will soon be bored and tired, too. If you are not interested your manner cannot get that vitalized spontaneity which makes dramatic power possible. Nothing else will give that relish on the lips, that gusto, which communicates its joy to the audience and makes it receptive to every impression. I used to say to teachers, "Tell your story with all your might," but I found that this

by a natural misconception was often interpreted to mean "laboriously." And of course nothing is more injurious to the enjoyment of an audience than obvious effort on the part of the entertainer. True zest can be — often is — extremely quiet, but it gives a savor nothing else can impart.

"But how, at the end of a hard morning's work, can I be interested in a story I have told twenty times before?" asks the kindergartner or primary teacher, not without reason.

There are two things to be said. The first is a reminder of the wisdom of choosing stories in which you originally have interest; and of having a store large enough to permit variety. The second applies to those inevitable times of weariness which attack the most interested and well-stocked story-teller. You are, perhaps, tired out physically. You have told a certain story till it seems as if a repetition of it must produce bodily effects dire to contemplate, yet that happens to be the very story you must tell. What can you do? I answer, "Make believe." The device seems incongruous with the repeated warnings against pretense; but it is necessary, and it is wise. Pretend as hard

as ever you can to be interested. And the result will be — before you know it — that you will *be* interested. That is the chief cause of the recommendation; it brings about the result it simulates. Make believe, as well as you know how, and the probability is that you will not even know when the transition from pretended to real interest comes.

And fortunately, the children never know the difference. They have not that psychological infallibility which is often attributed to them. They might, indeed, detect a pretense which continued through a whole tale; but that is so seldom necessary that it needs little consideration.

So then: enjoy your story; be interested in it, — if you possibly can; and if you cannot, pretend to be, till the very pretense brings about the virtue you have assumed.

There is much else which might be said and urged regarding the method of story-telling, even without encroaching on the domain of personal variations. A whole chapter might, for example, be devoted to voice and enunciation, and then leave the subject fertile. But voice and enunciation are after all merely single manifestations of degree and quality of culture,

of taste, and of natural gift. No set rules can bring charm of voice and speech to a person whose feeling and habitual point of view is fundamentally wrong; the person whose habitual feeling and mental attitude is fundamentally right needs few or no rules. As the whole matter of story-telling is in the first instance an expression of the complex personal product, so will this feature of it vary in perfection according to the beauty and culture of the human mechanism manifesting it.

A few generally applicable suggestions may, however, be useful, — always assuming the story-teller to have the fundamental qualifications of fine and wholesome habit. These are not rules for the art of speaking; they are merely some practical considerations regarding speaking to an audience.

First, I would reiterate my earlier advice, be simple. Affectation is the worst enemy of voice and enunciation alike. Slovenly enunciation is certainly very dreadful, but the unregenerate may be pardoned if they prefer it to the affected mouthing which some over-nice people without due sense of values expend on every syllable which is so unlucky as to fall between their teeth.

Next I would urge avoidance of a fault very common with those who speak much in large rooms, — the mistaken effort at loudness. This results in tightening and straining the throat, finally producing nasal head-tones or a voice of metallic harshness. And it is entirely unnecessary. There is no need to speak loudly. The ordinary schoolroom needs no vocal effort. A hall seating three or four hundred persons demands no effort whatever beyond a certain clearness and definiteness of speech. A hall seating from five to eight hundred needs more skill in aiming the voice, but still demands no shouting.

It is indeed largely the psychological quality of a tone that makes it reach in through the ear to the comprehension. The quiet, clear, restful, persuasive tone of a speaker who knows his power goes straight home; but loud speech confuses. Never speak loudly. In a small room, speak as gently and easily as in conversation; in a large room, think of the people farthest away, and speak clearly, with a slight separation between words, and with definite phrasing, — aiming your *mind* toward the distant listeners.

If one is conscious of nasality or throatiness

of voice, it certainly pays to study the subject seriously with an intelligent teacher. But a good, natural speaking-voice, free from extraordinary vices, will fill all the requirements of story-telling to small audiences, without other attention than comes indirectly from following the general principles of the art.

To sum it all up, then, let us say of the method likely to bring success in telling stories, that it includes sympathy, grasp, spontaneity; one must appreciate the story, and know it; and then, using the realizing imagination as a constant vivifying force, and dominated by the mood of the story, one must tell it with all one's might, — simply, vitally, joyously.