

on the just and on the unjust. There is no spot in all creation where God is not. Constant as the sky that bends protectingly over us; nearer than the atmosphere that so tenderly wraps us round; more substantial than the solid earth beneath our feet; is the Presence of the Eternal God. As Tennyson puts it:

"Closer is He than breathing,
And nearer than hands and feet."

It is not enough to appeal to the exceptional, the extraordinary, the uncommon, as evidences of God's presence and power. It is indeed a dull, gross, stupid mind that is not stirred by the explosions and eruptions of earth, by the disturbances and commotions of heaven; he is brother to the ox and cousin to the clod who sees not here the energy of the living God.

But these are, after all, mere accompaniments of God's approach, the heralds of the divine procession. The winds may be His chariot; the cloud-enveloped mountain may be His highway; the thunder and the lightning may announce His coming; but the heart of man is His destination. He wanders through nature; He dwells in the heart of the humble man. The soul of man is the goal of God. Issuing from eternity, He makes excursions into human history, and visits the hearts of mankind. He presses upon us; He besets us round; He compasses our path and our lying down. Turn whatsoever way we will, there stands a Presence that confronts us, face to face.

God is seeking a highway into the human heart. Until communication has been opened up between God and man, the divine purpose has not been realized. Until intercourse has been established, human need has not been satisfied. Is it not the unuttered and often the unconscious wish of every heart: "Show us the Father, and it sufficeth us?" And is not this the Father's unceasing lament: Have I been so long time with you, and yet thou hast not known Me?

God is "not far from any one of us." We may refuse Him entrance and deny Him confidence, but we cannot escape His Presence. God is everywhere, even in the common things. He stands often knocking at the back door of life, while we stand vainly seek-

ing Him at the stately front entrance. And He is there too, and when we have learned the lesson that God waits and watches at all the gateways of the human heart, our life will become at once more sacred and more secure. With Jacob we shall hear God's voice saying: "I am with thee, and will help thee in all places whither thou goest." And with Jacob, too, we shall reverently say: "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not."

St. John, N.B.

The Spiritual Side

By Rev. S. S. Bates, D.D.

"Methods that have worked" are confessedly methods worth studying, and THE TEACHERS MONTHLY will take pains during the present year to gather an account of these from various sources. No school or locality may be able exactly to reproduce a successful method in all its details; but earnest workers will find hints that may be put to practical use. The writer of the following article is the Field Secretary of the Toronto Baptist Sunday Schools.—EDITORS.]

When I began work as Field Secretary a year and a half ago, it was agreed that, for the first year, the emphasis should be almost wholly placed upon the spiritual side of the work. It must be ever borne in mind that if in this department a Sunday School is a failure, it cannot be counted a success at all, whatever else it may accomplish. Then, too, we felt that in no other way could we so certainly and rapidly increase efficiency in every department of our schools. It is obvious that, if the spiritual tone be raised, the teachers will be more regular and prompt in attendance, more careful in their lesson preparation, and more earnest and direct in their teaching. In such an atmosphere, too, the scholars will become more orderly, attentive, and in every way improved.

The decision having been made, what steps were taken to attain our end? At the annual meeting of our City Sunday School Association in May, the importance and possibilities of the spiritual work in our schools were enlarged upon. So impressed were all, that although usually no session of our association is held from May to September, it was decided to have monthly meetings during the summer for prayer and conference. At these, per-