

The term "great preacher" does not always convey the same idea. He who is "great" in the estimation of one class of hearers may not be so to others. And the "great preacher" in the estimation of men may not always be great in the sight of God. But, taking the term in its broadest, truest sense, taking it, as including all that men of varying tastes would place in the category of greatness, and, as including what we may suppose is great in God's sight, the greatest gospel preacher of the age has passed away in the death of Charles Haddon Spurgeon, on the 31st of January, at Mentone in the South of France, at the comparatively early age of fifty-six years. There was no line of what almost any man would call success along which he did not attain. Crowded throngs hung upon his words for 40 years, from the time he began to preach in 1850, at the age of 16, until his work was done. With a clear, logical mind, quick wit, fertile fancy, vivid imagination, sound common sense, terse, strong, Saxon style, a capacity for organization and work, equalled only by his silvery eloquence, and an earnest consecration to his life's aim; while he kept in operation a number of charitable, educational and evangelistic agencies, he drew and held, in one place, for more than a generation, what was perhaps the largest single congregation in the world. Week by week with unparalleled continuousness, the press, in many languages preached his sermons all over the world. If the recognition of earth's great ones be deemed an honour, that too was his. But through it all, there seemed no swelling of human pride. There was no catering to earth's tastes, nor seeking of its applause. Unmoved by flattery or fame or frown, seeking the good of men and the glory of God, a friend to right, a foe to wrong, true to his Master as the needle to the pole, he remained the same simple, evangelical, scriptural preacher, the same intense earnest worker, the same humble Christian man and minister to the end. A strong mind, impelled by a strong earnest heart, and sustained by a strong, simple faith, his life seems like the shining of a great pure light, that made the world brighter while it shone, and will shed a mellowed radiance long after it has set.

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Will the seventeen thousand Sabbath school teachers of our church, please give a thoughtful perusal to Principal MacVicar's address to them in this issue. If they would all take hold of its one great thought, "the teacher reproduced in the pupil," and would then let that thought take hold on them, what added care and prayer would there be on the part of these teachers; and this increased Christ-likeness reproduced in the nearly one hundred and fifty thousand Sabbath school scholars, who are soon to be the workers and givers in our church, would have an influence that none can tell. In sitting for a photograph we seek to be our best, both in person and array. If such care be taken when that reproduction is a lifeless picture, what care should there be when the camera is the avenue to a human heart, and the negative reproduced, is a human life.

THE TEACHER REPRODUCED IN THE PUPIL.

BY REV. PRINCIPAL MACVICAR.

To Sabbath School Teachers.

☉ SOLICIT your attention to this subject:—
☉ I. AS A FACT.

What you are yourself, your pupil gradually becomes; a most serious matter both to you and to him. All the relations of life are infinitely serious, and fraught with momentous issues. We mingle freely in social intercourse, and life and death are the outcome of our doing so; for as decayed fruit rots that with which it comes into contact, so "evil communications corrupt good manners." This becomes appallingly evident when young unsuspecting persons are drawn into haunts where the ungodly and the scoffer are supreme.

It is equally true, and, blessed be God for the law of His Kingdom which makes it a truth, that strong intellectual and spiritual natures impress themselves upon others. If vice is contagious, virtue is unquestionably so. If man is naturally qualified and disposed to disseminate evil, he can, by grace, gain and wield the power to propagate good. He can sow to the spirit as well as to the flesh, and is as sure to reap, and to reap vastly more than he sows, in the one case as in the other.

If for example, as a godly, earnest, consecrated teacher, you are really successful in your work, the very lineaments of your soul are being stamped upon your pupil. He is the index or exponent of your thinking, of your spiritual activity and intensity.

The medium upon which you work must be taken into account in judging of your success or failure. That medium may be dull and comparatively unimpressible, or it may be highly sensitive and receptive, and hence, without any special fault or merit on your part, your image may reappear obscurely or vividly, all imperfect and blurred, or accurate and clearly defined.

But reappear it must in some form. You are to have immortality in your pupils. They will speak of you when you are gone, and speak and act under the controlling power of your teaching without being conscious of it, or able to distinguish it from what they may claim to be the product of their own minds. They will be the mirrors, the reporters, of your failure or success, and well will it be for you to be able to say in apostolic words, "ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men, being made manifest that ye are an epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the spirit of the living God."

This fact of the reproduction of the teacher in the pupil, is seen in the formation and history of great schools of art, poetry, theology and philosophy. The critical, and almost, the untrained eye, can easily distinguish Italian art from that which is French, German or English. Each of these have reappeared a thousand times in their admiring pupils.

So in poetry, while commonly counted a divine gift, it cannot be denied that the vast majority of the votaries of the Muse sing as they are taught by loftier spirits. Hence the many imitators of Wordsworth, Burns and Tennyson.

Theologians too, follow their leaders. Great masters in Israel like Augustine, Calvin, Arminius, Episcopius and Luther, leave their impress upon generations of feeble thinkers.