

Thanking God in Advance.

BY MRS. JENNIE F. WILLING.

CROMWELL'S soldiers went into battle singing a doxology—praising God for victory before a blow was struck.

If we conquer at all, it is by faith. When we go about a piece of work for Christ, we must be sure that we do it for him and because he wants us to do it. Then let us work joyfully, not groaning under the cross, as if we were serving such a hard master we could barely get grace enough to endure the service. If the work were to be done by us we might well fear. But "it is God that worketh in us." If any good is wrought, he must do it. Then let us have confidence enough in him to believe that, as he has promised to be with us always, and "supply all our need, according to his riches, in glory, by Christ Jesus," we can do all things that he would have us do. With this hope to hold us, we may safely thank him in advance for victory.

The Office and the Work.

BY REV. J. T. CRANE, D.D.

WHEN we consider the fact that the Sunday-schools of the Methodist Episcopal Church, U. S., contain 1,267,000 children and young people, and that this vast multitude is increasing at the rate of 60,000 a year, we are profoundly impressed with the high importance of the office of the Sunday-school teacher, and the great responsibility which rests upon those to whom is committed the management of the schools.

We cannot, indeed, contrast it with the duties which devolve upon the ministry, because to care for the school and in every way promote its true success is no small part of the very work of the ministry. It can be truthfully said that the question is not easily settled whether the Gospel preached in the pulpit, or the Gospel taught in the Sunday-school, produces the greater practical results. To intimate a doubt on this point is not to undervalue the pulpit or the Pastor. If the Pastor be what he should be, he is the chief

teacher in the school, and preaches there as really and as earnestly as in the general congregation. He can be, and do all this, too, without lessening the responsibility of the superintendent or the teachers, or causing any one to feel or suspect that the Pastor is ambitious to control every thing.

Whoever manages, whoever teaches, the religious training of this great host is a matter of transcendent importance to the Church and the world, as well as to these immortal souls themselves. Some are mere infants, who have not yet reached that dread point in life where there is laid upon each the fearful responsibility of settling for himself the question of eternal destiny. Some are children, before whose eyes the great problems of life here, and life hereafter, begin dimly to float. Some are young people, before whom these problems have come in definite outlines and clear coloring demanding solution. They are all of the beginning of the path, some hesitating which way to go; some choosing the right, some drawn toward the wrong. The two eternities are before them, the immortal good, the endless evil; and every moment they tend toward the one or the other. Surely it is not a small thing to act as guide to those who are setting out on a journey like this.

They all need to know, as soon as they are able to learn, "the Way, the Truth, and the Life." Some of them, indeed, will die early, before God shall lay upon them the duty of determining the question of infinite moment. Others will die, having some knowledge of Christ, and some dim idea of human accountability, the value of holiness, and the evil of sin; and they who witness their departure from the shores of time will watch their receding forms, and reason and wonder, and at last leave all with God, the All-wise and the All-merciful. But, according to the laws of longevity, more than a million will grow to maturity. A few years will bring them into the midst of the activities of life—its joy and its sorrow, its good and its evil, its duties and opportunities in the home, the community, the Church, and the State. They need, then, to be faithfully warned of evil, and encouraged to choose the good, and aided in