

please method, which for the most part prevail in it. Looked at as a free-will service, the Sunday school as developed during the nineteenth century is a magnificent achievement of Christian devotion. Viewed over against the functions and interests entrusted to it, it is found wanting. To begin with, we are forced to question whether, if a similar test were applied to the average Sunday-school teacher of Canada—take them as you find them to-day—which has been applied to the average academy scholar, the results would be much different. Though the practice of teaching must needs do more for the teacher than for the scholar, we doubt if anything the ordinary teacher extracts from his abundant helps would put him in the way of answering many of the most elementary questions in Scripture knowledge. One thing that these helps certainly do for the teacher is to release him from the necessity of having, apart from the lessons, any more general knowledge of religion than he happens to have. Nor does the ordinary Sunday school teacher feel the same responsibility for being present and doing good work that a day school teacher does. It does not require so great a cause to make him neglect his class, trusting that it will be provided for in some way. Still more are the scholars indifferent to the obligation of being present, and, when present, in a large proportion of cases they make no effort whatever to learn. Parental authority is little exercised to require respect. It is indeed too ready to intervene to lessen the teacher's authority. The child who is required to be punctilious about his day school duties does not always get from his home the idea that

Sunday-school matters much. Attendance is indeed largely a matter of coaxing, and still more is attention. Many Sunday-school scholars, especially boys, are in a constant attitude of passive, if not active, resistance to every effort made on their behalf. Their final weapon, if crossed in any way, is to threaten to leave the school, over against which threat there is no way in the hands either of the teachers or of the school authorities of enforcing discipline. The result is in many cases not only little or no learning of the lessons, but a positive learning of antagonism to religion and to authority. Realizing thus the disadvantages with which our Sunday-school system has to contend, we can only honor all the more those who conquer such difficulties, securing the loyal attachment of their young people, and leaving lasting impressions not only on their hearts, but on their minds. Under the best conditions, however, there remains the "scrappiness" of the courses of study. The International Lessons undertake to cover the whole Scripture in a seven years' course of study, with a maximum of twenty five hours a year. If there was home co-operation, the intervening portions of Scripture might possibly be gone over during the week, but where is this done? Yet without it no consecutive knowledge of Scripture can possibly be obtained. It would seem as though the Sunday-school system, far from being a finality, is propounding a problem to the twentieth century of which it fails to offer, or even to suggest, the solution, namely, how are the Christians of the future to be educated in the groundwork of their faith?—*The Montreal Witness.*