Provincial Wesleyan

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The grand enigma of religion is the inactivity of the Church in fulfilling the Redeemer's command to proclaim the riches of his grace to dying sinners throughout his ransomed world.—No mystery can press more heavily upon the mind than that, after the incarnation, the sufferings, and the death of the Son of God, to save our fallen race, so vast a proportion of the inhabitants of earth should, generation after generation, have been permitted to live and die without any knowledge of the hope for them in Christ. How fearful is the fact that while we write, not half the existing adult population of the globe have ever heard the name of Jesus, that the teeming millions of the most populous countries of the globe are hastening to the grave in utter ignorance of their position before God, and that the millions of Christians with whom is the Word of Life, and who have all the facilities, for spreading the truth, of that advanced civilization for which they are indebted to their Christianity, should be so cold and callous that they heed not the awful position of their fellow men, nor the command of their Saviour. The state of the world in our day affords undeniable proof that Christians have not yet agreed to love the Lord with all their mind and soul and strength, and their neighbours as themselves.

If we ask for the cause of this deplorable stagnation, it must be readily replied that it arises from the absence of a living faith. We grow indifferent to the claims of our religion as our faith in its Author declines. How many thousands are there among the followers of Christ, whom we would startle, could we pourtray in its dread reality the contrast between their profession and their practice. They profess to believe that one soul outweighs the universe, that the intensest physical suffering experienced by any or all of Adam's posterity is of no account compared with one moment's pang of that torture which a lost soul must bear throughout eternity, and yet they will manifest far more sympathy with a well authenticated case of bodily want than they will with the spiritual necessities of a world which is lying in the arms of the wicked one. Whence is this but from an operative belief in the one case, and a want of it in the other? If men believed, as they profess to believe, the Word of God; if they were actuated, as they profess to be, by love for the souls for whom Christ died; we should labour no longer under the reproach with which infidels assail us, but nation after nation would, by the influence of the Spirit accompanying the combined efforts of the united armies of our Emmanuel, be born in a day, and eyes already dim with age might behold the glorious consummation to which prophecy directs the hope of the Christian, "the kingdoms of the world become the kingdoms of our God and of his Christ."

It will seem strange that we speak of want of earnestness now, when the movements of Christendom on behalf of the heathen are unparalleled in the variety of their forms, the strength of their purpose, and the sweep of their benevolence. Compared with the lethargy in which the Church has indulged so long, its present state is indeed one of great awakening; but compared with its means and its duty, its efforts are not uncharitably characterized as utterly insignificant. Did the zeal which glowed in the breasts of the primitive disciples when they laid all their earthly possessions upon the altar, and counted not their lives dear unto them while engaged in making known the love of the Saviour, animate the heart of every professor of faith in the Lord Jesus at the present day, would not hundreds of pounds flow into the Missionary treasuries from the coffers which now contribute pence, and thousands take the place the place of tens? And should we be less zealous than the early Christians? Ought not the life of the church collective, as the life of individual Christians, to be a constant growth? Alas, because this growth is not found, as the general rule, in individual Christians, it is absent from the Church collective. How true it is that the life of the Christian too generally instead of being one of progress, is one of retrocession; instead of forgetting the things that are behind and reaching forth to those that are before, he lets go that whereto he had attained to recede by degrees to the gross indifference whence he had emerged. The new born soul, all on fire with the thought of the terrible doom of the perishing millions by whom it is surrounded, counts no sacrifice too great, if only it may snatch them from the eternal burning. It pants with an irrepressible desire to rescue them from the flames of hell, and introduce them to the peace and joy that spring from a well grounded hope of heaven. Then is seen the constraining love of Christ.—But that fervent zeal, which should day by day increase, decays. Sinners are suffered to pursue their headlong course to ruin. The voice of warning, and the language of entreaty are less frequently employed. The disciple ceases to be missionary in spirit and act.

What every Christian needs, and the universal Church, requires is a ceaseless quickening of faith. Strong in faith, we shall be fervent in spirit, constantly serving the Lord. Shall these truths be pondered until Zion awake and put on her strength?

Letter from the United States.

From our own Correspondent.

JOHN H. W. HAWKINS.

In our last, we noticed the departure of this distinguished man, but connected as he was with the great temperance reform in our country, he deserves a more special and extended notice. He was born in Baltimore, in 1797. At an early age he was put an apprentice to the hatting business, where he served faithfully until he was twenty-one. Says a correspondent of the *New York Christian Advocate:*

At the age of fifteen he was converted and joined the Methodist Episcopal Church; was a constant attendant at a class and band, and generally beloved by all who knew him. At the close of his apprenticeship he had saved by overwork twenty-five dollars; he spent the whole of it in purchasing Bibles and spelling-books, and paying the rent of a room to keep a Sabbath School for boys; for at that time there was no Sunday School for boys in his city, and his pious soul yearned to be the instrument in reclaiming the children whom he saw breaking God's holy day. He could get no one to help him; and such was the prejudice against the school that his own pastor refused to read a notice from the pulpit inviting volunteers. This school he conducted for three years, until he went West. He could find no one to take charge of the school, so he was forced to pack up the books, close the doors, and send the children adrift.

During his apprenticeship and early manhood he was surrounded by those who were in the daily use of alcoholic drinks. In the workshop the bottle was always filled, inviting young and old to partake. In the convivial party and social gathering he was proffered the cup of friendship by the hands of fair women and venerable sires. The minister and all classes drank. The matron prepared her brandied peaches and brandied pies; and thus wherever the youth went either to eat, or drink, or work, he was surrounded continually with temptation, not knowing himself that it would lead him down to destruction. Day by day his love for wine and strong drinks was strengthening, and day by day the love of his Saviour was weakening, until his appetite led him into the mire of intoxication and all the horrors of drunkenness. From the grogshop he has been helped home by his companions to his house late at night, and thrust in the front door, where he has lain in a helpless state of intoxication. His family would come to his assistance; his little daughter Hannah, unable to raise him up, would bring pillows and blankets to keep him warm, and lay down by her dear father to keep him from harm. Such acts of kindness pierced his soul, and he would promise himself that he would never drink to excess again; but the tempter came and he fell, and each succeeding fall was lower and more degrading than the former. His friends gave him up for lost, and he began to despair of himself; but on the first day of June, 1840, after one of the worst debauches he had ever had, which came near sending him to a drunkard's grave, his little daughter Hannah was made the instrument of her father's salvation. Coming to his bedside early in the morning, and supposing him asleep, she pressed a kiss of tender affection upon his bloated cheek. Then kneeling down by his side, she lifted up her eyes and heart to heaven, and prayed in a whisper that God heard, and went to the ears of the sinful man. "O my Saviour," she said, "give my dear father strength to stand up against the temptations of life, and save him from a drunkard's death." That child, she seemed like a stray bird of paradise that had for a moment lit on our sin-cursed earth. After this she silently left the room; but when he heard her steps dying away from the stairs he sprang from his bed, and knelt on the very spot where the child prayed, and cried penitently to his God to hear the voice of innocence, and there in that holy place he vowed, and called upon God to help him in his weakness, to forgive and raise him to the dignity of a man and a Christian. For three days, like Saul of Tarsus, he struggled against a raging thirst, an enfeebled body, a weak mind, and one of the strongest temptations that can befal a mortal; but God, who is rich in mercy, came to his assistance. The bottle, at the request of her father was broken by Hannah. At the invitation of six other bottle companions, he went to a carpenter's shop in the evening and signed the Washingtonian pledge; and there these men pledged themselves to watch and help each other to live temperate lives. Hawkins was enabled to keep the pledge; he was soon restored to the church and the class; and such was the confidence of his brethren that they elected him to the office of a local preacher. If his fall was rapid and ignominious his rise was glorious, and proved a blessing to thousands.

At this time Mr. Hawkins was in the prime of life, in person well formed. He had a dignified and commanding appearance, carriage erect, in manners affable, a rich, melodious voice, and a strong constitution. He had all the requisites of a reformer—boldness, discretion, energy, fortitude, firmness, and perseverance, together with the Christian virtues of self-denial, humility, benevolence, honesty, simplicity, and sincerity; looking to God for success, and giving him all the glory. Such was John Hawkins in the year 1840, when with six other reformed drunkards in the city of Baltimore they began their labor to urge the fallen to sign the temperance pledge.—They followed the drunkard to his house, and with tears urged him to come to their meeting and join their increasing army.—Their success in that city was great. It was preaching glad news to the spirits in prison. The poor drunken sot exclaimed, "Well, if such a man as John Hawkins can be saved, I can; and he signed the pledge, and himself became a temperance lecturer. In Baltimore there were in less than a year twelve thousand that joined them. The Macedonian cry from New York was, come over and help us. John Hawkins with several of his associates did come. Churches and halls were crowded. There was joy in desolate hearts; mothers and daughters, sisters and wives, felt that there was a way at last found to save their families from disgrace, and their husbands from death. The wilderness and the solitary place was made glad for them; and in a few months ten thousand drunkards in the city of New York left their cups and joined the Washingtonians as they were called. Boston was soon visited by Mr. Hawkins, and five thousand more in that city were added to their number. He continued his labors throughout New England, and it was estimated that there were in less than a year seventy-five thousand more redeemed from their cups. He now gave himself up to the work of saving the drunkard. He travelled extensively through every state in the Union, save California; and such was the wonderful success of his labors and his coadjutors, that in less than one year from the time he signed the pledge there was estimated to be over two hundred thousand that had joined this new temperance movement.

It was a great trial to him and his family to be separated. His relatives, among the most respectable in the city of Baltimore, felt it a great loss to have him go; but they felt the sacrifice must be made, and offered him up with cheerfulness, and to the last encouraged him in his truly apostolic labors to redeem his countrymen from the demon of intemperance. He was a man that made no boast of what he was doing, nor did he abandon for one moment the great idea of his life association in a pledge. In looking over his diary for the present year, I find a record of his work in Vermont—in less than one month he obtained as signers to the pledge 1,417. In writing to his sister, the widow of an Episcopalian clergyman, he says: "I have lectured fifty-four times in forty days, written sixty letters, travelled over one thousand miles; and the best of all is I am in good health, I live in peace with all mankind, and with a bright hope, which grows brighter and brighter to the perfect day, when my labors on earth shall cease, and I shall go to my reward.

"O! what a blessed hope is ours
While here on earth we stay."

On his sixtieth birthday he thus writes to his mother: "Sixty years ago, dear mother you bore me into this world of sorrow and pleasure. How signally has our heavenly Father blessed you and yours. Taking into consideration what some of your sons have done, all your children have proved a great blessing to you. God has been pleased to spare your life to a round old age, and I hope the prospects are that you are to be spared to us for some time to come. May God in his infinite mercy not allow one to be lost, but gather us all into his kingdom without one broken link."

He continued his labours until the 28th June, when his health failed him, and he literally broke down with excessive toil. At Boston he was taken sick, and confined to his room for some time. He proceeded by easy journeys to his son, the Rev. W. G. Hawkins, in Pequin Valley, Lancaster County, Pa., where he enjoyed for several weeks the society of a large number of his relatives, a feast he had not enjoyed for years.

He made a journey to Philadelphia a few days before his death. On his return he said: "I found the residence of the poor family, but they were living in much better circumstances than I had formerly known them to do. At their request I spent the night with them, and had a good room all to myself; but I have had an awful night, and advising with a physician, I have taken some medicine which seems to have checked the complaint."

He called his son up at midnight and told him to go for the doctor, adding a moment after, when taken with a cramp in his limbs, "It is all over now." The doctor ordered morphine, which threw him into slumber.—After an hour's sleep he said, with great self-possession: "It is no use; it is all over now. You cannot save me now," he said, turning to his daughter Hannah; "my dear, you will soon be without a father." Being asked by his son if he was happy, and perfectly willing to depart, he replied with firmness, "Perfectly." Turning to his wife, he said, "Farewell." These were the last words he uttered. His breathing grew slower every moment; and at a little past two o'clock, Tuesday, August 26, he expired without a pain or a groan. "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord; they rest from their labors, and their works do follow them."

ANNIVERSARY OF OUR SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION.

The Anniversary of the Sunday School of the Methodist E. Church, has just closed its session in Boston. It was a season of great interest. The congregations were large, and the exercises throughout were of the most interesting character. On Sabbath morning sermons were preached in all the Methodist Churches in the city and vicinity on the subject of Sunday Schools, and collections taken for the support of the Union. The sermons are reported as able and interesting. Some of the texts were peculiar, as, "A little child shall lead them,"—"And Samuel's mother made him a little coat."

The afternoon services were for the children, and were held at different churches in the city and vicinity. We had the pleasure of attending one of the suburban Churches, and can only speak of what we witnessed. If what we saw and heard was a proper exponent of the other meetings then we must pronounce them the most interesting meetings of the kind ever held in this vicinity. The speaking was good—just the thing for children, and the singing by the children was certainly a little extra. One of the hymns sung is the following, it is called "WILLIE AND I."

We love to go to Sabbath School,
Willie and I, Willie and I;
And be the weather foul or fair,
We purpose to be always there,
To listen to the opening prayer,
Willie and I, Willie and I.

Our teacher we do dearly love—
Willie and I, Willie and I;
She comes and takes us by the hand,
And points us to the better land,
And tries to make us understand—
Willie and I, Willie and I.

Our father—mother too, we love—
Willie and I, Willie and I;
While many boys and girls there are,
Whose parents for them do not care,
We of the good things richly share—
Willie and I, Willie and I.

We ought to love the Saviour most—
Willie and I, Willie and I;
For if we love and serve him best,
In his own bosom we shall rest,
And be in heav'n forever blest—
Willie and I, Willie and I.

On Monday afternoon, a *Sunday School Conference Meeting* was held in the Broomfield St. Church. Rev. A. D. Mervill, one of our old and venerable ministers presided. Several spoke of their Sunday School experience. One had been awakened and another converted in the Sunday School.—The laymen occupied most of the time, and it was a season of thrilling interest.

In the evening, the general Anniversary came off. The house was filled at an early hour. Mr. F. Odell, of Brooklyn, N. Y., one of the Vice Presidents of the Union, presided. The names of the speakers had been previously announced, and we were expecting great things from them and were not disappointed. REV. W. F. WARREN, of the New England Conference, was the first speaker. This gentleman has just returned from a foreign tour, and was the able "European Correspondent," of the *New York Christian Advocate.* He spoke ably and eloquently of the necessity of the Sunday School cause. The question of the Sunday School in America is the question of religious education, or no religious education of the young. The Sunday School here is not supplemental—it has a grand end of its own.

REV. F. G. HIBBARD, of the East Genesee Conference, and Editor of the *Northern C. Advocate,* was the next speaker introduced. He called the attention of the Church to the proper training of the children. Said the speaker:—

What, sir, shall we do with the children? What is the destiny of that child; for what did God make him? Tell me that, and I will tell you what we shall do with the child. The Spartans trained children for the State. Some in Europe and in this country adopt the theory that the individual man is but a part of the mass of mankind, and that we should worship humanity.—Sir, we worship God, and what we want to do with our children is not to make them humanitarians, not patriots merely. We want to convert them to Christ—not to a historic Christ, but to an atoning Christ—a sanctifying Christ. And now, sir, we have in the Sunday School, a basis, an appliance for this work that is not paralleledin the universe of God. Sir, I look into the constitution of the child, and see its adaptation to faith and conversion and holiness. The child has the spirit of faith, and has it till it is vitiated by our modern civilization, and our modern theology. Then, sir, the conscience of the child. It has the moral, before it has the intellectual development.—Let one child in his sports injure another and say, "I did not mean to," and the apology is accepted as sufficient. The distinction is made at once between the act and the intention of the act. So with the divine influence, it is given to the child. Such is the teaching of the Bible. Sir, the human lungs do not give better evidence that they were made for breathing, than do the aspirations and adaptations of the child indicate that it was for religion. If we would redeem the world, we must take it in the beginning, in childhood. And we want more faith in children. We have learned to distrust men; we want faith in children, in little children.

REV. R. M. HATFIELD, of the New York East Conference, was the last speaker.—After alluding to his strong desire to fraternize with other denominations, he spoke of the importance of the Sabbath School to our own denomination. In alluding to old fashioned Methodism which he loved to campmeetings which he always enjoyed, he said there was something besides singing and shouting. He wanted the piety, such as the Sunday School develops. One advantage, he said, derived from the Sunday School was, that it gave the members of the Church something to do. Another was that it reached a class of men that come to this country with sceptical notions, with a perfect hatred of the gospel ministry. The address was able and eloquent.

We have not space in this letter for the Secretary's Report, we may give some extracts from it in our next. The Anniversary was well sustained and closed gloriously. CECIL.

Oct. 28, 1858.

Cornwallis Sabbath Schools.

Though much has been said on behalf of Sabbath Schools, and the impress of Heaven has given sanction to their character, success to their efforts, and immortality to their renown, yet their claim is only partially acknowledged; their importance greatly undervalued.

Their agency in the formation of Christian principle, the onward march of truth, the triumphs of the Gospel, and the acceleration of the universal reign of Zion's King, is, by many, lightly appreciated.

Estimating, as we often do, the actions of men or the workings of systems by their ostentatious display, we attach a value to them which their real character or merits cannot justify; while other events, instrumentalities, and successes, less adorned with the glitter of external trappings, or less applauded by the masses, but possessing superior claims upon our regard for real value, purity of design and utility of purpose, are overlooked, or cast into the shade.

The *motive* and *aim* should ever be considered in calculating the dignity and value of any enterprise. Measured by this rule, weighed in this balance, the operations of a village Sunday School will not be found wanting. Viewed in relation to the objects it contemplates, and endeavours to promote, it must commend itself to every comprehensive mind, awaken enlightened sympathy, and insure encouraging support. As an important auxiliary to the Christian Church, the Sabbath School is the patentee of Heaven. Sublime in its aim, potent in its operations, stupendous in its influence, successful in its results, it is invested with a moral grandeur before which the pageantry of worldly glory must pale, and the fame of mere human achievement be heralded in whispers. Compared with the lofty designs and imperishable benefits of the God-honored Sunday School, every scheme devised by men to turn a penny, or multiply the "almighty dollar" for personal aggrandisement, is supreme folly—bubbles in air.

Had this instrumentality for the spread of BIBLE truth been employed in India, and successfully operated from the early days of the present generation, the dark mantles of degrading superstition had been rent asunder, fiendish passions had been subdued, her soil might not have drunk the blood of England's fairer daughters and more valorous sons! * * * * * * * * * *

These thoughts have been suggested by our recent annual festivals, which were of peculiar interest and worthy of a passing notice. Disappointed of the anticipated pleasure of being at those in the western part of the circuit, my notice must be confined to the one held here. The Sabbath School at Canning, joined by the smaller one from Canard, held its celebration on the 30th ult. The day was exceedingly propitious. The tables were supplied with pies, tarts, and cake, &c., in rich abundance and inviting variety, furnishing ample evidence that the fair providers were well versed in all the departments of Cookology, and might with propriety claim a diploma for superior practical acquaintance with that important science. That the honour was justly due, was satisfactorily shown by the marked respect given to the evidences presented, and the delight with which they were tested by some 120 scholars and a number of guests, who put them to a trying process to ascertain their qualities.

When this part of the exercises had received due attention, and thanks to the Giver of all good were borne to heaven in the voice of song, we repaired to the Church, where a platform had been erected for the convenience of the scholars who were to recite. The recitations, singly or in the several dialogues, in which from two to seven took part, were interesting; the topics introduced calculated to promote virtuous principle and moral conduct. Some of them in their exhibition of religious truth, manner of recitation, together with peculiar existing circumstances, were deeply affecting. The recitations were introduced with devotional exercises; enlivened by appropriate selections of music; occupied three hours, and closed with a short address from the minister.

It is hoped that the teachers and parents retired with an increasing interest in the Scriptural instruction of the young, and renewed resolves to aid, in every possible way, the Sabbath School.

How noble and dignified the enterprise! Even the heavenly throng, were they permitted, might wing their way to earth, and choose the teacher's sweet employment, yielding to it all their exalted powers.

And have not ministering spirits oft bent over the assembled groups and listened to the pleasing hum of their voices?—and if a tender heart longed for the Saviour's blessing, —a lamb sought his fold, they spread their pinions, and soared to their glorious home, bearing the glad tidings and circulated it through the upper courts, giving joy to angel bands.

Teachers! your office wears a dignity which surpasses all that earthly honors can confer. You seek the welfare of immortal souls, and labour to guide youthful hearts to Jesus—the Way, the Truth and the Life—to increase the swelling melody of heaven, and elevate to endless joys as trophies of the Saviour's grace those under your care. This is the most illustrious service, and has the highest reward. "Be not weary in well doing, for in due time we shall reap, if we faint not." J.

Canning, Oct. 26th 1858.

China Mission.

GREAT EVENTS—THE LATE TREATIES—OUR PROSPECTS.

How little does the Church comprehend the full bearing of her action, when in the fear of God, and with faith and hope, she devises missions to the unchristian nations with a view of diffusing the Gospel, with all its train of civilization, among those who sit in the region and shadow of death! For many long years the world regarded these Christian missions in Pagan lands as chimerical enterprises, founded in the visionary hopes and faith of the church. The zeal of the Churches and the heroic devotion of the men and women who became missionaries were regarded by some with pity, by others with admiration; but the active, stirring world, and especially in the higher departments of governments and commerce, considered success impossible and not unfrequently undesirable. Under this pressure of public indifference and doubt the missions of the Churches held on their way without wavering, and are now beginning to see indications that "the kingdoms of this world are becoming the kingdoms of our God and of his Christ." One form in which these indications appear is in the decided and liberal manner in which Christian nations are beginning to provide by treaty, not only for the protection of their citizens in unchristian lands, but also for their right to propagate the Christian religion. These treaty stipulations are founded partly on a conviction that they are right in themselves; but chiefly, as we think, in a conviction that these missions have become a permanent and practical power in the midst of those heathen nations, a power which must have a positive and increasing share in regulating the intercourse between Christian and unchristian nations. To this end Providence undoubtedly shaped the course of the various Christian missions in China, and made them prepare the way for the important treaties which have recently been concluded with China by England, France, Russia, and the United States, in each of which is guaranteed the right to publish the Gospel and form Churches in every part of that vast empire which contains more than one third of the population of the earth.

This great fact has attracted the attention of the ablest directors of the public press both in the Old and in the New World; and they all speak of it as an unexpected triumph of Christian missions, and as giving great and glorious promise of their future result. A letter from a very intelligent source in London to the *N. Y. Times* adverts to the subject in the following language, which we commend to the careful consideration of the Church. Let each reader ponder every word, and particularly the latter part of the passage