

Sunday Reading.

From the Papers of the late Rev. Dr. Cramp.

The Montreal Daily Witness of the 18th inst. gives the following, which will interest many of our readers:

AN ORIGINAL LETTER AND POEM FROM THE POET MONTGOMERY.

The following letter and accompanying hymn from the well-known poet, James Montgomery, were, along with many other interesting relics, among the papers of the late Rev. Dr. Cramp, and have been placed at our disposal for publication. We are sure they will interest our readers, as the letter is characteristic, and the hymn does not appear in general collections, and has probably never been published:

THE MOUNT, Sheffield, July 1, 1842.

DEAR SIR,—I thank you for having given me, after the lapse of years, an opportunity of acknowledging the sin, first of procrastination, and then of omission, which I committed against your kindness, when you sent me a copy of your valuable "Text-Book of Popery," and for which I now humbly ask your forgiveness. In truth, however, these are such frequently besetting sins with me, and I have so repeatedly resolved and re-resolved in vain to mend, that I dare not promise never to do so again. Besides indolence habitual, and infirmity constitutional, I am so overpowered with the liberality of friends and strangers in conferring such and other tokens of goodwill upon me, that I am always in arrears of gratitude, generally the more felt the less it is expressed, because it is ten times easier to do a duty at once than to bear the rebukes of conscience for neglecting especially neglecting so long as to be too late to do it at all, without a new and imperative call, such as you have given me; and, if the foregoing verses be of no other value in your sight, I trust you will accept them as an acknowledgment, perhaps, "better late than never," of the old, not obsolete, obligation afore-mentioned, and of my sincere repentance. You will please to use them, for your benevolent Christian purpose, or not, as you deem expedient.

And believe me, Truly your obliged friend and serv't, J. MONTGOMERY.

DEAR LADIES to your congregation. May they be indeed a "church" in the sacred sense, and you long the angel of it, and a star in your Lord's right hand.

A HYMN FOR CHILDREN.

Lord Jesus Christ, the children's Friend, On us lift up Thy gracious hands, And from Thy holy temple send Blessings on our united bands.

How precious in Thy Father's sight Were children's souls when Thee He gave, His only Son, His heart's delight, From hell to heaven those souls to save!

What love to them, what love was Thine, Meek Lamb of God! when Thou didst give Thy soul, a sacrifice divine, Dying Thyself that they might live!

Nor less the Holy Spirit's grace, When by His light He Thee reveals, As though they saw Thee face to face, And them as heirs of glory seals.

Are children's souls of such high price? With grief and gladness may we see How sad their loss in Paradise, How great their gain on Calvary.

Our own no longer, thine they are; In mercy bind them to Thy cross, Safe only from the tempter there, From second death and final loss.

JAMES MONTGOMERY.

Miss Havergal's reasons for going to Church on Rainy Sundays.

Miss Havergal says: I attend church on rainy Sundays because—

- 1. God has blessed the Lord's day and hallowed it, making no exception for rainy Sundays.
2. I expect my minister to be there. I should be surprised if he were to stay at home for the weather.
3. If his hand fall through weakness I shall have great reason to blame myself, unless I sustain him by my prayers and my presence.
4. By staying away I may lose the prayers which bring God's blessing, and the sermon that would have done me great good.
5. My presence is more needful on Sundays when there are a few than on those days when the church is crowded.
6. Whatever station I hold in the church my example must influence others; if I stay away why may not they?
7. On any important business rainy weather does not keep me at home; and church attendance is, in God's sight, very important.
8. Among the crowds of pleasure-

seekers I see that no weather keeps the delicate female from the ball, the party, or the concert.

9. Among other blessings such weather will show me on what foundation my faith is built. It will prove how much I love Christ. True love rarely fails to meet an appointment.

10. Those who stay from church because it is too warm, or too rainy, frequently absent themselves on fair Sundays.

11. Though my excuses satisfy myself they still must undergo God's scrutiny; and they must be well grounded to bear that. See Luke xiv. 18.

12. There is a special promise that where two or three meet together in God's name he will be in the midst of them.

13. An avoidable absence from church is an infallible evidence of spiritual decay. Disciples first follow Christ at a distance, and then, like Peter, do not know him.

14. My faith is to be known by my self-denying Christian life, and not by the rise and fall of the thermometer.

15. Such yielding to surmountable difficulties prepares for yielding to those merely imaginary, until thousands never enter a church, and yet they think they have good reason for such neglect.

16. I know not how many more Sundays God may give me; and it would be a poor preparation for my first Sunday in heaven to have slogged my last Sunday on earth.

War! Horrid War!

"I also was there, partly hurried on by the crowd, partly to prevail on our enraged soldiers to give quarter; for it grieved my heart to see Christians and Englishmen hacked down with swords and gunstocks, like curs in the street, when there is an alarm of mad dogs. In this way, the soldiers fighting and slaughtering, and I calling to them to stay their hand, we gained the very roof of the building, which was in part leaded, and to which, as a last tower of refuge, those of the cavaliers, who yet escaped, had retired. I was myself on like dogs of chase upon their prey; and, when extricated from the passage, I found myself in the midst of a horrid scene. The scattered defenders were, some resisting with the fury of despair; some on their knees, imploring for compassion in words and tones to break a man's heart when he thinks on them; some were calling on God for mercy; and it was time, for man had none. They were stricken down, thrust through, flung from the battlements into the lake, and the wild cries of the victors, mingled with the groans, shrieks, and clamours of the vanquished, made a sound so horrible, that only death can erase it from my memory. And the men who butchered their fellow-creatures thus, were neither pagans from distant savage lands, nor ruffians, the refuse and offscourings of our own people. They were, in calm blood, reasonable, nay, religious men, maintaining a fair repute both heavenward and earthward. Oh, Master Everard, your trade of war should be feared and avoided, since it converts such men into wolves towards their fellow-creatures!"

—Sir Walter Scott.

The value of a Religious Paper in the Family.

It is emphatically a reading age. The people will read, and their lives are largely moulded by what they read. The paper has an advantage over the book. It is supposed to be newer and fresher. It is supposed to contain the latest developments, and the latest thoughts matured, on the living questions of the day. Its articles are necessarily short, and can therefore be perused in odd moments; while the book may require days or weeks for its perusal. The few only have leisure or inclination for the volume, while the many find time for the shorter articles in the paper. The paper lies on the table, right in your way. The book, well got up, and nicely bound, is carefully put away in the book-case. How natural for every one to pick up the latest paper, if there are only ten minutes to spare. But how few, unless there are hours at their disposal, will

go to the library, or even the shelves, and select a book. The papers, therefore, are what the masses must read, if they read at all.

The newspaper has another advantage over the literature of the book. The latter is usually the product of one mind. It may be very superior, rich in thought, happy in illustration, and racy in mode of expression. But still, being largely the work of one mind, and shaped by one hand, there is danger of sameness. Kindred illustrations and similar forms of expression are liable to occur. So that, frequently, the reader, ere he is half through, wears of the sameness, and lays the volume aside, intending to resume it on another occasion, which perhaps he never does.

The newspaper, on the contrary, is usually the product of many minds. One thinks and writes in the old world, another in the new. One amid the exciting scenes of city life, another in the repose and quiet of rural scenes. One under the shade of the dome of an English or Continental cathedral, another by the side of the log-cabin or school-house in the American forests. One thinks and writes after sixty years' experience of life, another who is making his first plunge into the literary stream. Now the editor of the paper, after exhausting his own strength, time, and resources, can turn to this unlimited and varied supply, and select the cream of all he finds; and he can, therefore, give something to suit all tastes, weighty words for the grave, lighter ones for the gay, argument for the logical, deep things for the thoughtful, and easier reading for those who must toil with their hands more than with their heads.

"Variety is the spice of life." Nature is full of variety. We all love it, and the newspaper, rightly conducted, may be the most varied of all forms of literature. Therefore the newspaper, even now, is rapidly filling the place and doing the work, once done on a smaller scale, by the volume and the library.

It is high time that the Christian Church was awake to a full time. Christian parents were awake to this fact. The world is being governed to-day largely by the newspaper. The sword is yielding to the pen. The voter, at the polls, looks first to see what his paper has to say. The pen is making our laws, improving our commerce, building our railroads, extending our schools. On all these things, and a thousand others, people are watching sharply to see what the papers have to say.

Then, if the papers speak, and instruct, and influence on all social, political, and financial matters, but remain silent on the most vital of all questions, the subject of religion; if they say nothing about God, nothing about Christ, nothing about heaven, if they never point a lost sinner to the Lamb of God, then surely the children of this world are far wiser in their generation than the children of light. For worldly men, wide awake, see to it when they wish people to take an interest in certain matters, to have those matters placed in the highest colours in the public newspaper. If they want a railroad, or a sugar refinery, or a change of tariff, or any improvement in anything, a few active pens are set to work, and soon the thing is accomplished. Almost wickedly, sometimes, we think, is the Church, or at least the people who belong to the churches, neglecting this great instrument, this potent agency for good in the world.

No homes in this land should be without a religious paper. Far better let them be without Brussels or tapestry; far better without Chickering or Steinway; far better without malogany or rose-wood; far better without all luxuries, and even some comforts, than without the educating forces, the gentle persuasive influences, that come from a warm, earnest, well-conducted family religious paper. A paper imbued with the spirit of pure and undefiled religion, advocating denominational objects, so far as this may be needful, but still more, pleading for, and strongly defending, the great principles of our common religion, showing by argument the most conclusive, and illustrations the most lifelike, that the Gospel of Christ is Divine in its origin, universal in its claims, and that he makes a poor bargain who gains "the whole world" and thereby "loses his own soul."—Canadian Record.

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

Temperance in the Sunday School.

BY PASTOR M. P. FREEMAN.

Published by request of the Colchester Sabbath School Convention.

The Sunday School has a very important place among the agencies employed for the training of the young. It aims to imbue the mind with Scripture truth, and, by that truth, to win the soul for Christ. But this is not all its work. The child must, in the course of time, assume the duties of the citizen and the parent, and needs such a preparation as shall fit it for those responsibilities. The Sabbath School should therefore lay its work deep and broad. It should seek to subserve the best interests of the youth for time as well as for eternity.

The object of this paper is to enforce the necessity of Temperance work in our Sunday Schools. We do not propose to change their complexion, nor to divert them from their proper work, but rather to introduce an element that shall increase their efficiency.

"The devil's chapel," a rum shop, is in close proximity to the Sabbath School, open every Sabbath, and on every other day of the week. To it multitudes of our youth are being drawn, and thereby ruined forever, who might have been saved, had proper influences been thrown around them at the proper time.

Much has been accomplished through the noble efforts of Temperance men and women. The public mind has been greatly enlightened, and many have been saved from the drunkard's grave, to a life of sobriety and honor.

We have been setting up safeguards here and there, defending the citadel against the malicious attacks of the enemy, and trying to improve every opportunity to charge against the foe, to his dismay and defeat. But notwithstanding all this, only a lithe of what should and must be done has been accomplished. Our work has not yet reached the foundations; we have not yet had the great evil that afflicts humanity. Temperance workers have been trying to clip and curtail the evil when they can, but the shoots spring up anew. They are busy erecting barriers against the rushing tide; but even then it is as in the case of the rolling-dam when the waters only pause for a little, and then swell and roll on again in their fury over the opposing obstacle. Some are saved from the demon of drink, and many are restrained and kept back from falling into the pit; but alas! a vast army of immortals are marching to the infernal music, and cleave to their dreadful fate!

Temperance workers must not relax their efforts. This is no time for parleying with the foe. They, surely, have not learned "to play a retreat." They have had to encounter an enemy fortified by custom, supported by the good will of a vast host of tipplers, reinforced by constantly incoming bands of recruits, and backed up by fashion, wealth, and legislative enactments; but they have never quailed before the foe, nor will they abandon the conflict till the victory is won. They are on God's side in their endeavor, they know that the right must prevail.

There are crises in all human affairs, and so also in our Temperance work. By some cause or other a new direction is given to the current, and there must be a corresponding change of action. Some alteration of base on the part of the enemy, or an attack from some unexpected quarter, makes a change of tactics imperative. Or, it may be, that the successes already achieved necessitate the adoption of new plans and methods in order to keep what has been gained; or, it may be, that in the light of past experiences mistakes are discovered and rectified; instrumentalities formerly overlooked are brought into requisition, and effectively employed.

The Sunday School is, confessedly, of all the beneficent institutions of the world, next to the church of Christ, the most important. With this exception, there is no organization so potent in its influence, or so full of promise for the future of those countries where it has been generally introduced. This insti-

tution is under the foster care of the church. The impression is gaining ground that it is a necessary part of the work of the church. True there are dangerous tendencies in some quarters, but this has nothing to do with the fact of its mighty influence. This influence is religious. By the Sunday School there is a development Godward, the youth are taught to reverence their Creator. This culture is a necessity. The heart is greater than the head, for it rules, notwithstanding any ideas to the contrary. Without religious education, secular learning becomes a curse to the people. From religion all moral influences and forces spring. A people that denies God have no conscience, no moral standard, no moral force, and must become vicious. For this reason it seems a necessity that the Sabbath School shall undertake the work of Temperance. God's word pronounces most emphatically against the sin of drunkenness, and declares that no drunkard shall have any inheritance in the kingdom of God. On religious grounds every man should be made to feel that he must abandon the use of strong drink. As a religious duty he should feel it incumbent upon him to practice Temperance, and to persuade others to follow the example.

In enforcing the duty of abstinence from intoxicating drinks upon our youth they should be made to feel that in so doing they have the commands and sanctions of God's word. In this way we shall take them to higher grounds than those of mere morality and self-interest. We shall, by the divine blessing, enlist their conscience upon the right side in the struggle against the monster evil.

It is to be lamented that hitherto the professedly Christian church has not taken a true position in the matter of Temperance, but it is an omen for good to the cause that a change is passing over the Christian world in this respect, and that in many places direct Temperance work is being done through church agency. Baptists, from the first inception of this reform, have been amongst its staunchest promoters. The churches have, for the most part, declared against the use of the intoxicating beverages, and profess, at least, to discipline any of their members who, notwithstanding admonition and rebuke, should persist in this sinful indulgence. There is room, however, for improvement. They have need of greater zeal in their efforts for promoting the good endeavor to eradicate from her sacred precincts those roots of evil, that, if allowed to grow unchecked, will ultimately be productive of much mischief to the interests of godliness. One of the advantages arising from the introduction of Temperance work into our Sabbath Schools will be the quickening of the Temperance pulse of the church. It will induce a more healthful state of feeling with regard to the work in the minds of the whole brotherhood. The future recruits of the church will come mainly from the Sabbath School, and they should be so thoroughly indoctrinated in Temperance principles, that, when they enter upon this new relation, they will be prepared to co-operate with all Temperance workers in their efforts for the advancement of the cause.

There are two evil habits that our youth ought to hold as abominations—indulgence in strong drink, and the use of tobacco. These they should be made to hold in everlasting abhorrence. Our boys soon, too soon, graduate from the Sabbath School, and at just the time when they are peculiarly liable to temptation, just at the dangerous age when the power of temptation is strongest, and the youth are the weakest, they yield, through their own presumptuous confidence and rashness.

Very soon they may be found strutting idly about with cigar or pipe in mouth, and with an air of self-importance that is begotten of the consciousness that they have escaped from the apron-strings of their mothers, and are now prepared to assert their own independence. Tobacco will, very likely, introduce them to the tipping saloon, to the card-table, and to vices that will hasten their downfall and ruin.

Of course, I would not be understood as affirming this of all, or even of the most, who leave the Sunday School, or

who commence the use of the weed; but the danger is in this direction. From such as yield to sinful indulgences are taken those who will be brought to a premature and shameful end.

But it is not sufficient merely to advise and admonish against the use of strong drink. Set the young people of the Sabbath School and congregation at work; give them Temperance work to do. Encourage them to form a Temperance Society; let them give it some appropriate name; let them in joining take a suitable pledge.

Let it be of a simple character, with not much machinery, that it may run with as little friction as possible. The pastor, the Superintendent of the School, or some other person who will take the work upon his heart, may be placed at the head of the Society. Then a Secretary and Treasurer, the two offices perhaps combined in one, and a committee to arrange for the holding of meetings, private and public, is all that is necessary to give it due standing. Let the meetings of the Society be held regularly, weekly or monthly as may seem needful, and let the members be encouraged and urged—they may need the latter treatment—to give suitable recitations, readings, and dialogues. I would have the pledge include the use of tobacco and strong drink and their manufacture and sale; some add profanity. But, if you begin with one of the sins forbidden in the decalogue, why omit others? and if we bring all the precepts of the moral law into a Temperance pledge we undertake too much, and defeat the object in view.

In our Sunday School at Great Village we have the pledge written upon card-board, that we intend to have framed. On this are inscribed the names of those who promise to abstain from strong drink and tobacco, and who thus become members of the society which we have named the Band of Honor. The list we call the "Roll of Honor." This we propose to hang up to be seen always in the church, or else preserved, to be produced on special occasions. We take the signatures of all who are willing to sign it—Teachers as well as scholars; and of any others who may wish to share in the work. This list will be enlarged year by year, and becomes the direct possession of the school. We have not originated this idea. A writer in the S. S. Times speaks of such a Roll, used in a church over thirty years, and containing thousands of names.

It would be well to hold occasionally a public Temperance Meeting under the auspices of the society. A lecture now and then, sound and practical, pointing out the evils resulting from alcoholic stimulants, in their physical, moral and spiritual bearings will be useful. Let the young people see that there is "a tombstone," as one has expressed it, "looming up at the very beginning of indulgence in strong drink"; that moral decay is certain to follow with the loss of health; and that such as yield to the habit are on the direct road to wreck of manhood and ruin of soul.

This youthful organization would be defensive in its aim. The young people combine for their own preservation. Let them feel that they are erecting bulwarks to save themselves from the power of strong drink.

The pledge given helps the resolution. He is on his honor, and he will keep that untarnished—and though he become exposed to temptation in new associations, the remembrance of his former companions in the Sabbath School, of the counsels and the prayers of his teachers, friends, and pastor will help to strengthen his resolutions and to save him from yielding to the solicitations of those who would seduce him from the path of sobriety.

It is a law of our nature, that our interest becomes more active in any cause to which we devote our means and energies. When we take stock in any concern, it becomes our business affair. We have something at stake—a personal interest in its prosperity. The child who gives to send the gospel to the heathen—has an increased interest in the missionary cause; and every cent he can earn or save for this purpose helps to stimulate his zeal in that direction. It is precisely so in Temperance work. This is a very strong argument in favor of enlisting