

send down at a future time the power from on high which shall make those truths effective to the end designed. Your instructions may be a link in the chain of influence which shall result in the conversion of your pupils when you are far away, perhaps after you have gone home to glory. 'In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good.'"—*S. S. Journal*.

The Bible and the Sunday-School.

THE recent growth of the instruction imparted in the Sunday-Schools of the American Church is not less, or less significant, than that of the Sunday-schools themselves. It has been only very lately that the scholars in the Bible-classes have found themselves in possession of even a few text-books suited to their needs. These they are now receiving as rapidly as is desirable; and, in addition to them, such works for their reading and consulting as reflect valuable light on the topics treated during the hour. The amount of information for the larger scholars in our Sunday-schools that has come from the press during the last ten years, and particularly during the last five, is simply amazing. It seems more fancy than fact, so rapid is the growth. Witness the popular Bible dictionaries, abridgments of Smith's and others; works on oriental life and customs; biblical geographies and histories; travels in the Bible lands; popular and concise commentaries; historical monographs, and many other works of similar adaptation. The danger, in fact, is that there will be too much simplification on the part of theological writers; that there will be too little place given by both publishers and authors to self-consciousness and self-reliance in the readers.

The very surfeit of instruction just now almost awakens apprehension; or, as the Rev. A. J. Rowland well puts it: "I am afraid our Sunday-school teachers are being 'helped into helplessness.' Is there not such danger? The best of commentaries should be looked upon, it seems to me,

simply as crutches. What the teacher should do first—in time as well as in importance—is to take that part of God's Word which is designated as the lesson, and bend the mind upon this, with no other helps than his own powers of analysis and thought. Of course he must look to God for help, but this God has already promised to the faithful student who feels his need of wisdom. Then, when he has done his very best himself, may he resort to human 'helps.' His own thinking may then be corrected, difficulties be cleared up, more illustrations be gathered, and all the aid he needs to classify and complete his analysis or explanations be secured. But let the main dependence be upon God and the powers God has given. A lesson thought out for one's self is worth a good many retailed from somebody else. The teacher himself feels better for it, and the pupils know from the start that it is the result of prayerful study, rather than of rapid cramming of commentaries."

One of the most encouraging features of the recent study in the Sunday-school and of the works designed to promote it, is its truly Biblical character. So far as we can now see, all the Evangelical Churches regard the Bible, which Chillingworth said "is the religion of Protestants," as the only real book for the young and the places where they are taught. Of this we have striking proof in the International Series of Bible Lessons, which have been arranged by representative Sunday-school men in the leading Evangelical denominations. These lessons cover a series of years, and are so prescribed and arranged that the same one is taught in the schools of all the Churches on the same Sabbath. Thus a concentration is given to Biblical study by the young and their instructors, such as was never known before. All the prominent religious journals and Sunday-school periodicals contain now special departments for the exposition of the Scriptural selection for the following Sunday, prepared by some of the very best practical expounders in the American Church.

In the *Sunday-School World* we find expository notes by Drs. John Hall and Richard Newton; Chancellor Crosby and