

The outcome of these proposals will be looked for with the deepest interest by Sabbath School workers everywhere.

The Committee, on motion of Rev. Principal MacVicar, seconded by Rev. John McEwen, approved the Beginners' Course of Lessons recently issued by the International Lesson Committee, and also the proposal to issue an advanced course for senior pupils.

The appointment of Sabbath School missionaries or field workers has the cordial support of the Committee, who "respectfully recommend" to the General Assembly "that two Sabbath School missionaries be now appointed." The action of the Assembly on this proposal will be awaited with interest. Nothing is more sure than that, both for improvement of Sabbath School methods in the older districts and extension and improvement in the newer districts, there is abundant need.

#### TEACHER TRAINING

*By Professor Walter C. Murray*

##### VI. THE PROLONGATION OF INFANCY OR PREPARATION FOR LIFE

This and several following papers will point out some of the characteristics of the mental development of the child, as it advances from infancy to manhood; and the bearing of these characteristics on education will be considered.

One of the most important differences between man and the animals is the greater time required by the child to prepare for life. The young animal quickly reaches maturity. Not more than one-fifth of the life of the horse, nor more than one-eighth of the life of the dog, is needed for acquiring the knowledge and habits that are needed through life. But man must spend at least one-third of his lifetime in preparation. Not until he has reached his twenty-fifth year can he be said to have passed the preparatory stage. Of course, his education does not end then; but the foundations have been laid and the superstructure has been reared.

Man's need for preparation is great. The young animal comes into life fairly well equipped with instincts to protect him from his enemies and to provide for his wants.

The tiny duckling can swim almost as soon as it emerges from the egg. The partridge of a day or two can take cover as cleverly as the old bird, when danger is near. The young of the mountain sheep, within the third day of its birth, can clamber up the rocks and elude its active enemies. But the babe lies helpless, unable to note the signs of danger, unable to move. So ill prepared for life's difficulties is it, that even the least of them would prove too much for its tiny strength and wisdom, did not the anxious care of the parent protect it and provide for it. It is true that the instincts of the young animals require to be supplemented by habits; but the child's instincts, though not few in number, are rather the basis for the formation of new habits than the guides and guards required for life's battles. Habits must do for man what instincts do for the animal.

Man's needs, however, do not exceed his capacity for education. The young animal is much less responsive to the suggestions of the world around it, and much less retentive of the teachings of experience, than is the young child. Instinct is unerring and it is unyielding. Its perfection makes its possessor indifferent to the suggestions of surroundings. A certain kind of wasp stores up food in nests for its young. Its instinct urges it to drag its prey—for example, a grasshopper—to its hole, and then to enter to see if all is ready. If it is satisfied, it drags in the prey. An observer, while the wasp was within, moved the grasshopper slightly. On its return the wasp dragged the grasshopper up to the proper position, and then left it and went in to examine the hole. Again the observer interfered; and again the wasp went through the same process. This was repeated until the observer lost patience. Each time the instinct required the prey to be placed in a certain position before the entrance and then the hole to be examined.

One of Thorndike's experiments with cats indicates the capacity of the cat to learn. Three cats were experimented with. Each was required to crawl into a box, then to pull a loop, opening a door. It was rewarded by being given some fish to eat. One required twenty-six lessons, another eighteen, the third thirty-seven.