

OUR CHILDREN.

BY REV. W. WINSOR.

WHEN I was in Andover Theological Seminary, a canvas was made of the students, and it was found that out of the one hundred and eight in the institution, all candidates for the ministry, ninety-eight had had early religious training. Revivals largely tell the same story. From a little work, entitled "Sunday-School (Gleanings)," I gather such facts as these. In a revival at Barre, Vt., out of fifty converted, all had been more or less in the Sabbath-school.

In Hatfield, Mass., in a revival lasting three months, sixty-five members of the Sunday-school were converted, and not a single child or youth out of the school was known to have been converted. In Northampton, about the same time, out of fifty conversions, there was scarcely a case outside of the Sunday-school.

Now these results of success are perfectly legitimate and to be looked for. They do not prove that those outside of the Sunday-school will not be converted, but they prove that Sunday-school labour brings forth fruits. And at this point may I not ask whether we have faith enough in early conversion? Why should not a child become a disciple of Jesus as soon as he can understand that Jesus died for and loves him? Must he needs go through a process of several years, expansion of the reasoning faculty? Are we saved by reason or faith? To trust is the child's instinct where trust is invited. We can trust in Jesus. What shall lead him to faith? The sight of it in others; our evident love for the Saviour whom we cannot see any more than he can. I believe the seed of truth and faith, carefully nurtured by Christian love and patience—nurtured, not vitiated, by bad example, will ripen into early conversion. Nor must we prescribe an age for the Divine Spirit. Let us be assured that the limitations come chiefly from the parent, or the Christian teacher. We may well ponder the words of the Master, "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones."

A good woman who had been to church was met by a friend on the way home. Said the friend, "Is the sermon done?" "No," replied she, "it is said, it has got to be done." So with us, our teaching waits for our doing.

Yes, the child is nearer Christ than the sinful man. The face of conscience is not yet covered with the electrotypes of guilt, coppered over with hardness. Piety is to be looked for in the child under Christian training, cultured in by the Spirit's help.

It is a greater success to convert a child than a man. We judge wrongly in this matter often. We are misled by that which is immediate. The child has no long years of evil life to undo; no rooted habits of sin to waste grace upon, if I may so speak. He starts for Immanuel at the beginning of life. How much sin is saved! How much evil influence prevented!

Watch for him, then. Take the willing hand, and Christian tenderness and sympathy will win the heart. And when a child's heart is won for Christ, you know not what power you have set in motion.

A wicked father sat by the bedside holding the hand of his little boy, who lay dying. Said the weak, trembling voice, "Father, I am going to heaven, what shall I tell Jesus why you won't love him?" and the feeble voice and life grew still together. There was no space for reply. The father sat clasping the still hand for a moment or two in stony silence, and then his hard heart broke. Friends, preachers, all had failed to move that stubborn soul, but the little child led him to Jesus.

We estimate the power of any child at too little. The power for good of a child trained in Christian love, is greater than one not so trained, but the power of a converted child is greatest. Whatever, therefore, shall quicken the interest of the church in children, will hasten the day of the Lord.—*Sunday-School Worker.*

Warn the boatman before he enters the current, and then, if he is swept down the rapids, he destroys himself. Warn the man before he drinks the cup of poison; tell him it is deadly, and then if he drinks it his death lies at his own door. And so let us warn you before you depart this life; let us preach to you while as yet your bones are full of marrow, and the sinews of your joints are not loosed.

CAN I BE A CHRISTIAN AND BE IDLE?

BY D. M. H.

THIS is a question that is not hard to decide. Everyone who professes to be a Christian has a work to do; those who stand idle, and leave this work undone, will be held responsible when they come to render up their final account. Dear reader, are you employing the talents that God has given you or are you standing idle. There is no one that has not a chance given to improve the time and talents God has bestowed. If we desire to be followers of Christ, we cannot see our fellow man rushing headlong down to eternal burning without trying to save him. Yet how many professing Christians shun opportunities of doing good, especially to those who are given to strong drink, or those who blaspheme the name of God, for fear of being persecuted for it. O reader, remember that all such feelings are the device of the devil, to keep you from reclaiming these souls for whom Christ died. Will you stand and see your brother, your neighbour, or anyone going down to eternal death, and for fear of this world or Satan, refuse to speak to them? Remember, reader, if you do not try to arrest them now, their blood will be on your skirts, and be for a testimony against you at the bar of God.

Oh! friend and brother, I beseech you in the name of your Master and mine, do not stand idle until the eleventh hour shall come. You know not how soon it may come. I warn and beseech you to work while it is day, and be prepared to meet your God in peace. If it comes before you are prepared for it, you cannot say like those of old, "no man hath hired us," for God says, "go work in my vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you."

Can I be a Christian, and stand idle in God's vineyard? is a question that each one should consider for himself. Are you trying to reclaim any lost souls? Remember, though we are called to suffer loss or shame for His cause, that He groaned, and bled, and died on the cross for us.

Dear reader, will you not resolve now to bear the cross, and endure the shame, that you may wear a crown at God's right hand? It may be that you will not have to bear these things long. My earnest prayer is, that the Holy Spirit may seal these truths on the heart of every reader.

LITTLE CROSSES.

CHRIST comes to us morning by morning, to present to us for the day then opening, divers little crosses, thwartings of our own will, interferences with our plans, disappointments of our pleasures. Do we kiss them, and take them up, and follow in His rear, like Simon the Cyrenian? Or do we toss them from us scornfully because they are so small, and wait for a great affliction to prove our patience and our resignation to His will? Ah! how might we accommodate to the small matters of religion generally those words of the Lord respecting the children: "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones." Despise not small sins; they have ruined many a soul. Despise not little duties; they have been to many a saved man an excellent discipline of humanity. Despise not little temptations; rightly met, they have often nerved the character for some fiery trial. Despise not little crosses; for when taken up, and lovingly accepted at the Lord's hand, they have made men meet for a great crown, even a crown of righteousness and life, which the Lord has promised to those that love Him.—*Home Guardian.*

It is a thankless task to check insensibility into feeling when the patient loves his paralysis. It is weary work to climb up over men's prejudices when they have been accustomed to look upon them as religious principles. It is not pleasant to take some hoary folly by the throat, when a crowd of respectable people are standing by and crying "Murder." Yet these and other unpleasant things must be done, and it only behoves the teacher to see to it that his work is done conscientiously, with fidelity, reverence, and love.—*Golden Rule.*