



Sunday School Guardian.

TORONTO, SEPTEMBER, 1917.

IMPROVE THE TIME.

Youth is the time to enrich the mind. In the morning of life we should lay the broad foundation for a superstructure of moral and religious knowledge. Learning is like a river which rises far into the interior of the country. In its origin it is scarcely perceptible; but as you follow its graceful windings you discover that it enlarges itself, and while it increases the vegetation of the valleys through which it flows, its banks become more widely distant from each other, and its waters sensibly deepen, until, at length, the eye can scarcely mark its boundaries or detect its depth. Small may be the first efforts of the young. Hardly perceptible may be the first acquisitions of knowledge; but let the youthful scholar weekly add to his store; and by-and-by he, and others as well as himself, will be able to discover that he has not laboured in vain.

Dr. Clarke, whose fame is in all lands, whose learning was almost unequalled, laboured hard to acquire a knowledge of the alphabet; but he strove hard to learn a little every day; and before he died he was master of many languages—possessed extensive knowledge, and what was best of all, he was made wise unto salvation. He read much; but there was no book he loved to read so well as the BIBLE. Now, though we may not all become as learned as Dr. Clarke, yet we may all learn to read the BIBLE. Thanks to the Sabbath Schools! scores are now able to read who otherwise would have had no opportunity of acquiring a knowledge of letters. In them a beginning may be made which may end in the possession of extensive knowledge. Most assuredly there the best of all knowledge can be obtained; and we rejoice to believe that thousands have in them received that knowledge which makes wise unto salvation.

1. Let Teachers more than ever be engaged in their work of imparting instruction and of awaking and increasing the desires of the youth to be made truly wise—wise unto salvation.

2. Let children be encouraged to persevere in their efforts. However small may be the beginning, yet great may be the end.

The towering oak was once an acorn; the greatest philosopher was once ignorant of the A B C; and the loftiest saint was once a sinful little child.

OLD AND YOUNG.

There is so much truth in the following sentiments that we are persuaded our young readers, as well as our older ones, will feel their force:—"So different are the colours of life as we look forward to the future, or backward to the past; and so different the opinions and sentiments which this contrariety of appearance naturally produces, that the conversation of the old and young ends generally with contempt or pity on either side. To a young man entering the world with fullness of hope and ardour of pursuit, nothing is so unpleasant as the cold caution, the faint expectations, the scrupulous diffidence, which experience and disappointments certainly infuse; and the old man wonders in his turn that the world never can grow wiser, that neither precept nor testimonies can cure boys of their credulity and inefficiency; and that not one can be convinced that snares are laid for him, till he find himself entangled."

For the Sunday School Guardian.

A WORD TO CHILDREN.

DEAR CHILDREN,—When I address you I must think like a man and talk like a child. Your minds are like wax to receive and like rock to retain impressions. I want to persuade you to love your neighbours as you love yourselves. If you really and heartily love your associates and playmates you will do what you can to oblige and please them. You will not be envious towards them because they live in a better house than you live in, or because they wear finer clothes than your parents can afford to buy for you, or because they have more playthings than you can procure, or because they distance you in school and stand above you in the class. When you see a child with a hump-back, or a marked face, or a lame limb, or an impediment in his speech, never let him know that you noticed his deformity of body or his imperfect utterance. When you play with children whose parents are very poor, never say anything about poverty in their hearing. Never blame your schoolmates for the failings of their friends. If their parents are drunkards, they are not to blame, and they cannot help it. Children who love each other tenderly and affectionately will not tell tales for the purpose of getting their little friends punished, but will feel the sentiments they often read,—

"Teach me to feel another's woe,
And hide the fault I see;
That mercy I to others show,
That mercy show to me."

When Lord Byron, the celebrated poet, and Sir Robert Peel, the distinguished statesman, were little boys, they attended the same school. One day when the master was whipping Peel, Byron came forward with tears in his eyes and begged the master to stop punishing Peel, and give him the balance of the blows. He loved his neighbour as himself. Two kids once met on a narrow bridge, under which flowed a deep and rapid stream of water. There was not room for them to pass each other, so one kneeled down and allowed the other to walk over it. If you copy the example of the kids, when your young friends "crowd upon you," you will excite the approval of your own conscience and the admiration of good people. If you are abused and insulted by your playfellows, do not try to get them punished for their bad conduct, but freely forgive them, and then you will know how much better it is to have a great heart than to have a great foot or a great fist. Some children are so selfish, hateful, and wicked, they will trade with other children and cheat from them their tops, balls, knives, marbles, and kites, and sometimes steal them. Some have such corrupt hearts they will make up bad stories and circulate them about their companions. — Some are so cruel they like to see others punished. Some are so jealous they cannot bear to see their associates better off than they are themselves. Such children do not love their neighbours as they love themselves; ten to one if they do not grow up to be bad men and bad women.

"The tree which does not bloom in Spring,
In Autumn bears no fruit;
The child that is a hateful thing,
Manhood may make a brute."

The noble-hearted, generous-hearted boy who truly loves his neighbour, will cheerfully divide his meal with him if necessary. He will protect him in the hour of danger—assist him to acquire a knowledge of his lessons—speak a good word for him when a favourable opportunity is presented—defend him when others speak ill of him—sympathise with him in his afflictions, and rejoice with him when he is happy.

GEORGE W. BUNGAY.

A REPROBATE FATHER.

At a Wesleyan class-meeting, a man rose and addressed the leader thus:—"I am very thankful to God; and to you, for your Sunday School. My son, who now sits beside me, is my spiritual father. He heard me cursing, while in a state of drunkenness, and said to me, 'O, father, my teacher said to-day, at the Sunday School, that neither drunkards nor swearers could enter into heaven.' This so affected my mind, that from that time I was enabled, by the grace of God, to leave off those wicked practices; and both myself and my son are now members of your society." He then laid his hand on his son's head, and repeated, "My son is my spiritual father."