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Sunday School Banner

W. H. WITHROW, D.D., Editor

TORONTO, JULY, 1902

The Sunday School and Day School.

A GREAT deal is being said about the failure of the Sunday School to meet the needs of the times, to measure up to its possibilities. There will always be room for improvement, we suppose, while the world lasts; but we can think of no institution which so inspires love and zeal and faithful toil as the Sunday School. All over this continent, indeed, all over the world, are a vast number of devoted, faithful, loving teachers—a great army of two millions of them—who, week after week, year in and year out, are giving their best thought and time and toil to the blessed work of leading the children to the Saviour, and teaching and training them in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Most of these, all of them, we suppose, come far short of their ideal, but the world has never seen anything like this great unpaid agency whose only

and ample reward is the reward of doing good, of giving the cup of cold water and breaking the bread of life to Christ's little ones.

No just comparison can be instituted between the Sunday School and day school. In the one, trained skill, intellect, and culture find their field and work; in the other the supreme impulse is the love of souls. Society very inadequately compensates those who train and teach the young in secular knowledge; but no gauge or instrument can measure the obligation of the church to those who, moved by the mightiest impulse, mould the lives and characters of its young people for Christian service here and for heaven hereafter.

Much is said about paid Sunday School teachers. Their highest service can never be repaid. Not all the gold of Ophir can discharge this obligation. There is large room for improvement in methods of teaching. Few are more conscious of it than the teachers themselves, few more strenuously strive after it. By all means give them every aid and encouragement. Improve the literature, the teachers' meetings and institutes. But without the crowning grace of Christian love and faith and zeal, though they speak with the tongues of men and of angels, they are but sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal.

We clip from a recent number of The Guardian the following extract from The Sunday School Times, and its own judicious remarks on this important subject:

The Sunday School Times, of May 10, has a striking editorial on this subject: "Can the Secular School be Raised to the Plane of the Modern Sunday School?"

The S. S. Times claims that, when judged by the character and ability of the teachers, the Sunday School is vastly in advance of the secular school. The secular school does not command any higher talent or ability than money will secure, while the Sunday School can and does secure it. It is claimed that judges, legislators, lawyers, college professors, editors, authors, and the best mothers and choice women, and such-like eminent people, teach in the Sunday Schools. In the intellectual power and social standing of its teachers the Sunday School is vastly superior to the secular school.

This is a brief but fair statement of the argument of our contemporary. It has the merit and charm of novelty. It occurs to us that the facts are as stated, but that all the facts are not stated, and that the use made of the facts is in a