

Sunday Reading.

Hymn for Sabbath Morning.

BY REV. J. H. TOWNE, D. D.

Holy, holy, holy morn!
When creation first was born,
When the earth from chaos sprang,
When the stars of morning sang,
And the finished temple stood
Beautiful for all was good.
Man, in innocence arrayed,
Then his simple worship paid:
Praise was then his whole employ—
All his notes were notes of joy!

Holy, holy, holy morn!
Lo, a new creation born!
Christ has burst death's iron bars;
Shout again, ye morning stars!
Peace on earth, good will to men,
Strike, ye angel harps again!
Man redeemed—his ransom paid—
Christ has full atonement made!
Let the chorus of the skies
Hail the day that saw him rise!
Let the earth from labor free,
Keep the holy jubilee!

The Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland.

The President's Address at the opening is always regarded as a document of interest. We copy the substance of the one delivered at the late session at Liverpool, G. B. Devotional exercises had been held for an hour. The President, Rev. J. J. Brown in taking the chair said—

Honoured Brethren,—We have received many and generous forms of welcome in this great city, but there is none which I prize as highly as the prayers which have been offered for the presence and blessing of God. In the churches of our communions, and, I doubt not, in the churches of other communions, earnest prayers have been presented to God that our visit may be marked by gracious influence, and that we may carry back, in quickened faith and love and zeal, some fruits of our autumnal gathering. We value the sympathy, the affection, and the warm-hearted hospitality which are shown us, but we value far more the fervent prayers which are offered for us.

We might often hear the rebuke of the Saviour, "Ye know not what ye ask." But when we pray for each other, and for our spiritual work, they may "open our mouths wide that they may be filled." "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?"

THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD.

This is the spirit in which I would introduce the business of this day. In our assemblies we are wont to discuss very many and very divergent questions. This autumn the subject that will be brought before us is more directly the spiritual work of the Church. The relations which our churches sustain to each other, the condition and wants of those which are scattered in our rural districts, the duties and responsibilities of membership, and the work of our churches in evangelising our large towns, embrace the whole field of direct Christian labour, and may well occupy all our time and strength. The highest work that can engage the energies of pastors, and elders, and all Christian men, is placed before us.

Work that might fill an angel's heart, And filled the Saviour's hands.

It is delightful to linger among the sacred records of the first Christian Church. We gaze upon its youthful freshness, before sin had stained its purity, or sorrow had dimmed its brightness. We see it in the fervour of its first love, and faith, and zeal; we perceive the unity which marked it, and the showers of blessing which descended upon it.

CHRISTIANS AND MEMBERSHIP.

There is a question which meets us on the very threshold of our modern church life. What have our churches to offer to godly men which they cannot enjoy without membership? There are no awful mysteries enshrouding our churches. When a convert has entered, he does not find himself in a very different position from that in which he stood before. A name on the church roll, admission to a few select meetings, the privilege of the franchise in certain cases—these represent nearly all that is outward in church fellowship. "What profit shall we have?" as the result of any course of action, is the question which men often put. They look at the direct practical gain of any step they take. Church membership does not appear to many men as it once did. The influence of sentiment has been greatly lessened among us.

Nay, there are not wanting some who think that our churches are rather an evil than a good. If we listen to some critics, the sinners are within the Church and the saints are without. They discern a higher standard of

morals, and greater integrity of character and life, in those who have never entered the church and it might be supposed that the piety, the spirituality, and the beneficence of mankind were to be found in the world. I do not believe it. All history, all experience, contradict the assumption. Still it must be admitted that there are many outside whom we would welcome into our communion. We should gain by their fellowship, and they would gain by ours. It is their sin and their loss that they stand aloof. It may be as frankly admitted that there are many in our churches who seem no better for their union with us. There is no sign of life, no growth, no fruitfulness. There is no power of assimilation. They receive nothing; they impart nothing.

Our churches have nothing to draw men into them but the spiritual life which they contain. If men feel that there is a real society, instinct with Christian life, towards which they are drawn by spiritual sympathy, and within which they would derive help and strength, they will seek admission. Is there anything answering to this to be found in our churches? If the object of the Christian Church be the cultivation of taste and social refinement, and the production of a chaste ritual, then indeed most of our churches are a conspicuous failure. Men face to face with life and death cannot consider the appropriateness of a gesture or the polish of a phrase. Still, let us not deceive ourselves in this matter. The absence of outward pomp does not necessarily imply the presence of spiritual power. If some attractions are beyond our reach, and if we are not careful to attain others, let us strive with intense earnestness that the one attraction which cannot fail to win men's hearts—the attractive power of the cross of Christ—shall be ever conspicuously presented in our midst.

THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS.

We believe in the "Holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints." That Church is founded in man's spiritual instincts and wants; and is designed to unfold the noblest faculties of his nature, and to give exercise to the highest powers of his life. Many of us can remember our entrance into this spiritual society, and the fresh life, the awakened hope, and the quickened aspiration which accompanied our admission. It may be that these visions have been somewhat dimmed, and these holy feelings chilled. It may be that the eye of the spiritual mother has not been as vigilant, her voice not as cheering, and her hand not as helpful, as we may have anticipated, but the young life was nourished and strengthened. We have to thank God for some wise and loving heart which has drawn us more closely to the Saviour, and has "expounded to us the way of God more perfectly;" and not least for some voice which has warned us of the temptations and snares that lay in our path.

The Church of Christ should strive to present a living standard of righteousness and holiness to the world. All the members of our churches are not holy, and the holiness of the best is very imperfect. It may be said of the true disciples of the Lord Jesus as of the Knights of King Arthur:—

For good ye are, and bad, and like to you.

Some true, some light, but every one of you
Stamped with the image of a king.

The instruments to do God's work must be like God. Those who come into closest communion with Him must be partakers of His nature and character. We need to cultivate a loftier standard of Christian life, and of fitness for the Divine service. It is humiliating to confess how far short of the Divine conception the Church of Christ has been in every age. This is as true of the churches planted and watered by the apostles as of the churches which we represent to-day. Apart from the hypocrites and self-deceivers who "have crept in unawares" the truest members have never adequately represented Christ to the world. The image and superscription of the Lord of the Church is very dim and imperfect. The image is so distorted and the superscription is so worn that only the loving eye of Christ can discern it. We need to ponder the rebukes addressed to the Churches of Asia, whose light has been extinguished, and whose names remain a memorial of past unfaithfulness, and a warning to us upon whom loftier privileges have been conferred and greater responsibilities rest.

DANGER OF MERE NUMERICAL SUCCESS.

It may be that we have been too anxious to increase the roll of church members. We may have been more concerned about the numbers on that roll than about the character of those whose names it bore. We are naturally unwilling even to remove the names of the sheep who have wandered from the fold. No doubt the army which gathered around Gideon, as by the wand of an enchanter, seemed a mighty and imposing host. By mere force of numbers it would strike terror into the Midianites. To any eye but that of

God all Israel seemed to have risen as one man, and was animated by an unconquerable spirit of faith and courage. But on the first hint that whosoever was "fearful and afraid" might return to his own home, twenty-two thousand melted away like snowflakes in the sun. The three hundred in whose hands the leader placed the trumpets, and from whose lips came the mighty shout, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon," were better than the thousands whose craven hearts had shrunk from the conflict.

We have discipline in the church, but that discipline is at best a very rude and imperfect instrument. Our discipline however wise, can only touch gross and exceptional cases of sin. There are many sins which it does not attempt to touch. I never heard of a man being excluded from the church because he was covetous, though no doubt whatever existed of the fact. I never heard of a man being expelled because he was a mere lumberer of the Lord's vineyard. The patience and forbearance of the church seem to approach the Divine! There is no danger that our zeal for purity will uproot the wheat with the tares. Indeed, the most grievous sins of the church, the sins which eat out her heart, and strangle her very life, the sins of selfishness, of worldliness, and of sloth, cannot be touched by our discipline. These can be expelled only as the evil spirit could be cast out, by "prayer and fasting." It is not by penal processes that the culture of a higher life in the church is to be promoted. We must unfold the Divine life from within. The members of our churches should be distinguished by their tone as well as by their acts. In our intercourse with each other, on the exchange and in the mart, the moral standard of Christ should be striven after. The sermon on the mount is as much a part of the Gospel as the wonderful discourses in the supper chamber at Jerusalem. As in our Lord's transfiguration it would seem that it was not any splendour shed upon His person from without, that made His face as "the sun, and His raiment white as the light," but the glory of His own nature, shining forth until His whole being was transfigured; so from the unfolding of the life of God in the soul of each believer, the church shall become what the Saviour designed His Bride to be—the light, the glory, and the joy of the world!

NEED FOR BROAD AND LOVING SYMPATHIES.

The Church of Christ must cultivate broad and loving sympathies. "The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and one soul." They were drawn and knit together by spiritual affinities. Their unity struck deeper than the ties which bind other communities. Sympathy drew them into fellowship, and that fellowship deepened and purified their sympathy. To be in sympathy with one another is as much a condition of healthful church life as to be in sympathy with the Lord. "The communion of saints" is not a mere sentiment, a beautiful abstraction, but a living active principle, which will spring forth in many forms of service. It will mean suffering with those who suffer, as well as rejoicing with those who rejoice. No doubt there were in the early church, as there may be among ourselves, those who would regard as extravagant any great act of sacrifice, whether done unto the Master or unto his disciples: "Why was this waste of ointment made?" The old Adam lingers long, even in regenerate souls. There are many in our churches who do not realize the duties, the privileges, or the blessedness that spring from being members of the Body of Christ. However closely they may be united to the Head, they seem "strangers and foreigners" in the family. This is not the spirit of Christ. In this relation no Christian "liveth to himself," and no Christian "dieth to himself." We must cherish that charity which "beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." We must allow no word to drop from our lips which would wound the feelings, sully the purity, or turn from the path of holiness the humblest member of Christ's Church.

This broad and loving sympathy should not only be cherished toward all the members of the same church, but should overflow toward other churches. The most lively exercise of love toward the members of your special body may only be a disguised form of selfishness. "For if ye love them that love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same?" The purity, the activity, the usefulness of all our churches should be the concern and the prayer of each. "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." This is the pressing question of to-day, and has been brought before us again and again. We may easily be frightened by the spectre of independence. Words may often cheat and deceive us. Independence! There is no independence in this world, whatever there may be in any other. The stronger churches may stand aloof in coldness or indifference; it is almost inevitable that the weaker churches should cherish distrust. Their very weakness makes them sensitive, if

not proud. I can respect their sensitiveness and even their pride.

There is a great need of a broad and loving spirit towards those who are outside the fellowship of the Church. Ours is an age of unrest. The mists have enveloped many minds.

God has entrusted rich and varied endowments to His Church for His service. We read of the gifts conferred in apostolic times. "All these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will." These were not supernatural or miraculous endowments only. There were such endowments, they have had their uses, and have passed away. There were other and richer gifts, and these abide in the Church for ever. Not in the spirit of boasting, but of thankfulness, we may say, "In everything ye are enriched by Him in all utterance and in all knowledge." "Ye come behind in no gift."

UNUSED GIFTS.

It is appalling to think of the Divine gifts which lie unused among us. There are mines of spiritual wealth, as yet almost entirely untouched. It is not the one talent only that is "kept hid up in a napkin," but with many the two talents and the five. There are springs of sympathy in our Churches which would refresh and gladden many if they were unsealed and allowed to flow forth. Your experience of what you have tasted and felt of the grace of God would cheer and strengthen those who are cast down, if you would only tell them "what God has done for your soul." The gifts of teaching and ruling have not passed away from the Church, and are certainly not confined to the pastors.

It is still more appalling to think that these very gifts are dying out in the soul by mere neglect. The stagnant water gathers scum on its surface, and scatters miasma around; the flowing stream carries with it life and beauty. Every faculty grows and gains strength by exercise, and every faculty becomes duller and feebler by neglect. This process of decay may be going on unconsciously in our spiritual nature. The glory departs from the temple and leaves it a common dwelling. There are men to be found in our churches whose youth was rich in good works, whose manhood began to exhibit signs of decay, and whose mature life is withered, sapless, and barren!

It may be that we are ashamed of some forms of Christian activity which we see around us. They not only offend our taste, but they shock our sense of reverence. Not only can we not adopt the same means, but we are scandalized by the extravagances which we witness. Yet, instead of being driven into even colder propriety and building still higher the walls which shut us in, it may be well for us to ask how much of this has arisen from our criminal neglect of duty. If we had diligently used our gifts, there would have been less scope for that from which we shrink. If our Christianity had been more self-denying and more compassionate toward the ignorant and those who are out of the way, the moral and spiritual "waste places" around us would not have existed.

Dr. Livingstone somewhat describes a period of terrible drought, extending over three years. The rain would not come. The clouds often collected over him, and rolling thunder seemed to promise refreshing showers; but the next morning the sun would rise in a clear, cloudless sky. Nay, he even often saw it raining on the hills ten miles away, but it would not come near him. There was something which hindered or kept back the rain. Something like this has often been experienced in Christian hearts. There have been eager longings for the blessing which should quicken the world into new life. Nay, in our happier moments we seem to have caught "the sound of abundance of rain." Who knoweth whether it be for such a time as this that we are gathered in this city.

"Let Thy work appear unto Thy servants, and Thy glory unto their children." And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish Thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish Thou it."

The sentiment of British people with regard to the war in Egypt may be understood by the following episode in Glasgow a few days ago:

At a crowded and stormy meeting, Sir Wilfrid Lawson spoke against the war in Egypt, and said the greatest interest of the British was peace, and those who stated the Suez Canal required to be protected were wrong, for it was never in danger. He asked whether it was right to carry out a policy which supported one man who was fighting against another, and which cost this country £50,000 pounds daily. An amendment declaring the meeting to be of opinion that the measures taken by the Government in Egypt are justifiable was carried.

He is the greatest who chooses to do right at all times.

Essay.

Requisites of the Sabbath School Teacher.

A PAPER READ BEFORE THE ANNAPOLIS COUNTY SABBATH SCHOOL CONVENTION, HELD AT MELVERN SQUARE, SEPT. 14TH, 1882, BY L. M. LONGLEY, A. B.

(Published by request).

That the office of teacher in any capacity is an important one no one will deny. Especially is this true in connection with Sabbath School work. The importance of the subjects taught, the impressive character of those instructed, together with the unconscious influence exerted upon them, are all weighty considerations which press upon us, and demand our careful attention.

That there are requisites for the work of Sabbath School teaching our subject implies. In our search for these may it not be that our conceptions of the work of the teacher will be enlarged, and our interest in the work increased, while our desire to come nearer and nearer to our ideal of what the true teacher should be will have its influence for good upon our hearts? If, in our meeting to-day, either of these results be accomplished, or any of the thoughts growing out of this subject aid in securing that result, our meeting will not have been in vain, nor the consideration of this question unprofitable.

We shall treat our subject 1st, subjectively, 2nd, objectively, classing under the first requisites to be looked for in the teacher himself; and under the second those arising from his relationship with his class.

Inasmuch as it belongs largely to the teacher to communicate truth, it follows that the object of all truth must ever be held preëminent. It is not the pipes through which the water flows that satisfy our craving thirst; nor is it the instrument through which we gaze that gives us pleasure. All we ask of the one is that they allow the crystal water from the fountain above to come through them to our lips, and of the other that by the transparency of its glasses it would allow us to view the varied forms of beauty as they exist in the world around and above us. The teacher is this channel of communication, and he teaches best through whom his class sees in Christ Jesus, God's well beloved Son, "the one altogether lovely, and the chiefest among ten thousand."

It may be laid down as a self-evident truth that no one can impart instruction on a subject of which he is himself ignorant. Hence, the first requisite of the Sabbath School teacher, I should say, is *knowledge*. This I take to imply an intelligent and comprehensive view of the subject under consideration, together with its connection with such kindred topics as naturally spring from it. It also implies an acquaintance with those taught, especially as regards natural temperament, and the best means of approaching them to gain their interest and confidence. But above all this, in the Sabbath School teacher, I take it, that knowledge implies *spiritual enlightenment*; it implies that the teacher should be the possessor of *true piety*. I am aware that it may be advocated by some that morality alone is a sufficient requisite for Sabbath School work. But while we place a high value on morality, and know that the inculcation of it is an important element in Sabbath School instruction, yet we maintain that of itself it is not a sufficient qualification for the Sabbath School teacher. For if we admit it as a sufficient qualification in one case, how shall we arise above it into the atmosphere of spiritual truth, and the imparting of it as the truer purpose of the Sabbath School?

But it may be said that it is not always possible to secure just the kind of teachers we require; and is it not better in that case to have teachers such as we have mentioned than none at all? Our reply is this: Wherever there is a Sabbath School established there must be a moving spirit in it, one whose heart bears love to God and men. Better to bring the school all into one class under the influence of that one heart, warm with love to Christ, and more success will mark the effort, more zeal and love for truth will be awakened than can possibly be accomplished where only the letter of truth is communicated and the spirit lacking—that spirit which manifests itself in the warm heart and tender words of the living, loving teacher. Who can measure the influence and impressions that youthful minds are receiving all around us day by day? Who shall say that the very remembrance of the glance of the eye, misty with tenderness, did not cling to that wayward boy, and in after years, bring him to a knowledge of the truth? But how shall we have this God-given power in our Sabbath Schools unless our teachers are themselves in direct communion with Truth—with God Him-

self? Granted, for a moment, that our teachers are masters in learning, and even persuasive in eloquence in the enforcement of moral truth, but lacking true piety—love to God—what would be the outgrowth of our Sabbath Schools? Giants, perhaps, in intellect, and subtle handlers of the Word, but, more than probable, sceptics at heart, wielding the Sword of the Spirit to their own destruction.

Another requisite that we mention for successful teaching is *zeal*. Term it what you will, spirit, whole-heartedness, enthusiasm, or any such term, I will call it zeal. By it I mean a zeal that has its source in love, and I will also qualify it by the statement that it is a zeal according to knowledge. We all remember the story of the little child who, in its innocent play and search for the beautiful flowers, wandered off from its nurse into the open plain, into the shady grove, still pursuing its delighted way. We give the picture with the thought that in it there may be a lesson for us. Are there not beauties in God's Word to draw us out from ourselves? As our minds comprehend the truths it unfolds they rise before us as the tall cedars of Lebanon, or we gaze upon a delicate flower which, upon closer view, shows itself as none other than the Rose of Sharon and the Lily of the Valley. We walk in green pastures and beside the still waters, on and on, and who shall say that the beauties that meet us on every hand will not enrapture our very being? The fulness of our comprehension of beauty gives intensity to our description, and, like the glory in the transfiguration, illuminates our souls, giving fire and force to our expression of it. How can it be otherwise than that the Christian Sabbath School teacher should have zeal in his work? And will he not thus draw his pupils after him? Will they not seek to follow the same paths along which he leads? It is recorded of Caesar that he said to his men not "Ite," go on, but "Venite," come on. By his own fearless example he inspired his men to noble endeavor, and led them on to victory. So may the Sabbath School teacher, as well as the Christian preacher, "allure to brighter worlds and lead the way."

But zeal is not a mere effervescence. In endeavoring to impart religious instruction it is to be desired that the teacher himself feel the force of all the truth he seeks to impart. 'Tis then he feels blest in his labor of love. But should this lively emotion be wanting there still remain his *convictions of truth* which assure him that the ground on which he stands, though holy, is blessed, and he walks with sure step. He has his chart and compass to guide him, and he knows their word is sure. Then may he well have a zeal—a zeal, too, guided by knowledge.

As a third requisite for the Sabbath School teacher we note *persistence*. This virtue is inculcated by Paul, in his forcible charge to Timothy, in the words, "Thou, therefore, endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." Through all the devious way, through all the hindrance, through all the discouragement incident to the Christian leader's pathway, Paul well knew the need of the strongest fortitude. He knew that success, as dependent upon human means, meant active, self-denying, and continuous effort. For him it meant hungerings and thirstings, it meant bonds and imprisonment, but withal there was that constant looking forward to that blessed hope and the crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous Judge, should give at that day. A beautiful picture for our contemplation, and fraught with profit as well! Christian effort is the same in all ages. What was necessary for success then is as requisite now; and in Sabbath School work as in the Christian pastor's work is there need of this grace of endurance. And if it be desirable that this spirit permeate the whole body of our Sabbath School workers, that simply means that it is to be sought for by the individuals composing that body. Does any one ask for incentives to attain this? They are not wanting. Steadfastness on the part of the teacher is necessary to convince his pupils that he loves his work, and thus that he loves them, and has a strong interest in their highest good. Persistent effort wins the day where faltering steps would fail, and faithful service gives the teacher a power with his class that cannot otherwise be obtained.—Further encouragement is derived from the Word of God. Hearken to the words: "Be not weary in well doing, for in due season ye shall reap if ye faint not;" "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

Having treated thus fully of the qualifications of the teacher personally, we pass now to consider him in his relations to his class. Of the many requisites that might be mentioned here we shall note but four.