

## THE WORLD IS GROWING BETTER.

The world is growing better,  
Though it takes a while to see,  
The hand of steady labour  
With a friendly hand we greet,  
We will not drink the bitter  
When so little makes it sweet.

The world is growing richer,  
In wealth brought from the earth—  
But, better far, with treasures found  
In mines of sterling worth,  
For noble hearts are hono'ring more  
Than simple claims of birth.

The world is growing better:  
With fewer musty creeds,  
With more of human sympathy,  
To answer human needs,  
With precious harvests garnered  
As the growth of precious seeds.

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## Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLKS:

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

TORONTO, JUNE 16, 1883.

## SUNDAY SCHOOL GRANTS.

ON the day before the date of this writing the executive committee of the Sunday-school Aid and Extension Fund of the Methodist Church of Canada held its regular meeting in this city. Twenty-five applications for aid were carefully examined. Two of these were reserved for further inquiry, and aid was granted to twenty-three applicants as follows: 140 books, 19 Banners, 200 each of PLEASANT HOURS and Home and School, 237 copies of Sunbeam, 110 Berean Leaves, the whole amounting to \$124. In many cases the applicants pay about half the amount of the grants made; in others less, and in a few nothing. All applicants, however, are urged to pay something. The amount reported as sent the secretary in part payment on grants since the previous meeting was \$69 95.

The Conferences to which the grants were made were as follows. Toronto 9, London 4, Montreal 1, Nova Scotia 1, New Brunswick 2, Newfoundland 5. The greater number given to the Toronto Conference results from the fact that many missions in the North West, Muskoka and Algoma districts receive aid from the fund. About ten of the schools, or nearly half of those aided, were new schools just started. The Sunday-school Board is especially anxious to help this class of applicants, and requests the ministers to establish such schools at every preaching place

where now there are none. Such new and needy schools will be helped as liberally as the Sunday-school Aid and Extension Fund will permit. For money to carry on this work no fund is dependent upon the collections required by the Discipline to be taken up in every school in the entire Connection, and upon the amounts contributed by schools asking aid. The latter amounts have during the past year very greatly increased. It is confidently anticipated that the collections in the schools will exhibit a corresponding increase. Since last October the number of grants made has been 145.

At the meeting of the Sunday-school Board a resolution was also passed inviting publishers to send specimens of their Sunday-school books free, for examination as to their suitability to be placed upon our Winnowed List which now numbers over sixteen hundred volumes of carefully selected and approved library books.

## HOW THE GRANTS ARE APPRECIATED.

The following extracts from letters will show the manner in which grants are received and the amount of good which in remote and needy neighbourhoods they do. We do not give names as we have not the permission of the writers. The following is from a school in Nova Scotia:—"Dear Sir, I beg to enclose you \$3, this being the amount mentioned when you made the grants of the books and papers to our school. I am pleased to inform you that as a result of your liberal grant, the attendance of Sunday-school scholars has materially increased, and the excellent papers you send us are anxiously looked for and very much appreciated."

The following is from a missionary near Lake Nipissing to whose school a grant was sent:—"The people desire me to return you their best thanks for the kindness thus afforded them. Gladly would they take the papers and pay for them during the coming year, were they able. Any help that could be afforded them in the matter, would be highly prized by them and myself."

The following is from an Indian Mission:—"The papers kindly sent us are quite an attraction both to scholars and their parents. In fact a pagan Indian with whom I conversed one day told me that he read our Sabbath-school papers, his children being members of the school. We would like to have a library, an old one would answer every purpose. We could distribute the books every alternate Sabbath. In a short time I will, it spared, take up a collection for general Sabbath-school purposes."

Another brother writes:—"I have a preaching station in connection with this circuit, ten miles from the village. There is only a mere handful, so to speak, of Methodist people, but I have established a school, and already we have gathered forty children. It is just useless to ask them to give anything towards the school. If you can send us any books or papers they will be highly appreciated."

A zealous brother in Newfoundland, writes thus:—"A number of PLEASANT HOURS and Sunbeams have been sent, and the teachers and officers have made up their minds to let every scholar have one, and if there are more than one or two in one house we can distribute these papers. To this end we intend that every scholar shall pay, but as our people are poor we must wait

until the summer, and then a collection of fish will be made. I will be good for \$4 or more. I know it does not cover the entire cost, but I expect that when they get the papers they will pay up. I hope to get our school this year to move in the line of progress."

From a new settlement in Manitoba nearly 3,000 miles west of the one last mentioned—this gives one some idea of the extent of our Church operations—we have received the following:—"By to-day's mail I received the books you have so kindly sent for the help of our Sunday-school here. Allow me to thank you on behalf of the people belonging to our Church in this village, and myself, for the kindness you have shown us by helping in the starting of the Methodist Sunday school in this place."

From Newfoundland again comes this:—"I am grateful for the very liberal grant of Sunday school papers you are sending to my mission. Also for the back numbers, which are very useful. I will mail to you the \$5 promised as soon as I can get a Dominion note of that value. The Berean Lesson is now introduced in our schools. I am sure our Sunday-school work will feel the benefit of the grant of papers etc., given."

This is from the smallest of the provinces, Prince Edward Island. "I forward the enclosed to you on behalf of the Sunday-school Superintendent. I may say that this school deserves encouragement, for though very, very poor they are very zealous, and anxious to keep up a Methodist school. Your kindly consideration of their appeal for help will greatly oblige."

A grant is made to the settlement of Oka Indians at Bala, on the Indian reserve back of Gravenhurst, where we are told that all, old and young, are anxious to learn to read in English out of the Testament.

A missionary writes from Manitoulin Island:—"All are highly pleased with your generous donation. God is greatly blessing us."

Such is the sort of work being done by the Sunday-school Aid and Extension Fund. We invite hearty co-operation both in asking for grants and in contributing to the fund. When application for aid is made, please state number of scholars in primary and advanced classes, number of teachers, wants of the school, and how much it can give towards the grant. Address Rev. W. H. Withrow, Toronto.

## OUR OWN.

THE following remarks of the Sunday-school Journal apply with equal force to "our own" papers.—Ed.

The editors and publishers of the Berean System of Lessons spare neither pains nor money in providing assistance in the preparation of lessons. They pay good and wise men and women for the time expended in the study of the several subjects. They buy good paper, use good type, good ink, fine engravings, and seek to make the apparatus of the Sunday school compare educationally and typographically with the apparatus of our best secular schools.

The Church in the highest eulogy—the General Conference—select men to edit and to publish these helps. It is to their interest to do the work thoroughly, not cheaply. It is to their interest to provide at as low figures as possible the aids required by the average Sunday-school, but they dare

not so cheapen their publications as to run the risk of bankruptcy, or even temporary suspension. The Church has no private funds to waste in ridiculous and contemptible rivalry with private enterprises or competing religious houses. In a dignified, honourable, and substantial way it supplies careful instruction, in harmony with the standards of the Church, at reasonable financial figures, and expects every loyal Methodist minister, and every true Sunday-school superintendent and teacher, to use the publications thus supplied.

Criticisms upon methods are cordially solicited and welcome. The administration does not claim infallibility. It invites suggestions. Practical teachers in out-of-the-way places are as likely in their work to make discoveries as to principles and methods of teaching and management as is the editor in the quiet of his office.

The editor is therefore only too glad to be enlightened by those whose experience qualifies them for that service; and while we must not be in too great haste to modify our plans, we shall hold ourselves ready to receive hints from every quarter at all times.

Let us stand by our own helps, since our own are, in the long run, much the cheapest, and, in the judgment of many wise men and women in all denominations, much the best that are furnished the Sunday-school teachers of to-day.

## A PLEASANT LETTER.

WE would like to receive many letters like the following, which has just come to hand:—"Dear Sir: One evening I read for my little boy, Willie, from the PLEASANT HOURS, the story, by Mr. Crosby, of the Indian Boy, Peter who died through cold and exposure during a duck hunting expedition. He listened very attentively and when I had finished said, 'Pa, when you send your money to the missionaries send my silver dollar,' in which shape he had his accumulated savings. I enclose the amount (one dollar) which you will please forward to Mr. Crosby (with this letter) to be used by him in his work as he sees fit. I hope it will encourage him in his labour of love to know of the interest the children are taking in his work, and lead him to write more of his experiences in the PLEASANT HOURS."

God bless the dear boy! May he grow up more and more in sympathy with this grandest of causes. He will find in self-denial for the cause of God a richer, sweeter, enjoyment than any he can receive from the gratification of self.

THE Baptist Teacher says:—"The Bible Class Teacher, published by Mr. D. C. Cook, carries at the head of a recent issue, this remarkable announcement: 'The Bible Class is a place where the teaching should be kept clear of theology, and limited simply to the facts of the Bible.' Let Baptist readers ponder that statement carefully, and consider what the practical outcome would be from the adoption of a help that is prepared on such a plan." Others beside Baptists may ponder whether this broad-gauge teaching, which will suit any Church, is to be desired for our Methodist schools in Canada.