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Toronto, September 29, 1895.

Bible in the Schools.

A VERY interesting and timely article on Bible Study in the Public Schools occupies the first place in the last issue of the "Canada Educational Monthly." It is a brief but striking argument in which the facts are freshly brought out and the case presented in a strong, clear light. The writer shows by apt quotation how much illustrious authors owe to the Bible for their style—authors as Macauley, Ruskin, Ian MacLaren, Huxley and Matthew Arnold. Then comes a test the results of which ought to be pondered. The following sentence from the article explains the test: "Thinking of these things," the writer (of the article) was confronted by this question. Do my pupils know as much or more about heathen religions and other things that we do not specially teach them, as they do about the Bible, which we do not specially teach them either? The following papers were set as a means of answering this question. Here follows four questions with their sub-divisions. On subjects of general knowledge not specially taught in the school and corresponding to them four questions similarly stated on subjects from the Bible. The percentage won, for the secular paper averaged 74.4, and for the religious paper 42.8, in a trial of one hundred and nineteen pupils, a deplorable result undoubtedly. But the analysis of the examination detailed as it is in the article shows the value of the test, and justifies the remark that "one might sometimes be in a little doubt as to whether these children had been brought up in Christian or heathen homes."

We hope to be able to afford space in our next issue for the article in extenso, but meantime those of our readers who receive the "Educational Monthly" will find the article a most suggestive one, and as has been remarked at the outset, a timely one in connection with the question of religious teaching in the public schools. Written by one who has practical knowledge of the subject of teaching it has the stamp of feasibility as well as of earnest conviction, and the thoughtful among the teaching profession will find much in it to commend it to their careful consideration.

Advanced Studies.

There is among many worthy men to-day a very proper desire for advanced studies; and that along many different lines. Some take up the Higher Criticism; others are drawn to the Second Coming and its related doctrines; others seek to tread the flowery paths of science; others devote themselves to historical research; others pursue the courses laid down by our colleges for the attainment of the degree of B.D. or D.D. by examination. These are all laudable works, not a syllable is to be uttered against them. Rightly conducted they will be a benefit, and in many cases an

incalculable gain to those who carry them to a successful issue.

Ministers like other men need a spur to urge them on. Some by nature seem to have that in their constitution, but they are few. Most are the better of some strong inducement to draw them out, and lead them on, so that they may as Wordsworth sings, live within the light of high endeavors, and daily spread abroad their being, armed with a power that cannot fail.

To retain freshness and vigor and even true warmth of heart, new provinces of thought must be conquered. The old manna corrupts. It must be newly gathered every day. The advancing tide of thought and feeling—the new points of view that are taken—the fresh combinations of philosophical ideas—the new world that is ever rising on the ruins of the old, must be kept in touch with. To speak to it so as to influence it we must know where it is, and be at home in it. Rip Van Winkle was a lone man, without connections, after his long sleep. He was out of his element in the new world that had arisen about him. An object of commiseration rather than of reverence. Do we not sometimes come across some ministerial Rip Van Winkle living only in the past and wholly void of sympathy with the present. One in whose mind the fact has not yet found a place that the world cannot stand still. It must go forward. It must "spin forever down the ringing grooves of change." But such an one is a *rara avis* even in Canada. There is a commendable ambition even where salaries are low and families large to keep up with the times. To have the latest views of the leading scholars of the world. To master and profess departments of sacred learning. Often there sets in the backwoods or in the intervale among the mountains the lonely, thoughtful, studious man, whose brain teems with ideas and visions, which, were they once set down in order might kindle many minds to higher activity, and lead many into a nobler life. These worthies have been working lodes of precious metal alone. They have been carrying on advanced studies in a region where they are much needed to-day. The snares of religious teachers, to-day, lie in their being carried away from their own hearts and the heart of God. "Externalism" may fitly designate the danger to which they are exposed. The true power of one who has to deal with the hearts of men in God's name is, to be found in an intimate knowledge of his own heart and of God's heart, and therefore this field must not be left unexplored. If it be, the teacher will simply scrape the surface with miserable guess-work. And the shallowness of this every hearer quickly sees through, or at least feels through; for many who cannot formulate their thought, feel it. We rejoice in the advancing studies in theology, history, science, criticism; but we put in a plea for advanced studies in experimental religion. Let the minister be alive to the great facts of Christian experience. This will make him strong as a teacher. He will speak home to the inner man when he preaches. He will lead out the soul into fresh and fair regions. He will, like Luther, talk as though he had been inside a man. That is an advantage which places him away in front of much other learning. For after all, the man who knows the heart's action is learned in the highest kind of learning a minister of God's Word can have. What gives Dr. White of Free St. George's, Edinburgh, his proud and popular pre-eminence as a spiritual teacher? Is it not his thorough acquaintance with experimental religion? His studies have been in the deep divines;