

SUNDAY-SCHOOL WORK.

BY THE LATE REV. ROWLAND HILL.

The last time Rowland Hill occupied the pulpit at Surrey Chapel, nine days before his death, he addressed the teachers of the Southwark Sunday-school Society. The tender solicitude for the welfare of the schools, breathed throughout this address, proves how dear the work was to his heart, and that he could foresee a splendid future for these institutions over which he had watched so long. This address is the last he uttered in public, and is pervaded by that quiet power which was one of the chief characteristics of his preaching, and which was due to the sincerity of his purpose, the directness of his aim, and his conscious dependence upon the help and blessing of the Spirit. There is real heart music in this Swan Song of the venerable pastor, the echoes of which, even at this distant date, may afford counsel and stimulus to the workers in the holy cause.

ADDRESS TO SUNDAY-SCHOOL TEACHERS.

THE instruction of the human mind is of the highest importance. The wisest man that ever lived undoubtedly was the Lord Jesus Christ, who is wisdom itself in the hearts of all His people when He inspires salvation to dwell within them; but next to him was Solomon; and he very wisely says, "For the soul to be without knowledge," or instruction, "is not good." Our good missionaries are gone abroad into many heathen parts of the world; and they there find mankind left totally uninstructed, to be monsters of iniquity among themselves: so bad are they that they will scarcely let their fellow-beings exist among themselves, from the cruelty of their own savage dispositions. In Scripture, flesh is everywhere mentioned and recorded to be in a most depraved and wretched condition; so that it is said "they that are in the flesh cannot please God." And there is another expression, though not so plainly worded, perhaps, "The carnal mind," which is the same as the fleshly mind, is as bad as the devil himself; it is "enmity against God"; and worse cannot be said of human nature, or of any creature, than that it is "enmity against God."

Oh, my dear brethren, I love you. God bless you; and God grant that you may live a long time after I am dead, to do abundantly more good than I have lived to see done. But, however this may be, remember there is no good but what must come immediately from God. It is all darkness; it is all death, and hell, and sin, till we are born of the Spirit. You are no more fit, as you have been already very properly told, for this important office, without the influence of Divine grace upon your heart, than a dead man is fit to perform the functions of animal life. No; if you are instrumental in doing good to others it must always be from the principle created

in you by God having first accomplished that good in your own hearts.

Hence it is to be lamented that while education in general may be looked upon as a blessing, it is literally by no means to be esteemed as a blessing to all. I really do feel, and I think I have too much evidence of it, that in many instances, merely teaching children to read, to go carelessly to a place of worship on a Sunday, and leaving them otherwise uninstructed, is only putting a weapon into their hands which they can never use well till such a time as they are taught by the grace and Spirit of God how to use it. Bibles will not convert men, excellent as they are, but as the spirit, and life, and power of the Scriptures is brought home to the heart; it is otherwise but a dead letter to them that are "dead in trespasses and sins." So then, my dear brethren and sisters (for you all equally may do good), pray particularly for much of the life and power of God to possess your own dear souls. May you be lovely, excellent, and zealous Christians, walking before God in a manner well-pleasing in



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(Engraved from the Portrait in Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton's book.)

His sight, remembering that as He who hath called you is holy, so are you to be holy in all manner of conversation and godliness. Indeed, you will never desire to do the work of God, but it will be done by drudgery, till such times as righteous desires are implanted in your hearts by God Himself, whereby you will be directed. As preachers are not to be content with displaying their ability in setting forth a fine sermon, to gain the admiration of the people; so you will travail with these little children in birth till Christ be formed in them; and, it strikes me, then you will be taught to teach them as Christ teaches us all. I think you will feel, while you have them before your eyes, desirous not only to teach them the letters of the book, but the spirit and the meaning of the book which they are taught to read. I think you will be instructed to understand that it becomes you particularly to remember the children of poor parents; and that it is your business to do

with them, instrumentally, what God has done to you, we trust, spiritually and powerfully—made you feel the glories of His regenerating grace, and to know what it means by having the blessed experience of the same upon your hearts.

Now, here is before us a holy book; you will be naturally instructed, I conceive, to mention to your children the infinite holiness and purity of God in Himself; how He never can behold sin but with infinite detestation and abhorrence; and you will never see the children before you but you will endeavour to make them detest and abhor it too; and you will tell them that all their miseries arise from their inward corruptions, and that these must be subdued in them before anything that is good can be truly practised by them. I don't merely say this to those that give exhortations to children; I speak to you all as teachers. While you have your little classes before you, do endeavour to drop something of what