

of the parents the New Testament ordinance of baptism is administered to the child; not to give it a place within the Church, or to bring it into relation to its life and influence, but as a public and declarative recognition of that fact, viz., born within the pale of the kingdom of God on earth, the divine providence settles the relation, and the divine word proclaims it, in the promise to every believing parent "I will be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee" — a promise never revoked. Changes in ordinances, in modes of ratification and declaration have been made, but never in the terms and subjects of the covenant. In the recognition and declaration, of this relation between the believing parent and his children, the Church in her organized and assembled capacity is one of the covenanting parties, and here she comes in as Christ's true successor in teaching his truth and representing his claims and character. In her school work she is not merely supplementing the family in teaching the child, but supporting, encouraging, praying with the parent and for the family, in all their difficult work of bringing up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. She is engaged in this work not on grounds of sentiment or utility but because God has thus organized family and church life. Our third fact will be what the Sabbath School really is and the important place it has in the Word of God.

JOHN McEWEN.

#### THE CHURCH vs. SABBATH SCHOOLS.

Amid all the good, real or fancied which Sabbath School Conventions have accomplished, that good, it must be admitted has not been unmingled with evil, and one of the crying evils which have come in with them and of which they have been either the occasion or the cause, or both, is, the secondary and subordinate place which is given by them to the Church in contradistinction to the Sabbath School. The natural and necessary effect of this, the keenest advocates of Sabbath School Conventions have been compelled to acknowledge; for in every Convention, especially of late, the question has come up and been discussed in every variety of form "How shall the children of the Sabbath School, as they become matured, be preserved to, and become interested in the Church?" Our Lord, we are told, loved the Church and gave Himself for it, and in doing so He gave it no secondary or subordinate place, for while He dearly loved "little children," yet He first uttered the injunction, "Feed my sheep," and then emphasized it by repeating it, ere He said "Feed my lambs," and in keeping this injunction the apostles went forth everywhere planting churches including in them both the old and the young. In our day however in many congregations the Sabbath School has become a distinct, supreme and almost independent organization, so much so that it is familiarly called the children's Church, in which, as is not unfrequently the case, teachers are appointed by the superintendent or by the teachers' association, and it is often looked upon as a matter of condescension and acknowledged incapacity, rather than of consistency or of courtesy for either the superintendent or teachers to consult with the minister or session either in regard to the teachers to be engaged, or in regard to the order, the exercises, or teachings of the school. Thus in this way an independent organization exists in many a congregation, irresponsible as it is unscriptural, and consequently unchristian and in so far hurtful. Such organizations however, while deserving all the credit for the much good they do, yet presume so much upon their place and power as to all but hedge themselves around with a *nemo me impune lacessit*.

It is unfortunate too, that not a few of our ministers, either consciously or unconsciously, if they do not favor, at least foster this alienation between the Sabbath School and the Church; for while they may periodically preach a sermon to the children of their charge, and many do not do even this, yet with the exception of such specialities how often does it happen that from one year's end to the other the children are practically ignored in the preaching of the gospel, which is ordinarily beyond their comprehension, not always however, so much in the matter presented as in the mode in which it is presented, being so seldom addressed to them in such words and in such a way as to arrest their attention and make an abiding and effective impression on their minds and hearts. Such being the case many people are led to think that children have no right and should have no place in the congregation; and in consequence keep them at home and

send them to the Sabbath School only, on an idea which amid so much to foster it, soon becomes embodied in the very being of the children, and need we then wonder that, under and after such training in their younger and more impressive years when they become as they think too big or too wise to attend the children's church, so many of our once hopeful youth should fail to come forward and take their place and act their part as they ought in the congregation, a congregation in regard to which as a congregation they are often all but total strangers not only as to its work but as to its worship as well. The Church is like a household in which are both old and young, ruling and ruled, and as there, the best way to interest the young in the affairs of the household is to do so while they are young and shew them then how the interest of the household and of each member of it is one; so in the Church, and in order to this let the Church hold fast her legitimate supremacy, exercising it firmly but kindly, and let each element of her power and every aspect of her work ever constitute one constitutional unity, while distinct as the waves yet one as the sea, and in this way the purity and the peace, the prosperity and the perpetuity of the Church will become at once more hopeful, manifest and glorious.

#### A PROSPEROUS SABBATH SCHOOL.

MR. EDITOR,—At this period in the history of Sabbath Schools, a few words regarding the work might not be unwholly uninteresting to the readers of the "Presbyterian." It is not too much to say that many of our ablest minds in this and the Mother Country, are actively engaged in the perfecting of the present International System of Sabbath School Lessons, with its auxiliaries in the way of maps, blackboard-work, teachers' helps, etc. In this connection I would mention Knox Church Sunday School, Brussels, which has struggled along with varying success for many years. Five years ago the attendance was about fifty; at the close of 1877, it numbered 120 and upwards. Over twenty persons have during the last two years, been added to the Church from the ranks of the Sabbath School. The school is now in a very prosperous condition in a great measure owing to the livelier interest taken by both teachers and pupils since the introduction of the present system of lessons. The officers of the school comprise a superintendent (the pastor), Bible class leader, librarian, secretary-treasurer, and nine devoted teachers, with International Lessons, map, blackboard, organ, and a library of over 300 volumes. A very pleasant entertainment was held on Christmas for the benefit of the children, and a very enjoyable feature of it was a presentation to the superintendent (Rev. S. Jones) and to the Bible class leader (Mr. W. Warner) of testimonials of the love and esteem entertained for them by the whole school. And while the children shew evidence of their gratitude to the directing heads of the school for the long and faithful services they have rendered, the friends outside fully recognizing the painstaking efforts of the superintendent and teachers, have kindly donated the school a map, blackboard, and a library of 200 volumes; the latter to be introduced in January, 1878. It is encouraging for those engaged in Sunday School work to find it prospering so in their hands to feel that God is blessing their efforts to lead the children to Christ. There is evidently a great lack of interest on behalf of parents and the Church generally regarding the Sabbath School. The Sabbath School is the child of the Church, and as such should be provided for and nourished by the Church. How often do we find the Sabbath School from which the Church to a great extent looks for accessions to its membership, a self-sustaining institution, supported entirely from the contributions of the teachers and the children, and beyond the control of the Church. If the Church would take hold of the schools in connection with it, provide for their every want, encourage both teachers and children by frequent visitations of parents and Church officers, as well as by all persons interested in the work, we would find that our Sabbath Schools would greatly increase and multiply, and become more and more a giant power in the land for good. In connection with the organ in the Sabbath School, I might say that although it is generally considered a valuable acquisition to the school, there are unfortunately a few who look upon it as an unwarrantable innovation.

W. B. D.

[We rejoice to hear of the prosperity of the Brussels Sabbath School, and hope that the superintendent and

his well-equipped staff of officers and teachers will find still greater success following their praiseworthy efforts. The International Lessons ought to be used in all Sabbath Schools. Considering the frequent removal of children, along with their parents, from one part of the country to another, it is necessary that the same course of instruction should be followed in all the schools. The opposition to the use of instrumental music in the Sabbath School will probably not last very long. There are very few Sabbath Schools in this city without it, even among those connected with churches that do not use it in their regular service; and we think the same may be said of most cities and towns in the province. — Ed. C. P.]

#### LETTER FROM FATHER CHINQUY.

TO THE PROTESTANT CHURCH OF CANADA.—I cannot let this day pass without giving you the expression of my gratitude, for what you are doing to spread the light of the Gospel among my countrymen. It is to you, after God, that I owe the inexpressible joy of seeing so many of them giving up the idols of the Pope to follow Christ. Your fervent prayers to the throne of mercy, with the noble sacrifices you have made, have caused, these last three years, more than 7,000 Roman Catholics to see the saving light of the Gospel and accept it. May the Saviour who has promised an eternal reward for a cup of cold water given in his name, bless every one of you for what you have done for me and my countrymen. But allow me to tell you that the glorious victories which the God of Truth has given us over his implacable Enemy these last few years must not cause us to relax our efforts or lay down our arms. It is the very contrary. Let us remember that we are not called to conquer only thousands, but a million of souls to Christ. Let every one of us remember that our great and mighty God calls us to do one of the most sublime works which have ever been intrusted to the hands of men, the conversion of a whole people. If we are true to Him, He gives us, in the past success, the assurance of the most glorious and blessed results in the future. We have sure indications that the Church of Rome is shaken to her foundations, not only in Montreal, but all over Canada. I have in my hands a multitude of facts which would send a thrill of joy everywhere, if a short letter could allow me to give them. The thousand converts who have been forced to leave Montreal on account of the persecutions they had to suffer from the Priests, are scattering the Gospel Truths everywhere they go. Every week, sometimes every day, I receive the most interesting letters from some of the converts who have been brought to the knowledge of the Truth, by those who left Montreal in order not to starve. Let me tell you one of those most interesting facts that you may help me to bless the Saviour for these great mercies towards precious souls. Two years ago a young lady emigrated to Winnipeg, Manitoba, and read there a newspaper, which fell into her hands by accident. That newspaper contained one of my addresses on auricular confession. That girl, who was very devoted and used to go and confess once every week, was puzzled by the new light which came to her mind through that reading. She immediately wrote to me to ask a few questions on that subject. I answered her and sent her a volume of the "Priest, the Woman and the Confessional," with several other of our tracts and a Bible. Two months after, I received from that young lady one of the most interesting letters I have ever read, telling me her joy and happiness. She wrote how she had understood the errors of Popery, and accepted Christ for her only Saviour and refuge; and how her soul was filled with joy which she was unable to express, from the day that she had made her peace with Him. She asked me to send her more tracts and Bibles, for she had many friends to whom she wanted to give the light which made her so happy. I granted her request. Five months later four French Canadians of Manitoba, wrote me a letter of thanks for those tracts and books; for they, also, after having read them, had accepted the great gift, and were exceedingly glad in its possession. Last week a letter written by a well-educated Irishman from Manitoba, told me that he and a French Canadian woman had been converted by reading the books and tracts we had sent to that young lady. But these facts are not isolated ones. They are multiplied not only all over Canada, but in many parts of the United States, where I have half a million of my countrymen whom