

The persecution of heretics and dissenters of all descriptions down to the burning of the last witch, is the darkest, we may well say, the Satanic chapter in Church history; and yet it has been defended and justified by great and good men, including St. Augustine and John Calvin, as a duty of the Christian magistrate, as a necessary consequence of the strength of religious conviction, and as a protection of truth against error. But "error is harmless if truth is left free to combat it." God is stronger than his adversary. The Devil is mighty, but God is almighty. It is not a part of religion, says Tertullian, to enforce religion. It loses all its value if it is not free and voluntary. The whole teaching and example of Christ and the apostles are against violence in matters of conscience. Christ expressly declared that his kingdom is not of this world; he rebuked the sons of Zebedee for their carnal zeal against the hostile Samaritans, and Peter for drawing the sword, though it was in defence of the Master. He "came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them": and he submitted to the bitter cross rather than to call a legion of angels to his aid.

By persecuting, abasing and excommunicating each other, the Churches do cruel injustice to their common Lord and his followers. They contract his kingdom and his power; they belittle his influence; they lower him from his kingly throne to the headship of a sect or school; they hate those whom he loves and for whom he died; They curse those whom he blesses; and they violate the fundamental law of his Gospel.

We look hopefully for a reunion of Christendom and a feast of reconciliation of Churches; but it will be preceded by an act of general humiliation. All must confess, "We have sinned and erred. Christ alone is pure and perfect. We take to ourselves shame and confusion of face. To him, our common Lord and Saviour, be all the glory."

Fortunately, the doctrine and practice of persecution are doomed. The problem of mutual recognition and Christian union is attracting more and more attention, and is slowly but surely approaching a solution. There has been, indeed, within the present generation, a revival of ecclesiasticism; but the tendencies toward union are also widening and deepening. The principle of religious freedom has become an essential element in modern civilization, at least in Western Europe and North America.

Missionary.

SABBATH SCHOOLS AND FOREIGN MISSIONS.

BY PROFESSOR HENRY DRUMMOND.

[The following trenchant and original address was delivered by Professor Drummond, of the Free Church College, Glasgow, and author of the well-known work on "Natural Law in the Spiritual World," at the recent Conference of Sunday-school Teachers held at Kirkcaldy. It is specially worthy of attention for its unconventional and happy method of dealing with a pre-eminently important subject. We quote the report of a Kirkcaldy contemporary.]

It is not easy to interest in foreign missions men in middle life, with their sum of interests already made up and the romantic driven out of them long ago by the prose of business. But with children this problem scarcely exists. They are not yet rooted in the environment of any country. It is really only as we grow up that we become provincial. The child is the true cosmopolitan, has the universal mind, and India and Malabar are as real to it as the next parish. The Sabbath-school teacher will do well to mark this characteristic, and take ad-

vantage of it. Anything which makes foreign countries real is a contribution to the missionary cause.

Picture-books of wild animals, missionary adventures and travels, descriptions of the manners and customs of savage races—these have a most important function in preparing the mind to realize missions. Moreover, these are the most tempting of all themes to a boy or a girl—for there are no more voracious readers of boys' books than girls—so that this preliminary missionary education can be carried on without the possibility of prejudicing the scholar by the dryness of his task. A Sunday-school superintendent might do much worse occasionally than take his whole school to a menagerie, and a good paper might be written for next conference on the missionary function of Noah's arks.

No man, in fact, has a finer chance in any department of Christian work than the teacher who would interest the young in missions. While every other class of work is handicapped by difficulties of the most hopeless kind, this stands out as an almost solitary exception—an exception which would become the rule if men grew into the higher aspects of religion in childhood, instead of striving to force themselves into them in maturer years.

But, wholly apart from the religious nature, there is an appeal in missions to the instincts of the young, which affords an enormous leverage to those who would interest children in the missionary's work. Between the wondering adventurous spirit of the boy and the heroic career of the missionary there is a natural sympathy; and the question reduces itself mainly to this: Grant the preparation of the boy, grant the surpassing interest and fascination of the facts, how are we to bring the one in contact with the other? This is really the whole problem. The facts will make all the impression, create all the interest, enlist all the scholars, if they are only known. The teacher should know them. But the majority of the teachers are simply ignorant of missions. I have lately returned from a visit to one of the best known missions in the world, an ideal mission, which has been before the public in many ways, and whose romantic story, one would think, must have given it a place in the hearts and interests of many. I have been moving among the people most likely to have shown that interest, and yet I have not found more than three persons who could ask an intelligent question about it.

I have been asked by intelligent people if I went to Lake Nyassa by the Congo, and a dozen times I have had to change the conversation in despair on being asked if I had seen anything of General Gordon. It is a teacher's duty to qualify himself for his work by a knowledge of foreign missions. With regard to the information to be brought under the notice of the Sunday-school, the main thing is definiteness. The ordinary appeal for collections for India, or China, or Lebanon, or the New Hebrides, is comparatively useless. The box goes round as a matter of mere routine, and as a rule, the child sees no further than the hole into which it vacantly drops the reluctant copper. In many schools there is no more unintelligent part of service than the missionary collection, whereas, if wisely managed, it might become one of the brightest interests of the school.

The proper method consists in singling out some specific object, person, or place, and fixing it in the mind as a living interest. When a new steamboat is wanted for a missionary, half the schools in the country should be asked to put a plate in it. One large school should be asked to supply the funnel, another the compass, a third the screw, a fourth the anchor

others between them should pay the captain's salary, and there should be a competition open to all the mission schools in the country for the post of cabin boy. If a medicine-chest is wanted for the South Sea Islands, a hundred schools should furnish a bottle each for it; and in many such ways the fact that missions do not only exist on paper will be driven into the mind.

Another application of this principle consists in the singling out by a school of a certain person in the foreign field—a certain heathen to be taught, a certain native catechist to be maintained, a certain orphan to be educated in some missionary institution. Acting upon this principle, the United Presbyterian Church, after the Indian famine, had four or five hundred orphans distributed over the schools of this country. In many cases, the better to interest the home school in their welfare, these orphans received the name of their superintendent, or of the minister, or of the minister's wife, or of some leading teacher. This, by the way, I think a mistake, as well as an error in taste—Siamuka and Chipitula are much more picturesque than Norman McLeod or John Cairns.

In a similarly lively vein Mr. Drummond advised that every school should be equipped with a good set of maps. When a band of missionaries start for the foreign field the fact should be announced in every school, and their route traced with the pointer. With regard to collections, the traditional box might be laid on the shelf for a month or two, say at Christmas time, and a neat card for home use put in its place. The senior girls might make the cards themselves, illuminating them nicely with a text and the collector's name. The wide circulation of good missionary records and lives of missionaries, can scarcely be too much insisted upon. The chief duty here is to see that the literature is really of first-class quality, and especially that the narratives given are all rigidly true. One of the most efficient ways also of exciting missionary interest is the frequent exhibition of curiosities from missionary lands. These can now be had almost for the trouble of collecting, and few things are more stimulating to the mind of the child. Equally if not more valuable, are magic-lantern exhibitions with missionary slides. The churches might do worse than have one or two lanterns, with competent professional lecturers, in steady circulation, and a desideratum for the future to supply might be a carefully-projected, first-class, well painted missionary panorama.

Only one influence remains to be noted, but that the most important of all—the living voice of the living missionary. There is such a thing as a dead missionary—and when one thinks of where they spend their lives, and the few privileges they enjoy, the wonder is there is not more. I would never let a dead missionary speak to a living child. No one feels the touch of death like a child, and its instincts will not be deceived. There are also weak missionaries, dyspeptic missionaries, soured and discouraged missionaries, unsympathetic, scolding missionaries. I would not have their voices heard in any Sunday-school. But when you can get the real man, at any cost bring him. The tale of self-denial, quietly told, will make its mark; long after the day is past and the story of his life forgotten, his personality will abide in the hearts of the best in the school as an ever-living power. If they cannot be got, let some one go where they are and catch their fire, and bring back their words, for a single echo from a living voice is eloquence.

Interesting scholars to become missionaries is the highest department of our work, and the one most of all neglected. It is not enough to watch among the scholars for an interest in missions. We must watch for the dawn of the