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## Sunday School Banner.

W. H. WITHROW, D.D., EDITOR.

TORONTO, MAY, 1899.

### Temperance Lessons.

We have heard rumours that an endeavour will be made at the approaching Sunday-school Convention to remove from the Lesson scheme the plan of having a temperance lesson at least once a quarter. We trust that in the interest of the International system no such attempt will be made. We are sure that it would cause very great disappointment and dissatisfaction in Canada, as we believe it would in the United States. Our people here attach a very great deal of importance to this lesson, and make it the occasion of inculcating those temperance sentiments which so strongly mark the Canadian community. We seek to supplement and enforce all the Sunday-school lessons by pictures, poems, and special readings in our periodicals, but we find none are more gladly received than those in which the great topics of temperance and missions are thus taught. We feel that it would be

interpreted as a lowering the standard and of temporizing in the presence of the greatest evil of the times to place any less emphasis on the temperance lessons or permit any less frequency in their occurrence.

## The Demand of Childhood.

BY THE REV. JOHN McLEAN, Ph.D.

Periods of discovery have marked the progress of the world, and every period has pursued its special quest, as the discovery of lost manuscripts or unknown countries. It has been reserved for the present century to make two important discoveries, the discovery of the lost Christ and the child.

In poetry there were few references to the child. Homer presents a faint glimmering reference; Shakespeare knowing little about him; but William Blake peopled poetry from the nurseries, and Eugene Field sang his merry lays, which endeared the children and made him king of the childhood world. The Greeks and Romans knew little about him, and though he was found at the time of the Reformation, he was lost again until Ralphe of Gloucester, Arnold of Rugby, and Guthrie of Edinburgh, discovered him, and taught us the art of winning the responsibility, duty and dignity of educating and elevating the child.

In the older literature he had no place, excepting a few rare books, as Robinson Crusoe, Pilgrims Progress, and the Dairyman's Daughter, but in modern times the sweet faces of youth are seen in Dickens' Little Nell, Harriet Beecher Stowe's Eva, and in the numerous books and magazines published in the interests of childhood. Few of the old masters painted children, while no less than forty of the most prominent pictures at the Philadelphia Centennial were of children.

Christianity is the religion of childhood. It is the only religion with a child in it. While contemporaneous history was silent, the Bible deals with the infant years of Moses, David, Samuel, Samson, Christ, and many others. We have come to a new era for childhood, and there is a new child in the world. The child is a volume to be read, and childhood has become the text-book of the age. We may alter Pope's maxim,

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