

Sunday Reading.

For the Christian Messenger. Another Day.

Cheerily the beams of morning shine, Wake, heart and mind, in glad accord, Accept with joy the gift divine, Another day to serve the Lord.

Another day of life and love, Of welcome labor, prayer and praise, Open the windows, Lord, above, And let it be a day of days.

May every work in these feet hours, Of hand or mind be truly done, And let my heart, like opening flowers, Give sweet response to thee my Sun.

Illumined by a glowing sky, How bright the vales of earth appear, So, Father, through this day may I Receive and give celestial cheer.

Then when the evening shadows fall, And heaven reveals its starry face, I'll rest in peace, with thanks for all, Thy gifts of nature and of grace. S. S. Marlborough, Mass., 1884.

For the Christian Messenger. The Planet Venus.

BY REV. I. HUNT COOKE.

Venus is the nearest world to ours, but we are unable to ascertain much concerning its condition. It is a very beautiful object in the sky, being a bright morning or evening star. She gains nearly twice as much heat and light from the sun as we do, on an average, but on her surface there must be far greater variety of seasons. The day there would be half an hour shorter than here, and the year only three-quarters the length. It is not decidedly known whether she has a moon, no one has been seen. This world is about the same size as ours; there is no proof of the existence of seas or water on Venus, but it is thought there is an atmosphere somewhat denser than our own. But we really know very little about the surface of this planet.

Dr. Whewell, in his remarkable work on the plurality of worlds, thinks that perhaps if we could see her better we might find that she had a surface like the Moon, or perhaps, in the nearer neighbourhood of the Sun, she may have cooled more slowly and quietly, like glass which is annealed in the fire, and hence may have a smooth surface instead of the furrowed and pimpled visage, which the moon presents to us. With this ignorance of her conditions, it is hard to say what kind of animals we could place in her if we were disposed to people her surface; except perhaps the microscopic creatures, with silicious coverings, which, as modern explorers assert, are almost indestructible by heat. To believe that she has a surface like the earth, and tribes of animals like terrestrial animals, and like man, is an exercise of the imagination, which is not only quite gratuitous but contrary to all the information which the telescope gives us; and with this remark we may dismiss the hypothesis. It may be added that Venus is the star of all others that it would be most easy to prove to be inhabited.

Venus is the bright and morning star. The ancients dedicated it to earthly love. Christian men should associate it with divine love. It is the last emblem of Jesus Christ given us in the Bible. It is very beautiful, but its grand feature is that when it appears in the darkness it gives promise of a speedily coming day. So when the soul first sees Christ by faith, he may rejoice in blessed hope that a glorious day will soon dawn for him, a day of everlasting joy which shall have no night.

A Changed Life.

BY G. F. PENTECOST.

I know a lady (or I should rather say, knew; for she and her husband are both now with the Lord), who was the unconverted wife of an unconverted husband. When the Lord converted her she set her heart upon seeing her husband, who was a man of the world, converted too. She gave herself wholly to the Lord. In vain did her husband seek to lead her back to the world. But she not only went far away, but sought by every tender and loving persuasion to win her husband. At first he was provoked, because she had left him, as he termed it, for Christ; and then he got angry with her when she

pressed Christ upon him. But she was wise, and earnest, and loving. She redoubled every effort to make home attractive and beautiful. Every day she let her light shine before him. Faithful in every wily obligation, consistent in every step of her walk, she established a testimony that he could not deny. On her baptism he had refused to go to the church, and had ever after that refused to go to the church with her. But she did not cease to pray for him day and night. She did not tease him; but Sabbath day after Sabbath day she would lovingly ask him, 'Will you not go to church with me to-day?' to which she received but one answer, 'No.' At first, she told me, the answer was given crossly; but afterward it was with indifference; and then, as the years went by, it was kindly spoken; but was always, 'No.' For twenty years that wife prayed, and watched, and waited, and never failed just to ask him to go to church. After twenty years she saw that husband bow his knee to Christ. I knew him as a humble and devoted Christian till the day of his death. He has often told me of that twenty years' battle against his loving, faithful, and consistent wife's testimony; and of her quiet, determined purpose to win him. 'Oh,' he once said to me, 'It was hard to resist her. I was proud, and would not give in. I many times wanted to yield; and the persistency of her love at last broke my heart. I knew that nothing but an Almighty power could have held her to that purpose against my twenty years' battle.' The wife told me that often it was the consecration of herself to win her husband that held her faithful to Christ; for she had this deep conviction, that her testimony must be a faithful and consistent one. This is a marked case. I believe that most wives and husbands would be sooner rewarded if they set their hearts to win their companions.

Willing to Shovel.

To be willing to begin at the bottom is the open secret of being able to come out at the top. A few years ago a young man came to this country to take a position in a new enterprise in the Southwest. He was well bred, well educated, and he had the tastes of his birth and education. He reached the scene of his proposed labors, and found to his dismay, that the enterprise was already bankrupt, and that he was penniless, homeless and friendless in a strange land. He worked his way back to New-York, and in mid-winter found himself without money or friends in the great busy metropolis. He did not stop to measure the obstacles in his path; he simply set out to find work. He would have preferred the pen, but he was willing to take the shovel; and the shovel it was to be.

Passing down Fourth Avenue on a snowy morning he found a crowd of men at work shovelling snow from the sidewalks about a well-known locality; he applied for a position in their ranks, got it, and went to work with a hearty good-will, as if shovelling were his vocation. Not long after, one of the owners of the property, a many-millionaire, passed along the street, saw the young man's face was struck by its intelligence and wondered what had brought him to such a pass. A day or two later his business took him to the same locality again, and brought him face to face with the same man, still shovelling snow. He stopped, spoke to him, received a prompt and courteous answer, talked a few minutes for the sake of getting a few facts about his history, and then asked the young man to call at his office. That night the shovel era ended, and the next day, at the appointed time, the young man was closeted with the millionaire. In one of the latter's many enterprises there was a vacant place, and the young man who was willing to shovel got it. It was a small place, at a small salary, but he more than filled it; he filled it so well indeed that in a few months he was promoted, and at the end of three years he was at the head of the enterprise, at a large salary. He is there to-day, with the certainty that if he lives he will eventually fill a position second in importance to none in the field in which he is working. The story is all told in three words; willing to shovel.—Christian Union.

The Sabbath School, its Aims and its Results.

AN ESSAY READ AT THE CENTRAL BAPTIST SABBATH SCHOOL CONVENTION AT SUMMERSVILLE, HANTS CO. BY REV. W. B. BRADSHAW.

It is not the intention to prepare an exhaustive paper upon the above theme. All that will be attempted, will be, to present a general outline, which may suggest grateful thoughts and encourage the people of God to persevere in this field of Christian service.

The Sabbath School stands pre-eminent among the moral forces that are directed by human power and intelligence, in the world of to-day. It is the peculiar phase of Christian effort in these modern days, and perhaps, is a return, in some important respects to the practice of primitive times. In fact, the method of preaching formal sermons was not the habit of the early Christians. The modern Sabbath School, however, seems to be more in conformity with the custom of early days. Then were acknowledged leaders,—bishops, pastors and teachers, who took the lead in conducting religious exercises and other matters connected with their spiritual interests. But the rights and privileges of each member were recognized and exercised.

The Sabbath School has repeatedly and we might say continuously received the stamp of the divine approval. By this means God has worked, is working, and will continue to work, for the promotion of his cause and the salvation of man. Really, it is the church of Christ at work in a legitimate way for internal and external improvement and advancement. It is each person for himself drinking out of the fountain of life, and each helping each to the unadulterated stream. It is each person receiving orders from headquarters, how, where, when and what, may be done for the Master, and his brother man.

This mighty power now influencing almost every nation, city, town and village made small progress till the last one hundred years. There is no doubt, the particular study of the Word was practiced by small companies in a manner somewhat similar to our Sabbath School. But there were grave hindrances to the general enjoyment of this privilege. The ignorance of the multitude, the condemnation of Rome against the general circulation and study of the Scriptures &c., stood as impassable barriers. But the "revival of letters" the art of printing, and the struggle of the Reformation carried away these hindrances to spiritual progress. Two centuries, however, elapsed before the Sabbath School idea was appreciably developed. History gives Robert Raikes, a printer of Gloucester, England, the credit of founding the first modern Sunday School in 1781, and we are only just through with celebrating the Centennial. And yet, what untold progress! "The little one has become a thousand!" There is great difficulty in making an accurate estimate of S. School work or marking its progress. The following estimate is substantially correct. It is probably slightly below the figures of 1883-4 if we had them at our command.

Table with 2 columns: Category and Number. Whole number of scholars in Great Britain: 3,000,000. Number of teachers: 300,000. Number of scholars in America: 5,300,000. Number of teachers: 700,000.

Making a total for Great Britain and America. Scholars: 8,300,000. Teachers: 1,000,000.

It is difficult to get any correct statement in regard to S. School statistics in the other countries. Of those in America, the Baptists claim by their statistics:

Table with 2 columns: Category and Number. Scholars: 1,500,000. Teachers: 175,000.

But if S. School statistics are as imperfect in other places as in our communities it is very evident that this is far below the true statement, so that we may safely compute the S. School army in Britain and America at about 15,000,000, teachers and scholars. What a mighty host! Robert Raikes's "ragged school," like the mustard seed, has become a great tree. It is covering the whole earth.

Let us go near and study this immense body of Christian workers more minutely. We find that: it is no longer

the ragged and neglected children of want who come, but all classes are represented. The child of culture, wealth and luxury stands shoulder to shoulder with the sons of ignorance and penury. Nor is this all. Here men and women in their prime, and others of riper years, mingle with children in giving and receiving instruction. Its doors are opened as wide as the Gospel gate, "and whosoever will may come."

But who are those who have interested themselves in this enterprise? They are the best of men and women. They are persons who have been the subjects of divine grace, and whose moral precepts, tastes and resolves are aroused, developed and sustained by the highest standard of moral excellence, the Word of God.

If we mark this band of S. School workers minutely, it will be manifest that they are not lacking in mental strength and vigor, nor in the culture of the schools. It would seem that men of the best moral and mental training have heard the call to this enterprise, and are willing to bear the burdens connected with the work.

A very superficial survey unmistakably convinces us that this is no meeting for mere pastime. The earnestness in look, tone and movement shows that something important is at stake. The time spent, the care taken, and the money expended, with such serious earnestness and determination, speak to us of a mighty enterprise with great aims and grand resolves.

As we enquire more particularly into S. School work, we learn that it is a diligent search after Truth. Teachers and scholars are digging in the mine of God's Word for the golden nuggets. The fountain of Truth is the living spring from which they drink. Here is the letter from their Father, and the family would understand his will. Their aim is not to be satisfied with a superficial view. They call in the best aids to interpret the letter. The stores of knowledge lay away in ancient and modern books, and men that are able to unlock them are lovingly and successfully pressed into the service.

Thus this host of workers persist in their enterprise. They ask us to join their ranks, and share in the toil and glory of this laudable undertaking. (The invitation is to every member of the community. The rallying cry is, "Ho all ye servants of Christ, to the work! to the work!" "Ho all ye children of men, both old and young, come to the Sunday School!")

Is it worth our time and care? For an answer let us enquire diligently into the Aims and Results of the S. School.

THE AIMS OF S. SCHOOL WORKERS ARE: 1. To teach the scholars to recognize God.—However strange it may appear, there is a strong tendency of the human nature of to-day to exclude God from the great problem of existence. His person, His power, His wisdom, His justice and His gracious love are, alas! too generally either partially or completely ignored, and that in Christian lands. The duty of parents to inculcate religious principles into the minds of their children must either be shamefully neglected, or the mighty tide of indifference and skepticism which is met in society obliterates their early impressions of God and duty. It is the aim of the S. School to stem this current of evil, by imparting and impressing a knowledge of the true God, and dispersing the mists of doubt from the minds of those whose hearts have been hardened by the ungodly influences of a sinful society. It is the aim of the S. School to implant and cultivate in the minds of the scholars a consciousness of an ever present Deity, and their duty to recognize him in every department of life.

2. To unfold the great facts of the Bible as a revelation from God.—This includes two lines of study—History and Doctrine.

No person can have a complete knowledge of the history of the world and the human race without the Bible. It opens with the creation of the world, and its preparation for man through an extended series of progressive stages. To the Bible we refer for the only reasonable account of man's origin, his sadly depraved nature, and his subsequent struggles in the progress of his history. In fact for 3,500 years of human experience we have no other reliable source of information whatever.

The S. School aims to supply this want by unfolding to the scholars God's account of the events of the remote past. But this is, after all, only a means to an end. With the history of man we have the history of his fall and redemption. Man in the earliest ages had indications of the Divine love and grace. He believed, and while the smoke of his burning sacrifices ascended into heaven his prayer was heard, and the responses of divine peace filled his soul with unutterable joy and hope. For 4000 years the light burned dimly, yet burned, in type and sacrifice, in prophecy and promise, still increasing in its brightness as the years rolled on, till the fullness of time brought the fulfillment of promises and prophecies in the great antitype,—the Lamb of God, the Saviour of the World! The Bible leads us through this history in Company with the worthies of the past bidding us remember the words and mark the footsteps, until John the Baptist, in performing his mission, introduces us to Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the key that solves the enigma of the past, and unlocks the mystery of the future.

(Conclusion next week)

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger. English Ministers and Nova Scotia Churches.

A LETTER AND A COMMENT.

Dear Editor,—

I beg to call your attention, and that of your readers, to the following letter: To the Editor of the Baptist (English).

DEAR SIR.—As one of the ministers who have been in communication with Rev. J. Brown concerning a pastorate in Nova Scotia, will you permit me to say that it may be the case with others as with myself, that although willing, they had not means to pay, their own expenses out to that country?

The majority of our pastors have too small an income to even allow them to save sufficient for that purpose. I think if the passage money could be guaranteed, with a little over to provide for a family left behind whilst the minister goes to make a home in that colony, some brethren would be perfectly willing to respond to the cry.

October 27.

In this epistle our good-English brother, wishes to have his expenses paid to Nova Scotia, and expects to find a home when he has become acquainted here. However peculiar this may appear to us, I assure you, it is perfectly reasonable from his standpoint.

Rev. John Brown, acting on the request of our Home Mission Board, has been seeking, in England, ministers for Nova Scotia. Some time ago he was at my Alma Mater giving an address to the students; "fishing," as he said, for pastors.

Till now, I have never said anything, pro or con, on the matter; but I presume that "Theta" has heard that there are churches, here, which have been, for months, or years, without pastors. As English Baptists generally, do not withhold their contributions to the cause of Christ, under any circumstances, he naturally concludes that a church without a pastor, for a year, would have about \$500—in the hands of its treasurer. He will be astonished if he comes to find that the people usually keep the Lord's money themselves, as soon as a pastor resigns. Again the Brother speaks of making a home over here, perfectly innocent of the unsettled state of the Christian ministry among the Baptists. It is in no wise unreasonable for him to suppose that, if he be accepted as a suitable pastor, he may remain years, perhaps for life, in one place.

Now, Sir, it is quite clear to my mind, that if the churches in Nova Scotia were what is here assumed, there would be no reason at all why Theta should cross the Atlantic—Native ministers, able and true, holding good places in different directions in this Continent, would hurry home to fill the vacant pulpits; and far more of the piety and intelligence of the denomination would be attracted to the pastoral ranks. Why are your pastors so constantly driven out from this Province? Simply by lack of discipline in the churches. By discipline, I don't mean turning persons out of the church scarcely at all; but teaching

them conformity to our common principles.

I venture to predict that unless there be a radical change (amid the progress of educated common sense, and the sharp competition of other bodies) numbers of our churches in country places will pass out of existence.

Bear with me while I state a few facts touching the very heart of this subject. Twelve years ago a minister and his wife came to this country, paying their own passage. This minister was commended to the regard of the Baptist people here, at a public meeting held at the place of his late pastorate, presided over by a Close Communion D. D., known on both sides of the Atlantic, who sent a report of the meeting to the Christian Messenger. He brought with him good recommendations from Mr. Spurgeon, and the Secretary of the Association with which he was connected. On arrival he was directed to a church; while he found the people hospitable and kind, the church did not move to secure his services until he had left to visit fields of labour in other places. A letter came from the first church visited with a unanimous invitation just at the time when the people were completing an arrangement to secure his services. Being more acquainted with the people first visited, and having found attachments he accepted their offer at a hundred dollars less per annum than the others offered. The sympathies of the people were however divided and they would not pay the pastor after the end of the year. I have never heard of a single objection, that would have any weight with a thoughtful man, being brought against the character or ability of this minister, though he has been twelve years in these Provinces, striving to serve God amid great difficulties.

For several reasons, I am exceedingly sorry to have to write this. Nothing but a high sense of duty induces me to do it. I am persuaded that hereabout lies the obstacle to progress. During twelve years quite a stream of good ministers has poured out from Nova Scotia. If any of my countrymen are willing to come and fill the vacancies, I will give them a hearty welcome, they may do a vast amount of good—but if we are going recruiting for them we ought to be very faithful.

I love the Baptists of Nova Scotia; their earnest prayers; the intelligent addresses often had at the conferences; I love the tears many of them shed in sympathy with their pastors. The Psalmist said, "Put thou my tears into thy bottle are they not in thy book?" Thus I treasure the sympathies of my first pastorate in this Province; and if it were not unmanly to weep, I should be a perfect child on visiting the scenes of my past labours.

I feel that I could lay down my life for the principles of our denomination, and have always been troubled to see them crossed. Hence, for years, I have spent much time in becoming acquainted with our difficulties in various parts. I feel, too, that, in Providence, I have been led into their way that I may do something to roll them off from the churches; but my arm is weak, and it makes my heart bleed to say things that may seem unkind to any one.

Sometimes the remedy seems easy. Will not our beloved brethren, see to it that no one be permitted to peddle around, objections to their pastors? They have a right to object, if there be a cause; but it should be embodied in a resolution of want of confidence, or of censure, as the case may be, and brought before a church meeting, in regular order, and dispassionately considered. It is very remarkable, when a man has an objection to his pastor, if there be no other reason, he pleads the scarcity of money to pay a salary. It is so easy to get people to clothe purses. This as a rule in country places is the one objection, in England, Australia, the States, and Canada. Of course this will sometimes be valid; but never until every effort has been made kindly and promptly. With this understood, by all parties, let the English brethren come; and may it be in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.

H. BOOL.

Pugwash, Nov. 13th.