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TORONTO, FRIDAY, MAY 10, 1878.

SABBATH SCHOOL WORK.

THE attention of the public has in various ways been turned to the subject of Sabbath Schools. During the past few months, the County Sabbath School Conventions have been held in several parts of the country. There is every sort of convention in connection with this work—provincial, national, international. During summer we have at Chautauqua the annual gathering of the Sabbath School Parliament, surely a sufficiently dignified name for a society of Christian workers. Recently we reported the proceedings of the Conference of Sabbath School workers held in the Toronto Metropolitan Church. It is noticeable that every ecclesiastical assemblage—whether Anglican, Congregational or Presbyterian—seems to take up the work of Sabbath Schools as a matter of vital importance. The Presbytery of Toronto has devoted Tuesday evening of this week to the consideration of the report of their committee upon Sabbath School work—thereby evincing the deep interest which they take in this subject and their estimate of its important relation to the congregation and the Church at large.

From all this it is evident that the work of Sabbath Schools is deemed indispensable and necessary by the various Churches. When these were first instituted, it will be remembered that their main object was to instruct neglected children. This was the professed purpose of those who engaged in the work—to take from the street poor ragged orphans and the offspring of wicked parents, and to give them some show of religious instruction. It was only Christian men and women who could do such a work for the children outside of the Church; but for the most part their views were so extreme upon the duty of parents teaching their children at home that there was very general opposition to any such things as Sabbath Schools. Nor has the prejudice against them wholly disappeared even in our day. In many parts of Scotland there is no such thing as a Sabbath School. In not a few parishes such schools have only enjoyed an ephemeral existence; and this, be-

cause of the deep-rooted feeling that the home is the place for religious instruction. But it is evidence of a very general change of opinion that notwithstanding the deep-rooted prejudices against Sabbath Schools which so long prevailed in the mother country, they have even adopted the American institution of a Sabbath School Convention. They will by and by, we doubt not, have their parliaments too. All over the world the Sabbath School has grown until now it is regarded as an essential organization in every Church. In Canada we are happy to say that the several denominations are alive on the subject. The Sabbath School is a necessary branch of congregational work. The mission school is almost a thing of the past. Where such is established, it is done by some congregation which has relations to the mission district because of vicinity or some other circumstance. But the work of Sabbath instruction is being so thoroughly done by congregations, that as a rule they are able to attend not only to their own children, but also to the young ones of a certain prescribed locality, or parochial district.

Such action as that of the Presbytery of Toronto and other ecclesiastical bodies shows that the day of religious "gush" in the Sabbath School is surely passing away. The kind of school which has prevailed in the United States, and which is not without examples in the Dominion of Canada, is a curious development of modern ideas. The Scripture has been almost ignored, and yet it is Protestant Sabbath Schools to which we are referring. In place of reading and studying the Bible, a black-board exercise has been introduced, by which the artistic genius of superintendents has been called into play. The drawing of the swine, for example, which the prodigal was sent to feed, or the attempt to reproduce in chalk the sycamore tree, often consumes the proper time given to instruction, and certainly can do no more than amuse the children, or minister to the teacher's self-conceit. The grand idea of the typical Sabbath School of which we are speaking is having a good time, and, accordingly, the singing of hymns is an essential feature. Not that we despise hymns, but when there is little more than the singing of these, we rather dread the enervating effect of such Sabbath School work. What we want to see in the Sabbath School is a class of robust, intelligent, earnest teachers impressing themselves upon the young and rising generation, and imbuing their hearts with the vital principles which were enunciated by the Divine Teacher. Good singing will have its place in such a school, but it should not degenerate to the milk and water hymnology that is so widely used. Nor will the training of children in Scriptural knowledge be all that is sought to be accomplished. Culture in respect of speech and behavior will go hand in hand with intellectual equipment and Biblical studies.

The important and necessary place assigned to Sabbath Schools is seen in nothing more conspicuously than in the splendid structures which are built for their accommodation. The children are no longer placed in a cold, empty church to be starved into saying their catechism. The modern churches are even giving up the use of basements for their schools. They substitute commodious chapels

attached to the rear of the main buildings. These are generally in point of style and material a component part of the church structure. Internally, they are divided into compartments, which are furnished suitably for the various classes they are intended to accommodate. These open into the auditorium, and the children occupying them can see the platform or be seen from it. By throwing open the folding doors, the whole school can be made one audience, and be admirably disposed for the closing exercises. An organ, harmonium or piano is in most cases a *sine qua non* as to furniture. From all this, it is seen that the modern Sabbath School is a recognized factor in the education of the young and rising generation. Its influence cannot well be overestimated. When the abuses to which it is apt to lead are carefully avoided, and such a thorough system of instruction adopted as that proposed by the Presbytery of Toronto, the Sabbath School will be felt to be valuable for its own sake as well as for the palpable benefits which flow from it.

THE ENGLISH BURIAL QUESTION.

IN England the subject of the admission of Non-conformists to the use of parish churchyards for the burial of their dead, with such religious services as they may prefer, has been the subject of long debates both in Convocation and Parliament, as well as of discussion in the newspaper press; and is still undecided.

It must come sooner or later to a settlement; and it is much to be regretted that the charitable and common sense adjustment for which the Archbishop of Canterbury so earnestly pleaded was not accepted promptly and cheerfully, as it does seem it will be the only solution ultimately possible. Convocation and 15,000 clergymen are opposed to it. But on the other hand, the House of Lords has already expressed its approval, and in the Commons Mr. Osborne Morgan's motion was only lost by a majority of fifteen in a House of 470.

The opposition is largely based upon the ground that the concession would endanger the safety of the Establishment. Very much the same ground was taken in the persistent opposition made some years ago to the abolition of Church rates; and yet now it is universally allowed that this has proved an immense gain to the Church. So in the Burials' Question, wise and generous concessions without the sacrifice of principle will bring peace and strength; while persistency in the present unyielding position will only precipitate the catastrophe which is dreaded.—*Evangelical Churchman*.

SELF-INDULGENCE AT HOME.

THE evil of intemperance appals men. We look for its sources in order that we may apply a remedy, but do we look far enough? Its first beginnings elude our search. We will find them often where we least suspect them. It is in the home and in the early training of our children where the mischief is often done. Self-indulgence ruins. Habits of self-restraint and self-denial are never inculcated. The appetite which now craves the pleasant delights of sweets will by and by,