

"The observations in my last respecting a union with the Established Church of Scotland need not alarm you. However desirable such a union might be, and I will not conceal it from you that I should rejoice to see all Christian churches united in one body, yet I have no expectation that the Established Church of Scotland and we are to be speedily united. Such is the bigotry and domineering disposition of many of her ministers in this country that my hopes of a union are very faint, and I have no wish for a union except on terms strictly honourable to all parties."

The time for union was not yet, but this first beginning of agitation on the subject was not without its influence, when Providence opened the way by opening the eyes of ministers on both sides that they might be able to see each other as brethren beloved in the Lord.

#### THROUGH DEATH TO LIFE.

The difficulties and embarrassments caused by the conduct of the members against whom the "bad reports" had been circulated, went on increasing from day to day, threatening almost the existence of the churches in the lower part of Upper Canada. Effectual discipline was impracticable for any offence, and fears were entertained that if charges were pressed for withholding moneys, the accused "would plague them with civil law." And, at length, "the conclusion seems to have been reached that the best way out of the trouble was by dissolving the corporate existence" of the Presbyteries and Synod, and so letting the offending brethren drop. This action was, accordingly taken, probably without formality, and the year 1825 saw the end of those pioneer church courts. In due time, however, from their graves, arose purified as by fire, the more systematic "United Presbytery of Upper Canada," followed in 1831, by the "United Synod of Upper Canada." These organizations will be the subject of a future article.

#### OUR THEOLOGICAL COLLEGES—THEIR RESPONSIBILITY TO SABBATH SCHOOL WORK.

We have, at the request of the Editor of the "Record," presented in the January number of that journal an outline of Normal class work, as a necessity for our Sabbath School teachers, and how to organize such classes.

This has been followed up in these columns by a statement of the necessity of such means of training, and "How Normal Class Teachers can be obtained" for the whole Church.

This statement of the subject has led us to the important conclusion, viz., that the possession of reasonably qualified teachers in Sabbath school work, is to be found in this department of work being vitally and organically connected with the training of candidates for the ministry in our colleges, thereby making the whole subject of the religious education of the people more of a specialty in ministerial training than it has been—embracing in the pastor's sphere of work, the training of a body of the people who will be able to instruct others. Let no one imagine that we are advocating that the pastor should reproduce, and dole out, the matter and manner of his own training to the people. This for him and his future work may have been the best possible course, but for the people it would be failure, if not a calamity from which they would protect themselves by refusing to be present, and in this direction some may find the cause of failure in attempting Normal Class work.

Much of the collegiate course of training is for educational reasons, in form and language, *abstract*, technical, and entirely out of the range and line of the people. And just as the balls and ropes of the gymnasium are in themselves of little value, yet as means of developing strength, imparting tone and expertness they are invaluable to those that are exercised thereby; indeed we are quite sure that the department of the science of teaching—if commenced in a simple but sensible way—would give the student in his after work great power in direct contact with the minds of the people, and by this direct working on the minds of the people he would be greatly helped out of the abstract and technical forms of his own training into the more historical forms of thought and life in which popular mind delights to dwell. In this way thought would awaken thought; love would elicit love; and personal character would mould and elevate character. If there is wisdom in the struggle vitally to connect the sphere of human training, from the kindergarten to the university, in secular life, will it be unwise to connect and elevate the religious life and

instruction of the home, the school and the theological college?

Forty years ago the Church in the older countries was appalled, and shuddered before the lapsed masses and their degradation. How are we to bring them under the saving and elevating power of the Gospel, was the burning question of the hour; and while the urgency and importance of this work has not wholly passed away, yet another phase of the problem is calling for attention.

How are we to reach the well-informed and cultivated masses, whose interest in the Church, her cause and her Lord, is so formal and uncertain? With the large majority of this class who have come to maturity in an important sense—our opportunities if not wholly lost are greatly weakened—and the wisest evangelistic effort will not wholly retrieve our loss. This class lack definite views of truth and duty, and connected with this sad fact, definite convictions of life and obligation. There is great need for laying foundations in our training of the young, in storing their minds with not merely the form of sound words, but with *thoughts* in appropriate words, definite and adapted to the stage of progress, having regard to the fitness of things. If ever there was a time when careful discrimination of statement and exact habits of thought on religious truth was needful, it is now. We must labour to get the children of the Church early grounded in an intelligent and interested apprehension of the main parts of Christian experience—clear, exact, orderly ideas of the truth of salvation. To accomplish this we must aim at raising the spirit, methods and attainments in parents and teachers. And to reach this there must be patient and persevering work by our permanent pastorate; and to make this more easily attainable, with the work of the preaching, our institutions of training ought to give it a place in their curriculum.

It is not generally known that this matter has already been submitted to the authorities of all the theological and ladies' colleges of the Dominion by the Sabbath School Association of Canada in a memorial on the subject. Replies of a hopeful and sympathizing nature from several of these institutions have been received. The subject is one calling for consideration from church courts. If our Senates are embarrassed by suggestion of this departure from use and went, they ought not to be left to agitate, but the voice of the Church should be so expressed as to assure them of a public want, and show cause for believing that the remedy is found in normal work in our colleges. It is competent for Sessions, Presbyteries and Synods to overture the General Assembly, either because of an existing public opinion on the subject or to call the attention of the Church to the desirableness of the proposal. The association that has, in the courage of its convictions, drawn up a memorial on this question, is thoroughly catholic in its constitution and aims, takes special interest in fostering and guiding a healthy but progressive public sentiment on this department of work, has opportunities of knowing the most forward aspirations toward better work for the Master.

Those who have not taken special notice and interest in the progress of opinion in the Sabbath school enterprise need to be informed and assured that, during the last five years, and at the annual gatherings, there has been a growing demand for solid thought and thorough work, to such an extent that the previously prepared programme is not unfrequently subordinated to the public demand for illustrations of means and methods in teacher training. County Associations make special provision for this expressed want. The direct road in which public sentiment is heading, is that every congregation or community should have its distinctive department of training the present and future Sabbath school teachers. And as the qualifications for such work are not specifically recognized as entering into ministerial training, therefore it is resolved—

That our collegiate institutions make provision to meet this new demand of Christian effort.

We are not without many indications that this subject is one worthy of our thoughtful consideration. We shall not take space to detail the efforts of Cambridge in England, and America, vitally to connect courses of reading, lecturing, teaching, examinations and assigned positions from attainment and merit with these seats of learning. Nor will we wait to notice at length that the cities of London and Boston are being organized by their universities for prescribed

popular work, summer courses of science. The Concord summer school of Philosophy and literature pervaded by the atmosphere of Emerson and Alcott; Chautauqua and its deep Christian spirit, and unabated enthusiasm, under the organizing genius of John Vincent; these are all outbursts of an underlying public want and sentiment not peculiar to cities, but first manifested there because the means of meeting it are at hand. The Christian worker knows of it in the villages and rural clusters of settlements.

Under the heading "The Welfare of the Youth of our Church," a committee of the Free General Assembly of last May gave in a carefully compiled report which called forth much hopeful discussion, led by such men as Rev. Alexander Whyte of St. George's, Edinburgh, Professor Salmond of Aberdeen, and McPhail of Glasgow. We will not enter into the details of the report or of its recommendations further than to state,—

1. That it proposed to indicate lines of study for Bible classes throughout the Church; to prepare examination papers on three or more subjects.

2. Give prizes or certificates of attainment; and the result to be announced to the General Assembly yearly, the names of those successful to be placed in the Church records, and by these means awaken interest, give point to effort, and direct attention to strictly church work.

Such a movement could easily be directed and utilized in both subjects and methods adapted to the work of instruction in the school.

To some this will seem a small matter, compared with some of the deliberations (of that Assembly) that fill the public eye, yet it presents the highest representative body of the church wrestling with a vital element in her future growth and prosperity.

Take another illustration: It is matter of historical fact that before Dr. Duff went to India, the prevailing form of missionary work was evangelistic, that is earnestly proclaiming the Gospel wherever a few listeners could be gathered, and then seems to have been regarded by the Baptist and Episcopalian missionaries as the only form of obedience to the Divine commission "Go preach the Gospel to every creature." Dr. Duff arrived in India in 1830. For reasons we need not enumerate, the Moderator of the General Assembly in his charge counselled the young man not to begin his work in the city but in more rural parts, but Duff had not only brought with him a new faith to this great land, but a profound conviction of the fitness of things—a rational mode by which that faith was to be propagated; and the first thing he did was to rent a room in the busiest street in Calcutta, he founded a new era in modern missions by making the school the sphere of effort. He began with five pupils secured to him by the influence of that Hindoo Deist Rammohun Roy, and Duff obeyed the commission, "Go teach all nations."

His plans and methods were regarded by his ministerial brethren as the precursors of signal failure. The evangelistic men taunted Duff with the words, "The young madman will make infidels of the lads," but by that training institution he destroyed the stage of Tom Paine darkness and profanity, and its atheistic leaders were brought to own the truth and professed faith in Christ.

Thus arose the famous missionary institution for educating labourers for that land.

There is not a church, or missionary society in the world who would for one year think of doing their work without special attention to not merely training her converts, but training for specific work, official and unofficial.

Are we as wise at home in reference to our large body of Sabbath school labourers?

Duff is reported to have said in his last days, "From all eternity Christ intended the heathen to be taught, and are not their teachers to be included in this purpose?"

Fifty years work in India, with redoubled argument in every school set up, seems to cry to Christendom, Awake, equip, train your workmen "that need not be ashamed." The guerilla soldier often does a dashing and daring thing, and may temporarily harass the foe, but the main strength in warfare, offensive or defensive, is the trained, disciplined army.

JOHN McEWEN.

LUNATIC asylums are likely to receive an accession to the number of their inmates from the victims of the walking mania.