

THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL AS A FORCE.

It is no secret that a considerable proportion of our prominent educators, as well as many of our best day-school teachers, have hitherto shown little sympathy with the Sunday-school. They have not only given it the cold shoulder, but—some of them, at least—have spoken of it with derision, not, in most cases, because of a want of sympathy with the church as a Christian propaganda or training institution for Christian character, but because of a real or supposed pedagogical incompetency in the Sunday-school personnel and in its methods.

There is no doubt about the validity of the objection that the Sunday-school is so largely manned by teachers pedagogically "untrained," but the objection may be valid and yet be proportionately of small consequence. I say proportionately, because, while incompetent teachers diminish the efficiency of the Sunday-school, they diminish it only as far as this incompetency goes. An untrained, incompetent "teacher," so called, may be a very competent personal Christian influence and moral power.

It is at this point that the parallel between the Sunday-school and day-school ceases. The Sunday-school teacher may be a poor scholar, may know very little, either intuitively or by training, of teaching processes, and yet may exert an immense personal influence on his pupils, not only in the class, but out of it, on week-days as well as Sundays.

Of course, the Sunday-school wants, and means to have, the very ablest teachers procurable, but it must also be remembered that some of the pedagogically best Sunday-school teachers prove to be of little value as an influence in the upbuilding and strengthening of the Christian character of their pupils. A pupil in the day-school, under an able teacher, may become a fine arithmetician or a close philosophical thinker, but he may also remain a surly companion or a thief. Under a righteously influential but pedagogically untrained "teacher" in the Sunday-school a pupil may be turned from darkness to light, rescued from the sway of bad motives, and developed into an exemplary Christian gentleman. . . .

Pedagogics is not alone the touchstone by which the Sunday-school teacher is to be finally

tested, nor is mere moral excellence or "piety" alone the test. The teacher must size up to a compound excellence not required in so large a degree by the day-school teacher. That many Sunday school teachers do fall short of this ideal is no to be wondered at, but that the average is high enough to make the Sunday-school one of the greatest and grandest of our civilizing and Christianizing agencies is beyond a peradventure.—*Patterson du Bois, in N. W. Monthly.*

A LITTLE LESSON FOR A STORMY DAY.

Have you ever made a special effort for your Sunday-school class, studying and praying over the lesson all the week, trying to make its teachings fit the needs of each individual scholar under your care, and looking forward to the lesson hour with high hope and eager expectancy, only to wake up on Sunday morning to find it raining? If so, you know just how great is the temptation to fret and worry and scold about the bad weather interfering with all your plans.

But there is a better way to meet a stormy day, taught us by a company of little children who were perfectly unconscious of the impressions they were stamping indelibly on human hearts. Saturday afternoon of Christian Endeavor Convention week at Boston in 1895 was set apart for children, and a rally was held in the immense audience hall of Mechanics' Building. The various Junior Christian Endeavor societies, under the care of their superintendents, came, not only from all parts of Boston proper, but from every town within a radius of many miles. The children had been planning eagerly for it many months.

The long-looked-for Saturday afternoon came at last, and with it rain, —not an ordinary rain, by any means, but a heavy, steady downpour, that showed no signs of abating. Disappointment reigned supreme. Early that afternoon, Old Colony Depot presented an unusually busy scene. In addition to the regular passenger traffic, which is always heavy, trains were arriving every few minutes bringing great numbers of children.

The building could not accommodate them all, and groups of children were obliged to