

## Memorizing Scripture.

ON several occasions it has been a matter of surprise to find how ignorant the children were of Scripture and standard hymns. Many verses that seem to have been in the writer's mind as far as memory goes back called no responsive chord. It is not intended to make a wholesale, sweeping assertion, including all sections and all families; but the fear is expressed that less attention is given than formerly to teaching children to memorize Scripture and hymns. The writer has been a member of the Church nearly thirteen years, a Sunday-school teacher twelve, and a minister of the Gospel six, and has studied and read the Scriptures and hymns a great deal; but he feels perfectly safe in saying that more than one-half of all the Scripture and hymns that he knows were taught him before he was twelve years old. And moreover, those verses he never forgets, while many of the others cannot be called up at pleasure.

It is not intended to write at length on the value of having the mind stored with the treasures of Scripture. The ungodly themselves, being judges, know there is nothing of more service than the apt use of Scripture. It is a shield and buckler, it is a two-edged sword, it is a lamp to the feet. It is good for both attack and defence. The parent who equips his child thoroughly with the knowledge of the Word of God has supplied a never-failing counsellor, who will not be silent and timid, but will on every occasion give advice whether desired or not, whether pleasant or bitter. There is nothing that can be compared to it.

But when shall this training begin? As soon as the child can talk. Teach the children things that will help them. Many parents say they have not time, and yet they teach their children "Mother Goose" and such like doggerel. It is far better for the interest of your child, both temporal and eternal, that you take time for this, even if you give it less to eat and put less finery on its little back. Some mothers can take plenty of time to make all manner of unnecessary articles in order to fix the child up more gaudily than their neighbours' children, and then carry it around the neighbourhood weighed down and almost smothered by the envy-creating stuff. (The overdressing of young children is a crime against spiritual and physical health, fostering pride and undue thought of externals and stunting and dwarfing the body.) But these same mothers do not take time to teach their children the Bible or hymns. One half-hour devoted to this work daily would make mother and child both happier in this life and on the day of judgment.

God's Word, brethren! It is His most precious gift to us. It is far better than all the things for the flesh. Do we teach it to our

children? Do we take them every morning around the family altar and read and pray with them? Do we then hear them recite it to us? The Master said, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Let us believe Him and see to it that from their earliest years our children are nourished by the bread of eternal life. If they do not get it before they are twelve, they are not likely to get it at all. Now is the time to begin. Every day is precious. Do not shirk this duty longer.—*Methodist Recorder*.

## Explain to the Children.

BY E. B. P.

LET one who has tried for years to learn how to make children understand the precious truths of the Bible suggest to others the necessity for explaining even familiar words in the Sunday-school lessons. In a class of sixteen boys and girls, from six to ten years of age, the definitions given to "strive to enter in," "he that is faithful," and "fared sumptuously," were so very absurd that the teacher could with difficulty restrain the amusement they called forth. The best definition given to "fared sumptuously" was "had a fine house to live in."

The Sunday-school lessons and songs are an unmeaning repetition of words to most of the children, even those from intelligent families. A little girl who attended a Sunday-school in the vicinity of the writer asked her mother, upon her return from the church, "Do you think it is nice to sing about bed-clothes at Sunday-school?"

"Of course not. Why do you ask such a question?"

"Because, mother, they sang about bringing in the sheets [sheaves] this evening, and I thought if the teachers could sing about sheets I could too, so I sang as loud as any of the rest."

After the close of the Sunday-school in a Kentucky town not far distant, a mother asked a bright little girl what sort of a school they had.

"Oh! we had a splendid school, except that Jesus was not there."

"Jesus not there! How do you know that, dear?"

"Because he was out calling, and, of course, he was not there."

"What makes you think he was out calling?"

"Because they sang it over and over: 'Jesus is calling, is calling to-day.'"

Would it not be well for the superintendent to read the hymns aloud, and explain them in language simple enough for undeveloped minds to understand?—*S. S. Times*.

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