

To fulfil the duty of chairman on such an occasion as this, I assure you, an undertaking to which I have been but little accustomed; and in attempting to do so this evening I shall have mainly to rely for success on the kindly indulgence and support of the audience and on the desire of each one to maintain order and to give close attention to the addresses which are to be delivered; and, if these conditions are complied with, my task in the chair will be an easy and agreeable one, and, I may add, a corresponding pleasure and benefit will accrue to yourselves.

There is, however, a two-fold claim which I think I may venture to urge in favour of my sustaining, in some measure satisfactorily, the position which you have called on me this evening to fill, and the claim is grounded on these two facts—that I shall be careful not to detain you by any lengthened remarks of my own, and in the next place that I shall be the means of introducing to you my Rev. friends beside me, by whose addresses, I know, you will be delighted as well as instructed and profited. Aye, and in looking around, I find I might have added a third claim, as strong as any, for I see that my friend Mr. McKay with a strong corps of musical artists are already in their places, and are both willing and ready to contribute their part to the delight and enjoyment of the evening. (Applause.)

I have reason to believe that I am only giving expression to the general opinion when I say that, so far as relates to the more material portion of the evening's entertainment, so far as concerns the department superintended by the ladies, and managed and provided for by the committee of arrangements, all has been eminently satisfactory and eminently successful, and that the universal sentiment in respect to the friends connected with this department is—"They have done well. They deserve our best thanks." And now, if I shall have the good fortune to achieve a similar success in regard to that part of the evening's entertainment with which I may be looked upon as more directly connected, if I shall have been the means of securing for you an intellectual repast—an oratorical feast, which shall bear a favorable comparison with the standard attained in the other department, then shall I also expect to obtain the testimony of your approval, and to find that your decision in respect to the chairman is—"He also has done his part well." And upon that issue am I willing and prepared to let my credit and good name as your chairman to-night be staked and determined; and, when I look round and see the speakers who are to address you, I have no fear that the verdict shall be carried against me.

For the commencement of the rich feast yet before you I know you are all anxiously waiting; and I have pledged myself not to interpose delay by my own remarks. But, unwilling though I am to detain you, I yet feel I must claim time to express the hope that our meeting to-night will be the means of strengthening the Sabbath School cause, and of giving an impetus to the zeal of its friends in this quarter of the congregation and in other quarters of it also. The work indeed is little more than begun. I feel that a very great deal yet requires to be done before the duty that lies before us in this matter can be said to be in any adequate degree overtaken. There was a statement made to me the other day by Mr. McKay, one of our elders—and I know you will agree with me in saying that his name, his word is authority equal at least to that of any other person in this township or in this county—I say there was a statement made to me a short time ago by him, which I may be permitted to repeat here to-night, as conveying to us an

important lesson, as showing the work required to be done by us in the field of labour of which we are speaking. His statement to me was this—That, taking in the whole of this township, our Church is more numerous than either of the other Presbyterian bodies. And, whilst our prayer and fervent hope is—whilst the prayer and fervent hope of every one of us is—that the time may soon come when all the branches of the Presbyterian Church shall be united in one—then shall there be one great Presbyterian Church in all Canada. (Loud Cheers.) Yet the fact that the majority of the Presbyterians of this township are members or adherents of our communion should teach us our responsibility and awaken us to a sense of the magnitude and importance of the work before us. I know well the difficulties to be encountered in keeping up or in trying to keep up a large and well-equipped Sabbath School in country districts, where the families are so much scattered and so far removed from each other, as is generally the case in Canada. But notwithstanding this drawback I still cherish the hope that the present meeting will have a beneficial and expansive influence on the cause, not only in this but also in other districts of the congregation. Among other good results flowing from it I expect to hear of a larger and better attendance of scholars in this place, though the attendance so far has been very encouraging; and I also hope that those who are engaged here from Sabbath to Sabbath in teaching will find their hands strengthened and their hearts encouraged to renewed diligence and devotedness in their work. To them would I only say at present that the consciousness of doing good to others, or of seeking to do it, will be the best and most satisfactory reward of your labours here—a reward perhaps the most pure and delightful which is given to man to enjoy upon earth—but surely the approbation of this meeting and of our good friends from a distance who have travelled so far to be present to-night, to countenance and encourage your endeavours, is a reward highly to be prized and esteemed, and should cause you "not to weary in well doing" but to persevere in your work of faith and labour of love. And let us further cherish the hope that the example will spread, and that at no distant day we shall have the pleasure of seeing Sabbath Schools organized and in efficient operation in other branches of the congregation.

I fear I am in danger of violating my pledge by detaining you too long; and I shall therefore put a close to my remarks and thus make way for the speakers who are now to address you; and let me request that good order be observed, and the strictest attention paid, whilst they are doing so. The speaker whose name is first on my list is the Rev. Mr. Carmichael, of King, who has come so far through the rain to address you on the present occasion. Mr. Carmichael, I am happy to say, is not altogether a stranger amongst us. We shall not readily forget, I trust, the remarkably able and eloquent speech which he delivered here last winter on the Home Mission cause of our Church. For my part I can say that in Mr. Carmichael I have never been disappointed, and I think I am not risking a great deal in predicting that I shall be able to say as much both for you and myself this evening also. He is a young gentleman in regard to whose acquirements and great talents and ability there is but one opinion amongst those who best know him. Permit me now to introduce to you Mr. Carmichael, who has such strong claims on our friendship and gratitude. (Applause.)

Mr. Carmichael, on coming forward, was met with a kind reception, and proceeded to

address the audience in a speech of great force and impressiveness, of which we can give only a brief analysis. After making some introductory remarks he referred to the prosperous state of the school, which was manifest from the large number of children and parents assembled there that evening, many from a great distance through muddy roads and a drizzling rain. He reminded the scholars of their high and precious privileges, privileges denied to thousands of little boys and girls equally deserving with them. He reminded them of their obligations of practising in their daily walk and conversation the lessons of heavenly wisdom they learned in the Sabbath School. He referred to the opportunities for doing good which even the youngest among them enjoyed; how they, following the example of their great Master, might recommend vital religion to their youthful and careless companions, and persuade them to accompany them to the House of God, that they might there learn of Him "who came to seek and save the lost." He encouraged them to persevere nor ever grow weary in this work, inasmuch as the lessons they received might influence their whole future lives and make them happy or miserable for eternity. He encouraged the teachers also to persevere.

They should be stirred up by this large assembly to greater diligence for the time to come. They could not but feel that their labours had been crowned with some success. The Sabbath School teacher has many difficulties to contend against; there is often inattention on the part of the scholars, and carelessness on the part of the parents. Their attendance is irregular; the lessons are far from carefully prepared; they see no prospect of any good resulting from their labours; their most faithful and prayerful instructions seem as if thrown uselessly away; no fruit appears, not even a green blade; no buds of promise telling of a coming harvest of heavenly fruit. Sabbath after Sabbath they have plied their little charge with invitations of mercy, admonitions, warnings, entreaties, but all seemingly in vain. In vain they cannot be! God is faithful; not one word ever spoken for Him has been in vain. The seed you sow so patiently, watering it with your tears and prayers, will spring up; a harvest will one day be gathered where you have laboured so faithfully. Not in your day, perhaps, but what of that? Others in past ages have laboured that you might reap the result. Why should you grudge to toil though others and not yourselves should be the reapers? Nor think that the sphere you enjoy is too small. An angel would covet to labour there; the highest angel in glory would esteem it an honour and a privilege to be employed in teaching an erring child the story of the manger and the Cross, the agony of Gethsemane and the sorrows of Calvary. The success that has always attended the Sabbath School should furnish ground of encouragement to teachers. What multitudes have received their earliest religious impressions there! Has it not ever been the nursery of the Church? Have not many of the noblest and most faithful ministers of the Church left it on record that it was in the Sabbath School they were first made acquainted with the "truth as it is in Jesus." He enjoined on parents the necessity of carefully following up at home the instructions which their children received in the Sabbath School. The labours of the teachers are not designed to supersede their duties, but rather to be an auxiliary to them. They are not released from their solemn responsibility of "bringing up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." No society on earth can release them from their obligations of instilling into the minds of their children the gracious truths of