

MEETING OF SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

[On Wednesday, January 1, at ten o'clock, A. M., the Sunday Schools in connexion with the American Presbyterian, Congregational, United Secession, Methodist New Connexion, and Baptist Churches, assembled in the Congregational Church, St. Maurice Street, when the Children were addressed by the Rev. HENRY WILKES, the Teachers by the Rev. BENAIAH HOE, and the Parents by the Rev. DAVID DONIE. There were about 450 children present; and the Chapel was otherwise well filled by the Teachers and Parents, and other friends of Religious Education. The exercises were of a highly interesting character. A Correspondent has furnished us with a copy of Mr. HOE's Address, which we insert with pleasure in our columns.—EDITOR.]

ADDRESS OF REV. BENAIAH HOE TO THE TEACHERS.

Not having been present at any previous anniversary, the speaker is not aware of the topics of address on former occasions; and consequently it is probable his remarks may be merely a reiteration of what you have repeatedly heard. And indeed, under any circumstances, this must of necessity be the case; for on such a common theme as Education, it is next to impossible to suggest any but trite thoughts, or to present them in any but familiar forms. Accordingly, in discharging the duty devolved upon me, I propose merely to stir up your "minds by way of remembrance."

It may seem almost superfluous to remind you of the importance of the enterprise in which you are engaged. "That the soul be without knowledge it is not good," is a truth inculcated by infallible wisdom, and confirmed by the constitution of the mind and the facts of history. It has not, however, met with that reception which a truth sanctioned by such authority, and attested by such evidence, demands. For though the advocates of popular ignorance are now comparatively few, yet there are many who form no adequate conception of its evil, and who regard the progress of education either with a latent jealousy, or profound indifference. And therefore it is still requisite, occasionally, to advert to its importance, in order to engage a more cordial co-operation in its diffusion.

As the time allotted for this service precludes any lengthened argument, a plain

illustration must suffice. You may have observed the analogy between the physical and spiritual economies, and that there is a similar connexion between cause and effect in the moral as in the natural world. In both, the end is accomplished by the employment of appropriate means. There is, for instance, a very obvious resemblance between Agriculture and Education. This is evident as regards their respective necessity. The earth will not yield its productions without cultivation. This was required even in Paradise. "The Lord God took the man, and put him in the garden of Eden, to dress it and to keep it." And if this was so requisite even then, how much more must it be now, when the sentence is inflicted: "Cursed is the ground for thy sake: thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee: in the sweat of thy face and in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life." And as in the natural world when the land is uncultivated, the most fertile soil will be unfruitful, and every thing become wild and waste, stunted and sterile, so is it in the moral. Without culture the mind, with all its capabilities, is unproductive; its powers are contracted, dwarfish, and barren; society becomes a spiritual desert; and in such a state, to suppose that the flowers and fruits of wisdom and virtue will grow spontaneously, is as preposterous as to expect to "reap where we have not sowed, and to gather where we have not strawed."

But the two cases present other points of analogical illustration. Thus in Agriculture it is necessary that the land be sown, or else it will yield little but weeds and thistles; and the richer the soil and the better the tillage will only make these the more rank and luxuriant. It is also equally essential that the seed be good, as on this depends the nature of the crop. "According to whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he reap." "Men do not gather grapes of thorns, nor figs of thistles." And is not the case precisely the same with respect to mental culture? Let us never forget that mere education, the art of reading or power of acquiring knowledge, will of itself be productive of no advantage, but rather of much injury. It is like the "tree of the knowledge of good and evil." While it increases the opportunities of good, it proportionably multiplies the means of evil. It breaks up the fallow ground; but unless the soil be sown with good seed, the enemy will soon cover it with tares. If truth you plant not, error springs instead. Unless right doctrines are disseminated, and correct principles implanted, instead of fragrant flowers and wholesome fruits that would beautify and bless the moral landscape, there will be