

SUN WORSHIP.

Steadfast the Sun steers through the awful void ;
Steadfast the Earth wheels in her mighty place ;
Only we mortals lag, and are annoyed
That the Gods march not with our stumbling
pace.

What are our follies, what are all our fears,
Our deep despair, or that bright hope that
buoys ;
What all the rapture, all the bitter tears—
What but the child's adventures with his toys ?

Comrades that waver, lo ! the All-Shining One
Loves the least luccent of His starry line ;
He knows His course, and ours is but to run
Sure in the circle His just laws assign.

The love of law is our true law of love ;
In this rich concord Life Divine is won ;
Our fainter octave thrills to that above
And wakes the silent Wisdom of the Sun.

—A. E. S., in *Canadian Magazine*.

INTERNATIONAL S. S. LESSONS.

December 22. Luke 11: 8-20.

The pastors, or shepherds, who are truly watching their flocks, are the first to have the "divine intimation" from the Angel or Messenger of the Master. Such a thing as a pastor in the occult sense is almost unknown to-day, however, and the clerics who occupy that relation towards modern assemblies or congregations are foremost, as a rule, in denying the present reality and possibility of events which they dogmatise upon as actual occurrences in the distant past. The annunciation by angels to shepherd watchers was a feature of the Virgin birth of Krishna, of India, five thousand years ago, and of other Christs in other parts of the world. But the reality of the Christ-birth in every man's own inner nature is the more immediately important lesson. The Anointed Lord (verse 11, Revised Version) becomes the Saviour of man, not through any external sacrifice, but by the internal growth and development of the soul, the making sacred of the inner life, so as to prepare a fit dwelling-place for that Sacred One, whose Angel or Messenger, the Forerunner of other texts, may sometimes be confused with the true Master. "An Angel came upon them," one version reads; the Douai Version of

Zechariah tells of "the Angel that spoke in me," the same "Angel of the Lord." The correct rendering of the Angel-song is notable: "Glory to God in the highest; on earth peace among men of good-will." Only to men of good-will is any message of peace reasonable or possible; and the false professions of peace where there is no peace have often led to worse error than open warfare. Where disharmony exists, open or concealed, the Anointed Lord dwells not. How can he that hateth his brother whom he hath seen, love the Master whom he hath not seen? And without love, the mystic power from on high, overshadowing the soul, there can be no birth of the Christ.

December 29. Review.

The Golden Text is Matthew vi: 10, "Thy Kingdom come."

Modern thought has become so wrapped up in the things of this world that the idea of a Kingdom with most people is of a nation with a monarchical form of government, a throne and a crowned sovereign, and so forth. When Jesus was said to have been taken up into a high place and shown all the Kingdoms of the earth, the Roman Empire and its provinces are usually understood to have been the means of temptation. A subtler temptation, however, is implied, for it was not the Kingdoms of the Eon, or present age, but the kingdoms of the cosmos, the kingdoms of nature, as we say, which are mentioned. Luke writing later, uses *oikoumene*, but Matthew says *kosmos*. At any rate the Kingdom of the heavens, the realm of the Father, the spiritual state (and both senses of the word *state* may be considered) in which a man attains his divine stature, is the result of inner development, and the devout aspiration, "Thy Kingdom come," must be supplemented by the effort to realise it if the prayer is to be of any effect. The coming of the Kingdom will not be from without, or by the forcible change of the external conditions of society. These conditions will change, but only as a result of the change which must take place in human nature, and individually.