


The Sunday School Banner.

TORONTO, AUGUST, 1875.

 *Communications on Sunday School Topics invited. Address all communications, Editor S. S. BANNER, Toronto.*

Sunday School Instruction.

The Sabbath School interests of the Church are amongst its most important interests. The command of our Lord, "Feed my lambs," was the dictate of highest wisdom as well as of purest benevolence. "Instead of the fathers shall be the children," and in the constant flux of generations the young are the hope of the world. In ten or fifteen years the children in our Sunday Schools will be the bone and sinew, the very marrow and life of our Churches. And those who graduate into the Church from the ranks of the Sunday Schools, will make far more intelligent and efficient Christians than those gathered from the world after years of sin have enfeebled their moral powers, and confirmed ~~in~~ intellectual and social habits which shall for ever impair their usefulness.

The influence of early instruction is the most permanent, the most potent of all the elements which go to the formation of moral character. Impressions received in that plastic and formative condition of the mental constitution are indelible in their nature. The youthful mind is wax to receive, and marble to retain, impressions of either good or evil. "Scratch the green rind of a sapling or wantonly twist it in the earth, and the gnarled and knotted trunk will tell of thee for ages to

come." Give a bias for good or evil to the character of childhood, and the fruits of holiness or the scars of sin shall forever bear witness of the nature of those early influences. We have seen in the rocky pages of the book of nature the imprints made by the falling rain-drops on the smooth sea sand, consolidated into hardest rock, telling of the direction of the wind and the force of the shower in the bygone geologic ages, when the earth was young. We have seen the tracks of loathsome lizards and hideous monsters that wallowed in primeval oceans, which the process of ages had turned to stone. So in the infinite future may be seen in the tablets of the human soul whose destiny is fixed for weal or woe for ever, the impressions made by showers of grace falling on the youthful heart or the befouling traces made by prowling passions and loathly lusts trampling down and defacing every bud of promise, every flower of hope in the garden of the soul.

We witnessed some time since an affecting illustration of the power and permanence of early religious impressions. Visiting the Provincial Lunatic Asylum at Toronto, we noticed a pale and pensive-looking creature, self-absorbed among the babbling throng around her. On near approach she was found to be softly whispering to herself, what do you suppose? A sweet Sunday School hymn that she had learned amid happier scenes, it may be by her mother's knee, away back in the sunny days of her childhood. Amid the clouding of her intellect and the wreck of her reason, this alone remained to her bright and imperishable, a relic of those innocent days.

In the olden time, before the invention of paper, when the only writing material was papyrus or vellum, which were both scarce and costly, when men wished to