

## The Sunday School Banner.

TORONTO, SEPTEMBER, 1873.

### A WORD FOR THE SEASON.

THE season through which we are now passing is one of peculiar trial to all branches of Christian work. A feeling of depression, caused by the sympathy of the human frame with the state of the weather, seems to affect those engaged in the various fields of labor for the Saviour. This is the time for vacations. Every one who finds it possible leaves the more densely populated parts of the country, and endeavors to obtain rest and relief where nature's sovereignty is undisturbed. The clerk leaves his desk, and flings aside his business cares with his well-worn pen; the accountant brings his ledger together with a "bang," and rejoices in the thought that, for a few weeks he shall bother his brain with no long columns of figures that seem resolved not to come right; the preacher closes his study, and locks his MSS. carefully away, and seeks, by recreation, to fit himself anew for the work of soul-saving; and the lawyer, needing no calendar to remind him that the "heated term" has come, forsakes his briefs and clients, to wander in other fields than those of legal fame.

And this is natural. But there is a disposition in some quarters to carry the thing too far. Thus we read, with deep regret, that during the warm weather certain churches and schools will be closed. Yes, this happens not to be the case in the Dominion; but is not the infection spreading? We blame no one for seeking renewed vigor through means so abundantly provided; but is it never the case that duty's calls are neglected, and the cause of the Redeemer made to suffer, that this should be brought about?

Even where this is not the case, we have observed the disposition to let things take their own course in such seasons as this; the school is opened with less punctuality; the lessons are less carefully prepared; the singing is lazily engaged

in; the absent scholars are not looked after with the customary diligence. We are not unfamiliar with the excuse, "It is so hard to make much effort now." So it is. And yet, as the professed followers of Christ, should not a little extra effort and self-sacrifice be made, that there may not be ground lost? We have feared sometimes that our revivals in the winter season but make up for our losses in the summer, when we permit almost everything to go at loose ends.

We do not notice any less activity on the part of Satan because it is "dog days." The daily papers contain no less "amusement" advertisements. We never knew of a bar-room being closed on account of dull times occasioned through heat. Oh! is it not so that "the children of this generation are wiser than the children of light?"

It seems to us that we should never be more watchful than now,—that the preachers should preach their best (and shortest) sermons,—that the lesson should be more carefully prepared, and the session should be made throughout lively and interesting. Shorten the exercises by all means, an hour is long enough for a school when an August sun is strong; but don't put less of Christ in the lesson, nor less of life into the exposition.

Are we asking too much? Are we requiring more than flesh and blood can endure? We would not willingly do so. We ask it for the thousands of our children who never know the joy of a holiday; and for the thousands whose temptation lies in the very fact that holidays are so abundant; we ask for the sake of those to whom next winter's special service will be of no avail; for their sake we ask every Sabbath-school teacher to endeavor now, at the cost, perhaps, of some pleasure and personal comfort, not to yield the battle to the enemy. Don't wait for the cool weather before you speak to that scholar for Christ. It may be the autumn winds may whistle around his grave, or that, before the flame of a revival shall kindle, the lips that should have spoken the message may be closed by death. Let us work, then, while it is day, for "the night cometh when no man can work."