


# The Sunday School Banner.

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 *Communications on Sunday School Topics invited. Address all communications, Editor S. S. BANNER, Toronto.*

## Learning Verses.

It is not the intention, but it is sometimes the effect, of the adoption of the International Scheme of Sunday-school Lessons, that fewer verses are committed to memory than under the old system. For instance, at an admirably conducted Sunday-school of some three hundred scholars, which we had the pleasure of visiting recently, the Secretary reported less than six hundred verses recited—not two for each scholar. Now in our own early Sunday-school days, from seven to ten verses a week was about the average of the school. There is certainly nothing in the Lesson Scheme to cause this falling off. On the contrary, the printing of the verses on the Berean Leaf and their distribution among the scholars should greatly facilitate their being committed to memory.

It would be a calamity of no ordinary magnitude if the present generation of scholars in our schools were less thoroughly grounded in the Scriptures than their predecessors. There is no legacy which youth can hand down to old age comparable with a memory well stored with passages of Holy Writ. It is something that will be solace in solitude, wealth in poverty, joy in sorrow, and consolation in hours of sorest bereavement.

Youth possesses peculiar facilities for this acquisition of the very words of Scripture. It is wax to receive, but marble to retain those early impressions. The verses

which we learned in our Sunday-school days are a portion of our very being, enfilmed into the very texture of the mind. What we try to learn now is with difficulty acquired, and is apt very soon to escape.

The words of Scripture, too, are instinct with marvellous power, and often prove of regenerative efficacy long after the instructions with which they have been accompanied have been forgotten. The boy may grow up wilful and wayward, and forget the guide of his youth; yet in other years and amid other scenes the holy recollection of Sunday-school verses will come with a spell of power, bringing the proud heart of rebellious manhood in subjection to the feet of Jesus.

We have read of a rude slaver, a trafficker in human flesh and blood, a man steeped to the lips in crime, who had yet been in his youth a Sunday-school scholar. One night, as he kept his lonely watch upon his vessel's deck, the Spirit of God brought forcibly to mind some of the long-forgotten teachings of his childhood. Strong convictions seized him, and the strong and stubborn man became a meek disciple of Christ.

Some years ago we visited a large Lunatic Asylum. Among the patients was one that particularly attracted our attention—a pale, pensive creature, who sat apart talking quietly with herself. On approaching her, what was our surprise to find that she was repeating the verses of a Sunday-school hymn, learned long years before, in the sunny days of her childhood. This alone survived the wreck of intellect; this was the sole relic of that happy and innocent time. So strong, so ineffaceable are those early lessons.

In the olden time, before the art of paper-making was known, when costly vellum was much employed for making books, it often happened that a former