

## GETTING READY FOR THE LORD'S DAY.

BY REV. ALFRED TAYLOR.

WE hear much about the preparation which the Sunday-school teacher should make for his labours in the class. He should be amply provided with a stock of well-digested Scriptural knowledge; he should be well practised in the art of imparting it. He must take a prescribed course of teachers' meeting, well shaken together with home study, and seasoned with all attainable improvements.

But it is, with many good people, a matter of secondary importance whether or not the superintendent makes any preparation for his work. Some superintendents seem to suppose that the management of a school is like the running of a railroad train. They jump on, like a conductor, at the station whence the train starts, expecting to find all hands aboard, and in readiness for their duties. It is truly possible for a man to get through with his duties, after a poor fashion, without special preparation; but it is in a limping, wooden sort of a way, with no after feeling of joy, or even of satisfaction. There are duties in connection with a Sunday-school which none but the superintendent can properly perform. There is a fatherly oversight which none can exercise as well as he can. It is a mistake for the superintendent to literally to "take no thought for the morrow" as not to busy himself at least as early as Saturday with some preparation for his Sunday duties.

Most of our superintendents who are good for anything, are busy men. Their week-day time is fully occupied. From the hurry and bustle of business, they can snatch a few spare moments for study and thought, and they can exchange occasional words concerning their Sunday-school duties and privileges with others whom they are constantly meeting who are situated just as they are. But the close of the week generally brings relief even to those who are very busy. Saturday evening is generally accepted as a semi-religious breathing spell. Many people study their lessons then, who seldom look at them at any other time. There are fewer tea-parties, or great entertainments, or business meetings, or concerts, or lectures, on Saturday evening, than on any other evening of the week.

Saturday evening is a grand time for the superintendent to make ready for Sunday's work. If his lesson is to be studied, and his memory is very short, there is less chance of his forgetting what he learns, than if he had learned it on Monday. It is well to have a teachers' meeting for concerted study of the lesson; to have it as early in the week as possible, and to have the superintendent conduct it. But we cannot always have all we want, and in spite of our best endeavours, both superintendent and teachers must often resort to solitary study.

The quiet of Saturday night affords good opportunity for the superintendent to look over his roll of teachers and scholars, with a view to the relief of difficulties, the supply of wants, or, perhaps, the change or amalgamation of certain classes. If he comes to his school on Sunday with his mind made up about these things, he can attend to them much more successfully than if he does them on the spur of extemporised thought.

The selections of hymns to be sung, of chapters to be read, of persons to be invited to offer prayer, and of sundry other of the incidentals of the services, can be made better on Saturday night, than when the superintendent has taken his stand before the school. Very often do thoughtless superintendents blunder into the announcement of something which is entirely foreign to the lesson, simply for the want of this timely forethought. I once heard an unprepared superintendent blunder through the whole of the sixth chapter of John, which has seventy-one verses. It had no connection with the lesson, and he read it horribly. He then commanded the children to sing the fifty-first Psalm. Their singing was worse, if possible, than his reading. He had not spent Saturday night in preparing for his Sunday labours.

One of the most profitable exercises of a Sunday-school is a review at the close of the lesson. If the superintendent is a man of good sense, and of some acquaintance with Scripture, he can profitably spend five or ten minutes in such an exercise. It is well for him occasionally to secure the services of the pastor, or of other good friends, for this, for the sake of variety. Saturday night is a very good time to jot down a few memoranda, bearing on what to say and how to say it, with a

view to reviving the school. Even if a teachers' meeting has been held, or if the superintendent has carried lesson helps in his pocket for wayside reference all the week, Saturday night is a good clinching time to fasten the nails of truth which may have been somewhat loosely driven.

And as the superintendent retires to his rest on Saturday night, he can offer such a prayer as on no other night of the week, for a coming day of joy and usefulness, of sunshine and success. Thus working and thus praying, he can go to his Sunday work with a wealth of furnishing for it which will make it all delightful, profitable, and triumphantly successful.

## JOHN ROGERS'S GRAVE.

BY REV. JOHN BARDNEY, M.A.

JOHN ROGERS was the grandson of the first martyr under Queen Mary, who washed his hands in the flame as though in cold water. He looks at us fully in the face when we enter the parish church of Dedham in Essex. He is in the act of preaching with his Bible in hand, resting on the cushion the attitude in which he generally stood. When preaching, no Beauverges thundered more loudly, and when conversing, not a Barnabas spoke more sweetly; he ran and laboured for heaven. The following circumstance related by the Rev. John Howe, respecting Mr. Goodwin is an instance of this. "He (Dr. Goodwin) told me, he, being in his youth a student at Cambridge, and having heard much of Mr. Rogers, of Dedham, purposely took a journey to hear him preach on his lecture day; a lecture so thronged and frequented, that to those who attended not early, there was no possibility of getting into that very large and spacious church. Mr. Rogers was at that time discussing the subject of the Scriptures; and in that sermon he expostulated with the people about their neglect of the Bible. He personated God to the congregation, thus addressing them: 'I have trusted you so long with my Bible, you have slighted it; it lies in your houses covered with dust and cobwebs; you care not to look at it. Do you use my Bible so?—well, you shall have my Bible no longer.' He then took the Bible from the cushion, and seemed as if he were going away with it, and carrying it from them, but immediately turned again and personated the people to God, full down on his knees, cried, and pleaded most earnestly: 'O Lord, whatever Thou doest to us, take not Thy Bible from us; kill our children, burn our houses, and destroy our goods, only spare us Thy Bible; only take not away Thy Bible.' Then he addressed the people as an answer from God. 'Say you so? Well, I will try you a little longer; here is my Bible for you, I will yet see how you will use it; whether you will value it more, whether you will observe it more, whether you will practise it more, and live according to it.'

"By these actions he put the congregation into so strange a posture, that the place was a *Bochim*, the people generally being deluged with their tears. Dr. Goodwin himself when he retired to take his horse again, was fain to hang for a quarter of an hour upon the neck of his horse, weeping, before he had power to mount, so great was the impression upon him on having been thus expostulated with for the neglect of his Bible."

The crowds which attended Mr. Rogers's ministry have passed away, but there are two names which must not be forgotten, those of George Dunne, who erected this monument of sincere regard, and Robert Alefounder.

On a shield beneath the monument is the following inscription, translated,—“John Rogers is waiting the resurrection which he here preached. He died on the 18th October, in the year of our Lord 1636; in the sixty-fifth year of his age, the forty-second of his ministry, and the thirty-first of his ministry in this church.”

The way in which William Burkitt and John Rogers died is not told, but one thing we know, that if they lived the life of the righteous, they would die the death of the righteous. —From "Personal Visits to the Graves of Eminent Men."

Pray for thine enemies, and they that smite thee. So shall thy captivity soon be turned (Job xlii. 10); and though thy heart be heavy, the word of God is still true. Deal thy bread to the hungry, clothe the naked, and take the outcast to thy house, so shall thy light break forth as the morning. Isa. lviii. 8.