

be a good place, if only to keep boys and girls off the streets on the Lord's day; but the conception now of the work has risen pre-eminently above this initial idea, and to-day it is accepted as a mighty factor in the conversion of the world.

In this place I would like to notice a thought that seems to possess the minds of many Sunday-school workers; this is, that the Sunday-school is entirely separate from the church. We, as a people, with our position stated fairly and squarely to the world, with the reiterated watchword of the father of this restoration—"Where the Bible speaks we speak, and where the Bible is silent we are silent,"—ringing in our ears, I affirm that we cannot separate the church and Sunday-school. With my present knowledge of the New Testament, with its account of the work of Christ and his apostles, I cannot believe that their great work, the work demanded in the sublime commission, "Go teach all nations," was altogether a childless labor. I think we can safely postulate this argument. The commission of Christ, as preached by his apostles, sanctions everything that leads the human race to pure faith, penitent confession and proper obedience. The time has come when the church of God should take to herself the burden of that universal commission, "Go preach the Gospel to every creature." When every individual member of the church, without regard to condition or sex, shall feel the weight of responsibility resting upon them, and rest not themselves upon any false theory of scriptural interpretation, but like the Jerusalem dispersed, go everywhere preaching the word—when this spirit shall take deep root in the hearts of our brethren, shall glow with burning zeal in the lives of Christians, burst forth in every-day walk and conversation of God's children—when the liberty of the Gospel shall be carried by strong hands and willing hearts into the prayer-meetings, mission schools and Lord's day gatherings of the children—when, in short, each member of the body of him who was dead, but now liveth forevermore, shall realize that God has called indeed, and is now waiting for the fruits of their labor in the vineyard, then, and then only, will the church be filling that sublime conception of its duty so graphically pictured by Christ and

his apostles. While we attempt to consider the teacher's responsibility let it be remembered that the ultimate of his work is such a training of the young minds in his care, that they with all the redeemed, out of every tribe and nation, shall be considered worthy to enter that grand throng, and sit down at that heavenly feast prepared for the Lamb of God. Then in the very beginning of the teacher's work, he must learn an important lesson; he must learn that he is one of "God's workmen, hammering away week after week in the Sunday-school work-shop, mouldering characters for eternity." The teacher must learn that, whatever may be the home influences, whatever may be the conditions that surround the child, and whatever may be the difficulties, he must do his whole duty as one who must give an account to God. Then with these thoughts in our minds, I offer as among the very first responsibilities resting upon a teacher, *The correct formation of a Christian character.* Dr. J. H. Vincent says: "There is one essential qualification for the Sunday-school teacher's office. I desire to name it with a preliminary protest against the charge of 'can't' in connection with it; but it is a qualification without which there can be no true Sunday-school teaching, without which in fact, there can be no careful preparation for teaching. That one qualification is religious character." "Why," says he, "should we require the Sunday-school teacher to be a Christian? Look at his work! He is a Bible teacher. He who expounds God's word must be able to pray. 'Open thou mine eyes that I may see wonderful things out of thy law.'" There may be occasional instances in which a Sunday-school may result in good where its teachers are not all professors of religion, but the logic of Sunday-school work is neither more nor less than so much Gospel-force for the education and conversion of the children. Before the work of the teacher shall have attained its proper dignity, the indifferent impressions in regard to the school must be set aside.

Let the question be honestly answered by every church member, "What is my relation to the Sunday-school?" That answer taken as the key to future duty, and this work of educating children will assume a position consonant with the great end and aim of church

work.

We then state as a second item of responsibility, the teacher's obligation to the church for the faithful performance of this duty.

(To be continued.)

The Overflow.

A queer, remarkable river is St. John's, in Florida. It is about 150 miles long, four to ten miles wide, and averages about one foot deep. It is salt for fifty miles from its mouth, brackish for 100, and runs about one mile per day. In the middle of it is the channel which is the real river, sometimes forty feet deep, narrow and inhabited by all sorts of fish and reptiles, from tadpoles to alligators. The great width of the river outside the channel is simply an overflow.

This vast overflow beneath the scorching sun causes vegetation to grow in luxuriant abundance. Here and there its broad river fields of green stretch away in the distance, interlined with veins of silver, as from the opening grasses its waters flash in the tropical sunlight. This overflow is one of the greatest natural blessings. An old alligator fisherman says all the cattle in Florida congregate here for pasture. They sometimes become amphibious, plunging their heads beneath the water until their horns can not be seen, and holding them thus for two minutes, cropping the tender herbage that grows below. While the channel is useful for purposes of domestic commerce, the great blessing of St. John's river is its overflow. Human life is like a river. It has a deep, narrow channel called the heart. This channel may serve the purposes of legal and commercial life. But then, this heart-channel is the abode of the serpents of anger, wrath, malice, jealousy, strife, seditions and all unholy passions and appetites. Moreover it is "deceitful and desperately wicked." All the impurity and evil in God's great universe has at some time and in some manner been represented in the human heart. It is selfishly narrow, wickedly deep, righteously slow, with nothing naturally lively in it but the serpents of vice, and passion, and sin.

Happy is that heart whose life-forces overflow the narrow channel of self in good will and good deeds of blessing to others; whose life blossoms with deeds of fervent charity and is fragrant with helpfulness and benevolence; whose

love overflows in comfort to the afflicted, in kindness to the suffering and in helpfulness to all; who finds life's highest joy and holiest ambition in carrying cheer to the downcast, courage to the faint and hope to the discouraged. Such a life is fragrant with coveted excellencies. Such a life is in harmony with that of the divine Exemplar. Such a life is exceedingly happy in the sweet consciousness of indwelling peace and the divine approval, and awaits a starry crown in the rest beyond.—M. R. P., in *Domestic Journal*.

FORGIVENESS.—There will arise at times differences, not only between unbelievers and believers, who are brought together by the business of the world, but between Christians themselves; and therefore a kind, forbearing, merciful disposition should be exercised by all. If we would have God's forgiveness, we must extend forgiveness to others. To cherish bitterness, wrath, anger, and revenge, is to imbibe the spirit of our heavenly Father. "A gentleman," it is said, "once went to Sir Eardley Wilmot (formerly Lord Chief Justice of the Court of Common Pleas) under the influence of great wrath and indignation at a real injury he had received from a person high in the political world, and which he was meditating how to resent in the most effectual manner. After relating the particulars, he asked Sir Eardley if he did not think it would be manly to resent it. Yes, said the knight, it would be manly to resent it, but it would be godlike to forgive it. The gentleman declared that this had such an instantaneous effect upon him, that he came away quite a different man, and in a very different temper from that in which he went. To indulge in a revengeful, unforgiving spirit brings unrest and disquietude into man's bosom; to foster a compassionate, forgiving spirit promotes peace and quietness and sweetness in the breast.—*Selected*.

Cultivate cheerfulness, if only for personal profit. You will do and bear every duty and burden better by being cheerful. It will be your cosider in solitude, your passport and recommendation in society. You will be more sought after, more trusted and esteemed, for your steady cheerfulness. The bad and vicious may be boisterously gay and vulgarly humorous, but seldom or never truly cheerful. Genuine cheerfulness is an almost certain index of a happy mind and a pure, good heart.