

Our Contributors.

AT WORK AGAIN.

BY KNOXIAN.

Most of the people who went down the St. Lawrence or to the Atlantic coast, or the Northern lakes for rest, change and fresh air, have returned, and are at work again.

Some of them are no doubt growling a little because the working days have begun again. It is mean to do anything of that kind. If a man has had a good rest, gratitude, not growling, is the proper exercise for him.

The fact is growling is a poor kind of exercise at any time. It makes a man a nuisance and it never pays. If one could make a hundred dollars a day by whining, people might be excused in dull times for going into the whining business. But the business does not pay, and the more you push it, the worse it gets. Growling is a poorer business than raising fall wheat at fifty cents a bushel. It is almost as bad as working for Sunday cars at a promised salary that vanishes into thin air as soon as the Sunday car men are beaten. Grumbling is a poor enough business at any time, but it is specially mean after one has had a good holiday.

There is no power in language to describe how much better work is than idleness. The man who has too much work is not so much to be pitied as the man who has no work at all. Overwork is a safer thing than idleness. The doctor who has so many patients that they lay siege to his office and scold him with sweet reasonableness because he cannot be in half-a-dozen places at the same time, is a happier man than the doctor who hasn't any patients. The lawyer is worried by the number of his clients, is in a much better position than the unfortunate who never gets a chance, philanthropically, to protect anybody's life, character or property. A minister with as much work as he can attend to in fourteen hours a day, is not an object of pity. The brother to be pitied is the one who has no work at all, or not enough to keep him busy. The merchant who has nothing to do in his store, the mechanic who is idle in his shop, the working man who can find no work—these and not the busy men are the real objects of pity.

There is a good deal said about the toil of the Canadian farmer. The farmer most to be pitied is the one who has no farm to toil on, or whose farm yields him nothing to toil with. A frost in Manitoba or a drought in Ontario may lessen the farmer's toil fifty per cent. in harvest, but easy times in harvest are likely to mean hard times later on. The fact is, work is one of the blessings we should thank our heavenly Father for every day. We have heard a great many prayers of various kinds and lengths, but we have never yet heard one man thank his Maker for the blessing of work. We have heard several thousand complain because they had to work.

Work is a means of grace. Not one in a thousand of us can behave himself if he has nothing to do. It takes more grace than is usually given to average Christians to keep idle people anything like straight. Idle hands would be bad enough, but the trouble is, the hands are not idle. A certain personage always finds something for them to do.

Idleness is as direct a violation of the Fourth Commandment as Sabbath-breaking. The command says, "Six days shalt thou labour" as certainly as it says on the seventh "thou shalt not do any work." A man who goes idle all week, drives a coach and four through the Fourth Commandment.

If we complain because we have a reasonable amount of useful work, we complain because we have an undoubted and most precious blessing.

Does this paper meet the eye of some dearly beloved brother who perhaps, un-

consciously, has allowed himself to fall into the miserable habit of complaining about his work.

Brother, you find making sermons hard work. Well, supposing you do. Professor Young used to say, the work must fall somewhere. If it does not fall on you during the week, it must fall upon the people of yours and let the outside wanted or expected you to make or preach any sermons, your lot would not be improved. A preacher that nobody wants to preach, is in a bad way.

And you have a great deal of visiting to do, brother. Supposing you hadn't any to do, would you be happy. A pastor without any families to visit would be a queer kind of a functionary. Most likely he wouldn't have any salary.

And you have a great many meetings to attend. Well, just strike off about two-thirds of them, sit down in your study, and make some good, healthful stimulating, Calvinistic diet for these people of yours and let the outside meetings go. Half the time the outside people want you merely as a figure-head to ornament the rear of the platform. The chances are a thousand to one, you are not handsome enough for that. If they have any other reason, it is to worm a little money out of your people on the plea that their own minister is to take part.

You say you can't sustain yourself if you don't trot to every show that fussy nobodies get up in the community. Well, if you must fall, go down with all your colours flying. The Church badly needs the example of one or two ministers who died ecclesiastically rather than belittle their pulpits. Do you know of any minister who died through devotion to his pulpit and people? Most of us can name twenty who perished by trotting to everything. Presbyterian congregations worth the name, will stand by their minister if he stands by his pulpit and pastoral work and refuses to spend his time perching on platforms for ornamental purposes.

Brother, if your congregation will not sustain you unless you trot and perch, resign at once and report the case to the Foreign Mission Committee. Perhaps one of the young men labouring among the heathen might be recalled.

SIR WILLIAM ALEXANDER, AND THE SCOTTISH ATTEMPT TO COLONIZE ACADIA.

BY THE REV. GEORGE PATTERSON, D.D.

Dr. Patterson is well known, not only as a theological writer, but as a historian and biographer, who has devoted special attention to the affairs, civil and ecclesiastical, of the Eastern Provinces of the Dominion. His article on Sir William Alexander is a fresh and valuable addition to his biographical sketches. It is interesting, critical and instructive, and is well deserving of careful perusal. Sir William was a native of Menstrie, near Stirling, Scotland, born, according to the common account, in 1580, but, according to another account, which Dr. Patterson prefers, in 1567. He was educated, it is said, at the Grammar School of Stirling, at one of the Scottish universities, and at the University of Leyden, in Holland. He has gained reputation as a poet, a politician and colonizer. "It did not satisfy his ambition," says Sir Thomas Urquhart, "to have a laurel from the muses, and be esteemed a king among poets, but he must be a king of some new-found land, and like another Alexander, indeed, searching after new worlds, have the sovereignty of Nova Scotia." In early years he accompanied the young Duke of Argyll in his travels on the Continent. He afterwards became a great favourite with King James, who appointed him gentleman extraordinary of his eldest son, Prince Henry, and on his death, of his second son, who became King Charles I. During the reigns of James and Charles, he rose to high positions, and was elevated to high rank. He was appointed Secretary of State for Scotland, Master of Requests,

and extraordinary Judge in the Court of Session. He was knighted, created a peer as Lord Alexander of Tullibody and Viscount Stirling, made Earl of Stirling, Viscount Canada, and also Earl of Down. His literary productions were numerous, varied, and not a little remarkable. Among these was a metrical version of the Psalms of David, commenced by King James and completed by Sir William, but published in the name of the King. This version was intended to supersede the versions used in England, Scotland, but it was rejected by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, and failed to secure approval in England. Another of the literary productions of Sir William, was his history of colonization, which he traced from the days of the sons of Noah to modern times.

As being chiefly interesting to Canadians, Dr. Patterson devotes the greater part of his article to the efforts made by Sir William Alexander to establish a new colony in North America. Here had been organized the colonies of New France and New England. Desirous of establishing a colony of New Scotland, Sir William obtained a grant of land, including the present Provinces of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and portions of the State of Maine, and of the Province of Quebec, over which he was invested with almost unlimited privileges and powers. He and his heirs were appointed Lieutenant-General, and authorized to govern, to punish, and pardon; to make and change laws, to make and remove captains, bailiffs, and other officers for the execution of justice. He was invested also with absolute power to arrange for securing peace, and repelling invaders by force of arms. Soon after obtaining his charter, Sir William despatched a vessel for New Scotland with a few colonists, among whom were a Presbyterian minister, one artisan, a blacksmith. The minister and blacksmith died within a year.

Many were the difficulties to be encountered in establishing the new colony. A special difficulty was the want of money, for the supply of which various devices were adopted. The creation of baronetcies was one of these. This mode of raising money had already been employed by King James. To promote the colonization of Ulster, after the Irish Rebellion, the King had established an order of baronets, each member of which was required to pay, on receiving his title, the sum of £1,100. In this way a profit was, in a few years, secured of £225,000. It occurred to Sir William that he might profit by establishing an order of baronets of New Scotland, and, accordingly, he obtained authority to appoint a hundred baronets. As in Ireland, candidates for baronetcies were required to pay money for the dignity conferred on them, and in this way to replenish the colonial exchequer, which all the efforts made were unsuccessful in replenishing.

In the course of his article, Dr. Patterson reviews in an interesting manner, various important events in the history of the Eastern Provinces connected with the names of the French Viceroy De Monts, Cardinal Richelieu, Sir David Kirk, and the Latours, father and son, and thus closes his reviews of the efforts of Sir William Alexander, who died in 1640. "One thing, we think, must be conceded, and that is, the extraordinary energy and perseverance with which he prosecuted his undertaking in defiance of every obstacle. To us, there appears something of the morally sublime in the manner in which he held to his purpose in spite of straitened circumstances, the jealousy of rivals, the indifference of the public, the hostility of the French and the faithlessness of his King. We must say, too, that the scheme promised well. The few notices we have of the colony during the four years of its existence, indicate that its progress was encouraging and its conditions hopeful; and we believe that nothing but the extraordinary conduct of the King caused its failure; but it was one of these failures which prove the necessary preparation for subsequent success. Still, having failed from whatever cause, it is, of course, doomed to hopeless condemnation. Will the time ever come when those who attempt great things for their race, will be judged by the motives from which they conceived them, and the energy with which they prosecuted them?"

ETERNAL LOVE.

"His mercy endureth forever."

Thy brother fell; will he arise?
Withhold not thou the helping hand,
It may be, where his foot hath failed,
Renewed again, he strong shall stand.

He faltered in the path of life,
He sought nor found the higher good;
Then let him in thy heart of love
Find witness of the brotherhood!

Perchance, that knowing love in thee,
He there may trace the Father's face,
That bends above in endless truth
And mercy to a darkened race.

Ye cannot know the strife within,
The yearning thought that blessed
The right,
Ye can but mark the wounds that show
In one o'erburdened in the fight.

Nor dare to whisper all is o'er,
Nor limit thou the God of Love,
The changeless cycles of His might
Beyond our human measures move.

We only know, His ways transcend
Our highest thoughts in rapture blest,
When our weak creeds would darken Him,
He clasps us to a Father's breast.

Can thy heart meet the dawn of faith,
Close hidden in that trembling soul,
That scarce dare whisper, "If thou wilt,
Lord Jesus, Thou canst make me whole!"

"Lord, if thou wilt," no human heart
Could fruitless on His pity lean.
Enough! The sinner knows his guilt,
He is the Saviour. "Be thou clean!"
—M. Grant Fraser, Mhow, Central India.

A SUCCESSFUL SUNDAY SCHOOL.

How can we have a successful S.S.? That is the question which at present is taking up the most of my thoughts. Every Sabbath for the last twelve or fifteen years—with the exception of perhaps ten or twelve Sabbaths, when through illness we were prevented—we have taught a class, but never before have we felt the great need as we do at the present, for the existence of some bond of union between each teacher and the superintendent. Where this union does not exist, there can be nothing but failure.

For instance, say there are some twenty classes in the school. Each teacher takes up the lesson differently, and at the close of the lesson, up gets the superintendent to ask questions; he has another plan still, perhaps different from all the others. One question he asks after another, but gets no answer. Whose fault is it? Perhaps every teacher has tried to do his or her best, but instead of the ready prompt answers which are the life of the school, every one is silent. At last the superintendent closes his book; the children and teachers look relieved. They don't like to be thought ignorant. They would like so much if they could have answered at least some of the questions, but they could not; their teacher had dwelt on the lesson in a different way altogether. One more hymn is sung, a few notices given out, and the school dismissed. Next Sabbath it is the same thing over again; all get discouraged, and at last they settle down and think they are doing the best they can. The school is alive, but that is all. The children, as they grow older, cease to attend, and no wonder. Children are active and full of life, and they don't care to stay for an hour or more listening to what they cannot understand, and be asked questions which they cannot answer. Now for another question: Whose fault is it when we don't have a successful Sabbath school? We don't hesitate for one moment to answer that question. It is the fault in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, of the superintendent and the teachers. The last question we have answered briefly and we think truly. The first we will try to answer next week, if the editor can spare us a little space. We are deeply interested in the Sabbath school, and would like to see more interest taken by all those who are in any way connected with the work. There is no reason why our Presbyterian Sabbath schools should not be made such, that every one would look forward with pleasure to the hour of meeting, and be sorry when the school was dismissed.

ROSS.

Chatham, Ont., Sept. 2nd, 1893.