

we live and which is so necessary for our well-being and beneficial in promoting it. We have noticed also the unsubstantial character of worldly pleasures—of the wealth and honours of this life and again on the other hand the refusal of the soul to be content with these even at their best. The conclusion to which we are led is that the immortal spirit is badly portioned with the perishable things of time. But has not our heavenly Father provided something better for His children—something better suited to their nature, more adequate to their wants, and fitted to yield them true and perfect peace? The text in its second clause points out to us such a provision. In contrast with the fleeting things of time there is set forth the eternal will of God—he who doeth that will abide for ever. As the love of the world is set over against the love of God; so doing God's will is opposed to the pursuit of earthly enjoyments. It implies therefore that we give our hearts to God. Without this we cannot serve Him—for this service requires our love—love is the fulfilling of the law. HE THAT DOETH THE WILL OF GOD ABIDETH FOR EVER! Here is an immortality of enjoyment adequate to our immortal souls. And this is to be realized through Christ Jesus, for "life and immortality are brought to light in the Gospel." And after this has been attained we shall have an explanation of all the anomalies of the present life, of the dissatisfaction that ever prevails, and be able to say in the words of Augustine, "Because, O Lord, thou hast made us for Thyself, our souls can find no rest till they rest themselves in Thee." To this true rest Jesus bids us come, "Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest."

And let God's children remember that if life's joys be brief and passing, so are also its sorrows; but on this we cannot enlarge. When the changeable scenes of this present world—some of them dark and painful enough—have been all passed through, for them there is a home eternal in the heavens where "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away."

Brief life is here our portion,
Brief sorrow, short-lived care;
The life that knows no ending,
The tearless life is there.
Oh happy retribution—
Short toil—eternal rest;
For mortals and for sinners,
A mansion with the blest.

"There remaineth, therefore, a rest for the people of God." A.

THE PRESBYTERIAN YEAR BOOK for 1878 is very full in its tabular matter, constituting a handy book of reference in regard to matters that must be often cited, but which are necessarily scattered at large in the Minutes of Assembly. It also supplies condensed statistics of the Presbyterian Churches of the United States. In addition to these dry, but useful details, it contains a variety of interesting and valuable original matter from various sources; among which will be found a sketch of "The First General Presbyterian Council," which met at Edinburgh last July; a paper on "Presbyterianism and Literature," by Rev. Robert Murray, Halifax, N.S.; an article entitled "A Parcel of Blue Books," by the Editor, reviewing the "Minutes" of the American and Scottish Churches; "The Office of Ruling Elder in the Apostolic Church," by Rev. Dr. Proudfoot, London, Ont.; "Presbyterian Literature for Canada," by Rev. Professor Gregg, M.A., suggesting, among other things, the publication of a Quarterly Review. Under the head of History of Congregations, there is "A Sketch of the History of St. Andrew's Church, Kingston, and of some Congregations in the vicinity," by Miss Machar; and "A History of St. James', Charlottetown, P.E.I.," by Rev. Thomas Duncan. Miss Machar also contributes a paper on the "Pioneers of our Church." Thus the PRESBYTERIAN YEAR BOOK is not only useful for reference, and of inestimable value to the future historian of the Church, but at the same time very interesting to the ordinary reader. It should not be overlooked that the YEAR BOOK is offered free to all subscribers to the CANADA PRESBYTERIAN, paying their subscriptions for 1878 before the 1st of January next.

Not he who has little, but he who covets much, is the poor man.—*Seneca*.

The reputation of a man is like his shadow,—gigantic when it precedes him, and pigmy in its proportions when it follows him.—*Talleyrand*.

OUR CONTRIBUTORS.

THE TRIO.—A REAL HISTORY.

A strong rough man the father was
That made his power be felt,
Unquestioning obedience reigned
Among all with whom he dealt.

In business first, in council prompt,
At home a perfect king;
He pushed ahead and quick achieved
Success in everything.

Honoured, though not a learned man,
Trusted as well as feared;
A blessing to the neighbourhood
His energy aye cheered.

A plain but godly woman she
Who mother was and wife;
With homely love her household cares
Performing, while her life

Drawn from the highest source unseen
Was charity and peace,
And prayers for her children fell
In dew of heaven-sent grace.

The strong man felt her influence mild
Though not religious he,
And for her sake to build God's house
Put forth his energy.

She reigned by holy love, he was
Her servant to serve God;
Thus gracious influence, sped by might,
Like perfume spread abroad.

No stint of toil or needed gold,
Through neighbours' willing aid,
Full soon a goodly church was raised,
With graveyard for the dead.

Six sons grew up and daughter fair,
A working family;
Whom mother's love and father's force
Guided right happily.

The daughter's heart to Christ was given,
His life shone clearly forth;
The young, the sick, and sorrowing,
Learned her rare Christian worth.

Wedded betimes to wealth and ease,
Her riches well were spent;
Her time and gifts seemed but to be
A treasure God had lent.

The father sleeps among the dead,
Close by the church he raised;
His memory lives and still, with right,
By grateful men he's praised.

The daughter too has run her race,
And joined the blood-washed throng;
Her deeds live still to memory dear,
Lauded by every tongue.

But all unknown, unpraised, unsung,
The lowly mother's hid;
God only knows how nobly she
The wife and mother did.

Men praise the two, but not the third;
And yet I dare believe
God's higher need, in the great day
Of praise, she will receive.

J. L.

NORMAL SCHOOLS FOR SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHERS.

At a public conference held in connection with the last meeting of the Ottawa Presbytery, Mr. Mutchmor read a paper on "The want of well qualified teachers in our Sabbath Schools." In the opening of his address the speaker referred to his visit to the Centennial Exhibition, and to the great progress in secular education which was indicated by the Dominion exhibit in that department. This progress he attributed almost entirely to the comprehensive and complete system for the training of teachers in our Normal and Model Schools. He then pointed out the want of efficiency in our Sabbath Schools as compared with the day schools, quoting the opinion expressed at the Guelph Convention that the former are only about one-third as efficient as the latter, and attributing this state of matters to the want of training establishments for Sabbath School teachers. "My conviction," said Mr. Mutchmor, "is that our Sabbath Schools to-day want teachers thoroughly trained and qualified quite as much as our pulpits do an educated ministry. Both use the same weapons and engage in the same warfare. Both wield the sword of the spirit, which is the Word of God, and both have to wrestle against principalities, against powers, against the

rulers of the darkness of this world, and against spiritual wickedness in high places. How can a Sabbath School teacher any more than a minister of the Gospel take unto him the whole armor of God and be able to withstand the Rationalism, Spiritualism, Universalism, Atheism, Plymouthism, and all the other isms of the present day without being well qualified and prepared to meet error with truth and overcome evil with good? Another, and probably the greatest deficiency or want in the qualifications of our Sunday School teachers is what many of them, I fear, consider the easiest and simplest part of the work, requiring no skill or preparation on their part, but in my humble opinion the most difficult, as well as the most important, both to teachers and scholars, requiring careful thought, diligent study, and superior skill and training. I refer to what has been called by Joshua Fitch, M.A., "The art of questioning." Lord Bacon once said that a wise question is the half of knowledge. It is equally that we must have a thorough knowledge of what we teach before we can put a good question upon it. For instance, we take up a newspaper containing a report of a trial or suit in one of our Assize Courts now sitting. The witness is a neighbor whom we know to be illiterate, scarcely able to read or write. As we read the evidence we are astonished. The language used is choice and elegant; every significant fact carefully stated; each subsequent fact beautifully connected with the one preceding. We marvel how such an ignorant man in a crowded Court-room could narrate all the facts with so much precision and good taste. The secret of success is not in the answer of the witness, but in the skilled barrister standing opposite, who has been thoroughly trained in the art of questioning, and from constant practice and experience so frames the questions as to draw out answers which read to us like a consistent narrative. A good teacher never conveys information in the form of a question, and the answer to one question should always suggest what the next question is to be. The best questioning is that which stimulates thought and action on the part of the learner, and also gives him the habit of thinking and enquiring for himself. Archbishop Whately says curiosity is the parent of attention. A pointed and carefully studied question excites the curiosity of the scholar, and interests him, so that before he knows it, he is questioning the teacher, and the lesson, instead of being an irksome task, becomes a pleasure, and teacher and scholar become mutually helpful to each other. Questions should be definite and unmistakable, admitting for the most part of but one answer. They should always be put with animation. Slow, dull and heavy questioning wearies the scholars, discourages the teacher, and destroys all interest in the lesson. Whether the questions are good or bad, let them always be our own; not read out of a book or from written notes, but proceeding fresh from the mind, the result of careful, patient, persevering study. A well qualified teacher will never attempt to teach a lesson without having in his own mind a distinct and definite plan of what he wants to teach. Discover the particular truth in the lesson best adapted or suited to the circumstances and wants of the scholars; then question the knowledge into their minds, and after you have succeeded, question it out again. The Creator of the universe, the Great Teacher, the practical builder, work according to plan, and so should the well qualified Sabbath School teacher; and as the arch over every door and window has its key-stone, so make Christ the chief corner stone, the sure foundation, of all teaching—the centre around which all historical facts, doctrinal points, apt illustrations and personal applications cluster. I trust these hints, though imperfectly stated, will suffice to convince any ordinary mind that there is a want of well qualified teachers in our Sabbath schools. Taking it for granted, I will very briefly suggest what I conceive to be the best methods or remedies for supplying that want:

First: in the selection of teachers for the Sabbath School, the utmost care should be used by pastors, Sessions and Sabbath School superintendents, to employ always the very best they can get. It frequently happens that those whose only qualifications are the indispensable ones, viz, (loving hearts, fervent piety, and earnest zeal, to work for the Master) are more willing to offer their services than those better qualified, and more apt to teach. To obviate this difficulty, I would heartily commend the practice of Sabbath Schools where the teachers are approved and recommended to the school by the Session.