

Religious Intelligencer.

SAINT JOHN, N. B., JULY 1, 1853.

OUR PAPER. We now present our readers with the *Intelligencer* enlarged and improved according to promise. We hope it will meet their approbation. It is the cheapest paper, that we have any knowledge of. We sincerely pray that God may give it favour in the eyes of the people.

SABBATH SCHOOLS.

In our former articles on Sabbath Schools, we gave their *Origin and Progress*, until their existence seemed to be essential to the maintenance of proper religious influence. One thing is certain, the importance of early training, cannot be too highly prized. Terrible as was the shock which man's moral nature received by the fall, it was not totally buried in the ruins. He has a moral nature still, and is susceptible of controlling impressions. However deeply depraved—however strongly inclined to sin from the cradle, yet moral culture in most cases, is a restraint, without which, men generally would become vicious members of Society. Hence the admonition of the wise man: "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." And doubtless the opposite is nearly as true—train up a child in the way he should *not* go, and when he is old he will *not* depart from it. God and nature and human law, have assigned to parents the moral culture of their children. But how many ignorant of God, (and hence, ignorant of the only element of goodness and happiness,) manifest but little affection, or care for their offspring, and hence entirely neglect them; while there are others whose false affection prove the ruin of theirs. How many from their birth, are pampered in pride, and nursed in indulgence, without a sentence taught them about God or Heaven, or the way to either. There are thousands of children in our own Province, who receive no religious instruction at home. And although many of them are restrained from out-breaking sins, nevertheless they grow up without religious principle, and are prepared for skepticism and death. To remedy this deplorable evil has been one work of Sabbath Schools. To bring within the circle of religious influence, the children whose only parental training is *for earth*—to perform the duty which God assigned to the parent to do,—to teach his words diligently unto their children, to talk of them when they sit in the house, and when they walk by the way, when they lie down, and when they rise up. (Deut. 6. 7.) Was every parent a christian—did every father and mother feel that in the children given them they have immortal souls entrusted to their care; were the rules of every household drawn from the word of God—was there an altar of prayer in every dwelling, then the utility of Sabbath Schools would probably not be so great. But such alas, is not the case. And while the Sabbath School has gathered in the little objects of parental neglect, or parental error; how often has it also qualified and sent back to the family circle a little Missionary with the treasures of wisdom and knowledge to teach perhaps the parents, who have been long accustomed to sin, the way of life and peace. And what an old woman once said on this very subject, might be said with equal propriety by thousands of others:—"I have learned more of religion," said she, "in a few months, than for any thirty years of my life, and all through the Sunday School, the children and the little books."

"One day," says Mr. Raikes the founder of Sunday Schools, "as I was going to church, I overtook a soldier just entering the church door. As I passed

him, I said it gave me pleasure to see him going to a place of worship." "Ah sir," said he, "I may thank you for that." "Me" said Mr. R., "Why I do not know that I ever saw you before." "Sir," said the soldier, "When I was a little boy, I was indebted to you for my first instruction in my duty. I used to meet you at the morning service in this Cathedral, and was one of your Sunday scholars, and I came here this morning in hopes of once more seeing you." The soldier brought himself to Mr. Raikes' recollection by the following circumstance. "His father," says Mr. R., "was a most vile profligate man. After the boy had been some time at school, he came one day and told me that his father was wonderfully changed, and that he had left off going to the ale house on a Sunday. It happened soon after that I met the man in the street, and said to him, 'My dear friend, it gives me great pleasure to hear that you have left off going to the ale house on the Sunday: your boy tells me that you now stay at home, and never get tisy.' 'Sir,' said he, 'I may thank you for it.' 'Nay,' said I, 'that is impossible: I do not recollect that I ever spoke to you before.' 'No sir,' said he, 'but the good instructions you give my boy he brings home to me, and it is that, SIR, WHICH HAS INDUCED ME TO REFORM MY LIFE.'"

These are only solitary instances which stand among the tens of thousands which might be recorded in the annals of Sabbath Schools, and which are all evidences of their utility. But not only are the children of irreligious parents blessed, and made a blessing to others, but the Sabbath School aids the christian father and mother, in the work of training their beloved offspring—in forming and developing their best moral powers, and in storing their youthful minds with maxims of truth and righteousness—that in thousands of cases are barriers against evil in the rough voyage of human life, as well as in bringing them "nigh to God."

Neither does it stop here. What work is more calculated to aid the christian, in the enlargement of his soul—in the exercise of his grace—in the discipline of all his moral powers, and in their full development, than the labor of instruction? In the Sabbath School, the young christian, the middle-aged, and the aged, the male and the female, the minister of Christ, and every member of the body, may do something; may converse—may pray—may instruct—may expound—may plant the principles of eternal life in the youthful heart, and aid in moulding it for glory and for God. Here is presented a field broad enough for the entire Church, activity in which is a blessing to the Church itself, apart from the consequences without. We cannot pursue the subject further at present. We urge its claims and utility, and we long for the time when every Church shall feel that identified with its prosperity, is the existence in its midst of a well regulated and efficient Sabbath School.

DISTRICT MEETING.

THE SIXTH DISTRICT MEETING OF FREE C. BAPTIST commenced its Session with the 2d Church in Dorchester, on Saturday the 18th ult., at 10, A. M., and continued over the following days. The elders present were, E. Wayman, John Perry, J. Gunter, E. McLeod, and John Wallace. Saturday and Sunday were occupied, as is usual at such meetings, by conference and preaching; and although the Divine presence was not so peculiarly manifested as we have often seen it, yet, some special blessing was enjoyed, and the hearts of some of God's dear children were made to rejoice in Him. Brother E. Wayman and ourselves spent the Sabbath with the Church in Dover: very large congregations were present through the day, and we trust the word spoken, was, at least, *bread cast upon the waters*.

On Monday, at 9, A. M., the Elders and Messengers met for the purpose of reporting the Churches and attending to the business of the District. There are eleven churches belonging to the District. (The

church at Dutch Valley was omitted, through mistake, in the notice which we gave for the meeting.) Nine churches were reported by Messengers, and one by letter. There have been added to these Churches, during the last year, forty members, making their present number four hundred and seventy three, which, with the one not heard from, (whose number we do not know,) will probably make about five hundred members belonging to the Sixth D. Meeting. In addition to these, Elder J. Wallace presented reports from three small churches, which have been gathered, principally, and organized by him, and who sent requests to become members of Conference. Five of the churches represented have interesting Sabbath Schools. The number of youths and children taught in these schools are over one hundred and sixty. And there was one feature in the reports, which we think is peculiarly significant; and that is, in every church, where there have been any conversions, there is a Sabbath School. This shows that revivals in churches either awaken an interest in this department of christian labour, or Sabbath Schools are attended with a blessing to the churches that sustain them. The following is the Report made by the Committee on this subject to the Meeting:—

The Committee appointed on Sabbath Schools Report:—That we view with pleasure, that an interest in Sabbath Schools, and prosperity in the Churches, seem to exist together, and we rejoice that several churches in this District have now in them flourishing schools; and we entertain the hope that continued interest in them will result in greater blessings to the churches and communities in which they exist. And while we recommend the immediate organization of Sabbath Schools in churches where they have not yet been introduced, and the renewal of such as have been discontinued, we would also call upon parents to give their influence in their behalf, in order that their children may enjoy the blessings of an institution which God so signally owns and blesses.

J. GUNTER,
G. M'CREADY,
J. MACHUM.

A very great want of Pastoral and Missionary labour is felt in several of the churches and communities composing the Sixth District; and it is high time that Ministers and Christians awoke to the importance of mutual efforts to break the bread of life to starving souls. Observation, as well as scripture, prove to us that Churches cannot prosper without a Heaven-called and Heaven-sustained ministry. By Heaven-called, we mean a ministry appointed of God; by Heaven-sustained, we do not mean, *fed by parents*, as was the prophet; but sustained according to Divine appointment and ordination; the perfect rule for which is laid down in our rule of faith—the Word of God. Those churches which according to their ability sustain the most ministerial labour, and are the most engaged in *active benevolence*, are generally the most prosperous. And those Ministers of Christ, who are most willing to sacrifice to God, are the most useful. All the churches represented in the Sixth District have contributed something to the G. C. Fund, and some of them quite liberally; and they have all manifested a disposition to sustain ministerial labour among them, provided it can be obtained. The want of it among us, as well as the destination thereof throughout the Province, is a matter that calls to deep humiliation and prayer.

Among the business of the Meeting was the appointment of Brethren John Machum and John Colpitts, as Delegates to the General Conference. The next meeting of this District will be held with the Church in Lower Sussex and Stedholm, commencing the fourth Saturday in June next.

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