

sources, many of whom are without the restraining influences of home culture. But while we accept this statement as a fact, we claim that there is an open question of choice between different systems of government. A Sunday school is not a military camp of instruction, where the soldiers obey orders under penalty of a drum-head court-martial. The peculiarity of the Sunday school is, that there are no physical means of enforcing discipline. Hence a man who may be capital at preserving order in a day-school, or at perfecting a regiment in drill, finds himself utterly at fault in dealing with the Sunday school. Here is a different system of relations entirely. A man's epaulets command but little respect. Vain is his power, vain his severity. The more he disciplines, the more the children persist in disliking him, and the more the school dwindles down under his hands.

What, then, are the proper qualifications of a Superintendent? Aside from sincere and devoted piety, which is an indispensable qualification, underlying every other, I would place first and foremost, a love for children. I care not what may be one's other recommendations, if he have not this, he is totally disqualified; and no temptation should seduce him to be a candidate, or entice the school into putting him at its head. The experiment, if tried, will just as surely end in failure, as there is certain connection between cause and effect. And this ought to be understood distinctly at the outset. No charitable hopes that he will "do," no delusive expectations that other admirable qualities will counterbalance this, should be indulged in. The defect is radical, fatal, incurable. The man cannot help it: it was born in him; and unless he feels conscious that he can simulate the appearance of affection, so as to deceive the keen instincts of childhood, he had better decline to accept the office. Just so sure as he undertakes it, he will find a wall of separation gradually rising between him and the children, which will shut them out of sympathy with each other, and cause the little ones, at least, to lose their interest in the school.

Nor will any amount of conscientiousness on his part make up for this deficiency. He may be as punctual as the clock, as faithful as a watch-dog, as regular in his discharge of duty as the horse that treads the wheel round; but, without love for children, he might as well, for purposes of inspiring interest or enthusiasm, be an automaton.

The man who would have a prosperous Sunday school must come down out of the desk, and mingle among the children. He must have a heart which kindles at the sight of them,—which warms at their approach,—which takes a kindly and affectionate interest in their affairs. What is the great bond of attachment to the Sunday school? Is it sense of duty? Is it filial obedience? These are motives which actuate comparatively few, and are not to be looked for outside of Christian parentage. But with the masses,—those for whom the Sunday school was specially instituted,—what is it? If they are not drawn by the cords of interest and affection, it will be in vain that we seek to draw them. I would impress this subject, therefore, deeply, if possible, upon your minds. Nor is the remedy difficult to be applied. Natural love of children, with sufficient intelligence for the post, are to be found in almost every church. And with this great qualification, all other defects may be remedied, or counterbalanced by effectual cooperation in the corps of teachers; but this wanting, all other natural endowments are of little avail.

It is not to be forgotten that the teachers have their own more limited circle of influence, in which they may do much to counteract deficiencies at the head; but, after all, the Superintendent is the controlling genius, and a radical defect in him will develop into withered blossoms and unsound fruit throughout the school.

The next prime qualification of a Superintendent, is *tact*. This, also, is with some a natural gift,—with all, cultivable, like the other,—but in many totally wanting. It partakes somewhat of the nature of an instinct. As the word in its root indicates, it is that by which a man feels, rather than reasons out, the fitness of things,—a nice perception, partly intuitive and partly acquired, of the proper course to be pursued under all circumstances that may arise. Children probably require more tact in managing than any other class of beings. In the first place, their conscience is but imperfectly developed; and, then, again, they are but partially capable of reasoning, or being reasoned with; and in addition to this, they are lacking in that soundness of judgment, which maturity and experience only can give, which would enable them to appreciate what is really for their good. Suppose, for instance, you want to interest them, and to awaken in them a feeling of enthusiasm for their studies and the school,—something of what the French call *esprit du corps*. Your plodding, methodical, matter-of-fact Superintendent may talk to them by the hour, expatiating on all the duties, and obligations, and higher interests involved in the case; he may lay down plan upon plan, every one of which he demonstrates like a proposition in Euclid. And what is the result? The children yawn in his face, and the big boys scrape their feet upon the floor. But the man of tact comes in, and without saying a word, perhaps, he feels around among the little ones; he feels their wants and difficulties, and the derangements in the system of the school; and he goes quietly feeling out the remedy; and the first thing you know, all eyes are snapping with brightness; dull faces begin to beam with interest; and the scholars run telling every where what a nice Sunday school they have got. If I had a voice that could reach around the world, and command such attention as the old Greek orator, I would say to Superintendents every where, "Next to cherishing a love for children, cultivate tact!

tact! tact!" System is good; but tact is better than system; for it is that, and something more. Zeal is good; but it needs tact to guide and control it. Patience is good; but without tact, it will wear itself to death, like a galley-slave in a tread-mill. Talent, culture, education,—all these are good; but infinitely better when tact is superadded. Nor is piety itself, though of the deepest character, a sufficient offset to the want of this grand, practical qualification. It is needed in all the Superintendent's relations with the school,—with the teachers more, perhaps, than with the scholars.

And over and above all this, a Superintendent of a Sunday school in these times should be a man of enterprise. However well the slow coaches of a former age may have answered the requirements of the public, the people now-a-days demand locomotives and steamboats. The man who persists in driving his ox-team, must either get out of the way, or be run over. The spirit of progress, of experiment and improvement is abroad; and it has entered the Sunday school. It will not do to stand fast in the old ruts. Competition has developed enterprise, and enterprise invention, and invention has introduced new systems, many of which are far in advance of the old. It will not do to reject these blazing lights of experience, and say that the twilight walks of our fathers were better ways. Systematic visitation, children's meetings, special attention to singing hymns specially adapted to children, melodious organs, comfortable and inviting accommodations, new and improved systems of instruction, and of gaining interest and attention,—all these are modern ideas, but they wonderfully help a Sunday school to succeed. And the way is yet open in the future for vast and beneficent improvement. Children, apart from parental preference, will go just where the greatest inducements and attractions are offered them. Such are being offered on every hand. The question is, how are we to meet them? I answer, by a spirit of enterprise, greater, if possible, than exhibited anywhere else in the community. The motto, *Laissez faire*, is no motto for the Sunday school. Progress should be the watch-word. Numbers, it is true, should not be the end of one's ambition; but the Superintendent, like the preacher, should spread his net wide, that he may catch all, in hopes to save some. His is but an imperfectly developed aim, who does not seek to have his school as large as it can be made.

There is one other qualification of a Sunday school Superintendent, which I mention with reluctance, but which, since I have liberty to speak, and speaking, must discharge my conscience, I feel in duty bound to name. A Superintendent of a Sunday school should be a man of liberality. I verily believe that more schools are crippled and dwarfed through the extreme frugality of those who manage them, than from almost any other cause. If Sunday schools ever adopt a liturgy, and your speaker had the making of the prayers, he would certainly put in this:—"Good Lord, deliver us from Superintendents who are afraid to spend a dollar." The Sunday school cause, like every other, must have money to carry it on. Enterprise always costs an outlay. Every Sunday school has its wants, which are pressing and urgent in their calls for the "filthy lucre." And there are just two ways of meeting them. One is, by stoically ignoring them altogether, and so taking your place among the fossils; and the other is, by responding in a spirit of generous liberality. And in this the Superintendent should take the lead, by drawing on his own private purse, and by using his tact in devising ways and means; and the teachers and church should nobly second him. The Sunday school is the last thing, next to the church, that should be suffered to languish for want of material aid. But if there is anything that raps and grates, and, like a continual dropping, wears away the very foundation stones of a Sunday school, it is a perpetual dinning and dunning for money from the scholars. You must put oil, my friends, upon this wheel, if you want the machinery to work well.

There are many things, of course, which I might have said, which the limits of my Essay forbid me to mention. I have spoken freely, because, as a stranger, I could speak without suspicion of personal allusion, having reference only to general principles. If I have spoken broadly, it has been in the confidence that my spurs were struck into a generous steed, that would show its mettle by quickening its pace. And if the suggestions which have been offered shall have the effect of inducing any Superintendent, or any school, to aspire to a higher standard of usefulness, or to more eminent success; and, above all, if by pointing out defects they shall lead to earnest endeavor at amendment, the object of your Essayist will be fully accomplished.

One fact, however, deserves to be mentioned in conclusion. The largest, the most successful, and in all respects the best conducted school with which I am acquainted, stands surrounded by vacant lots; and when it had an average attendance of 1400 scholars, there were scarcely a dozen of them who lived within a quarter of a mile, and almost all of them came from three and four and six times that distance. Now it has an average attendance of from 1800 to 2000 scholars. The secret of its success is, LOVE FOR CHILDREN, TACT, ENTERPRISE AND LIBER-ALITY in the Superintendent. Yet the Superintendent has not done it all by his own unaided efforts. But these qualities have attracted around him a corps of faithful and efficient allies whose shoulders have been placed with his beneath every burden, and whose hearty cooperation has moved along the wheels of progress, until the little one has become a thousand. And this is what I would that we might see in all the Sunday schools in our land. This is that to which, my brethren, in my judgment, we should all aspire.

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

BY REV. CHARLES TUPPER, D. D.

CHAPTER III.

CONVERSION, AND ENTRANCE ON THE MINISTRY.

(No. 16.)

I attended the Baptist Association, which then included Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, and was held in Cornwallis, commencing on the 24th day of June, 1815. The late justly esteemed James Munro, who had recently commenced preaching, delivered a discourse in reference to our Home Mission, from Mark xvi. 15. Excepting Brother Obadiah Newcomb, who resided at that time in New Brunswick, but removed to the United States soon after, no other man had entered the ministry in connexion with the Baptists in these Provinces for a number of years before. A liberal contribution, nearly amounting to £30, was taken up for the Mission. Brethren Joseph Crandall and James Munro were sent into the Eastern parts of the Province, by the Missionary Society, which had been commenced at the Association in Chester in the preceding year.

At the time now spoken of the number of our Ministers in both Provinces was small, I think not exceeding twenty, and the destitution in many parts of each Province was great. When the subject was discussed, and statements were made relative to the need of laborers in the Lord's vineyard, I felt a strong desire to aid in communicating the glad tidings of salvation to the destitute. I was almost ready to say, "Here am I; send me." But considering myself as being merely a child in age, less than twenty one years old, and "anovice," that is, a young convert, and by no means qualified to engage in a work so important, so responsible, and so difficult, and not feeling assured that the Lord called me to it, I did not venture to make such a proposal.

A discourse delivered by Rev. Enoch Hunting, a delegate who accompanied Rev. Isaac Case from the State of Maine, interested me greatly. It was founded on Titus i. 2. "In hope of eternal life, which God, that can not lie, promised before the world began." He very clearly depicted the nature and effects of a real Christian's hope. It subsequently appeared that a man of considerable intelligence who was present, became convinced that his hope was in himself, was led to renounce it, and undoubtedly was brought to obtain a "good hope through grace."

The Letters from the Churches evinced a low state of religion in them during the past year. After remarking in my Diary, that the number of members appeared to have diminished, rather than increased, I added, "This depressed my spirits. Have we not reason to pray, 'Thy kingdom come,' and not only so, but to exert our utmost efforts for its advancement?"

Rev. Edmund J. Reis, who was originally from France, a prisoner taken in war, subsequently converted, and had labored considerably in these Provinces to good acceptance, on this his last visit from the States attended our Association, and preached. In private conversation I stated to him, that my mind was exercised with reference to preaching the gospel. Undoubtedly deepening it needful for me to count the cost, that I might not afterwards become disheartened, and abandon the undertaking, he remarked, that if called to that work, I might expect to meet with many trials. This, which accorded with the notice given beforehand to Paul, (Acts ix. 16.) and which had already been anticipated by me, did not tend to discourage me, or deter me from entering on the work of the Christian ministry.

The Circular Letter, which was on the religious training of children, prepared by Rev. Joseph Dimock—a very amiable, judicious, and useful Minister—strongly recommended the use of a Catechism. The following extract, (which has been copied by Menno, C. M. 1861, p. 33.) is well worthy of attentive regard. "The Baptist Catechism, we think, contains a brief summary of the Christian religion, calculated to be an excellent help to parents and guardians in the instructing of children. We do not wish by this to supersede the Scriptures, which are a perfect rule of faith and obedience, but by it to lead to a greater veneration for the Scriptures. A child of common capacity may soon commit it to memory. Many leisure hours might be appropriated to this work; but any one who would make proficiency in this work, must attend to it

at stated times, and pursue it conscientiously. That part of the Lord's day which is not taken up in public, family, or secret worship; might be taken up in imparting religious instruction to our children. . . . We would not wish for any one to be confined to a set form, or stilted method of instructing; but to make such remarks, explanations, and enlargements as may seem proper."

In accordance with these views, which were, so far as I am aware, adopted by the Association without a dissenting voice, it was resolved, "That the Baptist Catechism should be procured, and recommended to the Churches in the connection, to be used by their members in the education of their children."

The want, however, of a definite arrangement for procuring, and distributing copies of the Catechism, appears to have prevented the carrying of this judicious resolution into effect among our people in general. Undoubtedly it was regarded practically by some. I, for one, freely expended several dollars in the purchase of copies, which I gave to children. In some cases, where opportunity was afforded, I personally taught these children the Catechism. Individuals so instructed had evidently a much better acquaintance with the principles of the Christian religion, than had those in general who had not received such catechetical instruction.

The descendant's of Jonadab, the son of Rehab, are strongly commended for their observance of an injunction which he gave them hundreds of years before. (Jer. xxxv. 6-10, 13, 14, 18, 19.) On the most mature consideration of the subject, I do not hesitate to express my full persuasion, that the general adoption and practice of the wholesome advice given by Father Dimock—regarded by all who knew him as a prudent and excellent counsellor—endorsed by our other justly venerated Fathers, will, if followed up with perseverance, meet the Divine approval, and be highly beneficial to our rising generation, and to generations yet unborn.

For the Christian Messenger.

ALAS, FOR OUR COUNTRY!

Dear Editor,—

When the present Government came into power, their constituents entertained great expectations from the audent pledges given by the candidates generally of the western portion of the Province, especially, the question of the Intercolonial Railway, an incalculable boon to the Province, the prospects of which were just brightening into reality, was by our sage Legislators, not only given up, but a law passed to abrogate the statute; thus, as far as their power extended, forever to deprive the country of so invaluable a privilege, and which we might forever have enjoyed.* Instead of which, they have concocted an Act to tap Pictou with a Rail Road, to the great injustice of the Western Counties. And what is most extraordinary the greatest part of the Western members allowed themselves to be inveigled into the wily snare, so artfully and successfully laid for their capture. What specious equivalent could have been offered for so great a sacrifice, we cannot divine; the intimation however was so great that the effects produced upon one of the Hon. members of the North riding of Kings, was that he became quite jubilant and uttered a speech under the excitement produced, partaking somewhat of the spirit of inspiration. If the reported debates are reliable, after tapping Pictou and thereby uniting it to the metropolis, he would, in order, tap each of the principal places of the Province. It is however to be feared that before the latter part of the prediction comes to pass, the heads of the people of the present generation may become cold. It seems we have an overflowing Treasury. What shall we do with it? Discharge it in the vacuum of the P. chaos? There will always be room enough for any surplus. What care we about roads and bridges? Let each County make their own. Perhaps it may not be necessary to reduce the salaries as contemplated, as the revenue may be considered to be quite sufficient without, notwithstanding the solemn engagements prior to the election. The mistified school Bill, we ignorant folks cannot properly comprehend or decipher. A broad margin being reserved for litigation and dispute. The lawyers know how it may be solved, and their interests are identical with both sides of politics.

And those beautifully polished and learned men from Pictou! Cannot some of them be persuaded to transport themselves upon their de-

*The clause of the bill which would have repealed the Act of 1862, was not agreed to by the Legislative Council. The Act relating to the Intercolonial Railway, therefore, stands as it did last year.—Ed. C. M.