Sunday Reading.

The Kingdom of the Child.

Out of the common daylight of the world I wandered forth into a golden dawn, A buoyant and a brilliant atmosphere, In which all language had a sweeter sound All faces shone, and salutations glad Of love and cheer flew fast from lip to lip. Then, as the light grew strong upon the heights,

Bell answered bell with jubilant refrain. Until the hills the flying echoes caught, And wafted upward even to heaven itself. And then there was a silence and great peace, While in the air above me and around A whisper rose that grew into a song-"Enter the happy kingdom of the Child!"

And then a miracle befell my sight. With eyes no longer holden I beheld A realm immeasurable, a golden zone That like a ring of flame shone round the world.

And everywhere the joy was in the air, Wreaths bloomed on shrine and window and

The incense rose from every heart and home, It seemed a bright new world within the old. A thousand summers mingled into one. And still the burden of a song went on, Too silver-sweet for any human voice-"This day began the kingdom of the Child. * * * * * *

No crown he wore, but round his peaceful An aureple shone, from whence unnumbered

rays Floated away to crown less worthy heads. His hand no sceptre clasped, but fast and far The beams of morning as his heralds rode To bear the Christmas gladness to the worl And fast and far his dearer angels sped, Blessing the little children and the poor With the best utterance of his perfect love; And sorrow heard, and mourning lips were

And even hid itself and was afraid. Oh, then with heart at rest I heard again The voice, that swelled and grew into

"This day, till time shall end, from shore to shore. Shall come the blessed kingdom of the

MRS. F. L. MACE'S Christmas poem, in Harper's Magazine for December.

The Song of Old.

It came upon the midnight clear, That glorious song of old, From angels bending near the earth To touch their harps of gold: "Peace to the earth, good-will to men From heaven's all-gracious King!' The world in solemn stillness lay To hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come, With peaceful wings unfurled; And still their heavenly music floats O'er all the weary world. Above its sad and lowly plains, They bend on heavenly wing, And ever o'er its Babel sounds The blessed Angels sing.

Yet with the woes of sin and strife' The world has suffered long, Beneath the angel strain have rolled Two thousand years of wrong: And men at war with men hear not The love song which they bring. Oh, hush the noise, ye men of strife, And hear the angels sing!

And ye, beneath life's crushing load, Whose forms are bending low. Who toil along the climbing way With painful steps and slow, Look now, for glad and golden hours Come swiftly on the wing: Oh, rest beside the weary road, And hear the angels sing!

For, lo! the days are hastening on, By prophet bards foretold, When with the ever-circling years Comes round the Age of Gold. When Peace shall over all the earth Its ancient splendors fling. And the whole world send back the song. Which now the angels sing. EDMUND H. SEARS,

Sympathy of Christ.

They tell us that in some trackless lands, when one friend passes through the pathless forests he breaks a twig ever and anon as he goes, that those who come after may see the traces of his having been there, and may know that they are not out of the road. Oh, when we are journeying through the murky night and the dark woods of affliction and sorrow, it is something to find here and there a spray broken or a leafy stem bent down with the tread of Christ's foot and the brush of His hand as He passed, and to remember that the path He trod He has hallowed. and that there are lingering fragrances and hidden strength in the remembrance, "in all points tempted as we are," bearing grief for us, bearing grief with us, bearing grief like us .- Maclaren,

In Christ Church, Louisville, there is a 'pool' on the North side of the is administered when thus asked for.

Christmas.

CHRIST'S GLORIOUS COMING.

BY GEORGE H. HEPWORTH, D. D., NEWARK N. J.

And thou, Bethlehem, in the land of of Judah, art not the least among the princes of Judah, for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel .- MATT. ii., 6.

When Herod asked the chief priests and scribes of the people where his to answer in the words of prophecy. They misquoted the passage, however, and left out what to us is the most important point in it. The prophecy, as it was given by Micah, reads thus: But thou, Bethlehem Ephratab, though Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be Ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from old-from everlasting.'

associations connected with this little city of Bethlehem. It is picturesquely situated on the brow of a rugged and rocky hill. Over yonder, on the right, lies the sluggish Dead Sea, with its sad memories. Afar off to the north, like lehem will always hold a sacred place in our memories, because of the associations connected with its distant past. It was just outside of the city limits that the shepherds heard the announcehad at last arrived. While they were listening to the announcement, they heard the voices of angels filling the air with the music of their good news, and saying: "Glory to God in the highest,

The announcement of the birth of the Lord was not only made to the shepherds who were watching their flocks by night on the hillsides beyond Bethlehem, but, also, to the magians in the far East, who saw 'His Star,' and followed it over the dreary sands of the desert until, at last, it settled above the stable in which alone there was room for God's Child, and then they discovered the manger in which the Babe lay, and offered to Him their frankincense, and myrrh, and costly gifts. It is not a little curious that God should have aunounced the greatest event of history not only to the Hebrew people, but, at the same time, to the Gentiles? And is it not a little remarkable, also, that the bebrew shepherds and the magians of the Orient should as it were, meet side by side at the cradle of our Lord? To me it is a very significant incident. For the first time in the annals of the world the declaration of human brotherhood and of human neighbourhood emphasized. Old things are passed away.

As we look from Lebanon to the dessert, we find that the Hebrews themselves were a corrupted and demoralized people. Their spiritual notions were few. Their avarice and ambition had materialized everything. They did not look for an humble child of God to lead them; neither did they care to have one teach them the secrets of the spiritual life. They looked out of a stony heart, and through eyes of burnished steel, with a) cold and ambitious glance, from Judea to Galilee, for a man who was strong enough is wholly satisfactory to the soul. W to break the Roman yoke of slavery and plant the banner of their own nationality upon the captured ramparts of the foe. They stood, as a nation, on the mountain-top of ambition, and looked over the Son of God, hoping to find another more like to their hopes, and answering more closely to their own

avaricious and personal designs. moment, we will walk with a rapid step through the streets of Athens, and enter its marble corridors. We would fain stop to look at those wondrous results of genius, those statues of Pentelican marble which the world wondered at then, and which are to-day the relics of a grandeur of which we can scarcely conceive. We will walk up to the top of Mars hill, where Paul stood years afterwards, and told chancel, where baptism by immersion story of the Cross to skeptics. We will

will visit the Lyceum, with its great sinking heart, then returning with throng of students, enthusiastic for their unwearied wings, and bearing to the leader, and listen to the close reasoning | ear of heaven every cry and sigh, of Aristotle for a little. Then we will every wish and hope that comes from go down into that part of the city your tired-out soul. Oh! no wonder, where the commonalty live. We will no wonder, then, that when the Babe wend our way through those streets bread to eat; where mothers are burying | Peace on earth, and good-will to men.' their faces in their hands because disease has crossed their threshold; dreaded rival should be born, they tried where fathers are looking up and wondering it there is any beyond to which their loved ones have gone. After we have walked together through this marvellous city, I have but one question to ask, and to that I demand an answer. I know that Athens is the thou be little among the thousands of throbbing brain of the world; I know the subtlety of her philosophy; I know the shrewdness of her science; I know that she has proofs of her genius in every street - genius incomparable; There are peculiar and hallowed genius that throws its shadow over every century, and even to-day becomes the inspiration of the scholar as be crosses the threshold of his youth. and looks forward to influence and position as the result of hard work.

Now go with me to another place. a crown on the hill-top, is the holy We will stand upon the hill-top this City of Jerusalem, her temple's dome time, where St. Paul stood when he glistening in the morning sun, and the overlooked the Eternal City. There it very air that hovers over her being rises in all its grandeur before us, seated filled with the incense perfume of a upon its seven hills. Like an empress, whole nation's gratitude to God. Beth- it commands the world. There is no town within the limits of civilization where the Roman spear does not glisten in the morning sun. There is no plain from which the Roman shout of victory has not rent the air. There ment that the long-promised Messiah is no spot, favored or unfavored, that does not bear the foot prints of some Roman's tread. The army of Rome was its only power, and one of its officers said to Christ one day, with tone of disgust, when he talked to Him and on earth peace, and good will to about truth: 'What is truth?' It was as though he said, 'I know nothing that has influence except an army. I belong to Rome, and Rome means victory. You may talk of truth as you please, but I put my faith in Roman spears and in Roman swords.' I say to the Romans, we give you the meed of praise. We crown your brow with the victor's crown, and fill the air with shouts of admiration for the heroism of your dead. But, when the day of festival is all over, and when the last chariot in the triumphal procession has passed, and its dust has settled to the earth again, there comes the gloom of night. The shades of evening fall on Rome as well as on the humblest village under her power. I ask her as she stands there in her might, mistress of the world, to tell me whither I shall go when I die; to tell me how to dry my tears when I am in sorrow and suffering. What answer do I hear? Brethren, you get an echo of your own question, and that is all. It is like speaking in a whispering gallery; your own voice comes back to you, a thousand times repeated it may be, but it is your own voice, nevertheless, Rome never yet answered that question. With all her intellect, with all her power, she was as helpless as a child in the presence of suffering and death.

Now we can come back for a moment to Bethlehem. Let us kneel as the shepherds and the magians did at the manger cradle, and then look forward to the future of Christ's life and ask the same questions that I have been asking of the great political powers of the world. What is the answer? can thank God at last. Jesus gave to us an ideal of personal perfection, and the impulse that impels us to its accomplishment.

When a mother kneels to-day by the side of her dead child, what a difference there is in her condition of mind and that of the poor Athenian mother to whom I have referred. The one Now if you will pass westward for a sits in despair unutterable; the other feels the sense of loss and of desolation, but in her heart of hearts, she can look up and say what the heathen world fall. could never dream of saying, or of understanding: 'Thy will, and not mine be done.

That blessed Babe has told you, dear brethren, that God will assist and help you in all the weariness of your work, and in all the dreariness of your life; that you are never alone, because invisible messengers are coming down through

teaching the world how to think. We of encouragement from on high to your doing a fine thing in combating the diswas born, angels filled the air, and where poor men toil that they may find joined in one grand chorus, saying: They have been brought down from their

I remember hearing a story in connection with our battlefields. One weary, dreary night, while our army was on the eve of a great and important battle, a soldier paced up and down with his work, he began to sing half to himself, 'When I can read my title clear.' After a little, his voice grew it were a song of victory. His tones rang out on the still night air. After a little, another soldier, off yonder, hearing the music and fascinated by it, joined and another voice, farther off, joined, and there was a chorus, and it was not long before the whole army as far as the mind could reach on either side, were joining in that wondrous chorus, and singing, in the presence of the

"When I can read my title clear To mansions in the skies."

Well, brethren, when I heard the story, it seemed to me that I could see in the far-off di tance that wondrous carpenter's Son of Nazareth, standing alone and singing, 'Glory to God in the will to men.' After a little, twelve disciples took up the refrain, and joined their hearts. In the next century, a still larger number added their voices, and now, after eighteen hundred years have gone by, the music of that wondrous song, which began with Him who stood in His father's workshop, is sung, and echoed, and re-echoed the whole wide world over. It is our revelation from God, and it is the impulse that lifts us all up to God.

'Oh! let us come again, then, and kneel by the side of the shepherds and and offer the frankincense and the myrrh of our gratitude to that Babe who was the door out of our darkness, our pathway.

Spiritual Defoliation.

BY J. HUNT COOKE.

The question of lapsed membership has been recently urged upon our attention. The voice of Nature to-day seems to direct our thoughts to this subject, for the leaf is the chosen and appropriate emblem of profession. Whence comes it that of recent years so much of the seed of the kingdom has fallen on stony places, been received with joy, but has disappointed hope; and after the promise of the green blade has fallen away? With numbers, instead of the precious fruit, there has been "nothing but leaves," and these leaves have fallen and are found, tossed by some strange wind of doctrine or of disregard, sear and withered in out-of-the way places.

The cause of the fall of the leaf is problem with botanists. Defoliation however, is known to be the effect of slow process that goes on within the leaf stalk, and in time ends in separation from the plant. So the cause of defection of church membership arises from a decay of religious life. A person may give as a reason dissatisfaction with the means of grace, or some offence; but the real cause lies in his own heart. One day in the leafy month of last June strong wind swept through an oak tree. It lifted every branch and shook every leaf. Each only whispered to its neighbour with a cheery rustle, not one fell-Last week a light breeze with not on tithe of the strength passed through that same tree. Leaf after leaf took offence and fled on its downward course. Why was this? For some weeks past the unseen process of decay had been going on; the hold had been loosened, and they but awaited a suitable occasion to

The effect of the fall of the leaf is ignominious; so also in a Christian is declension from church fellowship. There is in the eyes of some a certain beauty in fallen leaves. So sometimes in the opinion of the world there is something admirable in the spirit of a declining Christian. The world often applaud that which might make angels weep, Whilst Christ is dishonoured the poor

pline of the church The conduct is praised for being what the world calls high-spirited; but how will it be regarded at the all-revealing judgment seat? Walk down a country lane this season of the year You are pleased with the picture of the descent of the leaves and delight in their rustle about your feet. lofty position, and there they lie in their varied hues all intermingled. There sre crimson tinged beech leaves, golden lime leaves, brown poplar leaves, blackened elm leaves, pale poplar leaves, ruddy oak leaves, variegated plane leaves, tawny sycamore leaves, speckled chestnut before the tent of his general. Wearied leaves. How free they are. No longer bound to the tree they whirl and dance in their liberty. But here comes a chilling November breeze; see how they are driven before it; they whisper to each louder, and he sang the hymn as though other, but no fellowship save in misfortune, is found They flee into mid-air as though they would rise to their former elevation, but in vain. They are whirled in eddies and trampled under foot. They become crushed in the mire, all their beauty departs, they poison the atmos in. There was a duet. A little longer, phere and spread disease, they pass away to corruption, and are known no more. Better far have been bound to the tree, up in sweet atmosphere, amidst the glinting sunshine, deriving life and vigour from the vital sap. The parable surely needs no explanation.

S. S. Convention Essay.

HOW TO SECURE A HOME PREPARA TION OF THE SABBATH SCHOOL LES SON BY THE PUPILS."

BY SILAS W. FAULKNER,

The difficulty of the question is at once seen. With reference to either highest, and on earth peace and good | theory or practice none more problematical could well be offered. It must, at the outset, be stated that no pretence in the chorus. After a little longer, in of solution is here made, but if any usethe next century, a larger company ful hints can be given, the hopes and gathered together, and sang it with all ends of this paper will have been amply

The subject is naturally separable, presenting two leading considerations,-1st. Principles; 2nd. Methods. The former are fundamental in character. wide in range, and of manifestly direct bearing upon the case. Let me instance and briefly comment upon three.

1st. The adaptiveness and therefore attractiveness of Bible truth to the human soul, and the instinctive recognition and appreciation of its moral beauty and value. This is the basis upon which we rest. It lies at the very foundation of our work, and is largely and who is still the light that shines on in our favor. We teach not a dry it is doing in his hands. Of course it creed, nor a lifeless tormula of man's formation, but the Word of God full of life and light, and therefore to be relied upon as being its own best witness and power among men.

> 2nd. Unity. The functions of teacher and pupil naturally blend, and converge | the standpoint of the highest principle, toward a common point.

3rd. Moral power. Spiritual facts and truths can be properly imparted and enforced only by spiritualizing influences. While it is true that results under this law are far grander when attained, yet they are more difficult of attainment, inasmuch as it admits of mind and will, being only persuaded, not driven, toward Divine things; and hence spread the knowledge of the Scriptures, them. and to instruct in godliness. It must, however, be recognized that the differense between instruction and practice is vital. Instruction is that exercise of by their own studious preparation. Christian benevolince by which the soul is made to confront distinctive views of truth. It is passive in its first relation there must be a movement of the mind | truth. towards it. By the term "practice" we mean that instruction has found its full realization in the life, that it has been resolved into the "will," and become an important factor of soul-life. Hence by the very relations of instruction and practice we see the need of cooperation between teacher and pupil, and how that from the individual responsibility of the latter, it is mos essential that the teacher interest the mind, affect the heart, and influence the will toward Divine things. In the Sabbath School, then, our triumphs are to be won, our hopes and aims realized, not objectively but subjectively, or, in other words, they are not things to b grasped and achieved by easy. direct

of the soul and a right action of the moral powers; when, after the mind has been enlightened, the heart touched. they come to be wrought out in the life. Instruction on the part of the teacher. and ready assent, hearty interest, and earnest co-operation of the pupil, these necessarily go together, and, for the primary purpose of Christian work, you cannot dissociate them. Enlist their efforts in harmonious conjunction with your own. It must be done, teachers, for their sakes as well as for our own; and in proportion as it fails to be done will there be a waste of energy in this great machinery of Sabbath School work. Only upon unity in the separate functions of teacher and pupil, and oneness of purpose between them, can we depend for the accomplishment of our desires and the lasting good of our scholars. Thus logically as well as practically we see the importance, the imperative necessity of securing the hearty action of the pupil unitedly with our own. Do this, and further obstacles vanish to leave you master of the situation.

This brings us closer to the heart of our subject, and we ask, How is it to be done? "How can we insure home study of the lesson?" And just here center all the perplexities met with. The very nature of the case allows of no fixed rules. It is wholly a question of expediency, and one which affords an infinite field for conjecture and experiment. The general must serve the particular. Suggestions, not explicit instructions, can be given, and much, might it not be said all, must be left to the common sense and shrewdness of the teacher. As bearing, then, upon the subject, we note, in order, a few practical hints:

Questions on slips. This is practical, and easily done. Distribute five or six, each containing a question so comprehensive, that all together will embrace the principal points of the lesson.

Personal letters to each pupil, when you can, asking opinions upon any point or points, or putting such questions as may be calculated to stimulate to study. This would, perhaps, increase their selfrespect, and arouse a healthy spirit of emulation. One of the most successful of teachers is a personal friend, who follows this plan as a fixed habit, and God alone can estimate the great good involves some labor, but do it when and as often as you can. How vast the possibilities for spiritual harvesting!

Any private system of rewards that you can conveniently arrange. This may be somewhat open to objection from still it is suitable for the very young, and we must remember Paul's motto. "If by any means I might save some,"

Try to bring PUPIL into communication with pupil, and encourage among them an interchange of thought and questioning. Melt the ice and keep it melted by the warmth of your own genial spirit.

Impress the pupils with the idea that compulsory performance can scarcely be you as well as they wish to learn; and productive of spiritual profit. Let me | that they, as well as you, can and ought emphasize the point. The aim of all to teach. The opinions and questions Christian endeavor is the ingathering of of pupils often show an intelligence unsouls into the fold of Christ. The mis- suspected. Respect them when given; sion of Sabbath School work is to if necessary correct, but never ridicule

Show them that the most profitable results are attained, not by passively listening to a lecture by the teacher, but

Remember that the true ideal of teaching is not so much to impart knowledge as to educe the indwelling power to the mind, and hence may or may not of the pupil, and aid him in the mental affect character. For this purpose grasp and spiritual apprehension of

Be genuinely interested from a sense of duty and love in your class. It is next to the ties and concerns of your home life. As a "worker" in the vineyard, it is your first and grandest opportunity for the Master. It has the highest claim upon your talents, your affections, and your industry. In this over all will you be required to give an account of your stewardship. Show them, then, your loyalty to Christ by faithfulness and efficiency as a teacher, "as much as lieth in you."

Set the example in the desired respect. Be always prepared, and let it be manifest that you have been diligent and careful in your own "home study." In so far as you can be supposed to affect go into the Academy where Plato was the sky all the time, bearing the word soul, mistaking evil for good, thinks it is pursuit, but follow upon a right attitude expect that "like teacher, like pupil." them at all, remember you can only