

The Passing Ships.

WE are afloat on life's voyage, bound for eternity. The cargo we bear is of priceless value—not measured by Troy weight, but in balances that judge the worth of immortal spirits.

As we sail thitherward, how delightful to break the monotony of the sea voyage in meeting passing ships and interchanging friendly words. Sometimes we hail vessels that have been wandering to and fro in misty, foggy weather for a long time, and the far-off home ones, left behind, fear lest the new, untried bark has been shipwrecked. We ascertain all is well, and then send word to anxious, waiting hearts that the long lost one is safely moving onward to the destined port of rest.

How many fond, aged hearts are straining their ears to catch some tidings of that dear boy who is outward bound. How their aching bosoms swell with unutterable joy as they read the simple bulletin—"Spoke such a vessel in such a latitude and took her mail." How came they to receive the welcome tidings? A mission ship hailed this fragile craft and unselfishly, in God's name, put on board of it a good supply of her own provisions, and thus sent it bounding o'er the waters with new life and high hopes. Let us hail every ship we meet. We will come across many detained by stress of weather, beaten and battered in rigging, and sorely worsted by stormy weather. Ah! these pelted, stricken spirits should be soothed by the kindest comfort and be furnished with rich spiritual stores to sustain them all through life's tiresome voyage.

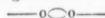
Shall we go silently by these passing barks, never inquiring if they are in need of help? Oh! no! If you find a young man rolling in the rough surf and amid the breakers of vicious habits, don't let him go to pieces, but throw him the line of sympathetic interest—launch the life-boat of importunate, trusting prayer, and bring him to the shore a saved one—a reclaimed one. You can do it, my Christian brother. Try it now on those perishing loved ones all around you. Their spirits piteously plead for some strong hand to help their infirmities. Don't refuse to acknowledge on to such ships. Immortal souls

are in jeopardy. If you flinch or fail in duty at this hour, these blasted, tempest-tossed, lost spirits will turn upon you in eternity their agonizing looks.

What sad shipwrecks strew the shores of time simply because Christian professors are so weak in faith and poor in spirit. Each voyager, piloted by the Holy One, should see to it that the lamp of a consistent walk and godly conversation should always be seen gleaming from the mainmast, ever ready to give passing ships the true course that will lead them to cast anchor within the harbor of eternal deliverance.—*S. S. Record.*



THERE is hardly any other practice in the Sunday-school that we abominate more thoroughly than the custom of offering prizes to scholars for committing to memory the greatest number of Bible verses within a specified time. It is offering prizes to induce insanity, mental imbecility, or blank idiocy. It is inciting children to see how much their minds will bear before they break down. We are startled to know that the usage is still in existence, and that lately, in two or three places, it has resulted in the committing, by little ones, of from three thousand to six thousand verses apiece. Such a practice is simply horrible, and its movers and abettors are rivals of those who sacrifice children by making them "pass through fire." The statistics are plain enough that it is dangerous to excite such rivalry. As the *Christian at Work* says, Bergh ought to look after these torturers and slayers of young children.



AN effective means of securing regularity in the attendance of teachers is the manner of roll-call, as practised by our friend John E. Miller, of the *Little Corporal*. At a tap of the bell the teachers all rise in their places and respond to their names with sufficient vigor of voice to be heard. As very few care about having their absence thus publicly advertised, they are almost always on hand, either in person or by proxy. And Mr. Miller further says that in this way he makes the whole school acquainted with them,—which isn't a bad idea in itself.

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