

set, and that is just what made me think of them. What's the use of going huckleberrying in a pasture where there ain't any huckleberries? If we are going to do good, we must take off our coats, roll up our shirt sleeves and go at it!"

"That is the right sentiment," said the minister, appearing in our midst, and holding out his hand in a cheery way to Penderennis. Then he listened, kindly and gravely, to all we had to say for and against the Kemp.

"Suppose you put it to the vote now," said he. "The best time in the world is present time."

So he put it to vote, and the Kemps received the sympathy of the majority, and we went home to think it over and wake up real missionaries.

Directly the Kemp residence became an object of interest to our entire community. It was a novel—nothing more or less—and not one in ten of us had ever thought of entering it.

We decided to pull straws to see who should be the pioneers in our undertaking. Letta happened to pull the longest straw, and Olive, Gay the shortest, so it was their lot to go. After a good many misgivings and discussions as to the best course to pursue, the girls set out with only a few flowers in their hands.

Letta said it would not be delicate to let them feel we were making them the objects of charity—and she was quite right.

They found old Kemp on the boys called him, asleep on the flat door-sill, with a four-footed companion grunting and rooting around him in the most amicable manner.

Mrs. Kemp, who had commenced sweeping the room the moment she perceived the visitors approaching, stirred him up with the broom, and poked him out of the way, so that the girls could enter.

"Would you be kind enough to let us come in and rest a little, and get a glass of water?" asked Letta with a bright smile.

The woman knocked the cat off a broken chair and pushed it toward her, saying with a sigh:

"I guess you can't rest much here; nobody can."

Letta did not wonder she said so, for a place with less home-comfort in it she had never seen.

Mrs. Kemp brought a rusty tin dipper, without a word of apology, and the girls tried to sip a little water from it.

Ruth was lying on a flock-bed in the corner, the picture of squalid poverty. Her eyes turned eagerly to the beautiful flowers, and Olive placed them upon her pillow. The child clutched at them with the natural demand for sympathy which finds outbreak in the cry—"mother."

The woman's wan face looked almost attractive as she went to the bed and bent over the blossoms.

"Ruth is amaz' fond of such things; I used to be, but—deary me!"

This was said with a weary shake of the head, as if those days were very far away, but, somehow, there came a softer look into her face after that, and she tried to be kind, in her poor way, to the young ladies, who, in turn, spoke pleasant words to her.

"We could bring you flowers almost every day," said Letta going to Ruth, and helping her to arrange the blossoms in water. "I dare say there are other things, too, that a sick person would like that we have an abundance of. Books, for instance, and—what else?"

"Milk?" asked Ruth, hesitatingly.

"Oh, yes, we could send you some every day, if you would like."

Ruth broke out into a queer, nervous laugh, that made the girls long to cry. It did not sound as if she was used to laughing.

"We don't keep a cow now," the woman said, with another long, dismal sigh. "She haint much of an appetite, Ruth haint; poor critter!"

"Mrs. Kemp," said Letta trying to wink the tears off her long, silken lashes, "you must let us idle girls help you to bear some of your burdens. How do you manage to take care of such a large family?"

"It aint taken care of. I suppose some folks think I could do better, but I can't. When I was a girl, I was bright and active enough, and I'm sure I never thought I should come to this. But girls don't know what's before 'em."

"Well, I think I know what's before me," said Letta; "I am going to be of some service to you and Ruth. We've got a little Sewing Society started among the young folks, and if you would let us take your children and sew for them it would be doing us a service."

"I am sure it would be doing me one," said the poor woman brightening. "It's the first cheerful word I've heard in many a year. When a poor critter gets stuck in the mud, like me, a little lift goes a great ways."

"You would not mind us girls running in and out, to amuse Ruth, would you, Mrs. Kemp?"

"I would be glad and thankful, miss; I would, indeed!"

The next morning Peter went up with a can of new milk, a loaf of white bread, and somebody added a nice new bowl and spoon. When he came back, his eyes looked as red as a beet.

"You have been crying," said Olive. "It's none of your business if I have," blurted Peter.

Little by little, we made our way into the hearts and home of the Kemps, until

we made it all over. Then we brought Mrs. Kemp to church in a new dress, and the children to Sabbath-school. We had the hardest tug with poor old Kemp himself, but when we got the dealers to refuse him liquor, we soon brought him to terms. Such a laugh as we had the day the boys put the pig in the pen, and we coaxed Mr. Kemp to wear a collar. It was hard to say which was the most uncomfortable.

Finally the minister went in to pray with the family and comfort Ruth. We asked him to go at the first, but he said "No, not yet." He thought money and food, and raiment, and kindness were better, at the first than exhortations. When he did go, I think the Kemps listened to him as to a friend who had clothed and fed them.

We never lost sight of the poor in our village after that delightful experience, and have kept up our Home Mission ever since, and I do earnestly hope there are many young people who will become just such missionaries.

A story is told of a troublesome member at a church meeting who kept rising on points of order. The pastor got out of patience at last, and somewhat testily exclaimed, "Mr. Jones, what do you think I sit here for?" The member quietly shrugged his shoulders and replied, "You have got me now."

A popular clergyman recently delivered a lecture to parishioners assembled upon the interesting subject of "Fools." There was naturally a very large audience, and the rush for seats was much augmented by the form in which the admission ticket were printed. The inscription ran thus, "Lecture on Fools. Admit one."

The Sabbath School Superintendent; Qualification and Duties.

The following paper was read before the N. S. Central Sabbath School Convention, held at Aylesford, by John W. Bars, Esq., of Wolfville, and is published by special request of the Convention:

There is, we conceive, no one matter before this Convention of more importance than this, the first on the programme.

A Sunday School may be filled with attentive scholars, with suitable teachers, and have a good library, but if it lacks a good and efficient Superintendent it will make but indifferent progress. It is often difficult to find the right person to fill this office. Do not choose the pastor of a church; his duties are of a higher order, his time is occupied with other weighty matters; if he undertakes this duty also, he usually attempts more than he can accomplish. The Sunday School is especially designed for the occupation of the lay members of the church, and should, as far as possible, be left in their hands. The pastor is the proper advisor of the Superintendent, and can aid him much in his work; in return, the Superintendent can aid the pastor by keeping him informed of the state and condition of the young under his charge, be they members of the church or of the congregation. Thus mutual aid is afforded which does not exist when the pastor himself is Superintendent.

I would not select an aged person to be Superintendent, as age is too often void of activity, and with it sympathy for the young is greatly blunted. But one who has continued in the office from youth to old age should not be lightly esteemed nor unceremoniously removed.

There is objection to the appointment, likewise, of one very young, whose experience is immature, and his influence not felt by teachers and scholars as it should be.

A middle-aged person should be preferred, not too old to be wedded to obsolete ideas, nor too young to hastily adopt untried projects. When one of these is not to be found, would it not be well to select a Lady Superintendent, if there be one in the church. When qualified male leaders are scarce, particularly in a small country church. If such a course were adopted, fewer Sunday Schools would drop out of existence than is now the case. There are in our churches many well educated women who are anxious to work for the Master, but who are kept back by timidity, and want of proper encouragement, in taking a prominent position in Sabbath School or church work.

In England ladies of piety in the higher walks of life do not hesitate to gather the poor, both male and female, (often of the roughest classes of sailors and soldiers), teach them, pray with them, and publicly instruct them in the Word of God. If it is not necessary with us to go so far, I am convinced in

the management of a Sabbath School, there ought to be no objection for a pious woman to take the leadership, or act as Superintendent. It may be asked, Who is to choose the Superintendent?

I would suggest not the pastor of the church, as his duties do not especially fit him to choose the one most desirable, and his partiality might lead him to an unsuitable selection. Nor should the church alone select one to preside over the School, as too often it would select one of its members esteemed for piety, whilst destitute of other essential qualifications. But the teachers, being well qualified to judge, should select the Superintendent, and should ask the church to adopt the one of their choice. Thus the work would be essentially that of the church, and the Superintendent would feel that he had its support,—in its prayers and its sympathies,—whilst engaged in his important labors.

The qualifications required of a Superintendent are so numerous that we can only refer to a few of them. He must be of undoubted piety. This would seem to be unquestioned, but we occasionally find filling the position non professors of religion, who assume to teach to others what they have never learned themselves. The Superintendent should possess an agreeable and genial temper. Kindness and pleasantness will do more to win respect and correct irregularities than scolding and fault finding. He must essentially be a person of punctuality, system, and order. Unless he be in his place waiting the time for opening the School, he will soon find his teachers and their scholars late in their attendance. Unless he open and close punctually at the appointed time, he will soon learn that his influence is gone, and the children become uneasy and restless in their classes. System will lead him to see that the opening and closing services are short; these can be varied to suit the views of the teachers and scholars. In attending to this, a sufficient time will be given within one hour for opening services and the teaching of the lesson, a longer time usually leads to weariness, which, if possible should be avoided. The Superintendent should himself be a person of financial benevolence, as by his example he will teach quite as powerfully in urging his teachers and scholars as he could do by his precepts. His duty is not only to open and close the school, but to arrange the classes, select the teachers, and grade the scholars. In doing this, tact and judgment are both essential; as teachers often desire to select their class, and scholars not unfrequently wish to choose their teacher, when in neither case would such an arrangement be suitable. The Superintendent should be very courteous to strangers and others visiting the School, and kindly invite them to participate in its exercises when practicable. He should aim to interest the parents of scholars in the School by becoming acquainted with them; as far as possible he should seek intimacy with teachers and scholars, and by an outstretched hand and pleasant smile invite their confidence and cooperation at all times. The superintendent must have tact in summing up or reviewing the lesson at the close of each session; he should, in a few well chosen words, draw the attention of the School to the leading thought in the portion studied, and try by a gentle pleasant manner to place the truth before the children gathered before him, dealing with the heart and conscience in the simplest and most faithful manner possible. This summing up should be short, as children will be interested only for a few minutes, when a long, prosy address will make them restless and uneasy, and will have no beneficial result.

The Superintendent, to have influence, must walk circumspectly out of school as well as in. Children are close observers, and will fail to respect the teaching of one on the Sabbath whose conduct is conspicuously light and trifling during the week, therefore should they ever be watchful lest their good be evil spoken of. In fact, a Superintendent requires the grace of watchfulness, as he is continually being watched by those over whom he exercises influence; he must be wise as a serpent and harmless as a dove.

With the foregoing qualifications, under the direction of the Great Teacher, he may hope to be a successful Sabbath School Superintendent.

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

Letter from France.

(From our Correspondent.)

We have had later news from France than in the following letter. Gambetta is now the premier. It is of some interest to observe the foreshadowing of this prominence, as shewn in our correspondent's letter.

PARIS, Oct. 30th, 1881.

The political world has no theme now but Gambetta's travels in Germany, and that famous gentleman's recent interview with the President of the Republic. In official circles and in the authoritative, it is claimed that his journey had no political significance, and his interview with the President no witnesses. But less reliable reports have it that he paid a visit of a quasi-official and political character to Prince Bismarck, and give the full dialogue that passed between him and M. Grevy. There is no question as to which story is worthy of the greatest credence. The President of the Chamber of Deputies visited Germany, going as far as Dresden, and inspecting the chief points en route, going and coming in entirely private capacity, and the roughly incog. The German Chancellor was aware of his presence in the Empire, but made no advances, and received none. That he had some earnest motive I can well believe, but to suppose that any influence of his will move Prince Bismarck to change his policy is the least likely thing on earth. Yet it would be wise, prudent, and patriotic, if, in the course of this visit, M. Gambetta has made any approach towards conciliation. The Germans have got it so firmly rooted in their minds that France intends some day to pounce down upon them, that six millions of gold are always kept ready to put the army in motion without an hour's delay. This is a cruel sacrifice for Germany, a country never very flush in ready coin. Three millions lie fruitless in the fortress of Spandau, bringing in not a penny of profit or interest, and the Government will not employ it in any way lest they should be unable to get it immediately. I expect the real motive of M. Gambetta was to judge for himself the real state of public opinion in Germany before he comes into power. This visit may have considerable influence on French politics in future, whether he had an interview with Bismarck or not.

After maintaining peace, the next most important subject for the republic is that of promoting popular education. Plant the schoolmaster everywhere is the order of the day, and the great plank in the republican platform. The position of the national schoolmaster in France hitherto has been very painful, and he is only now on the high road to be emancipated; he was to be at once something of a call boy for the local mayor and clergyman, and when these two individuals were of opposite politics, his situation was purgatory. For the future he will be the employe of the educational department of the state; he is no longer dependent on the minister or the mayor; he is still an agent of the prefecture—a connection that will soon be sundered. As for the religious instruction, that was a matter for the clergy of respective denominations; the schoolmaster was simply to inculcate morality and steer clear alike of ecclesiastical fanaticism and "orthodox atheism."

In the Electric Exhibition the Edison exhibit is one of the finest, occupying two large rooms, containing his numerous inventions, and no place is more sought for by inquiring visitors than this. The maxim exhibit is not complete, but promises well. The Harmonic Telegraph system, by Prof. Gray, attracts much attention. This system at present is capable of transmitting five messages at one time in each direction, over a single wire. In this department several telephone companies and three telephone exchanges are represented. The electric lights make a most beautiful and magnificent display during the evening; they do not illustrate of any one system, but the effusion of nearly 500,000 candle power of light, gives the brilliancy of the noon-tide rays. Those who witness these illuminations can never forget them. It is a success of science, and mostly of the present day. A place for study, thought, and reflection, as well as for those who live for gayer hours. All gaze

in rapture on the brilliant scene, admiring a thing as nearly like the sun itself. Has not another epoch begun? Has not science leaped forward by a single bound? It is the march of Progress under the banner of Wisdom.

AUGUST.

For the Christian Messenger.

The road to Telugu-land.

"VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS."

Of all the strange customs that hold in England and worry the uninitiated, "tipping" stands supreme. While familiar with the American principle of "support by voluntary contributions" as applied to churches and benevolent objects, his astonishment only equals his disgust when he finds something similar applying to the maintenance of servants of all degrees from the "boots" to the lordly butler. Even before landing, astonished exclamations among the passengers of "You don't say so?" "Never would have thought of such a thing," "What is about the usual figure?" prepare him in part for the merciless exaction of gratuities soon to be practised upon him. Although you have supposed up to the present moment that the sum paid for tickets is inclusive, and that no further demands would be made on your purse, you have now to learn that a fee to the steward is customary and expected, whatever proviso may have been inserted in the company's circular to the contrary. The servants are engaged by the company, and you have the privilege as a passenger of paying their wages—that is the gist of the matter.

The demands of this kind made on your pocket on shore are constant. I say "demands;" for although one is never in so many words asked for money, yet in this case "actions speak louder than words." Step into a cab; at once a dirty urchin springs from the gutter or from behind an adjacent lamp-post, closes the door (for "cabby" does not deign to descend from his elevated post) and pulls his unkempt forelock with a significance which cannot be mistaken for "Your honor won't forget me." Cabby sets you down at your destination, and as he receives his fare touches his hat as much as to say, "A frippery to drink your 'ealth, Sir;" and more frequently than not the coin is forthcoming.

You buy a ticket at a railway station, and in doubt which train to take, ask a messenger or porter or guard. As he gives the desired information (which you have been accustomed to receive from the officials at home as a matter of course) his deferential manner strikes you, and so does the sudden thought "He expects a tip." He takes it too; whether he be the dirty office boy who sweeps the floors, or the sprucely dressed guard who precedes even royalty—in the van. The first time we had occasion to travel by rail, a friend saw the luggage safely on board, and took his seat with us. Soon a porter ran up the platform, poked his head into the carriage, and touched his hat to my friend. Upon something being dropped into his hand, he immediately disappeared. On inquiry I learned that this was a stalwart young beggar who, disguised as a railway porter, had come for his tip after putting our luggage on board. To escape them is impossible—I say them, for their name is legion. You may put on a look of stony indifference as your parcels are handed from the car, and turn away without the slightest apparent intention of making an immediate exit; but before you have taken six steps the same face will confront you with the same respectful salutation and a "lope" that "Mr. has his parcels safe."

Feeling hungry (and economical) you enter a restaurant, seize a bill of fare, and settle on

- Steak.....10 (pence)
- Potatoes..... 2 "
- Coffee and roll. 6 "

saying to yourself, "That will do nicely; only one and sixpence." You give the order, and when it is filled, eat your dinner with great self complacency and enjoyment. Then you call for and pay your bill. On reaching the street you are puzzled by the fact that dinner has cost you threepence more than expected; and finally settle on the conviction that you have paid one-and-sixpence for the dinner and threepence for the privilege of eating it.