

SEED TIME AND HARVEST.

"Faith"

T. C. O'KANE

1. There's seed time and har-vest, but who can fore-tell, If what we have sown we shall hap-ly well
The drought or the tem-pest may come to des-troy the rich fields or the hour we hoped to en-joy,
2. When the Lord of the vine yard shall come and shall call, For the la-bour he needs does it mat-ter at all
To the ser-vant who scat-ters the seed in the ground, If his name with the har-vest-ers ne-ver is fought

Or life may be har-vest-ed ere we can know, though Or life may be har-vest-ed ere we can know
1. Or life may be har-vest-ed ere we can know, though Or life may be har-vest-ed ere we can know
2. He's bid-den to sow, though he ne-ver may reap, He's bid-den to sow, though he ne-ver may

Who-ther God will in crease what in weak-ness we sow, what in weak-ness we sow,
But the Lord of the vine yard his re-cord will keep, his re-cord will keep,
know Who-ther God will in crease what in weak-ness we sow, what in weak-ness we sow,
reap, But the Lord of the vine yard his re-cord will keep, his re-cord will keep.

3 It may be the seed which is given to sow
May seem to us worthless—too broken to grow,
But why should we question the wisdom which plans
The thoughts of our hearts and the work of our hands:
In faith if we sow as the Lord shall provide,
He will give us our wages—: what need we hesitate?

4 There's seed-time and harvest, and always will be
For those who will labour, though many may see
A stranger's hand reaping in fields they have sown,
While they gather harvests where others have sown.
And many may sow, yet they never may reap,
But the Lord of the vineyard : their record will keep.

which would bankrupt a world to buy. J. J. Rousseau, the Byron of French literature, saw that these words had changed the poor penniless "orphans" of the Church into the princely heirs of crowns and kingdoms. He therefore wrote that "the inventor of this system would be a greater miracle than Jesus Christ." And the German poet, Herder, declared such words, as pure and bright as the stars in the blue vault above, must have come from the pen of an angel. "Yes, they did come from the lips of the Lord of angels."

Need we wonder then that faith, "the substance" of all the hopes, transfigures the humble homes of "orphans" into the "mansions" of glory. They change the sad implements of hungry saints into sceptres, and their empty boards into the banqueting-tables of cherubim and seraphim. They convert the threadbare covering of the poor believer into the royal robes such as kings wear before the throne of the everlasting God. Then let the "orphans" dry their tears, take down their neglected harps, and sweep their strings with a song that shall meet the anthems flashing over the jasper walls of heaven.

SABBATH SCHOOLS.

IN all cases where we have heard of objection being made to one sermon and the Sabbath-school on the Lord's Day, instead of two sermons, it seems to have been under the impression that the Sabbath-school is not a full half-day service for the house of the Lord. In other words, it is not up to the proper ideal of *public worship*, for the whole congregation. It is a service for children, and perhaps for those who live so far from the sanctuary that it is inconvenient to go home for lunch, to whom it may be a relief from the tedium of waiting for the hour of intermission to pass. To make this a substitute, therefore, for one of the usual regular preaching services, is lowering the dignity of God's ordinance of worship; it is releasing the minister from one-half of the labour which he has agreed, and is paid to perform; to deprive the older and more solid portion of the congregation of their appropriate share of the Sabbath ministrations; and to make an unseemly departure from the good old ways of our Puritan fathers.

We are glad to know that there are congregations—an increasing number—who exhibit a much more creditable view of the subject. In these the Sabbath-school is made worthy to occupy the place of the more formal service. The whole congregation expect to attend it, and all have their assigned positions in it. The devotional services are in the hands of the pastor, and, after the usual recitations, he gives a *resumé* of the points embraced in the lesson, with such a practical use of the whole as he deems appropriate. During the recitations he usually instructs one of the classes. The exercises are brief, lively, and adapted to the capacities of all, from the smallest child to the oldest and wisest present. And wherever such a method has been practised long enough to insure a fair trial, the experiment, we believe, has uniformly proved successful. The interest surpasses that of the former method, and is general among all classes. The smallest child feels that he is recognised, and has a personal share in the performance. As a means of instructing in Divine truth it undoubtedly excels the sermon. For awakening and deepening religious impressions it presents the most favourable opportunities. The faithful teacher can apply God's Word to his class with a directness and discrimination which is impossible in the more formal discourse of the pulpit.

Let it be understood that a service thus conducted requires much patient and faithful labour. A lazy congregation will not be apt to like it. Something more is requisite than to take one's seat in a luxuriously cushioned pew and listen in a half-somnolent way to the flowing sentences of a polished preacher. There is *work* in it, and *because* work [there are] fruits. God honours those who honour His Word. Every part becomes a stimulant of every other part. The classes are incited to study the lesson when they know there is a wide-awake teacher to question them upon it. The teacher will strive to master the subject if he is to come before intelligent and expectant pupils. The pastor will, in his turn, be roused and fired with new courage, when he knows that he is to sow the seed in hearts that have been broken up and mellowed and watered by fresh living contact with the Divine Word. And a congregation thus prepared for a blessing from above will most surely receive it, not merely in frequent revivals, but in continuous, quiet, individual conversions,