

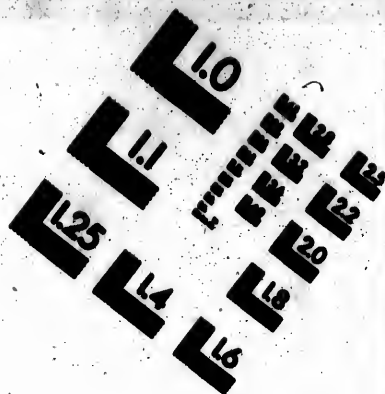
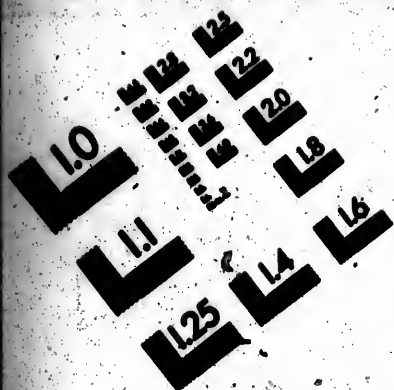


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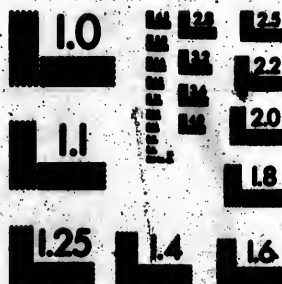
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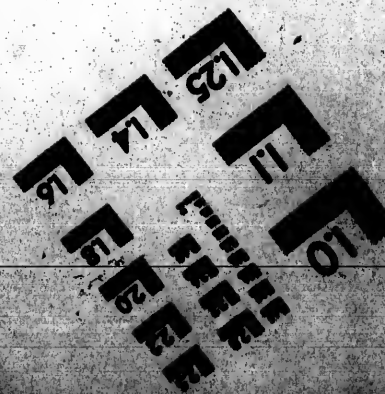
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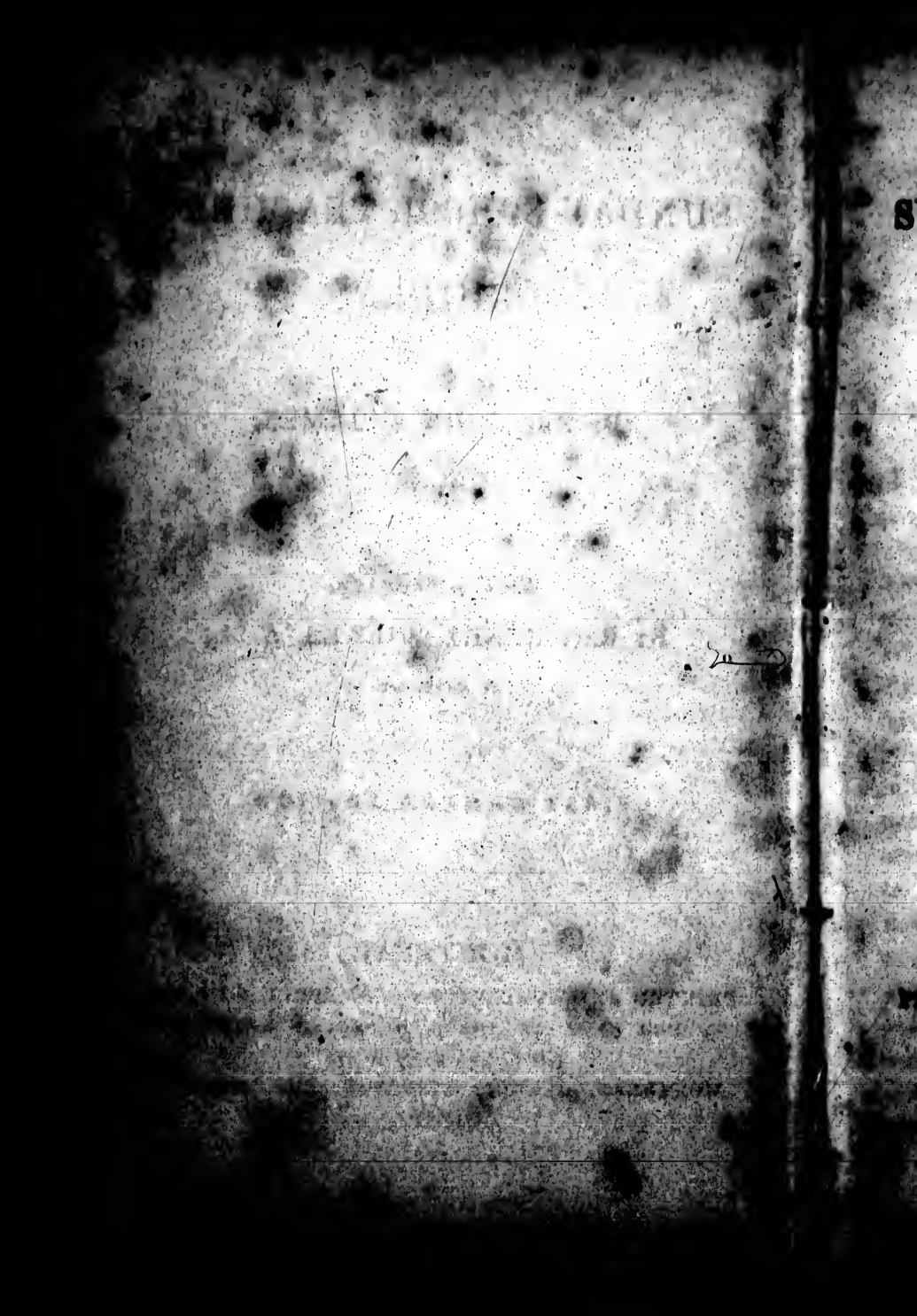
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Walter Clark

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**SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER'S
GUIDE.**

By REV. JOHN A. JAMES.

**WITH A PREFACE,
By REV. HENRY WILKES, A. M.,
OF MONTREAL.**

FIRST CANADA EDITION.

MONTREAL:

**PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY CAMPBELL & BROWN,
AND SOLD AT THEIR PRINTING OFFICE,
AND AT THE BOOK STORES OF
MONTREAL, QUEBEC, KINGSTON, AND
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PREFACE.

It is a favourite idea with certain lovers of things as they were, that the world is out of course, that it has degenerated, and continues to degenerate; so that the most gloomy anticipations are formed regarding the ultimate point of this downward course. With them the past is golden; the present is brass, if not iron! In their estimation the "lives" of our forefathers were in very deed "cast in pleasant places," while the "lot of our inheritance" is dreary in the extreme. They decry the literature of the present age as superficial and puerile, our social arrangements and position as immeasurably inferior to those of "the olden time," and the manifold novelties which we venture to call improvements, as so many innovations on what is excellent, so many steps in the descent to anarchy and ruin. Of the correctness of this view of matters, we must declare ourselves more than sceptical. Admitting, which ought to be done, that there were "giants in the earth in those days," whose intellectual power was

great, and whose acquirements were of extent and variety truly astonishing, and yielding the further fact, that their noble thoughts, attired in modern dress, have without acknowledgment been employed to fill many a fashionable post 8vo. ; yet we are not without our giants, who have reached a boundary in the various fields of inquiry, far beyond that attained by "the Fathers;" and even if it could be proved that no individual among us is equal to some of them, we have at least the advantage of *diffusion*. Our *aggregate* power is incomparably greater than was their's; for with them knowledge was confined to a sort of intellectual aristocracy, while it is one of the glories of the present age that the *multitude* is instructed. It is true, that they who form the "masses" are still imperfectly taught; and that there is required much knowledge of divine things, in connection with other information, in order to a general elevation of character; it is also true that there are yet many barren wastes without an implement of culture,—but enough already appears to afford, as compared with the past, a happy prospect of the universal prevalence of light and truth.

It must be further considered, in order to a correct estimate, that however the distinguished men of former days may have excelled in what was strictly contemplative, this generation surpasses them immeasurably in enterprise and action! Availing

themselves are gathered in the repositories of their thoughts, and gathering from every source its quota of help,—it brings home, in their practical application to the business and weal of mankind, the things formerly confined to the regions of speculation. Hence, whatever may be our errors, and they are many and sad,—still advance and improvement mark our course, and it becomes us gratefully to recognise the wisdom of heaven in those arrangements that secure gradual and happy progress in all that benefits man and honours God. Instead of the mourning and lamentation that repress hope and lie as an incubus on the master springs of action, let us rather, with gladdening expectation, trace the many streams of blessings enjoyed and promised upwards to their Fountain—to Him whose ineffable character “gathers splendour from all that is fair, subordinates to itself all that is great, and sits enthroned on the riches of the universe.”

Like the other great schemes of benevolence by which this age is distinguished, the Sunday School Institution is of modern origin. Sixty years have not elapsed since its father and founder, the venerated RAIKES, caught the happy idea which led to its formation;—or shall we not rather say, received from the Spirit of grace and truth the important suggestion? It is not the province of these introductory remarks to trace the history of this movement of mercy, or to describe the results, which, under

the divine blessing, have been produced. All within the limits to which we are confined admit of a statement of the manifold advantages arising, directly or indirectly, from Sunday Schools. On these points, the following pages furnish ample information and suggestion.

It had been an anomaly in the history of human plans could it have been said that the Sunday School came perfect from the hands of its founder, and that no improvement had at any time been desirable. It presents, however, no such anomaly; but, on the contrary, few plans have been brought more fully under the modifying influence of accurate experiment, and carefully estimated experience, since the period at which the *Teacher's Guide* presented from the pen of its estimable author (nearly a century of a century ago) many of the defects then existing have been remedied, and the great object of Sabbath School instruction so admirably stated, pp. 64, 65, is kept more simply and steadily before the mind of Teachers generally. Improvements, too, have been made in the entire machinery, and have given it a compactness and efficiency hitherto unknown.

It is no slight evidence of the substantial excellence of Mr. Janna's work, that notwithstanding the advances made in the system, it is not becoming antiquated, that new editions are still required, its value and popularity remaining

all the unimpaired. It may indeed be deemed a standard work. One reason probably is, that it is a book of principles clearly and pointedly stated, and of precepts solemnly laid down, appropriate to the exigencies of the Teacher as such, whatever change there may be in the system. Another and stronger reason is to be found in Mr. JAMES's qualifications as a practical writer. It would be presumptuous in us to attempt an eulogy of the author of the *Christian Father's Present*—*The Family Monitor*—*The Christian Professor*—*The Church Member's Guide*—*The Anxious Inquirer after Salvation Directed and Encouraged*. Knowing him personally, admiring him greatly, and venturing to number him among a class of friends in the Christian Ministry, resident in the Fatherland, whose worth he has not language to express, the writer can only say, that he deems it at once a privilege and an honour to have been requested by the Publishers to introduce this first edition to the Canadian press, of one of his earliest works. As a literary performance, it is inferior to Mr. JAMES's other and more recent works. His style has improved as his years and experience have increased;—but his *Teacher's Guide* breathes the same spirit of deep toned piety, bears the same impress of enlightened and holy zeal, and manifests the same high regard to principle, which characterize his later performances.

The edition now presented to the Teachers of Sunday Schools in Canada is not abridged, as is that issued from the press of the American Sunday School Union; and is therefore, in some respects, not only more complete, but more valuable. From that press, however, we take leave to say, have proceeded some invaluable little works for the instruction of Teachers in the various details of their momentous work. These we might particularize; and at the same time call the attention of Teachers of Sunday Schools in this country to considerations having relation to the peculiar features of their position; but it is felt that our limits have been already exceeded; and therefore we conclude by affectionately and prayerfully "commending them to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build them up, and to give them an inheritance among all them who are sanctified."

HENRY WILKES.

Montreal, January, 1841.

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INTRODUCTION:

CONTAINING A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE ORIGIN,
PROGRESS, AND IMPROVEMENT OF THE SUNDAY
SCHOOL SYSTEM OF EDUCATION.

TO TRACE a mighty river to its source, has ever been considered a sublime and interesting employment. It is pleasing to ascend its course from the point where it opens into the ocean, and becomes the inlet of wealth to an empire, till we arrive at the spot where it bubbles up a spring but just sufficient to irrigate the meadows of a neighbouring farm, and to observe, as it receives the confluence of tributary waters, how it diffuses its benefits to the tribes that dwell upon its banks. Still more engaging is the task, to trace the streams of benevolence to their source, and contemplate the course of those institutions, which in their progress as the swelling tide of Christian knowledge, confer eternal blessings on immortal souls. For what is the Nile, or the Niger; the Missouri, the Euphrates, or the Thames, compared to the river of life? The source of rivulets which flows into this celestial stream, has more sublimity and importance than the greatest rivers upon earth, and will be traced with the deepest interest upon the map of the Millennium.

kingdom, millions of ages after the ocean itself shall be dissipated into nothing. Justly, therefore, may it be accounted an object worthy our attention to trace, by a rapid survey, the origin, the progress, and improvement of the SUNDAY SCHOOL INSTITUTION.

To the greater part of those who are employed in diffusing the benefits of this admirable system, it is almost impossible to form an adequate idea of the extreme ignorance of the poor, before its introduction. Except where a happy few of their children were gathered beneath the wings of some charitable institution, the great mass of their offspring grew up in the most deplorable ignorance. Myriads of children of both sexes were continually rising into life, to whom the letters of the alphabet were a set of mystic symbols, and every page of inspired or uninspired writ, an insoluble enigma. This was the least part of their calamity. Ignorance is the prolific mother of crimes and of miseries. It is during a state of mental night, that the worst vices of the human character steal from their coverts in the heart, to prey upon the peace and the comforts of society. To the children of the poor, the Sabbath seemed to suspend the toils of the body, only to afford them greater leisure for effecting the ruin of their souls. They claimed the sacred hours as their own, and diligently employed them to aid their growth in wickedness. In the vicinity of every large town, multitudes were to be seen practising every boyish sport; while others spread over the face of the country, to commit their depredations on orchards and gardens. In many places the farmer was detained from public worship to guard his property, or else employed his servants in the same task. Persons going to the house of God,

not only had their minds disturbed, but their peace interrupted, by numerous bands of these unhappy youth; of whom the more desperate, sometimes associated for the purpose of molesting those whom conscience led to worship in the meeting-house, rather than the church. Thus every generation of the poor was growing up successively, without any general effort to instruct their ignorance, to check their violence, to repress their vices, or to form their manners.

In this state matters remained, till God in his great goodness raised up a man, whose memory innumerable multitudes will bless; and to whose name, religion will assign a distinguished rank in the roll of benefactors to the human race, which she carefully preserves in the archives of the church. To the last moment of time, and through every age of eternity, ROBERT RAIKES will be venerated as the father and founder of Sunday Schools. This illustrious individual was a native of Gloucester, and born in the year 1785. His heart was one of mercy's earthly temples. His benevolence was ardent and active. The first object which engaged his philanthropic exertions, was the miserable situation of the prisoners confined for lesser crimes in the county jail, for whose instruction and reformation he made a noble and successful struggle. The circumstances which led to the institution of Sunday Schools shall be stated in his own language. In a letter to a gentleman who had applied to him for the particulars of the nature and origin of his plan, he thus writes:—

"Some business leading me one morning into the suburbs of the city, where the lowest of the people (who are principally employed in the pin manufactory) reside, I was struck with concern at seeing a group of children,

wretchedly ragged, at play in the street. I asked an inhabitant whether these children belonged to that part of the town, and lamented their misery and idleness. Ah! sir, said the woman to whom I was speaking, could you take a view of this part of the town on Sunday, you would be shocked indeed; for then the street is filled with multitudes of these wretches, who, released on that day from their employment, spend their time in noise and riot, playing at chuck, and cursing and swearing in a manner so horrid, as to convey to any serious mind an idea of hell rather than any other place. We have a worthy clergyman, said she, minister of our parish, who has put some of them to school; but upon the Sabbath they are all given up to follow their inclinations without restraint, as their parents, totally abandoned themselves, have no idea of instilling into the minds of their children, principles to which they themselves are strangers.

"This conversation suggested to me, that it would at least be a harmless attempt, if it were productive of no good, should some little plan be formed to check this deplorable profanation of the Sabbath. I then enquired of the woman if there were any decent, well-disposed women in the neighbourhood, who kept schools for teaching to read. I was presently directed to four. To these I applied, and made an agreement with them, to receive as many children as I should send on the Sunday, whom they were to instruct in reading and the church catechism. For this I engaged to pay them a shilling for their day's employment. The women seemed pleased with the proposal. I then waited on the clergyman before-mentioned, and reported to him my plan. He was so much satisfied with the idea that he engaged to lend his assistance by going round to the schools on a Sunday afternoon, to examine the progress that was made, and to enforce order and decorum among such a set of little heathens.

"This, sir, is the commencement of the plan. It is now about three years since we began, and I cannot but give you some reason to make inquiry into the effect. A woman who lives in a house where I had found a school, told me

some time ago, that the place was like a heaven upon Sundays compared with what it used to be. The numbers who have learned to read and say their catechisms are so great that I am astonished at it. Upon the Sunday afternoon the mistresses take their scholars to church, a place into which neither they nor their ancestors ever entered, with a view to the glory of God. But what is yet more extraordinary, within this month, these little ragamuffins have in great numbers taken it into their heads to frequent the early morning prayers, which are held every morning at the cathedral at seven o'clock. I believe there were near fifty this morning. They assemble at the house of one of the mistresses, and walk before her to church, two and two, in as much order as a company of soldiers. I am generally at church, and after service they all come round me to make their bow; and if any animadversions have arisen, to make their complaint. The great principle I inculcate is to be kind and good-natured to each other; not to provoke one another; to be dutiful to their parents; not to offend God by cursing and swearing; and each little plain precept as all may comprehend. As my profession is that of a printer, I have printed a little book, which I give amongst them; and some friends of mine, subscribers to the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, sometimes make me a present of a parcel of Bibles, testaments, &c., which I distribute as rewards to the deserving. The success that has attended this scheme has induced one or two of my friends to adopt the plan, and set up Sunday Schools in other parts of the city; and now a whole parish has taken up the object, so that I devote myself in future the good effects will appear more and more to become generally adopted. The number of scholars at present then engaged on the Sabbath are upwards of two hundred and three hundred, and they are increasing daily, as the benefit is universally seen. I have also endeavored to engage the clergy of my acquaintance thus united in their plan. One has entered into the scheme, and has given up his clerical duties; and it was in order to enter others in like manner, that I inserted in my paper the foregoing account.

I suppose you saw copied into the London papers. I cannot express to you the pleasure I often receive in discovering genius and innate good dispositions among the little multitude. It is astonishing in human nature. I have often too, the satisfaction of receiving thanks from parents, for the reformation they perceive in their children. Often have I given them kind admonitions, which I always do in the mildest and gentlest manner. The going among them, doing them little kindnesses, distributing trifling rewards, and ingratiating myself with them, I hear, have given me an ascendancy, greater than I ever could have imagined; for I am told by their mistresses, that they are very much afraid of my displeasure. If you ever pass through Gloucester, I shall be happy to pay my respects to you, and to show you the effects of this effort at civilization. If the glory of God be promoted in any, even the smallest degree, society must reap some benefit. If good seed be sown in the mind at an early period of human life, though it shows itself not again for many years, it may please God, at some future period, to cause it to spring up, and to bring forth a glorious harvest."

It appears that Mr. Rafter, who was sent about the close of the year 1791, at the beginning of 1792. His example was immediately copied by some of his friends, and the system began to spread in the city of Gloucester. Having continued his mission more than a year, he returned to his native place as a scholar, which he continued to be fraught with of many months. For his services he received a present of a weekly salary, of which he was the author and proprietor. The following is a copy of this important document.

the Lord's day subservient to the ends of instruction, which has hitherto been prostituted to bad purposes. Farmers and other inhabitants of the towns and villages, complain that they receive more injury in their property on the Sabbath than all the week besides; this is a great motive towards from the lawless state of the younger class, who are allowed to run wild on that day, free from every restraint. To remedy this evil, persons only qualified are employed to instruct those that cannot read; and those that may have learnt to read, are taught the catechism, and conducted to church. By thus keeping their minds engaged, the day passes profitably, and not idly. In those parishes where this plan has been adopted, we are assured that the behaviour of the children is greatly civilised. The barbarous ignorance in which they had before lived, being in some degree dispelled, civility is given forth; that these persons are mistaken who consider the lower orders of mankind as incapable of improvement, and therefore think an attempt to restrain them, impracticable, or at least not worth the trouble."

Mr. Raikes's statement of the good effects of the school, was not likely, nor was it permitted by him who watches every event, to float uncontradicted to oblivion. It caught the attention of a nobleman in Lancashire, before alluded to, who came immediately to him, and reviewed the latter given. By permission of his mother, he was pointed to one of the numbers of the *Quarterly Magazine* for 1794 (vol. 14, p. 114).

[The following page contains extremely faint, illegible text.]

from, wondering that it should never have been devised before, seemed determined to repair, as much as possible, the mischief of past neglect, by applying with the utmost diligence, the benefits of this new discovery in the world of morals and religion.

Several public spirited gentlemen in the metropolis, perceiving that the system would be greatly aided by the establishment of a society which should combine the patronage and energies of all denominations of Christians, held a preparatory meeting August 30, 1785, to take into consideration the propriety of forming a society, for establishing and supporting Sunday Schools for the instruction of poor children, in different parts of the kingdom. In consequence of a resolution then passed, a public meeting was holden on the 7th of September, and an institution formed, bearing the title of "A Society for the Support and Encouragement of Sunday Schools in the different Counties in England." This establishment was exceedingly beneficial to the growing cause. By the respectability of its members, it increased the public confidence; by their talents it enlightened the public mind; by their activity it stimulated the public zeal; and by their liberality it assisted the public expenditure.

It was an object of importance with the Committee of the Sunday School Society, to engage the sanction of Episcopal authority within the pale of the established religion of the country; and it was proposed to the honor of the Bishops, that they should come forward, and cast the weight of their authority into the scale of this good cause. Among the dignitaries of the church, who patronized the plan, the Bishops of Salisbury and London, and the Bishops of Canterbury and Exeter, obtained a distinguished place by their zeal and influence. The

rapidly had the flame spread through the country, that by the close of 1786, not less than 250,000 children were every Sunday receiving instruction.

The schools were at first universally conducted by *hired* teachers. This entailed a load of pecuniary difficulty upon the plan, which had it not been removed, must have considerably retarded its progress, and consequently diminished its usefulness. The Sunday School Society alone expended, during the sixteen first years of its existence, no less than *four thousand pounds* in the salaries of teachers. And this was not the least evil attending upon purchased labour. Hiring teachers can scarcely be expected to possess either the zeal, or ability of those who now engage in the work from motives of pure benevolence. GRATUITOUS INSTRUCTION was an astonishing improvement of the system; and which does not appear to have entered into the views of its benevolent author. "If we were asked," says a writer in the *Sunday School Repository*, "whose name stood next to Robert Raikes in the annals of Sunday Schools, we should say, the person who first came forward voluntarily proffered his exertions, his talents, to the instruction of the poor; since an imitation of his example was the great cause of the present flourishing state of these institutions, and of all that happy increase which may be reasonably expected. At what precise period this was first done we cannot appear, or where it commenced. The award of this second honour is reserved for the decision of the last day. About the year 1790 the plan became very general through the influence of the improvement in the mode of instruction, introduced by Dr. Bell and Mr. Lancaster.

must be considered as forming another era in the history of Sunday Schools, by affording new facilities to the business of instruction. And the advantage derived from these useful systems, does not merely consist in a servile imitation of all their arrangements, but in demonstrating to the world, more clearly than was ever shewn before, that education is an art susceptible of indefinite improvement, and in exciting an ardor, before unknown, to carry it on to perfection.

The institution of Sunday Schools was now become universal in this kingdom. Every city, and every town had warmly espoused the cause. Still there was one thing wanting to raise the system to the highest degree of efficiency, and that is *union*. In every possible application of the sentiment *union is power*. Reasoning upon the general principle, many were led to conclude, that great benefits would result to this particular case, from an association of counsel and energy. After much private inquiry on this subject, between many persons in various parts of the country, a public meeting was holden, July 18, 1825, in the school rooms belonging to Surrey Street, when the SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION was then formed. The design of this association is thus announced in its own regulations:—

The objects of this union are,—1st, To stimulate and encourage in the religious instruction of the young;—2dly, To promote the opening of new schools;—3dly, To promote the opening of new branches;—4thly, To print books, &c. suitable for Sunday Schools;—5thly, To correspond with similar unions in the united kingdom and abroad;—6thly, To promote the formation of country unions, which are not sufficiently supported in this society; and are allowed to purchase the publications at reduced prices."

This new society commenced its operations with no less prudence than vigour. Carefully abstaining from even the appearance of a desire to interfere with the private management of any of the associated schools, it aimed to diffuse new life and energy through them all. One of its first objects was the compilation of a new spelling-book, more adapted to moral and religious instruction than any they could find already in existence. This production reflects no small degree of credit on its industrious compilers. The next object of the Committee was to ascertain, by an extensive correspondence, what parts of the country were most destitute of schools. Finding, in many places, that the advantages of the system were greatly diminished by the want of method and order which prevailed in the schools, they published in 1806, "A Plan for the Formation and Regulation of Sunday Schools."

The example of the metropolis was soon followed by many of the large towns, and several Associations were formed in different parts of the kingdom, from which the happiest effects have resulted, among which may be reckoned the establishment of new schools in neglected parts of the country, amidst the darkness of benighted superstition;—the excitement given to those employed in the diffusion of Christian instruction;—the diffusion of Christian instruction in some instances a great improvement in the mode of instruction. The formation of the Scotch Union must therefore be regarded as a measure of vast importance to the success of the present scheme.

In an account like the present, the details of the SCOTCH SABBATH EVENING SCHOOLS cannot be omitted, as they may be fairly said to have arisen out of the English Sunday School

Institution.* The children of the poor, so far as common education is concerned, are all taught to read in the parochial schools, which are established in that enlightened country. Still, however, as it respects the observance of the Sabbath, and the more direct business of religious instruction, like the children in this kingdom, they are left of course to the care of their parents, multitudes of whom, indifferent to the welfare of their own souls, feel no solicitude for the salvation of their offspring. Observing and commiserating the condition of these neglected youth, who in great numbers spent the Sabbath, and especially the Sabbath evenings, in profanity and vice, the friends of religion formed the pious resolution of collecting them together on the Lord's day evenings, for the purpose of imparting religious knowledge. They assemble at six o'clock, and are dismissed about eight; during which time every effort is made to instruct them in the way of eternal salvation, and to urge them forward in the path of duty.

This admirable system commenced in the year 1787, and soon spread to the principal towns of Scotland. How should we should pass the Tweed, and be in England. There is one class of youth, who might become an incalculable blessing; the boys and girls, who have just left school, and who are generally considered as under no care. Thus abandoned by us, it is the case, that they lose all the little good they have received while under our instruction. Could they be collected together on a Sabbath evening, to be taught by the senior and junior members of our churches, who would

* From subsequent information, to be a mistake, as the system was in partial operation in Scotland for half a century.

interest themselves in their welfare, what a blessing might be expected to accrue.

WALMS, at a very early period in the history of Sunday Schools, entered with eagerness into the scheme, and adorned her romantic and picturesque vallies with numerous asylums for the instruction of the poor.

And here it is but justice to the Sunday School Institution, although by some it may be accounted a digression, to assert its claims to the high honor of giving birth to the most sublime, and efficient society that was ever formed by man, or blessed by God, for promoting the interests of genuine Christianity. Every reader will anticipate the name of the BRITISH and FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY. The honor of giving rise to this mighty combination of wealth, of zeal, and talents, is more worth contending for, than the highest place in the roll of monarchs, conquerors or philosophers. Newton, the great monarch and conqueror in the kingdom of philosophy, if he be acquainted with what is done on earth, would cheerfully resign all the glory of his previous labors for the brighter honor of having originated this noble and Godlike scheme.

By means of Sunday School education the number of readers increased far beyond the supply of Welsh bibles which could be obtained. This induced the indefatigable Mr. Charles Jones to undertake a journey to London, for the purpose of soliciting a private subscription from the friends of the cause to defray the expence of printing a new edition. At a meeting of the Religious Tract Society, which was held at the time, the mind of the Rev. Joseph Sturge was struck with the thought which darted as one of the brightest beams from the fountain of light and life above, and for

which millions through eternity will bless his name, that a little more exertion than was requisite for supplying the Principality with the scriptures, might found an institution that should go on increasing its funds, and extending its operations, till not only the British dominions, but the whole world should be furnished with the word of God. Such was the origin of a society which is the glory of our own age and nation, and will one day be acknowledged as the blessing of *all* ages and *all* nations. I have no need to trace it farther than just to say, that it was warmly embraced by the gentlemen present, and steps immediately taken to give it efficiency. My only object, in adverting to it, was to shew its pedigree, and claim it as the blooming daughter of the Sunday School Institution.

The cause which originated still supports it. For in most cases a Sunday School teacher must be the forerunner of a bible.

Geographically separated from us only by the passage of the Irish sea, but far more united to our native country, in the moral and political state of her inhabitants, begins to share in the benefits of this beneficial plan. In the year 1801 the Sunday School Society was established, and was immediately cherished by extensive patronage, and has already been exceedingly successful in diffusing the rays of heavenly light over a large portion of that long enveloped, the lower part of the community in that interesting, but hitherto neglected country.

The growth of the Sunday School Institution would be an unpardonable omission to pass by in silence that noble manifestation of its instruction of Adults. A few years ago, had any

one proposed such a design, a thousand voices would have exclaimed, in a strain somewhat similar to that of the wondering and doubting Nicodemus, "How can a man be taught when he is old?" But this is the age of a daring and restless benevolence, which no exertions can weary, and no difficulties can appal. The first scion was planted by Mr. Charles, upon the mountains of Wales, in the summer of 1811. "God prepared room before it, and caused it to take deep root; the hills were covered with the shadow of it, and the boughs whereof were like goodly cedars."

The account of his commencement and success, shall be given in his own words:—

"My maxim has been for many years past, to aim at great things, but if I cannot accomplish great things, to do what I can, and be thankful for the least success, and still to follow on without being discouraged at the day of small things, or by unexpected reverses. For many years I have held it down as a maxim to guide me, never to give up a place in despair of success. If one way does not succeed, new means must be tried: and if I see no prospect this year, perhaps I may the next. I almost wish to blot out the word *impossible* from my vocabulary, and obliterate it from the minds of my brethren. We had no particular school for the instruction of adults exclusively, till the summer of 1811; but many attended the Sunday schools with the children, in different parts of the country, previous to that time. What induced me first to think of establishing such an institution, was the evening I spent in the night in conversation with the children in their schools. The first attempt succeeded wonderfully, and far beyond my most sanguine expectations. The report of the success of this school soon spread over the country, and in many places, the illiterate adults began to call for instruction. In one society, after a public address had been delivered to them on the subject, the adult poor, even the aged, flocked

to the Sunday Schools in crowds; and the shopkeepers could not immediately supply them with an adequate number of spectacles. Our schools in general are kept in our chapels: in some districts, where there are no chapels, farmers, in the summer time, lend their barns. The adults and children are sometimes in the same room, but placed in different parts of it. When their attention is gained and fixed, they soon learn; their age makes no difference if they are able, by the help of glasses, to see the letters. *As the adults have no time to lose, we endeavour (before they can read) to instruct them without delay in the first principles of Christianity.* We select a short portion of scripture, comprising the leading doctrines, and repeat them to the learners, till they can retain them in their memories; and which they are to repeat the next time we meet."

Thus commenced that excellent institution, which is imparting the elements of knowledge and the benefits of religious instruction to thousands, who have passed the meridian of life; which in many cases, by teaching the aged to read, seems to add a lengthened twilight to their day of grace; and by revealing to them the things that belong to their peace, just as they are about to be hid from their eyes, accomplishes the words of inspiration, "In the evening tide it shall be light."

Soon after this time, as if the plan had been carried in the bosom of the Severn, and from thence conveyed by the Avon, it appeared in the city of Bristol. The individual destined to the high honour of establishing it there, was a man of obscure and humble origin. The rays of spiritual light do not always strike first on the tops of the highest mountains. Men in less elevated stations have often been employed as the ministers of divine bounty. The apostle, referring to the first preachers of the gospel,

could say, "Ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise : and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty." At the Second Anniversary of the Bristol Auxiliary Bible Society, among other intelligence communicated to the meeting, a letter from Keynsham was read, which contained the following sentence :—" We have been necessarily obliged to omit a great number of poor inhabitants who could not read, and therefore are not likely to be benefitted by the possession of a bible." This statement reached the heart of an individual present, by the name of William Smith. To be deprived of the inspired volume by an inability to peruse it, appeared to him worse than for a man to be dying of the plague, through ignorance of the way of applying a remedy, which in itself was within his reach. His benevolent mind meditated upon their situation. He longed to relieve them, but scarcely dared to hope that the case admitted of relief. In this dilemma he consulted Stephen Frost, Esq., a respectable merchant in the city, whose name stands high in the long list of Bristol philanthropists. The object of his enquiry was to ascertain whether it were possible to instruct the ignorant part of the adult poor to read. It is of immense importance, that when the seed of benevolence begins to germinate, it should be cherished by the gentle influence of a kindly atmosphere ; a slipping frost or a cold shower, would cause it to perish in the soil. In the spring, the patronage, and support of Mr. Frost, the scheme of Smith met the sanction which it wanted. He does not pretend that the plan, after he had received the promise of the general

tried to assist him in the undertaking, before he commenced his exertions. As he was employed the next day in collecting subscriptions for the Bible Association, wherever he met with persons who could not read, he asked them if they would like to learn, provided a school should be opened. Many embraced the offer with expressions of pleasure, and their names were taken down. Two rooms were immediately obtained, and the work of instruction commenced. So soon could the ardour of Smith be kindled, that in nineteen days after he had commenced, he asked Mr. Frost, the school was opened with eleven men and ten women. The number rapidly increased, till a few weeks after, more than five friends to the cause of religion and humanity, met the founder of the new institution, and having themselves into a society, bearing the name of the **INSTITUTION FOR INSTRUCTING AMERICAN SLAVES TO READ THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.** The society resolved to attract the attention and secure the support of Christians of all denominations; and it was considered a most valuable accession in the cause of education of Dr. Fols, a physician in residence with the Society of Friends. Within the space of two years, the society numbered 1408 members, of 274, who were taught by themselves, belonging to several dissenting congregations.

cover. The fountain of all good, thus causing the stream of his mercy to break forth in two distinct places, and almost simultaneously.

It was not likely that this new light, kindled by CHARLES and SARAH, would remain long unobserved. It was soon and admired from afar. The generous and noble spirited benefactors in different parts of the kingdom, who are ever watching for new means of promoting their species, hailed the heavenly gift with delight, and like the eastern Magi, followed the star, and looked to the bright morning rising. Schools multiplied every where. At the present time, they are to be found in almost every considerable town in this country.

The next event in the order of Providence, is of importance in the history of mankind. It is of a bloody nature. The sword is now drawn to the interests of man; and one of the most important auxiliaries to the cause of God. The other gift of heaven, it has been seen almost; it has been pressed into the service of humanity and cruelty; it has been used to establish laws which are founded in blood, and still under the direction of Satan and his agents. It has passed with a rapid and terrible course, from the hands of the righteous to the hands of the wicked, and from the hands of the wicked to the hands of the wicked.

once to interest, instruct, and excite. It should be circulated through every school, and read by every teacher. Already it has laid before the public a mass of most valuable information, and directed upon the Sunday School Institution, a stream of light which has revealed its magnitude and its beauty much more clearly than they were generally seen before. And in order to render it still more useful,

every one who has much experience in the business of instruction, and is possessed of ability to communicate his knowledge to others, should consider his duty under righteous regulation for its support.

It is of immense importance to the great cause. By a proper supply and comprehension of material.

It might exhibit the operations of the whole Christian world, and thus form a sort of Sunday School Panorama, in which, as in one connected and complete picture, the whole circle of operations may be contemplated wherever it is read.

We now turn our attention from our own country to the churches, and progress of the plan in other quarters of the globe. A few years ago the British and Foreign Bible Society, as with the voice of the Lord in the Apocalypse, had across the Atlantic, and spread on the shores of a country, what to the people of religion, so like their time, had appeared, presented a new world. It had been seen from Britain every thing else

sending us the Sunday School Institution." The call was promptly obeyed, and the eastern wind, which some say blows no good to any one, took back various publications, relating both to children's and adult schools. The result is, that letters have been received, from which one or two extracts will record the establishment of the institution in the United States.

It is not easy to determine by the intelligence yet come to hand, whether the first Sunday School was opened in New York, or Philadelphia.* The earliest intimation of its having claimed the attention of the Americans, was received in a letter from Divis Bethune, Esq., of New York, to Mr. Prust, dated July 12, 1814. The former, alluding to a present of a copy of Dr. Paley's *History of Adult Schools*, which he had received from Mr. Prust, continued, "Mrs. Bethune, and about twenty other ladies, have petitioned the Corporation of this city to grant them the use of a building, erected for a house of industry. Mrs. B. says she is of opinion an Adult School may very properly be attached to such an institution."

The first intelligence of the establishment of a school in Philadelphia, is contained in a letter from Miss S. Whitehead to Mr. Bethune, dated March 28, 1815, which is as follows:

"I had several extracts of Dr. Paley's work inserted in the *Religious Remembrancer*, a weekly paper of our city, and the widest extent universal attention; the first

number recently arrived, is again, and the same paper was established at various places, and the same work has been sent to various parts of the country, and the same work is now in New York and the

"I may venture to affirm, there was not a dry eye in the room, and tears flowed copiously down the cheeks of many. A committee was appointed of one or two from each denomination, to prepare a constitution, and set of rules, to be laid before the society at a meeting this day week."

In a letter from Mr. Bethune, dated New York, February 4, 1816, we learn what was the result of this noble exertion of female piety and zeal.

"This city is in a stir throughout, a strong interest awakened, and great exertions commenced, for the instruction, on Sabbath days, of children and adults. Mrs. B. has written to you on account of the first meeting of ladies; on that day week the second meeting was held, and so great was the crowd of ladies pressing forward, that the company had to adjourn from a lecture room to a church.

Next Sabbath, I believe, was appointed for the commencement of the work of teaching; the zeal of three of the congregations, however, led them to begin this day. Mrs. B. visited three schools, which, with a school of negroes, taught by my family, made up one hundred and thirty-six scholars. I presume the number next Lord's day will amount to one thousand, in all the schools. I believe the gentlemen are mustering their numbers, to follow the example of the ladies, and to take charge of the school and children of their own sex."

Thus it is evident, that this plant of heavenly promise has struck root in the western quarter of the globe, and there, as well as here, will one day send forth its wide-spreading branches, and refresh the parched and weary soul, innumerable multitudes of the human race. What a prospect meeting from the Atlantic, and uniting with the thousands of the continent, above the foundation of the world, the thousands of the throne of the universe, a united people, to glorify in the redemption of the human race, and to bring forth a new and glorious world, which shall be the seat of the redeemed, and the dwelling place of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, forever and ever. Amen.

Only one more triumph of this mighty scheme remains to be recorded, but that is a splendid one, no less than the invasion of Asia, and its establishment, amidst the temples and the gods of that part of the world, which may be denominated the **MYSTERY OF IDOLATRY.** THE FIRST SUNDAY SCHOOL IN ASIA was established by the Wesleyan Missionaries in Ceylon, June 4, 1815. This was a most appropriate and hallowed manner of celebrating the birth day of our beloved Monarch, whose tender solicitude for the education of the rising generation, and whose well known wish "that every poor child in his dominions might be able to read the Bible," entitle him to the honour of being considered the patron of Sunday Schools.

Messrs. Harvard and Clough, two of the Wesleyan Missionaries to the island of Ceylon, thus report the commencement of this good work in a quarter of the globe, to which the Christian patriot turns with a heart burning with the thirst of holy conquest, and an eye sparkling with the most benevolent hope:—

"We cannot conceal that the establishment of our Sunday School has given us favour in the eyes of many. It has certainly considerably tended to help on the reformation to our place of worship. We only mentioned our friend, who stated insurmountable difficulties, and seemed to think the time was not yet come, and that the people were not ripe for such an institution. However, we were encouraged by the help of God, so much so that we now have upwards of 250 scholars, and our zealous teachers most cheerfully engaged in their duty. Every week, every one is desirous to be taught, and we surprised that so simple an idea did not meet with more success."

"This, it appears, is a mistake, as the Wesleyan Missionaries were stated to have commenced the year 1815."

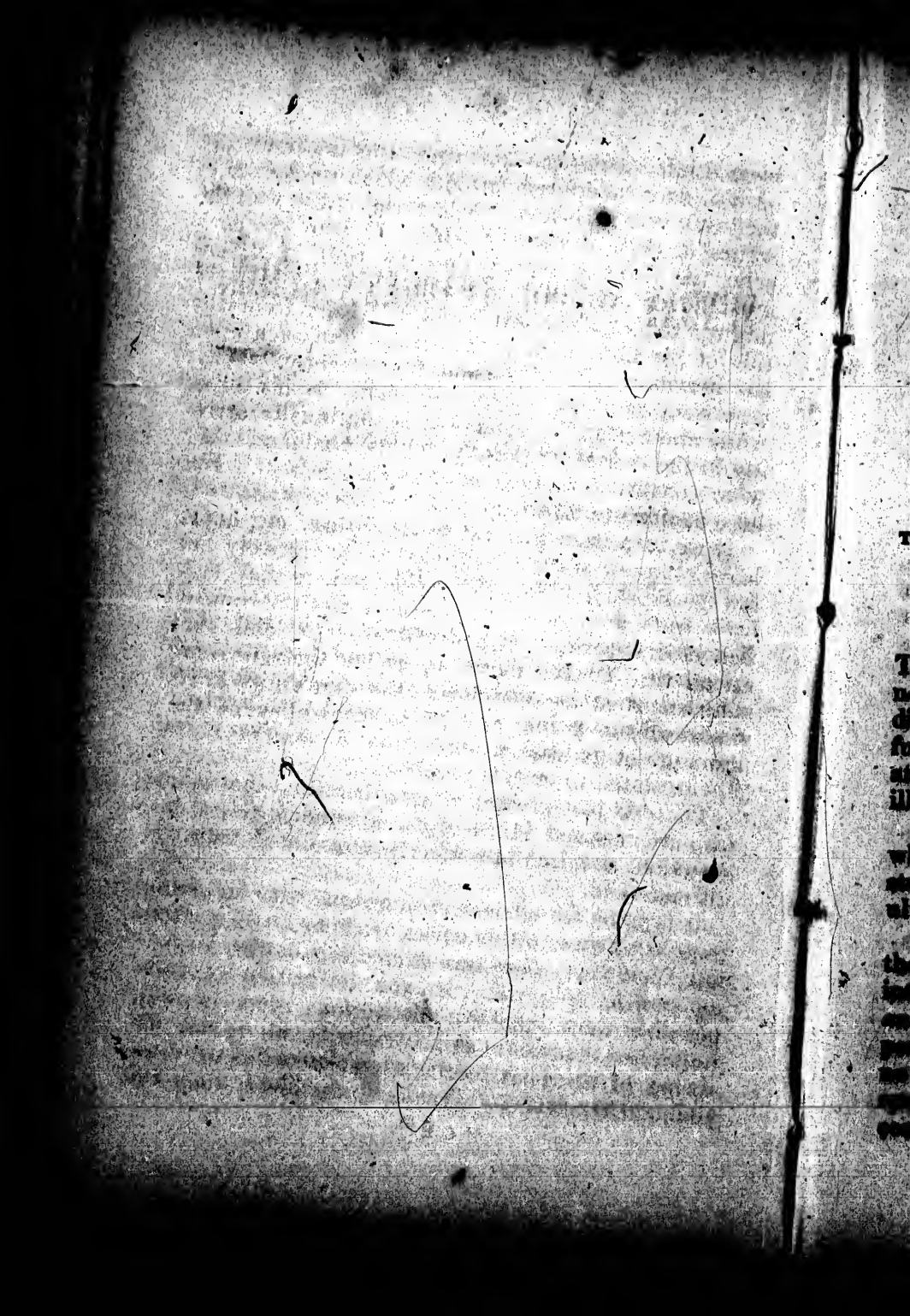
their minds before. We have the pleasure to inform you, that through the great kindness of the Hon. Robert Boyd, Member of council, and Commissioner of revenue, we have the use of the theatre for our Sunday School; and a better place could not have been chosen, it being so very central and commodious. We have quite a train of native children now in our school."

Thus a lodgement has been made by this institution in one of the outworks to the strong hold, which Satan possesses in the eastern division of the earth. Other missionaries in India will soon follow the example thus nobly given, till successive triumphs of the cross over the powers of darkness, shall open for this beneficent scheme an access to the territory of China; nor is the day perhaps so distant as despondency suggests, when it shall be announced in Britain, that Sunday Schools are formed in the city of Peking.—Hasten it, O Lord, in thine own time.

Thus widely and rapidly, to the present time, has this institution multiplied its funds, its objects, and its conquests. It is scarcely possible, even to hazard a conjecture upon the number of children and adults, which are every Sabbath under the sound of instruction throughout the world. Perhaps, if we were to state them at half a MILLION, we should not at all exceed the aggregate. What a reflection for the moralist and the Christian, the patriot and the philanthropist. What a wide and lovely scene for an enlarged and generous imagination to range over. Half a million scholars, collected by many thousand teachers in mighty circles round the fountain of eternal truth, to cleanse from the eyes of the heathen the scales of ignorance and superstition, must be the mind, and cold the heart, that sees nothing here to awaken its sympathy. O that a window in heaven were open, that

blest inhabitants can look upon this lower world; or if a door be opened through which the spirits of the just made perfect are ever permitted to visit the scenes of their terrestrial labors, O who can conceive the extacies with which the soul of Raikes must hover over the captivating scene. What a mighty reflux of delight must roll back from the tide of his benevolence, and reach him even upon the heavenly side of the shores of eternity. What accusations must be continually made to his bliss, while another and another soul is continually arriving in the realms of glory, to tell its inhabitants they were converted to God in a Sunday School. But here conjecture fails us.

If we turn from the past to the future, our hopes leave even our success behind. Comparatively but few years shall pass before other writers shall look back from a distance in the progress of the Sunday School institution, inconceivable to us, and sum up all that I have recorded, as but the very commencement of its operations, the first fruits of its victories, and as not worthy to extend beyond the first page of its history.



SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER'S GUIDE.

CHAPTER FIRST.

THE OBJECT WHICH SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS SHOULD EVER KEEP IN VIEW AS THE ULTIMATE END OF ALL THEIR LABORS.

To the success of any exertions whatever, it is necessary that the object to which they are to be directed, should be distinctly understood. Any confusion on this point, will be attended with a fluctuation of design, and an imbecility of endeavour, but ill calculated to ensure success.

There is just ground of apprehension, that many who are engaged in the work of Sunday School instruction, are but imperfectly acquainted with the ultimate end.

It is to be feared concerning some, that in giving their assistance to this cause, nothing further comes into their view, than communicating to the children an ability to read. In the estimation of such persons, these Sabbath institutions seem to rank no higher than ordinary day schools, which are of service of the poor receive the elements of an useful common education. Provided, therefore, that the

assist their pupils to read with tolerable facility, they attain the highest object of their desires, or expectations. How will such teachers be surprised when I inform them that the top stone of their hopes, is but the foundation of their duties; and that the highest elevation of their purposes, is but the very beginning of the ascent, which leads to the summit of the institution.

I admit that where no higher aim than *this* is taken, though very far below the proper mark, much benefit is likely to accrue to the children themselves, to their immediate connexions, and to society at large. Where no effort is made to form the character, and nothing more in fact is done, than simply to communicate the art of reading, a vast advantage is conferred upon the children of the poor. It is the testimony of inspiration "that for the soul to be without knowledge is not good;" and the whole history of man confirms the truth of the remark. The very first rudiments of knowledge, independently of any systematic attempt to improve the character, must certainly have a moral tendency. In the very lowest elements of education, the soul experiences an elevation, and however it may be prostrated back again by the violence of its demerits, begins to ascend from the regions of sin. Ignorance debases and degrades the mind. It not only enshrouds the intellect, but dims the eye by which the human conscience traces the natural distinction between right and wrong. "On the contrary," says Mr. Hall, "knowledge expands the mind, raises the faculties, refines the taste for pleasure, and in relation to moral good, by multiplying the moral resources, has a tendency to elevate the character, and in some measure to correct, and subvert the taste for gross sensuality." From hence it

is obvious, that the very least and lowest end, which as Sunday School teachers you can propose to yourselves in your labors, has a tendency to benefit the interests of the poor. I wish, however, to remind you, that simply to teach the art of reading, is the least and lowest end you can contemplate.

Others, as the ultimate object of their efforts, connect with the rudiments of knowledge, *considerable attention to habits of order, industry, and morality.* They are most laudably anxious to form the character of the children, so that they may rise into an industrious, orderly, and sober race. This is of vast importance, and subordinate only to what I shall afterwards propose as the ultimate end of all your endeavors. Much of the peace, comfort, and safety of the community depends upon the character and habits of the poor. If society be compared to the human frame, they are the feet and the hands; and how much do the ease and the welfare of the whole body depend upon the healthy state of the extremities. To tame the ferocity of their unbridled passions; to repress the excessive rudeness of their manners; to chasten the disgusting and revolting obscenity of their languages; to subvert the stubborn rebellion of their wills; to render them honest, obedient, courteous, industrious, and orderly, should be an object of great desire with all who are engaged in the work of Sunday School instruction. It should be your constant aim to reform the vicious, to heal the disordered, and to give whole direction of the lower classes of society, by training up their offspring "in whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report." Then, to use the language

to immortality. Every human body is the residence of an immortal spirit, and however diminished by childhood, or marred by poverty, or sicken by neglect, the hovel might appear, a deathless habitation will be found within. Every child that passes the threshold of your school on a Sunday morning brings to your care, and confides to your ability, a soul, compared with whose worth the sun is a bauble, and with whose existence, time itself is but the twinkling of an eye.

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cases by the example of their parents;—in manufacturing districts, inhaling the moral contamination with which the atmosphere of almost every workshop is laden; how rapid is the growth of original corruption; how luxuriant the harvest of actual transgressions which springs from it; how little likely, without extraordinary efforts, are these unhappy youths to enter "the narrow path that leadeth to eternal life."

Such are the children, and such their situation, which flock every Sabbath to the schools where you are carrying on the business of instruction. Look round upon the crowd of *little immortals*, by whom you are encircled every week; view them in the light which the rays of inspired truth diffuse over their circumstances; follow them in imagination not only into the ranks of society, to act their humble part in the great drama of human life: but follow them down into that valley, gloomy with the shadows of death, and from which they must come forth, either to have done well, to everlasting life; or to have done ill, to everlasting shame and contempt;" and while you see them plunging into the bottomless pit, or soaring away to the celestial city, say, what should be the ultimate object of the school teacher's exertions?

How can we be prepared to answer to any satisfaction, when I thus state it? The teacher of a Sunday School should be dependent upon divine grace, for the enlargement of his knowledge; to preserve himself from error; and to form those religious habits in the minds of the children which shall be the basis of their future holiness and happiness. He should be a faithful steward of the talents which God has committed to him, and should be diligent in the use of them, that he may be able to give an account of them at the day of judgment.

towards God; that faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; that habitual subjection to heart and life, to the authority of the scriptures, which constitute at once the form and power of Christian existence.

Here, then, you see your object, and you perceive that it includes every other in itself. To aim at any thing lower than this, as your last, and largest purpose; to be content with only some general improvement of character, when you are encouraged to hope for an entire renovation of the heart;—or merely with the formation of moral habits, when such as are truly pious may be expected, is to render the objects of your benevolence with decency deserving the grave, without attempting to provide them with the means of a glorious resurrection out of it. To train them up in the way of sincere and unfeigned religion, is an object of such immense importance, that compared with this, an ability to read and write, or even all the refinements of life, have not the weight of a feather in their destiny. And the truth must be told, that wherever religious education is neglected, the more tendency of knowledge to the production of moral good, is in most cases, very necessary, and successfully counteracted, by the corrupting power of human depravity.

Many schools, to be contemplated in their true light, must be viewed as nurseries for all kinds of evil, as bearing an inherent connection with the corrupt world; and as ultimately tending to produce the seeds of glory with "the father of sin and men pervert." To judge of their tendency, we have recourse; to view them merely as instruments for the spreading influence of morality, is to see them from the balance of education; and to view them merely as instruments for the spreading influence of immorality, is to see them from the balance of depravity; and to view them merely as instruments for the spreading influence of immorality, is to see them from the balance of depravity.



the beginning, they should be instructed that all our reasonings, and views, and feelings are to be brought into subjection to the inspired volume that bears this authority, in matters of religion, does and can be no appeal. In order to this, evidence of revealed truth should be laid before them in a familiar manner; and even a few who are capable of estimating the weight of proof, we should endeavor to produce a powerful impression on the souls of the Bible. The reason for my insisting so much on this, is a conviction, that among the many causes of seculism, there is a great deal of ignorance and ignorant scepticism which is produced by a want of knowledge of reasoning, by misapprehending that we have beyond their experience, and truths that are not to be questioned. There is a sort of infidelity, which weaves its web from the sayings of the poor, who in consequence of being well grounded in the persuasion that all must be true, whatever corrupt minds may say to the contrary, often fall into the snare, and become the victims.

[illegible]

their attention should be exclusively confined to its moral aspects. Explain to them the manifestations of the great God; his holiness as opposed to all iniquity;—his truth as manifested in the perfect fulfilment of his word;—his mercy which inclines him to pity the miserable. Teach them the purity of his law as pronouncing condemnation on a sinful thought. Endeavour to make them understand the overwhelming sinfulness of sin, as breaking through all obligations imposed upon the conscience by the equity and goodness of God. Strive to lead them to a knowledge of the total corruption of the human soul, as the source, and spring of their actual iniquities. Unfold to them their situation, as under the wrath of God, on account of their sin. Show them their inability, either to atone for their guilt, or regenerate their nature. Lead them to Calvary, and develop the design of the Saviour's death as a sacrifice for sin, and teach them to rely upon his merits alone for salvation. Direct them to the Holy Spirit, as the fountain of grace and strength, for the renewal of their hearts. In connection with this, lay before them all the branches of Christian duty: those which relate to God, such as faith, repentance, love, obedience, and prayer; and those which relate to man, as obedience to parents, honesty in their employment, kindness to all. Enforce upon them the observance of the Sabbath and public worship. Particularly impress upon them, that religion is not a mere theory, but is founded on a series of practical duties, and is a living principle, which is to be manifested in every part of the conduct of life.

Such are the topics which you are to illustrate to the children; unquestionably the most important which can engage their attention. Much, however, depends upon the method you adopt for explaining them.

Of course you should allot a portion of time to the work of *catechizing*. The experience of all ages bears testimony to the utility of this plan. If well improved, it affords a most favourable opportunity for communicating religious knowledge. To accomplish this end, it is necessary that you should do more than simply ask the questions, and receive the answers as they are ranged in the book. To arrest and engage the minds of children, who consider it generally as nothing more than a school exercise, you must descend to *familiar explanation*. Every answer should be regarded as a text, which, by a few plain short remarks, you should illustrate to their understanding, and enforce upon their conscience. It will be found an excellent method to explain one Sabbath what is to be committed to memory during the week, and repeated as a text the next. As we always learn with greater ease and pleasure what we understand, this would facilitate the business of memory, and prepare them for ex-
amination, which should always take place when called upon to repeat the answers which had been previously assigned.

It would greatly aid the business of religious instruction, if children were encouraged to give the answers to the questions, and portions of the word of God, which they had learned, in their own words. This would be a most valuable exercise, and would be a most effective means of securing a permanent impression upon the mind.

other book. The very words, as well as sentiments of revelation have a power and energy, which the language of uninspired authors, however original their opinions, does not possess. Divine truth, expressed in divinely inspired language, often strikes upon the conscience with a force which nothing else could produce. As the children are likely to be influenced by other motives than a simple regard to their improvement, the discretion of the teachers should often be employed in selecting suitable passages of scripture to be learnt; especially remembering that as whatever is committed to memory should be wisely explained to the judgment, they should be more anxious for their pupils to learn well than to learn much.

In a little work which I have lately read, there is a passage which admirably explains my meaning and views. The writer is delineating the character, and describing the conduct, of a good teacher.

Timothy called up his class, and the children repeated each one verse in rotation, the following passage, which they had previously committed to memory:—

"And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment. And he said unto him, Friend, how comest thou in hither, not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. Then said the king to his servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are called, but few are chosen."—*Matth. viii. 11-14.*

Timothy heard his children repeat the passage, and with an anxious eye. And when he saw that they were all understanding the meaning of the passage, he said unto them, Now I will ask you, my dear children, what is the meaning of this passage? (which passed by the class) And when they had answered, he said unto them, And what is the meaning of this passage?—

a king?" "Because he hath all power and authority." "Is not the Lord Jesus God as well as man?" "Yes; the Bible tells us the word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." "Does Jesus Christ know all our hearts?" "Yes; he that formed my spirit must be intimately acquainted with it." "Does the Lord Jesus take particular notice of those who profess to be his people?" "Yes; he came in to see the guests." "Is he now present with us?" "Yes." "Yes, my dear children, the Lord Jesus is now beholding each of us. He sees who among you is giving heed, and who is inattentive. He marks that little boy who listens to his voice; but he is greatly offended with those who are whispering, and do not regard the truths of his holy word. What did the king see when he came in to view the guests?" "He saw there a man which had not a wedding garment." "Can you tell me what is meant by the wedding garment?" "It means the righteousness of Jesus Christ." "Are sinners naked who are not clothed with this robe?" "Yes; our own righteousness is as filthy rags." "What is meant by our own righteousness?" "Our own good works." "Will not these commend us to the favour of God?" "No; God's law is perfect, and we can do nothing without a mixture of sin." "Will you inform me, my dear boy, what you understand by Christ's righteousness?" "His obedience unto death in our stead." "What did the Lord Jesus say to the man who had not on the wedding garment?" "Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having a wedding garment?" "Will not God, in the great day, call sinners to a strict account?" "Yes." "Will they then be able to excuse themselves?" "No; like this man, they will be speechless." "What shall be done to those who have not believed in Jesus?" "The king will say to his servants, 'Bind them hand and foot, and cast them into outer darkness.'—Are sinners able to resist the judgment of God?" "Yes." "No, my dear children; they who do not come into communion, like this man, shall never be able to enter it; like this man, who is bound hand and foot, they are unable to leave their seats. Gladly would they wish the robe and

the mountains to fall on them, and hide them from the face of the judge; but even this desire shall not be granted; they must endure the punishment of their iniquities." "Are those who die in sin deprived of the enjoyment of Jesus Christ, and holy angels?" "Yes; the king orders them to be taken away." "Where does he command them to be cast?" "Into outer darkness." "Children are generally afraid to be left in the dark. But oh! what must it be to be cast forever into the thickest darkness! Think of it. You are happy when you see the morning sun; but no morning shall ever rise on those miserable creatures who die in a state of enmity to Jesus Christ." "How shall they be employed in this darkness?" "In weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth." "Do not these terms express great anguish?" "Yes; they will for ever lament that they rejected the salvation of Jesus Christ." "Yes, my dear children, and if any of you follow their example you will share in their punishment." "Must not all of us soon appear before the judgment-seat of Christ?" "Yes; our lives are uncertain; we may be called in a moment to give an account of ourselves to God." "What effect should this have upon us?" "It should lead us to give earnest heed to the things that belong to our peace, before they are for ever hid from our eyes."

You have here a model, which in the communication of religious instruction, you would do well to imitate. Select a passage yourselves, and deliver it either to a whole class, or a part of it, to be learnt by the next Sabbath, when it should become the subject of examination; and in the mean time, consider what are the questions which it naturally suggests, that you may be prepared for the class. This is a most engaging and instructive method.

Another very judicious exercise for the children is to propose a question, and to require, for a given period, passages of scripture to prove and illustrate it; always remembering that the subjects of inquiry

be plain, easy, and adapted to the capacity of the children. For the sake of example, I mention the following:—

“What does the book of Genesis chiefly treat of?”

“What were the principal acts of transgression committed by the children of Israel in the wilderness, and in what way did God punish them?”

“Which of the prophets wrote most plainly of Jesus Christ; and in what parts of his writings does he allude to him?”

“In what passages of scripture is the divinity of Jesus Christ spoken of?”

“What did our Lord appeal to as a proof that he came from heaven, and is the Son of God?”

“Where is the necessity of the new birth declared?”

“In what passages are filial duties enjoined?”

Such exercises as these possess the happiest tendency. They are an admirable discipline for the intellectual powers, and train the mind to habits of reflection, and diligent enquiry. They call the dormant principles into activity, and must produce considerable improvement in the mental character of the poor. But these are the smallest advantages of the plan; it leads to an engaging and enlarged acquaintance with the word of God, and establishes a sort of familiarity between the children and the Bible, as the man of their counsel, and the guide of their youth.

It would be well also occasionally to exercise the children as to their remembrance of the commandments which they hear in the house of God. This would keep their attention alive to what is said from the pulpit, and lead them to reverence the solemnities of public worship.

It would be well also to exercise the children as to their knowledge of the names of the persons, places, and things mentioned in the scriptures. This would be a great advantage to them in their future studies.

of early piety, and at other times, cases of sudden and startling conversions. These are the symptoms of religious concern, as that which can alone reveal your ignorance, or satisfy your desire. Over every other kind of excellence than true religion, saying, "Alas! 'tis well, 'tis good, so far as it goes, but 'tis not the fruits of immortality." When these begin to show themselves, hail the first buds of religion with delight, shield them with a father's care, and with a skilful hand direct their growth.

CHAPTER SECOND.

THE QUALIFICATIONS WHICH EVERY TEACHER SHOULD SEEK TO POSSESS.

There is a part of the subject to which the attention of my reader should be directed with the deepest interest, and most lively solicitude. The following consideration will furnish rather an elevated standard, but instead of condemning it as too high, it should be your endeavour to see how near you can approach it.

*It is exceedingly important that you should be a possessor of real religion.**

I am not here discussing the question of the necessity of a personal experience of the love of God, but I am discussing the question of the necessity of a personal experience of the love of God, and I am discussing it in a way which I think will be found to be of great value to every Christian.

My personal religion, I have more than a general
proficiency of knowledge in Christianity; more
a fervent theory of religious sentiments; more
a sound acquaintance upon devotional forms; more
an experimental acquaintance with the truths of the
gospel, in their sanctifying and sanctifying influence.
It is certainly very true, that without such a state of
heart you may be useful in promoting the moral
cause of the institution, but can scarcely be expected
to reach that which is ultimate and supreme. You
may perform the humbler duties in this sacred
husbandry, of gathering out the stones, and
tilling the soil, but to cast the seed of the truth
must be left to other hands. You may, it is
supposed, have a knowledge of letters, and teach the
people to read even the book of God; but to be
able of writing his laws upon their minds, and
engraving them upon their hearts, is an honor to
which, without true piety, you cannot aspire. The
teacher who is earnestly seeking the welfare of
that of his flock, occupies a station as exalted
as that of a prophet, and is doing more for the
world than any other man. In the same living
word of truth, as the angels bring down the
word of truth to the people, so the people bring up
the word of truth to the angels.

across the low and steady desert. If I were to
 delineate, in picture, the emblem of a Sunday school
 teacher's duty and employment, I would represent
 Faith and Love, like the two angels that conducted
 Lot from Sodom, leading between them a poor child
 to the oven, and while one is directing his eye to
 the means of salvation, the other should be pointing
 him to the realm of eternal glory. But will this
 apply to you without decided personal religion? Oh
 no. If you are unconcerned about your own soul;
 if you gaze with a touristic eye upon the immortal
 realm that lies within your own breast; how can it
 be expected you will mourn over the spiritual dark-
 ness you see in others? How can you teach an
 unloving God? How can you represent that
 Saviour as a pearl of great price, which to you is a
 stone of stumbling? Can you illustrate in what
 manner the principles of divine truth should con-
 stitute the conscience, and engage the affections;
 how they should become the elements of a new
 existence and be breathed into the nostrils of the
 living spiritual life; what this without experi-
 mental religion! No. Of all things, it is most
 necessary to what duty to be taught, must be felt.
 If you will be without feeling so, in the
 study of this qualification, you will be equally
 devoid of inclination, to seek the highest degree
 of perfection. Can you feel disposed to share
 in the sufferings of others, in reference to the
 redemption of their souls, when you
 have not even the least personal
 interest in your own? Can you
 feel disposed to share in the sufferings
 of others, in reference to the redemption
 of their souls, when you have not even
 the least personal interest in your own?

...for a while, which creates the condition
...but because who will
...and that, as from the
...the eternal wisdom of the
...for he who understands it that

...teacher should possess an accurate and
...extensive acquaintance with all
...not possible, neither is it desirable, to attain
...the highest measure of knowledge, with which
...is compatible. In every case the
...of the heart, in reference to the

...may be said to be the light
...very far removed from
...in the soul, is the degree
...which every teacher should
...be clear and accurate
...heart, you should seek to add

...You should have such an
...able as to know in what way
...to direct the standing of your
...have a competent knowledge
...and be able to direct
...persons to support them.

...you conduct the business of
...with much effect? Remember
...of little planetary systems.

...is concerned, you
...of any one
...knowledge, but you
...to a more direct

...should be
...in every case
...our human laws
...that is reaching forward

3. *Gravity of deportment is indispensably necessary.*

Here I would not be understood as wishing to envelope the schools of religion in the gloomy shades of a melancholy moroseness. You should be as remote from this disposition, as its opposite extreme, a trifling levity. A teacher of glad tidings should not array himself in sackcloth; nor should the messenger of mercy appear as sullen and repulsive as the spectre of the cloister.

Religion when wrapt in gloom, will present but little that is attractive to children; nor will they be able to conjecture, how a countenance that is professedly lifted up amidst the light of heaven, can possess an aspect so lowering and so dark. Be it reasoned, however, that the cheerfulness which was given by inspiration, is holy and dignified like itself, and resembles, not the dissipating glare which is thrown over a city by the gaudy lights of an illumination, but that soft and soothing radiance, which beautifies the face of nature on a summer's eve. Religion has its smiles, they are not borrowed however from the scenes of a ball room, but from the sublime visions of eternity, and therefore, with the happiness of heaven partake something of its vastness. The topics of immortality look ill placed in the hands of frivolity; and in such circumstances are sure to lose much of their effect.

The authority of a teacher, of whatever description may be his pupils, can be maintained only by a *solemnity of manners*. If we may judge from the frequency with which it is enjoined in the New Testament, the Holy Spirit attaches great importance to this character. It is the office-bearer of the Christian Church, and is commanded to be grave, but even in ordinary man-

here, and especially young men are charged to show gravity and sincerity, as if it were hardly possible to be sincere in religion, without being serious in deportment.

If you see the importance of such a disposition, you will be impressed with the necessity of avoiding a *showy and expensive mode of dress*. These remarks apply of course, more closely to female teachers. A fondness for dress is one of the prevailing evils of the present day, and unhappily it has crept down into the lower classes of society, and imposes its tax upon those who are but ill able to support it. It is greatly to be feared, that of the multitudes of unhappy females from among the poor, who have quitted the paths of virtue, great numbers have been first led astray by this vain and expensive propensity. Between wearing gay clothes, and a delight in exhibiting them, the connection is almost inseparable, in the disposition of ignorant and little minds; while this love of display has often been the first thing to attract the eye of the seducer, just as the peacock, by expanding his feathers in the sun, has sometimes caught the attention of the vulture perched upon an eminence and looking round for his prey. If one may judge from the conduct of the lower classes at the present time, they seem to be endeavouring to hide beneath gaudy colors, the most distant approach to poverty. Ten thousand evils will flow in upon society, and they have already begun to flow, when the poor shall conclude that they are respectable, in proportion as they are fine. How much is this disposition likely to be increased in the pupils, if it be enforced by the example of the teacher. The children must have far more dignity of mind, far more solid reflection, and far more just discrimination, than can be expected in

their circumstances, not to be fascinated with an exhibition, on your part, of "braided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly apparel." To regard these things with indifference, when constantly displayed before the eye, is too much to look for in them, when it is not found in you. With such an object before you, a whole train of the very worst feelings are necessarily engendered. The touch of velvet, and the gleam of mine, together with feathers, flowers, and ribbons, have but little virtue to reconcile them to the coarser textures, and the plainer hues of poverty. Permit me then to recommend the utmost simplicity and neatness of apparel as of great importance in your office. Especially and earnestly do I repeat the most scrupulous *modesty*. Even a distant approach to the indecency which has characterized some modern fashions, would be offering pollution to the morals of every child, before whom it is displayed. I am not enjoining meanness, much less dirtiness or filthiness. These are a species of evil, wherever they exist, and are to be counteracted in your children, by the instruction of your lips, and the force of your example. What I recommend may be all summed up in two words, *modesty* and *simplicity*; or to express it in the language of an ancient sage, "When adorning, let it not be the outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which in the sight of God is of great price." It should be especially distinguished with the propriety of better conduct which is the distinction of society, and its proper influence upon their importance.

You should not only clearly understand what is religiously and morally right, but also have a keen perception of those minor distinctions between right and wrong, which have been established by the authorized laws of human intercourse. You should be acquainted with the obligations of inferiors to superiors; and of persons in dependant stations of life, to those who are their supporters or employers. You should be alive to all the little niceties of behaviour demanded by courtesy, and be able to expose to the children the impropriety of any instance of rudeness, incivility or ingratitude. Christianity, instead of sinking the distinctions of society, has elevated and guarded them: and indeed has employed its most sublime and interesting motives, to enforce the minutest offices of social life. The children of the poor, especially in large manufacturing towns, are often exceedingly destitute of that respectful deportment towards their superiors, which the order of society necessarily requires. This defect, it is your duty, as much as possible, to supply. A civil, submissive, respectful habit, is not to be considered as merely constituting the polish of general character, but in some measure preparing for religious impression. A rude, uncivil, untractable youth, is the last in the school in whose heart holy emotions are likely to be produced. He who feels little respect for human authority, is yet far distant from bowing with humility before that which is divine.

5. *It is very necessary that an "instructor of babes" should be able to communicate knowledge in a simple and familiar manner.*

This is a talent peculiarly requisite in those who are entrusted with the education of children. The mere possession of knowledge does not qualify for the business of instruction, except it be assisted

with an aptitude in communicating it. Every judicious teacher will consider the character of his audience, and adapt his communications to their capacity. If his sentiments be not understood, he may as well talk in a foreign language. Children require a very different mode of instruction from what may be adopted in the case of well educated adults. They are ignorant of the first principles of divine truth. Nothing with respect to them, must be taken for granted. You must assume nothing; every thing is to be communicated. Perhaps it is the fault of all teachers, not excepting those who deliver their instructions from the pulpit, that they proceed on the supposition that their audience have more knowledge than they really possess. They take for too much for granted. This must be particularly avoided in the case of Sunday scholars. Of by far the greater number of them, it may be affirmed that they have not a single idea on the subject of religion, but what they derive from you; and you are to be very careful in presuming upon what they have derived.

The same remarks will apply to language as to mathematics. Their knowledge of words is as contracted as their range of ideas; and in order really to instruct them, you must always remember the extent of their vocabulary.

Your discourse cannot be too simple, and familiar, provided it be not vulgar. "Nothing," says Mr. Gougeon, "is easier than to talk to children; but to talk to them as they ought to be talked to, is the very test of ability. A man must have a vigorous imagination, and be able to call in illustrations from the resources of the world, for he will make his discourse but by illustration. It requires great power to show the child how the habit of childhood

mind. I am surprised at nothing which Dr. Watts did, but his hymns for children. Other men could have written as well as he, in his other works; but how he wrote those hymns I know not." An aptitude to teach children in their own way, while it is necessary as a qualification, should be sought as an acquirement. I know of no better method by which this talent may be attained than to read with attention, the most approved works which have been written for children, in order to mark, and imitate the style there adopted. Such, for instance, as Dr. Watts' *Divine Songs for Children*, and Miss Taylor's *Hymns for Infant Minds*, together with any other books, which manifest simplicity without monotony. If those who wish to cultivate an elegant style, read standard works of elegance, surely they whose office requires simplicity of address, should take the same pains to excel in their appropriate attainment.

6. *A heart most deeply interested in the work, is a very necessary qualification.*

This is a cause which leaves no room for the operation of those principles, to which, in the general concerns of mankind, so large a portion of human activity may be traced. Here neither ambition, nor vanity can have any place, or admit but in the least degree towards success. Without a heart deeply interested in the work, there can be no energy and no success. That teacher who has no conviction of the importance of the cause, and no solicitude about its issue, who has been brought to the school by no motive at all, or at best, by a very feeble one, than to follow the example, or gratify the desire of others, has entered upon a career in which he is ill-qualified, and from which the worst consequences must follow. Without a most benevolent spirit,

ment to the duties of your office, you cannot perform them with much effect. The school will carry you through the difficulties, disagreeable and painful, which it calls you to sustain. Without a sincere desire to be successful, as shall conclude, that activity which is requisite to instruct, you will do but little. 'Tis painful to some persons perform the duties of the school. They begin with weariness and end with disgust. 'Tis very evident that whatever else they devote to the cause, they have never given their hearts.

A patient temper is exceedingly requisite.

The business of instruction, especially the instruction of poor children, who have every thing to learn, will often require the very utmost stretch of forbearance. You will meet with so much constitutional dulness, so much heedless attention, so much willful neglect, and so much insolent disobedience, that unless your feelings are under considerable control, you will often be hurried into excesses of impatience, disgraceful to yourself and injurious to your pupils. The little vexations and irritations which arise to try a Sunday School Teacher's temper are innumerable and unceasing. Yet to be successful you must be patient. You must discipline your temper till it is quite under restraint. A peevish, irascible manner, excited by every little trifling circumstance, renders you exceedingly unfit to deal with the untutored minds and habits of the children of the poor. In many cases impatience in the teacher must be exceedingly injurious to the improvement of the scholar. Some minds are very slow in their advances, very thick in their views, and require the most affectionate forbearance to be kept from utter despair and to be encouraged to go

on at all: harsh impetuosity here would at once overwhelm them with confusion and dismay. Very, very often is a pupil thrown into such inextricable disorder by a hasty and terrifying sally of the master's impatience, that memory and judgment both forsake him in his fright, and leave him the motherless victim of injudicious anger. A person that has not patience to communicate knowledge drop by drop, should never think of undertaking the instruction of ignorant children, since it is utterly impossible to pour it into their minds by copious streams. We have all forgotten how slow and unwilling we were to receive the elements of education, but as all children are very much alike in this respect, we may calculate upon our own experience with respect to others, as tolerably correct data of the pains that were taken with ourselves, and find in this no weak motive to seek the qualification which I now enjoin.

CHAPTER THIRD.

DIRECTIONS CONCERNING THE MANNER IN WHICH
A TEACHER SHOULD DISCHARGE THE DUTIES OF
HIS OFFICE.

HAVING disclosed to you the ultimate object of your exertions and prescribed the qualifications necessary for accomplishing it, I shall now lay down some directions for the regulation of your conduct.

1. *There should be a discriminating attention to the different capacities and tempers of the scholars.* Every school may be considered as a plantation of young minds, the tree of which represents

a different manner, and blossom at various times; each of them requiring a method of culture adapted to its nature. Some need to be brought forward to the sun; others to be thrown back into the shade. Some need to have their luxuriant growth repressed; others to have it encouraged. Children vary exceedingly in their capacities for learning. Perception is more quick, memory more retentive, comprehension more enlarged in some than in others. What would be industry in one, would be idleness in another. Of this the teacher should be aware, lest by expecting the same in both cases, he produce despondency in the former, or nourish idleness in the latter. Nothing is more discouraging throughout the whole range of education, than to have the mind put upon exertions, to which its faculties are unequal. The spirit in such a case, like a horse that has sunk beneath his burden, lies down in despair with scarcely a struggle to rise. It is of immense importance that you should know the real capacity of your children, and that you should never require of them impossibilities. You will often need much penetration to discriminate between a want of inclination, and a want of ability: this, however, may be easily acquired.

The *temper*, as well as the *mind*, will require the same judicious attention. Some are timid and will need great pains to produce more confidence in themselves; others are forward and must be seriously taught to be more diffident. Some are open and sincere; others are artful and designing. Sometimes you will find a character of such tenderness, that harshness would be like training the sensitive plant with a bar of iron; and then again you will meet with such hard invincible stubbornness, that a violent softness would be like tying down the

branches of the mountain oak with a silken thread. Surely then the character of the children. If all like locks, have different and often difficult wards; the same key will not open them all, yet all by a skillful locksmith may be opened.

It is astonishing what may be effected in the work of education by a little *ingenuity and invention*. There are some teachers, who like a set of empirics, have a certain nostrum which they administer in every case. They never vary the application. A command, a threat, and a blow; and if this does not succeed the case is abandoned as desperate; whereas a little variation in the mode of treatment, would have carried the point, and *ensured success*. We want more *science* in the business of education. To a certain extent you should be experimentalists upon the human mind; and when you meet with a case which ordinary methods do not reach, you should call to your assistance the powers of invention, and try the effect of new measures. I will here insert two anecdotes illustrative of my meaning. Mr. Baikes was in the habit of visiting the parents and children belonging to his schools at their own houses. He called on a poor woman one day, and found a very refractory girl crying, and sulking. Her mother complained that correction was of no avail, and that an inflexible obstinacy marked her conduct. After asking the parent's leave, he began to talk seriously to the girl, and concluded by saying that that as the first step towards amendment she must kneel down and ask her mother's pardon. This she continued sulky. "Well then (said he) if you have no regard for yourself, I have none for you. You will be ruined and brought to ruin. I am a good girl; and if you will not be good, I must be good myself and punish you as I think fit."

With that he knelt down on the ground before the child's mother, and put his hands together with the ceremony of a juvenile offender, and begged pardon for the guilty daughter. No sooner did the stubborn girl see him on his knees on her account, than her pride was overcome at once, and tenderness followed: she burst into tears, and throwing herself on her knees, intreated forgiveness; and what is still more pleasing, she gave no trouble afterwards.

What would many persons have done in this instance, uttered a scolding threat, and left the girl the miserable victim of her own bad temper. A little science, or in other words, a little ingenuity effected a rescue, for which perhaps, this child blesses the name of Ralnes to the present hour.

Mr. Langston had once under his care a boy of most indolent and untractable habits, on whom the ordinary methods of punishment produced no effect. He considered the case as almost desperate, to try an experiment. He placed himself as monitor over an inferior class, and in order more effectually to excite a feeling of interest and excite a habit of application, he appointed his class to another in a court, promising a reward to that monitor whose class was the most diligent. The experiment succeeded to admiration. Emulation was excited in the boy's mind. During the probationary week he was every morning present in good time, urging on his class to the most vigorous exertions. His truant habits were now broken; and rewarded by success, he became from that time a pattern of application.

Mr. Langston has versed in the art of instruction that boys would have been given up as incorrigible. I am sure what I mean by science and ingenuity in education. Cultivate it. Indulgence may never

the essence, whatever punishment a child may receive, no solid basis is laid for reformation; and therefore very little is effected. By calm statement, by mild and forcible expostulation, by an appeal to the understanding and feelings of the children; much, except in cases of almost incorrigible obduracy, may be effected in leading to genuine penitence. Great pains should be taken in every instance of moral delinquency to convince them *that their offence is committed chiefly against God*, and not merely in opposition either to the rules of the school, or the will of the teacher. It should be represented as a sin to be confessed to God, and for which there is no pardon but through the blood of the Saviour. Great judgment should be exercised in endeavouring to conduct the whole business of punishment, in such a manner as shall be least likely to irritate or exasperate the feelings of the delinquent. Surgeons, when it is necessary to employ the knife, are very careful to keep the whole frame as cool as possible, and to choose a time for operation when the diseased part is least under the power of inflammation. Select your times, and particularly remember not to push the rigors of punishment too far, nor continue them too long. The moment you perceive the mind softened to cordial concern for the fault, and that stubbornness, or impenitence has given way to docility or contrition, then is the time for punishment immediately to come. Beyond this it would be breaking the bruised reed and nipping the buds of reformation by the chilling influence of despair. In short as in the business of reward, so also in its opposite, make great use of the children's own feelings. Put the rod into the hand of conscience, and excite a trembling dread of the strokes which are inflicted by this internal censor.

3. *Discharge the duties of your office in a conciliating and affectionate manner.*

God who framed the constitution of the human mind and constructed all its mechanism, has himself informed us, what are the springs of action which by those who have any thing to do in guiding its operations, should be chiefly touched. "I drew them," saith Jehovah speaking of his conduct towards the Israelites, "with the cords of love and the bands of a man." Here then, in this single short expression, we have compendiously expressed the whole theory of human government, whether it apply to families, to schools, or nations; whether it be designed to control the savage or the sage. This verse which contains the philosophy of government, should be studied by every one who has any thing to do with his species in the way of enlightening their minds, improving their hearts, forming their manners, or exacting their obedience. *The cords of love are the bands of a man.* In prescribing to you therefore the manner in which your duties are to be discharged, I must enjoin an affectionate and conciliating temper. Here I would not be understood as inculcating that weak and foolish indulgence, which drops the reins of authority, and by abandoning the children to their own inclinations, is still more destructive than the sternest tyranny. The temper that I mean is perfectly compatible with the most inflexible authority, but it expresses itself in *tender and gentle language*. The law of kindness is in its lips. Its commands and prohibitions are firm, but mild. It avoids a surly, stern, repulsive tone, and often distributes looks and smiles upon its objects, which enter to their very hearts and win them as captives to itself. It represses all that impatience which the ignorance, the follies, and the

vices of the children, without great watchfulness, have such a tendency to produce; and renders its possessor long suffering and condescending. A teacher adopting such a method, takes the nearest road to the hearts of the youths committed to his care. He will secure their affection, and thus hold in his hand the key of their disposition. You mistake, greatly mistake if you suppose a stern, tyrannical manner is necessary to maintain your authority. Besides, it becomes you to recollect, that you are not mere ordinary schoolmasters; you are teachers of *religion*; and that religion too which has so much to do with love. It is the duty of your office to teach the children the knowledge of that great Being, of whom it is said, "GOD IS LOVE;"—to point to the cross of Jesus, and instruct them in the height and breadth, and length, and depth of the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge;—to repeat to them severally, the commands of the two tables, and inform them that the fulfilling of the whole law, is love; to announce to them the three cardinal virtues of Christianity, faith, hope, love, and to inform them, the greatest of these is love; in short, to teach them that godliness, the essence of which in this world, and its perfection in the world to come, is LOVE; how ill adapted, how inconsistent, how contradictory to such an office is a harsh, surly and tyrannical method of expression. In teaching the religion of Jesus, we must exhibit his spirit, as well as inculcate his doctrines; we must learn of him, who as a teacher was meek and lowly in heart; for it should never be forgotten that in his religion, mercy and truth meet together.

4. *With an affectionate, unite a dignified manner.*

I have already hinted that these two are by no means incompatible with each other. Their union

forms the very perfection of official conduct. Condescension is not necessarily connected with degradation: nor is it requisite to be familiar, in order to be affable. Remember you are placed on an eminence above your children, and however affection may lead you to *stoop* from it with kindness, in order the more effectually to reach them, still you must never descend from it to be upon their level. Between you and them, there is a boundary line, which must be mutually observed, and in order to keep them from overstepping it on their side, do not approach too near it on your own. You *must* keep up your authority; for if you cannot ensure obedience you had better retire. Let your method of addressing them in common conversation, be dignified and respectful. Call them by their proper names, and never apply the abbreviated terms of vulgar phraseology. Avoid all jesting and low familiarity, together with the broad loud laugh of jocular merriment.

If you would have them respect your authority, never trifle with it yourself. Let them see that you govern from principle, and not from caprice. In order to this, never require any thing but what is reasonable, and insist upon the performance of all you require. Always deliberate before you command or threaten, and then never relax afterwards. Your great aim should be that they may both love and respect you!

5. Pursue your exertions with unwearied perseverance.

It was little to the honor of Reuben when his dying father thus delineated his character, "Unstable as water thou shalt not excel." Instability is a great blemish of character, which occasional excellences may conceal for a season, but do not remove.

It is in general contemptible, but in the cause of benevolence, it is cruel. Like the fig-tree, which the Saviour blasted, it excites our hopes only to disappoint them. There are some persons whose activity for a *season* is prodigious. For awhile they are all bustle and energy, but it is only for awhile. I will not say that their exertions are utterly useless. Their zeal serves the part of thunder storms in the atmosphere of benevolence. Its roll is impressive, and its flashes vivid as lightning, but withal as transient. Still however even the storm is useful, though in a very subordinate degree to other influences more steady, more permanent, and more genial. How often have we had to lament the sudden resignation of teachers, whose labors required nothing but continuance to render them incalculably useful; but over whom we exclaimed with a sigh, "Ye did run well, what hath hindered you?"

It will be proper to enumerate here some of the causes which frequently operate in producing a want of the virtue I am now enjoining.

—In some cases a want of perseverance arises *from the self-denying nature of the employment, the difficulties and sacrifices of which were not previously considered.* In prospect of any intended labour, it is the part of wisdom to sit down and count the cost. Where this is neglected, even the smallest difficulties, as they come upon us when neither expecting them, nor prepared for them, are likely to have a very discouraging effect upon the mind. It is vain to deny and useless to conceal that the office of a Sunday School teacher is attended with no trifling sacrifices of ease and comfort, which unless they were previously foreseen, will, in all probability, soon drive them from the work. Should

these pages meet the eye of any one who is about ignominiously to retire before the face of a few unexpected toils, I entreat him to consider the importance of the cause he is disposed to abandon. Let him meditate upon the worth of souls, and call up the interests of two worlds, which depend so much upon religious instruction, and then say if he ought not to blush at the thought of retreating. Did the Son of God labor through a life of poverty, agonize in a death of torture for immortal souls, and will you cast from you their interests because a little sacrifice of time and ease is required on the Sabbath? Can you pretend to fellowship with Christ? If selfishness has not chilled your blood at its fountain, let it rise into your cheek with the blush of holy shame, and be the signal from this hour for rallying your retreating benevolence.

—Some teachers have been induced to give up their employment on account of a misunderstanding with their associates. It is much to the reproach of human nature, that there is no object however remote from the usual track of discord, however elevated above the mists of passion, or however distinct from the interests of selfishness, but sometimes becomes unwittingly the occasion of strife and alienation among those who support it. One should imagine, if experience were not a more credible witness than fancy, that the regions of benevolence were too rarified an atmosphere for discord to breathe in. But we know to the contrary. Offences among the active supporters of a Sunday School are, alas! too common, and have driven away many a valuable teacher from his office. And those, however, who are under the influence of such a temptation, and have well nigh parted up with their post because of some injury they have received,

seriously consider what the poor children have done, that they are to be objects of their revenge; for on them at last the anger falls. Let them fancy the great God following them into their retirement, and proposing to them a question similar to that with which he surprised his disheartened prophet, "What dost thou here, Elijah?" Would they venture to reply, or if they did, would it not be with trembling and confusion; "Lord I was offended by my fellow teachers, therefore I determined to give up the employment altogether." "And what," it may be expected would Jehovah reply, "have these poor ignorant, and in this case, innocent children done, that they must suffer for the wrong thou hast received? Have I borne with thy offences and provocations, lo! these many years, and have never forsaken thee, and yet now for one slight injury dost thou forsake both my cause, and the interests of these poor babes that I had intrusted to thy care! Is this thy gratitude! This thy obedience! This thy religion!" Now, to the rebuke. Confess your folly. Be reconciled to the offender; and persevere in your duty.

—Nearly connected with this is a dislike to some of the arrangements of the school, which not unfrequently induces a teacher to make their alteration a condition of his continuing in office. This cannot, and very generally ought not to be done, unless the managers are convinced that the proposed alterations are for the benefit of the institution, and even then it ought not to be done with the view of gratifying an individual, but of improving the school. The disposition which leads a man to say, "Unless you alter this or that I will immediately resign," with whatever plausible excuses it may be covered, is in reality nothing more or better than

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rank pride. Such teachers would do well to consider what would be the consequence if every one like themselves had an alteration to propose, as a condition of their perseverance. They can scarcely pretend to be actuated by feelings of benevolence, since whatever defects or imperfections they may discover in the school, even with all these clogging their operations, they can certainly do much more good by continuing than retiring. If they are really convinced that the system of instruction would be improved by the adoption of their views, and are conscious of being actuated by benevolence and not merely by self-will, then in the true spirit of a reformer, they should continue in their office with the hope of one day being able to accomplish the object of desire.

—In some cases young persons have quitted their office, *because there were none in the school of equal standing with themselves in life.* What! shall pride, that disgusting and destructive vice, be allowed admission to the field of mercy's sacred labors? What! must our very compassion be made dependant on the finery which the milliner, the jeweller, or the tailor can supply? That the frivolous and the gay should refuse to resort to a place where correspondent glitter is not to be found, is not surprising; but to refuse to distribute the benefits of instruction to the ignorant, and the blessings of salvation to the perishing, unless we have by our side one as well dressed as ourselves, seems the very climax of all that is absurd in human pride. Is this then a cause which can be enabled by the splendor, or degraded by the obscurity of its native supporters? Is it not enough that persons employed as the almoners of God's richest gifts, are engaged for the benefit of immortal interests? This

loftiest seraph that glows and burns in the temple above, if commissioned by his God, would accept with gratitude the office you are disposed to vacate; and in teaching the knowledge of his exalted Lord, would think himself most honorably employed though his pupils were the poorest of children, and his associates the poorest of teachers. If however you must have fellow workers who are your equals or superiors, you have only to look up with the eye of faith, and you would find yourself surrounded by ministers and missionaries; prophets and apostles; the wise and good of every age, who have all been pursuing, though in another way, the same grand object that you are seeking. And even all this, what is it to the thought of being, although in the humblest sense, a fellow worker with God and Christ in the redemption of a lost and miserable world?

—*Marriage* has very frequently put an untimely close to a teacher's labors. I have seen very many instances in which the next Sabbath after the conjugal union has been formed, both parties have relinquished their office at the school. Does that union then, which was designed by its divine author as the basis of society, release us from a single obligation to promote its welfare? Or do we acquire a sanctity of character at the hymeneal altar which is profaned by exposing it in a Sunday School? Or do the tender affections which this communion produces, unfit the parties for an office, one qualification of which is love? I acknowledge that in many, perhaps in most cases, the necessity of family business becomes a matter of necessity; but does it ever mean to give up his attention to the school the very first Sabbath after he has married? The greatest relative blessing heaven has to bestow, is a

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ould expression of gratitude to his benefactor. Till a rising family of his own prefer more just and sacred claims upon his time, than the children of the poor, it is both absurd and cruel to take it away from them. How can he better prepare himself to become the preceptor of the little circle, that may one day surround his own fire-side, than by acquiring the art of instruction among the sons and daughters of the stranger.

Such are the more prevailing causes that produce a want of perseverance, and such the manner in which they may be removed.

5. *I mention Constancy as exceedingly important in the manner of discharging the duties of a teacher's office.*

This perhaps, may seem like a repetition of the direction just expressed. But there is a difference. By perseverance, I intend a *continuance* in office, and by constancy a steady, uniform, and undiverted discharge of its duties. In most large towns circumstances are continually occurring, which put this virtue to the test. Some popular minister is to preach; or one of the resident ministers is to preach a charity sermon, or funeral discourse. On such occasions, without a firm and steady attachment to the business he has undertaken, a teacher is in great danger of being induced to quit his post.

There is one sect in the religious world, which, although not enumerated in the book of denominations or in any theological dictionary; which, although it has neither distinct creed, nor separate temples, still is entitled to a specific notification; this sect I shall denominate the *Novelists*; their distinguishing trait is a *love of novelty*. They belong to any preacher who for the time can interest them by something new; and they attach themselves to

every congregation that has something going on out of the common way. Thus, as they are carried along the stream of profession, like twigs and chips that are floating near the edge of a river, they are intercepted by every weed, and whirled in every little eddy.

If you would be a useful, or respectable teacher, you must not belong to this denomination. It does not rank very high in heaven above, or earth beneath. They would fain persuade you, that like the bee they are sucking honey from every flower; but more like the butterfly, they rove through all the gardens of the Lord, not to sip the most luxurious, but to flutter with a vain and useless volatility round the most gaudy blossom within the sacred inclosure. Be always at your post, and let it be your glory to find what powerful attractions you can resist, rather than be absent from your needy charge.

6. *Punctuality in a teacher is vitally connected with the prosperity of the school.*

When one considers the importance of the object in which you are engaged, and add to this the little time at most, you can command for seeking it, one might have presumed that it would be quite unnecessary to caution you against making that little less. And yet it is painful to be obliged to assert, that there is scarcely one evil, under which the whole system more severely suffers, than a want of punctuality in the teachers. It is an evil which eats into the very core of the institution. Precisely in the degree to which it exists, the order of the school must be interrupted, the solemnity of instruction be disturbed, and the whole machine be impeded. Nor will the mischief stop here. The children perceiving that it is useless to be there before their teachers, and imitating their irregularity,

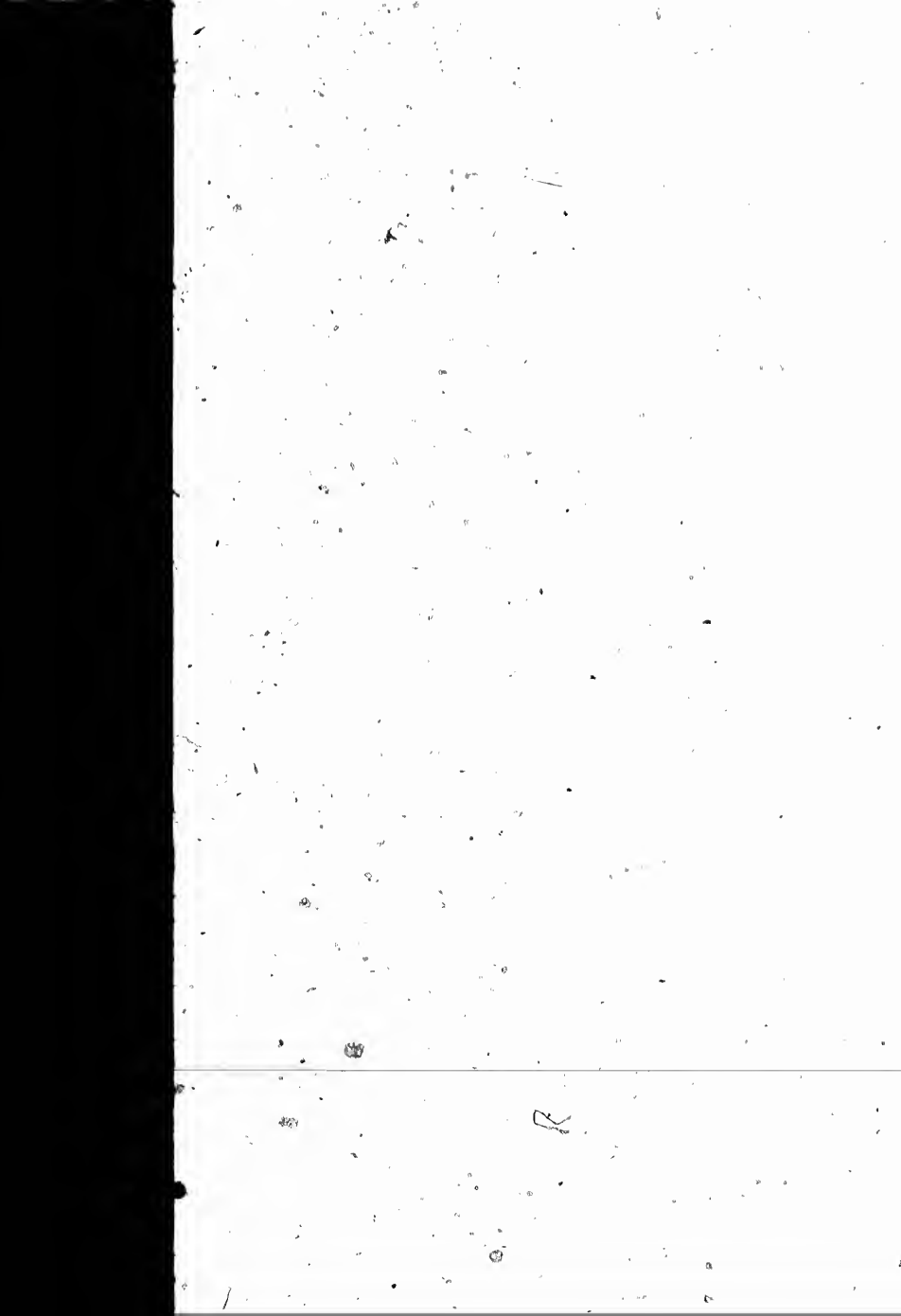
will sink into the same habits of inattention and neglect. Late masters must make late scholars. 'Tis useless for you to admonish your class to be early, if by example you instruct them to be late.

There are several causes which lead to the evil of which I now complain.

—*A thoughtless disregard to the importance of punctuality in general, is observable in some persons.* They are always and in every thing behind. If they have an engagement to perform, they never think of preparing for it till the time of commencement is past. On the Sabbath they do not set off to public worship, till the clock reminds them they ought at that moment to be in their pew. "A few minutes, they lazily exclaim, can make no great difference." A few minutes make no difference!!! If every one and in every thing, were to act upon this principle but for one day, the world would be a chaos. This procrastinating temper is a bane under the influence of which, the interests of society are suffering in a thousand ways; and that man would deserve the thanks of his species, who could furnish the most effectual antidote against it. *There is a time for every thing: and let every thing be done in its time.* In common language, we speak of fetching up lost time, but in strict propriety this is impossible. A moment lost can never be recovered.

—*Late rising on the Sabbath morning is a great obstacle in the way of punctuality.* Perhaps I shall be thought uncharitable in expressing my apprehensions, that by many professing Christians the season of slumber is protracted to an unusual length on the morning of the Sabbath; and that day which was mercifully intended as a season of rest, is sinfully converted into a period of indolence.







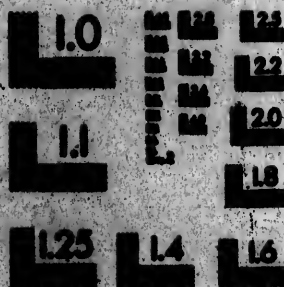
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Considering how closely the world and its concerns follow us on other days, one might imagine that we should feel disposed to make the Sabbath as long as possible. It is the last day we ought to shorten. And were our souls in a state of high spiritual prosperity, we should, like the lark, be soaring towards heaven upon the wings of the morning, while the greater part of the world below us was still wrapt in silence and in sleep, and, like the nightingale, continue to pour forth our songs in the night, when the multitude around us, to relieve the tedium of the sacred day, had prematurely sunk to their rest. But consider, your sloth defrauds not only your own soul, but also the souls of your children at the school. The dreams of such forbidden slumber to be characteristic, should present you with a shepherd depriving his lambs of their food. Rising late, you are often driven to the school without prayer and without preparation, and even then are often long behind the time. Every beam of the morning as it gently touches the lids of your eyes, seems to address you in the language of Christ to his slumbering disciples, "Why sleep ye? Rise and pray." Or if this be too gentle a voice to rouse you from your slumbers, let harsher tones disturb you, "What meanest thou O sleeper, arise, call upon thy God."

—Another cause of late attendance is *too much time employed at the dinner table*. Are there Christians who devote the Sabbath to more than ordinary gratification of the palate, and who in order to provide for their pleasure, employ their servants, or themselves during the most precious portion of the day in preparing for the table? Alas! to the shame of many, who make large professions, this question must be answered in the

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affirmative. In some cases it is beyond a teacher's control to alter the arrangements of a family, but it is within every one's ability to content himself with any thing the house affords, rather than be late at school, by waiting for the joint, that is smoking at the fire. Do I ask a costly sacrifice for the interests of the children? What! a warm dinner on Sundays too much to give up for those souls for which the Saviour gave his blood? This too much to relinquish, in order that you may hasten with the bread of life to those who are perishing for lack of it? Can you grudge this gratification when it is to enlarge your opportunity of endeavouring to save those souls, which if finally lost shall never have the temporary mitigation of their torments, that even a drop of water affords to a burning tongue.

Let me then enjoin with peculiar earnestness, a strict regard to *punctuality*. That you may feel more strongly the obligations to this, I again entreat you to recollect how short a space of time even at most, the children can enjoy your instructions. A few hours on the Sabbath, with respect to most of them, is all the time, during which through the whole week, they hear or see any thing like religion. Make not that little less.

7. *Crown all your labors with fervent and habitual prayer.*

It is important for you, in all your exertions, to bear in mind the total and universal depravity of the human race. By total depravity, "I do not mean that men or children are as bad as they can be, for in general they lie under strong restraints. Not that they are all equally wicked, for some are more restrained than others. Not that they are destitute of every thing useful and lovely in society ;

their social affections are often strong and praiseworthy. Not that the form of their actions is always wrong; the contrary is manifestly true. What I mean by total depravity, is an entire destitution in the human heart by nature, of all spiritual affection and holy propensities." In this view, every child that comes to your school is, till renewed by divine grace, totally depraved. To change this state of the mind and produce a holy bias; to create a new disposition; to turn all the affections into a new channel, and cause them to flow towards God and heaven, is the work of the omnipotent and eternal Spirit, who in the execution of his purposes, however, generally employs the instrumentality of man. Now this view of the case must be ever before your mind; it must mingle with all your plans, and direct all your exertions. You must accurately understand the nature of the materials on which you have to work, and be intimately acquainted with the source from whence success is to be expected. You must sow the seed in its season with the diligence of the husbandman, and then exercise like him, an unlimited dependance upon the influence of the heavens: for it is God that giveth increase to the labors of both. A spirit of earnest prayer should be the living soul of all your conduct. While your eye is fixed upon the children, your heart should be lifted up to God. You should sit down as between them and the fountain of life, and while opening, by instruction, a channel to their hearts, seek to draw the living stream by prayer from heaven. Your closet should be the constant scene of your anxiety for their welfare. In these seasons of hallowed seclusion, when your soul makes her nearest and happiest approaches to the throne of divine grace; give her in charge their

immortal interests. God loves the prayers of his people, and especially delights in the prayers of pious benevolence. Importune him therefore, to bless your efforts. Confess to him that the work of conversion is all his own. Hang the interests of the school upon his arm, and lay them down in the light of his countenance.

Especially on the morning of the Sabbath, in the prospect of your exertions, next to your own growth in grace, seek the principal subject of your prayers, in the welfare of the children. Pray for grace to be found faithful; and to be made sufficient for these things. Entreat of God to rouse you from lukewarmness, and to enable you to feel the weight of other souls, upon your own. There qualify yourself, if I may so speak, for your office. 'Tis astonishing what an effect is produced even on our own feelings, by fervent prayer. It elevates in our minds and endears to our heart, every object which it embraces. It is not the pleading of a hireling advocate, who after the most eloquent appeals, receives his fee, and forgets his client; but the intercession of genuine charity, which is inflamed towards its object by its own impassioned entreaties on its behalf. Prayer will cherish all the tenderest sensibilities of the heart, and keep down the growth and influence of our natural selfishness. Did you come to the school every Sabbath morning, like Moses from the Mount, direct from the presence and the converse of God, bringing all the solemn tenderness with which you had supplicated for the children at the mercy-seat, what a character would be imparted to your deportment! The solemn air of eternity, irradiated with the beams of heavenly glory, would be visible upon your countenance; while the meekness of Jesus, and the mercy of his

gospel, breathed forth in all your language, would admonish the children, that it was not a time for them to trifle, when their teacher had come to them with "a message from God."

Provided they possess other qualifications in an equal degree, those who are most prayerful will be most successful; on the other hand, it is matter of little surprise, that no success attends the efforts of those, I mean in the way of spiritual benefit, by whom this duty is neglected. They labor as might be expected, in a field on which the dew of heaven seldom distils, and which bringeth forth little else than thorns and briars. Whenever we shall be favoured to perceive a spirit of prayer resting upon the great mass of our teachers, and insinuating itself into all their exertions, we shall not wait long before we hear of a degree of success among the children which will delight and astonish us; for it is said of Jehovah, that "He heareth prayer."

CHAPTER FOURTH.

THE DUTIES OF TEACHERS TO EACH OTHER.

In every case of combined exertion, there are mutual obligations devolving upon the co-workers, on the due discharge of which, the success of their efforts materially depends. This is obviously true of the case in hand. Besides what is due to the children from the teachers, there is much to be observed by the teachers towards each other.

1. *They should cultivate a spirit of reciprocal affection.*

In addition to the ordinary reasons for brotherly love, which exist in every case, your circumstances supply another of considerable weight. Unity of exertion, certainly calls for unity of affection; for the former without the latter, can exist but in a very feeble degree, and be crowned only with very partial success. Love should be the superintendent of every school. Affectionately devoted to the object of the institution, you should love every one who contributes in the least measure to its success. Worldly, and even wicked associations, lead to strong affection between the united parties: the soldier contracts a strong affection for his comrade who is fighting by his side; the servant who is faithfully devoted to his master's interest, feels a regard for his fellow-servant, in whom he discovers the same fidelity; the traveller forms a growing friendship for the person whom he has incidentally met with on the road, and with whom he shares the toils and the dangers of the way; even the fraternity of robbers, generates sometimes a sort of affection for each other. Certainly then, a co-operation so benevolent in its object as that in which you are engaged, and so holy in its acknowledged bond of union, ought to produce a high degree of Christian love. Laboring side by side in the cause of immortal souls; that cause in which the Saviour spent his life, and shed his blood; that cause which from beginning to end is emphatically the cause of love, you should cultivate towards each other no common measure of hallowed friendship. It is not enough that you avoid a state of open enmity; it is not enough that you maintain a kind of complaisant indifference, or a cold and civil distance; all this is very far below that cordial and glowing affection, which should be cherished among the fellow workers

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in such a cause. This should be the prompt and generous language of one heart to another: "I love you, for your love to these children, and the interests of piety." The teachers of every school should form a holy family; a beautiful fraternity associated by the bond of affection for the purpose of benevolence, within whose sacred and peaceful circle, envy, jealousy, and strife, should never be allowed a place: but which should incessantly exhibit the "good and pleasant sight of brethren dwelling together in unity."

2. *There should be cordial and general co-operation in every thing which concerns the institution.*

The prosperity of the school at large, is what every individual teacher should keep in view, and which he should seek by the improvement of his own class. It is of vast importance that you should steadily and permanently remember, that although you have separate and individual duties, yet you have no private and separate interests. The school forms a little community, of which you are a member, and against which it is a sort of high treason to violate its integrity, by setting up the interests of distinct parties. *You must all act together.* The worst of evils have arisen from the teachers being divided, as is sometimes the case, into little separate associations. These are frequently, perhaps generally produced by the operation of private friendship. For example, here are two or three of the number who from congeniality of mind, or long intimacy, are on habits of the most friendly intercourse. Forgetting the consequences which are likely to ensue, they take no pains to conceal or suspend their intercourse during the time they are at the school. They are often seen talking to each other, and exchanging the warmest expressions of endeared

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friendship, while the rest are passed by with cold civilities, or indifference. All this while, a spirit of division is imperceptibly generated. Others perceiving that they are not to be admitted to the select circle, form parties of their own. During the usual, and uninterrupted routine of ordinary business, no effect peculiarly injurious, perhaps arises, but the very first time that an offense occurs, or a diversity of opinion takes place, the mischief which has been secretly collecting, explodes. Factions are instantly formed with the most exact precision, according to the parties which had been previously composed. Opposition grows strong. The work of division and alienation goes forward. The seeds of lasting discord are sown, and it is very long before the school recovers the injury.

Take care, therefore, of splitting the teachers into parties. Particular friendships you are not forbidden to form, but at the same time remember that the school is not the place to display them. Even should you walk in company to the scene of your labors, remember to separate as friends, the moment you touch the threshold of the school room, and suspending for a season the visible partialities of favoritism, mingle with the whole body, and feeling the pressure of a general bond, act upon the principle that you are *all one*.

Especially take care of systematically thinking and acting with a certain party. Endeavour in all cases of diversity of opinion, to act independently and conscientiously. Be very watchful that affection do not impose upon your judgment, and that private attachments do not influence your public conduct: for if it be seen that in your official duties, you act independently of personal regard, such friendships, however well known, will make no party, and therefore do no harm.

3. *Never make the real, or supposed faults of one teacher, the matter of conversation with others.*

This rule equally extends to official delinquencies and personal offences. There is a most powerful propensity in human nature to what has been denominated with considerable propriety, *backbiting*, or making the faults of an absent person the subject of familiar conversation. This is a vice so mean, so mischievous, so cowardly; so characteristic of littleness, as well as of malignity, that every holy man should hate it, and every wise man be ashamed of it. O what wisdom, what mercy, what beauty is there in our Lord's direction. "If thy brother trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault, between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more; that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established." If this rule were universally obeyed, three parts of the feuds and quarrels which destroy the peace, and desolate the temporal interests of mankind, would be cut off. "Tell him his fault between thee and him alone;" and of course this must mean, tell *him first*;—let not another know it, till you have tried the effect of this private and personal representation. How often has the harmony of our schools been interrupted by a violation of this simple and beautiful rule. A teacher's faults have been made the matter of free conversation, till the subject swelled by falsehood, and envenomed by malignity, has come to his ears in the most exasperating form. 'Tis quite melancholy to reflect from what slight causes, the most serious animosities have arisen, even among those who were professedly teaching a religion of forgiveness; and the grief is increased by considering what

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a small measure of forbearance would at one time have proved sufficient for preventing the whole series of subsequent mischiefs. It is a difficult point to settle, who is most to blame, and most answerable for the consequences, the person who first commences a fault, or he who by revenging, or publishing it, causes it to extend its baneful effects. If my neighbour be wanton, or wicked enough to throw a kindled firebrand into my dwelling, and I, instead of immediately quenching it, throw it back into his premises, or cast it into the air for the wind to carry it whither it will, am I less answerable for the conflagration than he? Thus when you are offended, if instead of going to a teacher alone, and endeavouring to come to an amicable adjustment of the affair, you throw back the firebrand in revenge, or cast it into the air, by publicly talking of the matter, and a fire of contention ensues, you are perhaps the guiltier individual of the two.

Let me here enjoin upon all concerned in the active duties of a Sunday School, the diligent cultivation of that charity, or love, which the apostle has so exquisitely described, 1 Cor. xiii. "Charity suffereth long;—when injured does not seek revenge: "Charity is kind; is desirous of making every one happy: "Charity envieth not;"—feels no pain at the sight of another's excellences or possessions; nor dislikes him on that account: "vaunteth not itself;"—does not boast of what it has done or can do: "is not puffed up;"—has no proud conceits of its own attainments or achievements: "can behave unseemly;"—quietly discharges the duties of his own rank, station, age, or sex, without stepping out of his own appropriate circle: "seeketh not her own;"—abhors misbehaviour; "is not provoked;"—is as backward to take offence, as it is

to revenge it: "thinketh no evil;"—is willing to impute a good motive, till a bad one is proved: "rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;"—mourns the failings and delights in the excellences of her opponent: "beareth, or as the word signifies, covereth all things;—covers with a mantle of love, those faults which it is not necessary to disclose: "believeth all things,"—to the advantage of another: "hopeth all things,"—where there is scarcely evidence sufficient to induce belief; "endureth all things;"—is willing to make any sacrifice, and endure any privation consistent with truth, in order to promote peace.

What schools we should have under the control of such a spirit! What hinders us from cultivating this Godlike, heavenly, and everlasting virtue, as the ruling temper of our hearts, and the all pervading spirit of the institution?

4. *Always address each other with kindness and respect.*

Avoid every thing domineering, uncivil, and disrespectful, both in manner and in tone. It is greatly to be regretted that snavity of speech and urbanity of manners, appear with some good people, to rank amongst heterodox virtues. But I have yet to learn in what page of revelation, courtesy is prescribed. Gold is not the less weighty for being furnished, nor the diamond less valuable for being polished; no, nor is real religion the less pure for being decorated with the ornament of real courtesy. The holiness of a saint, receives no contamination or alloy from the manners of a gentleman.

I am not denouncing the stiff, cold etiquette of a hypocrite and grinning politeness, but that obsequious and servile attention to each other's feelings which is compounded of benevolence and greed

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ing you are not many masters, but brethren.

It is of considerable moment, that as the children
are required to respect their instructors, they should
be invariably taught to do this, by the example of
the teachers mutually respecting each other. And
as it was one object of Sunday School instruction,
though not the ultimate one, to check what is rude,
and point what is right in the manners of the
children, it is of no small consequence, that in the
conduct of their teachers they should constantly
have before their eyes, very correct models of
kindness and respect.

3. *Never interfere with the duties of each other.*

An officious, meddling disposition, is sure to do
subtilty, and incur contempt. Your respective
duties are sufficiently distinct to be clearly ascertained,
and to render encroachment inexcusable on the
ground of ignorance. Upon observing any irregu-
larity or neglect, in the class of another, instead of
attempting to rectify it yourself, mention it kindly
to the teacher to whom it appertains, especially
reminding that the hint be given as privately and
delicately as possible, so no one should be convicted
or reproved before his own pupils.

4. *Be very careful to discharge the general
duties of your office, in a manner suitable to your
age, sex and condition in life.*

— Older and younger teachers are under reciprocal
obligations to each other. They whose years and
experience enable them to communicate wisdom
from their younger fellow teachers, should be
unflinchingly anxious to display their knowledge to
great advantage. Let them resemble the wise men
of their country, and therefore not merely receive



from every thing which it would be injustice for others to imitate, but abound in every virtue which may be copied with advantage. Unusual seriousness and zeal should characterise all *their* deportment. Connected with this should be a *friendly disposition to associate with their younger brethren*. There should be no distant, reserved and repulsive behaviour, but a willingness to instruct, encourage, and guide them, unattended by a wish to dictate and govern. How eminently serviceable might such persons render themselves by repressing intemperate zeal, by giving to youthful ardor a right direction, and smoothing the ruggedness with which the first stage in the career of usefulness is sometimes marked. Instead, therefore, of viewing the junior teachers as too young to be their associates, and leaving them to companions as inexperienced as themselves, let the senior laborers in this good cause, consider them as objects commended to their especial protection, whom by their fostering care, they are to train up to excellence in the duties of their office.

On the other hand, let the *younger teachers* be thoroughly aware of the duties of *their age*. Let them seek the company of their seniors; treat them with respect, solicit their advice, and hearken to their opinions with deference. Where youth is modestly inquisitive, and age unostentatiously communicative, much benefit must result from their being brought into association. Young persons, however, are exceedingly apt to be forward, impatient, positive and self-confident. Nothing can be more embarrassing and offensive, than to see a person, twenty years in years, still younger in experience, ignorant of the deference due to those who are wiser and older than himself, urging his own plans and views with a pertinacity which is scarcely tolerable in gray

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hair, and contending for their adoption in opposition to the ripper wisdom of his seniors, as if he had received them by revelation from Heaven. Modesty is a disposition so necessary in the character of youth, that no talents can be a substitute for it, nor can any attainments, however splendid, be admitted, as an apology for the want of it. Let those who have but recently entered upon their office, then, always shun with great humility to those who have been employed for years, and eagerly avail themselves of the testimony of experience. The worst of evils have arisen from that haughty temper, which amidst the pride of independence, forgets, that vast superiority of qualification is often connected with perfect equality of rank, and that in such cases deference is no degradation.

Between the teachers of *opposite sexes*, there are duties to be discharged which involve their own respectability, and the character of the institution. Some persons, who understand no logic but that of the pocket, and who find it more cheap to find out the faults of an institution, than the means of its support, have sometimes made this objection against the plan of gratuitous teaching in our Sunday Schools, "that it gives occasion for too frequent meetings of young people, and often leads to hasty and injudicious connections in life." Leaving this unsubstantial objection to pass like a shadow over a rock, I certainly see the necessity and importance of the most punctilious regard to all the rules of modesty and reserve, between male and female teachers. A school room is not the place for a trifle, or a time for gossip between young women. Nothing can be more improper than to see young men intruding into apartments reserved to the instruction of girls, and there meeting

laughing, or talking to some female acquaintance. Before an assembly of poor children, one of whose greatest dangers arises from a want of proper and delicate reserve between the opposite sexes, and who are ready to copy with avidity any want of decorum in their teachers, the very smallest deviation from the strict rules of propriety is a crime not only against their manners, but against their morals. Under such circumstances the most scrupulous circumspection is indispensably requisite.

And here, perhaps, it may be neither unseasonable, nor unnecessary, to caution young persons against being led into ill-advised connections, by the intercourse they necessarily must have with each other, after every rule of decorum has been observed. There exists no reason why a connection commenced at a Sunday School should necessarily be a bad one; nor on the other hand, why it should necessarily be a good one. Persons may be very excellent teachers, and yet be very ill adapted for husbands or wives. The qualifications required for these respective relationships, are of an order, in some respects so essentially different, that there is no arguing from the one to the other.

—Sometimes we shall find in the same school, persons of very *different standing in life*; and such a disparity, without an attention to the duties which it entails, is likely to be attended with some degree of discord. The richer and better educated members of the little community should be careful to exclude from their conduct every thing that looks like the pride of station, and at the same time to avoid that insulting condescension, which makes its object feel at what a distance it is considered. It is a nice and delicate point to distinguish between affability, and familiarity; and to act with those

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who are below us in life, as fellow laborers in the school, without making them our companions out of it. Those whom providence has destined to fill the *humbler stations of society*, and who are engaged in the work of tuition with others of more elevated circumstances, will also do well to guard against an obtrusive, and forward disposition; and without being servile should always be respectful. All they ought to expect from their superiors, is a kind co-operation in the duties of the school, without the familiarity of friends and companions in general.

7. Prayer is a duty which the teachers of a Sunday School mutually owe to each other.

If we are commanded to make supplication for all men, even for those with whom we have no other connection than what is established by the common bond of humanity, surely those ought not to be excluded from our petitions, with whom we are united in the communion of Christian benevolence. Mutual prayer, as we have already considered in the case of the children, would be productive, in proportion to its fervor, of mutual endearment. If on a Sabbath morning, you devoted a portion of the time spent in the closet, to entreat the blessing of God upon the persons and labors of your fellow teachers, how sweetly would such an engagement prepare you to mingle with them in the duties of the day. Softened to benevolence by the exercises of piety, and with the fire of love still burning, which prayer had kindled in your heart upon the altar of devotion, with what a holy temper would you hasten to the scene of your exertions, and with what a glowing affection look round upon the object of your fervent supplications. What an influence, might it be expected, that such a season of mutual prayer, sincerely, importunately,

and perseveringly presented, would draw down from heaven upon the institution at large. Showers of blessings would come down in their season, in which both children and teachers would reciprocally rejoice. God heareth and answereth prayer; and of all the prayers which enter heaven, and rise before the throne, we can readily conceive that none more speedily catch his ear and move his hand, than those which one Christian pours out the religious zeal of another; since such prayers, like the aromatic incense which ascended in a cloud before the mercy-seat, are compounded of many precious ingredients, bruised and burnt together, and all of divine appointment.

CHAPTER FIFTH.

THE TEMPTATIONS TO WHICH SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS ARE PECULIARLY EXPOSED.

As this life is a state of probation, it may be reasonably expected that every situation will have its trials. Temptations vary with our circumstances; but there is no scene from which they are entirely excluded. The heavenly and the earthly paradise alternately witnessed their attack, their victory, and their havoc. Angelic as well as human perfection yielded to their shock, and left a warning to every subsequent age, "not to be high minded, but to fear." In a world, which God for a while has permitted to sink under the domination of the prince of the power of the air, it is not to be wondered at

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that there is no situation, however obscured by solitude, or elevated by piety, from which all temptations can be effectually shut out. The fact is, that as our chief danger arises from our own evil heart, till we can be separated from our guilty selves, we shall look in vain for a spot, sequestered from the attack of our spiritual enemies. Well did our merciful Redeemer know our weakness and our dangers, when he put into our lips that appropriate petition, "lead us not into temptation."

What duty is more frequently enjoined in the New Testament, than WATCHFULNESS, and what is more necessary? How incumbent this is, on those who are engaged in the active duties of a Sunday School, will be very apparent, by even a partial enumeration of *their* temptations.

1. *They are in great danger of receiving injury to their own personal religion.*

The Sabbath, if the expression should not be thought too low, is the market day of the soul, when she lays in the provisions which are to refresh her, and the materials which are to employ her, during the ensuing week: if this day be misimproved, six days suffer for the neglect of one. 'Tis very true, that real godliness will not confine itself to peculiar times and places; but still there are both peculiar times and places which are eminently adapted to promote its life and power. The Sabbath and the sanctuary sustain the highest rank among the instituted means of religious benefit. 'Tis then that the Christian, engaged in warfare with this world, like a conflicting vessel at sea, lies by for a season, to repair the damages he has received, and prepare again for action, by renewing the faith which giveth him the victory. 'Tis then that piety, wearied and weakened by the toils of her wayfare,

sits down to rest beneath the shadow of Christ's ordinances, and refreshing herself with the river of life which flows at her feet, rises with renovated strength to pursue her journey to a city of habitation. Hence all those who are concerned for the prosperity of their spiritual interests, and are wise in the selection of means to promote them, set a high value upon the Sabbath as the chief auxiliary of true religion.

Now without great care a Sunday School teacher is in imminent danger of losing much of the benefit of the Christian Sabbath. As your attendance is required pretty early at the school, you are often exposed to the temptation of neglecting secret prayer on the Sunday morning. Without a most resolute and self-denying habit of early rising, you will be very frequently hurried away to the school before you have had time, except in a very hasty manner, to supplicate a blessing from God upon the services of the day. A Sabbath that commences without prayer, is likely to be spent without pleasure, and closed without profit. 'Tis in the closet that the soul is prepared for the blessings of the sanctuary: 'tis there the understanding is cleared for instruction, and the heart softened for impression: 'tis there that God excites the spiritual hunger and thirst which he afterwards intends to satisfy with the provisions of his holy temple. Every one that wishes to find the Sabbath a delight should introduce it by a season of earnest and secret prayer, which you, without most determined habits of early rising, are likely, in consequence of your engagements, to neglect.

Without great vigilance you are in danger of losing the spirituality of the Sabbath altogether, and making it rather a day of business than of

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devotion. In many large schools much of the Lancasterian system of education is introduced into the method of instruction, which certainly facilitates the communication of knowledge; but at the same time it must be confessed, that from its very nature, it has rather a tendency, without pre-eminence care on the part of the teacher, to increase the secularizing influence of the whole business of instruction. The audible repetition of orders, the evolutions of the classes, the exhibition of signals, and indeed the whole mechanism of the plan has a great tendency to destroy that tranquillity and spirituality of mind which are essential to the exercises of devotion. In addition to this, the little vexations and irritations which the conduct of the scholars so frequently produces, are very apt to disturb and discompose the most amiable temper; and thus disqualify the soul for that enjoyment, which requires the most serene and unruffled atmosphere. The body, too, often grows weary, and the animal spirits flag; under such circumstances you sometimes enter upon the means of grace, but ill prepared to improve them.

The service passes on, while alas! neither the solemnity of prayer, nor the animating notes of holy praise! neither the fervor of the preacher, nor the seriousness of the surrounding congregation, seems to interest or impress you, and then mourning the coldness and barrenness of your heart, you retire to mark upon the gloomy chronicle of disappointment another Sabbath lost. Many a teacher will subscribe to the truth of this representation by a deep and heavy sigh, and many a tongue be ready to exclaim, "my unliving piety yields sad proof, that without watchfulness, genuine godliness may receive little or no benefit even in a Sunday School. But tell me

how I may guard against the danger, its existence I knew without being told."

Begin the day as I have already directed, with earnest prayer, that you may carry a devotional spirit to your labors. Seriously remember your danger, and diligently watch against it. Keep in view the ultimate object of your exertions, and elevate your pursuits from the mere communication of knowledge, to the salvation of the immortal soul; as long as you can fix your mind on the spiritual interests of the children, and labor affectionately for them, you guard against the secularizing influence of the ordinary school business, and are cherishing a spirit every way friendly to your own piety. Make it the subject of earnest supplication, that God would preserve you from the danger to which you are exposed. Endeavour to acquire settled habits of stillness and order, that all unnecessary bustle may be avoided, and every thing conducted with calmness and serenity. Employ the time you have to spare during the intervals of public worship, in devotional retirement. By these means, assiduously applied, the spirit of true piety may be preserved, and personal religion remain uninjured amidst the routine of Sunday School instruction.

—There is another source from whence some degree of danger may be apprehended, and that is a *habit of speaking on religious subjects with too much indifference and levity*. This applies to every one who is called to teach religion officially. The sublime topics of heavenly truth can never be treated lightly, with impunity. A mind accustomed to dwell upon them in a more official and unfeeling manner, must gradually lose its susceptibility to their living influence; and become hardened against their power to sanctify and comfort. That which at

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one time we treat as the ordinary routine of business, it will be difficult at another to enjoy as the element of devotion. Let us then take care never to handle the truths of revelation with a light and careless temper; for by such means they are likely to become "the savour of death unto death," "The abominable, which warns us how we touch a holy thing," should ever imbue our minds while the topics of eternity are trembling on our tongues. Never forget, that everlasting interests hang upon the truths which you teach to the children, and that their manner of learning them, in a considerable measure, will be an imitation of your manner of teaching them.

There is the greater need of watching against the danger to which your own personal piety is exposed from your office as a teacher, as of all causes of spiritual declension, this is the most likely to be excused by a deceived conscience. Is the following mode of reasoning new to you? "'Tis true I have not been of late so attentive to personal religion as I formerly was, and it must be confessed divine truths affect me less powerfully than they once did; but as the neglect was produced by an attention to the interests of others, it is quite pardonable, for if I have not kept my own vineyard I have kept the vineyards of others; and therefore I consider that my falling off a little should be considered rather in the light of a sacrifice, than a sin." It becomes us however to recollect that our first care is with our own soul, and that as no duties can be incompatible with each other, nothing is required of us that necessarily interferes with personal religion. Nothing can possibly be a substitute for this; nothing causes the decline of it. Neither the most diffusive benevolence, nor the most ardent zeal, will be

admitted by God as an apology for sinking into the crime of inebriation. There is, however, no necessary connection between a decay of piety and the duties of a Sunday School; the danger arises only in those cases, where there is a want of caution; properly conducted, your employment would be sound, rather an auxiliary than a foe to the most spiritual mind.

2. *Another temptation to which Sunday School teachers are exposed, is a spirit of pride.*

To be a teacher of others; to be invested with authority; to be regarded as an oracle; to be listened to with deference; to say to one come and he cometh, to another go and he goeth, even among children, is a situation which has its temptations, and which some weak minds have found quite too powerful for their *humility*. You mistake, if you suppose the distinction and elevation of your office are too inconsiderable to induce pride. Pride is a vice that does not dwell exclusively in king's houses; wear only soft raiment, and feed sumptuously every day upon lofty titles, fame or affluence; generated in the depravity of our nature, it accommodates itself to our circumstances, and adapts itself to our taste: it is found as often in the cottage as in the mansion; and where it has never tasted the rich viands of higher elevations, feeds with avidity upon the lowest distinctions, which raise one man above another. Consciousness of superiority, whatever be the object of comparison, is the element of this most hateful disposition; and this may be supplied even from the office of a Sunday School teacher. The danger is greatly increased, where the talents of a young person have procured for him a prominent station, and assigned to him the discharge of extraordinary duties.

It would indeed be an unhappy abuse of the system, if it should be perverted into a means of destroying that modest and retiring disposition which is the most becoming ornament of the young; and rendering them bold, forward and conceited; a danger which it requires no penetration to discern, must ever attend a season, like that in which we live, of extraordinary activity. The mode of doing good in the present age, with all its incalculable advantages to the interests of mankind at large, needs the greatest watchfulness, both on the part of its principal agents and its subordinate instruments, lest it generate the disposition, against which this particular is directed. Vast multitudes are now brought from silence and obscurity, to sustain in public, a share of that distinguished honor, which the cause of Christ imparts to the moment of its advocates. Let them therefore be watchful of their own spirit, for the loss of humility is a decoliation in the Christian character, not to be repaired by the most splendid talents, or the most active zeal; while at the same time it would be an evil which our congregations would have cause to deplore with tears of blood, if their junior members should ever be inflated by any cause with the spirit of pride.

3. *Nearly allied to this is the danger of acquiring a dogmatical, authoritative and overbearing manner.*

The last particular referred to *spirit*, this more directly relates to *manner*: for it is quite conceivable that through the force of habit a person may acquire the latter without being considerably infected by the former. Accustomed to speak with authority to the children, and to expect prompt obedience to your commands, you are in danger, without great watchfulness, of carrying the tone and air of office

into your general deportment. A habit of this kind may be formed by imperceptible degrees, displayed without consciousness, and not broken without difficulty. Wherever it exists it never fails to create disgust, but is never so disgusting as in young persons.

CHAPTER SIXTH.

THE DISCOURAGEMENTS OF SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS.

EVERY cause which is worth supporting, will have to encounter difficulties: and these are generally proportionate to the value of the object to be accomplished. The career of benevolence is a path of flowers, leading down a gentle declivity, where the philanthropist treads softly and swiftly without a difficulty to check his progress, or a discouragement to chill his ardor. Mercy has far more to obstruct her course than even justice, since the latter is sustained by the strong arm of power, to remove the injuries which are offered to her dignity, and remove the obstacles which oppose her progress; whereas, mercy, accompanied only by that wisdom which is peaceable, must attempt to do by gentleness, what she cannot effect by force; toil through difficulties which she cannot remove; under the most aggravated injuries, console herself with the thought that she did not deserve them; amidst present discouragement, cheer herself with the hope of future success, and after waiting long and

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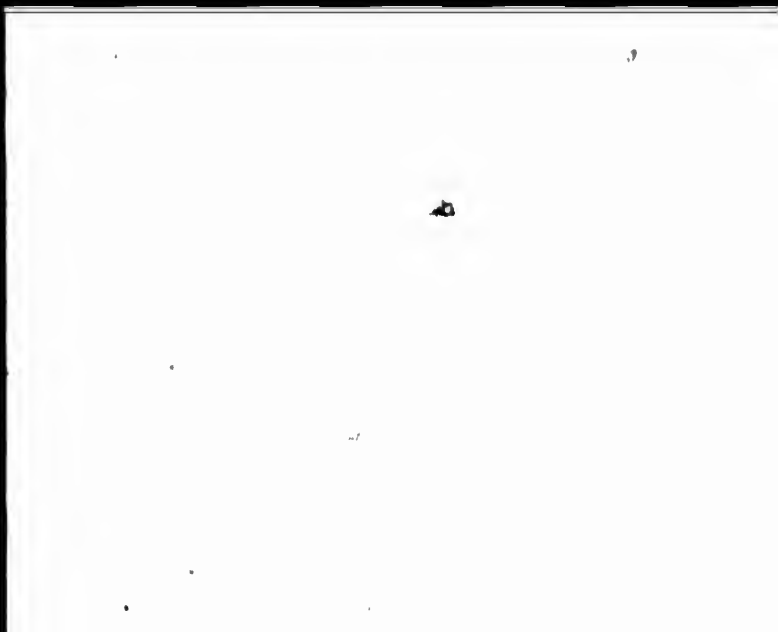
patiently for the fruit of her labors, sometimes find
her only reward in the purity of her intentions and
the consciousness of having done all she could.

The faithful teacher will meet with many dis-
couragements, which I will now enumerate, and
endeavour to abate.

1. *His discouragements will arise frequently from
the children.*

—From their *dullness*. Instead of finding them
quick in their conceptions, and steady in their
application, you will often find them volatile in their
habits, and slow of apprehension. After toiling
several weeks in teaching them the alphabet, you
will in some cases have the mortification to find that
little progress has been made, and months elapse
before much visible improvement takes place. In
looking round upon your class, you will sometimes
exclaim with a sigh of despondency, "So long
have I been laboring to instruct that boy, and yet
to the present hour he can scarcely add syllable to
syllable. It is like ploughing upon a rock, and
sowing upon sand. I feel almost inclined to abandon
the work altogether." Never yield to such feelings.
Innumerable instances have occurred, in which the
dullest children in the school have ultimately become
the teacher's richest reward. Plants of great
excellence are often of slow growth, and pay with
ample interest the gardener's heavy toil, and delayed
expectations. *What would you should no such reward
crown your efforts, still bear with their dullness,
reflecting that the very circumstances render
them more grateful of your benevolent regard.*

—From *disregards* is often this extraordinary
disobedience. Aware of the costly sacrifices you
make, and the incessant labor you endure for their
benefit, you expect in them a just sense of their



advantages and a grateful acknowledgment of their obligations. Instead of this you often see them utterly destitute of both: trifling over their privileges as if they were worth nothing to them, and unthankless towards you, as if it cost nothing to impart them. Perceiving that your kindness is wasted upon objects which it fails to impress, you feel sometimes disposed to withdraw your exertions, which are so little valued and improved. But consider, this very state of the children's minds, instead of inducing you to relax your exertions, should stimulate you to greater activity, since it is a part of that depravity of heart and that deformity of character, for the removal of which they are intrusted to your care. To abandon them on this account, would be like the physician giving up his patient because he is diseased. The more insensible and ungrateful you find them, the more should you labor for their improvement, since these vices, if not reformed in childhood, are likely to attain a dreadful maturity in future life.

—Their *misimprovement* operates very unfavorably upon the mind of their instructors. Who has not sometimes experienced a chilling depression, when he has looked round upon the school at large, and compared the actual state of the children, with the advantages they have enjoyed. How common are such reflections as these: "Alas! how few of these children appear at present to be the better, as to any moral improvement, for the instructions they have received. How few have received any serious impressions, or imbibed any religious principles. How many appear as depraved as when they entered the school, and are leaving it without a single proof on which a teacher can rest his hope that they are really the better for his instructions."

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And even of those who at one time seemed to promise well, how few are there whose budding excellences have escaped the corrupting influence of bad example. Disappointed so often we are afraid to indulge another expectation. Where are the boasted advantages of Sunday School instruction? Where the general improvement of mind, of manners, and of heart, for which we have been waiting? The present generation of the poor seems to be growing up as vicious and immoral as any that are past. We have labored almost in vain, and spent our strength for nought. It amounts well nigh to a question with us, whether we may not relinquish our efforts without any serious injury to the interests of morality or religion."

This is the dark side of the picture; but it has a bright one, which should check these discouraging apprehensions, and resist the paralyzing influence they are calculated to cherish. That in a great majority of cases no present visible effect, of a religious kind, is produced, I admit; but equally obvious it is, that in not a few instances, this happy result has been witnessed. Could you look at the aggregate of success, which has already followed these exertions, you would behold a scene which would fix your attention in silent wonder, or raise your heart into transports of delight. It is a fact which abundant evidence confirms, that multitudes of children have already been converted to God, blessed for both worlds, and made happy for eternity, by means of Sunday School instruction. At the very moment when you are giving vent to the sighs of disappointment, and yielding to the influence of despondency, a thousand harps are struck in heaven by a band of glorified spirits, who received their first devout impressions in a Sunday School.

Could you listen to their harmony, and gaze upon their beauty;—could you witness the seraphic glow which is diffused over their frame, and hear the rapturous praises which they pour forth to him that sitteth upon the throne as often as they repeat the honored name of their beloved teacher, discouragement before such a scene would instantly vanish, and animated hope would fill its place. When you feel despondency creeping through your soul, send your imagination for one of these heavenly harpers, and by the song of her conversion let her charm away the gloomy thoughts of your troubled breast.

On the way to heaven, as well as within its gates, are a goodly company, redeemed from their vain conversation within the limits of a Sunday School. Scarcely a Christian church will be found in the kingdom, that has had such an institution under its care, but records some members who by these means were converted from the error of their ways. The number of living witnesses, who from heartfelt experience, can bear their testimony to the spiritual benefit of this system, would perhaps more than fill one of our largest places of public worship.

In addition to this, numberless instances of *external reformation* have occurred, and many who would otherwise have been running to excess or riot, have been trained to habits of morality, industry, and order.

In many cases, the seed of the kingdom begins to germinate long before your eye discerns the hidden process. A secret work is going on, which shall one day surprise and delight you. The first dawn of day commences amidst the thickest shades of night; the tide begins to turn long before it is observed by a person walking upon the shore; thus the *latent stage of conversion* is often hidden from

every eye but his who seeth in secret, amidst the remains of unregeneracy. When you are most discouraged there may be the least cause for it.

Even those unhappy youths whose conduct excludes all joy for the present, and almost all hope for the future, even they, at some distant time may yield a rich harvest from the seed which is now, with respect to them, sown in tears. The instructions you communicate can never be totally forgotten. They give light and power to conscience: keep the mind in a state of susceptibility to devout impression, and render the heart more tangible to those incidents of a providential nature which are continually occurring to arrest the sinner in his career. In the gloomy season of distress, when reflection can be resisted no longer, then what they were taught in the school may be brought most vividly to remembrance. Then, when no preacher and no friend is near, conscience may denounce the terrors of the law, and memory the glad tidings of the gospel, till the poor trembling sinner, amidst the long neglected stores that were deposited in her mind at the Sunday School, finds the means of her conviction, conversion, and consolation.

It may be also observed, that those persons are far more likely than others, to receive benefit from the public preaching of the gospel, whose minds have been previously trained in the knowledge of its principles. They have a clearer understanding of the sermons which they hear; and as it is through the mind that God converts the heart, they are in a fairer way to derive spiritual impression than persons who have lived in the most brutish ignorance. This is a species of advantage arising from Sunday School instruction not sufficiently thought of. The teacher is unquestionably a powerful

auxiliary to the preacher, and the success of the latter in many cases must in justice be shared by the former. You may therefore check the despondency of your hearts, with this consideration, that where no present visible effect is produced by your instructions, by a sort of division of labor in the business of conversion, you may be preparing its subject for this great change, which is afterwards to be effected under the instrumentality of the minister.

Children, in whose hearts devout impression may have been produced, are often removed from beneath your care, before you have an opportunity to witness the fruit of your toil; but the eye of God is upon his own work, and he will one day make known to you, all that he does by you.

As to the discouragement which arises from the general appearance of the lower orders of society, it should be recollected, that a mighty change indeed must be wrought before it becomes visible in the aggregate; which ought not to be expected till the system has had the range of another generation or two, to work upon the mass of the poor with the weight of accumulated benefit. Thousands and thousands of instances of individual conversion and reformation may be effected, without at present altering the *visible* condition of the poor in general. Wickedness is noisy and obtrusive, and may be seen and heard in every place of concourse: piety is silent, modest, and retiring; not lifting up her voice in the street, nor praying at the corners of the streets. One murder makes more noise than a hundred conversions. To see the abounding of wickedness, the overflowing of ungodliness, we need not give ourselves the trouble of research, but to witness the good effects of Sunday Schools we must follow the subjects of them, to the closet of devotion, and to

the retired scenes of domestic life and social order, where like the violet, they are to be traced rather by their fragrance than their colors, and are valued in private more than they are known in public.

2. *A second source of discouragement is often found in the conduct of the children's parents.*

It is extremely disheartening to meet with so little co-operation as is generally afforded by them; this, however, should produce double exertions on your part, by convincing you that the children are cast entirely on *your* mercy for religious and moral improvement.

The same *insensibility* and *ingratitude* as are displayed by the children, are also in many cases manifested by their parents. It is not uncommon to meet with persons so stupidly thankless, as to talk of conferring obligations upon us by sending their children to our schools. Such monstrous ingratitude is exceedingly trying to your benevolence, and sometimes nearly extinguishes it. Let not the children, however, suffer for the sins of their parents. Continue to cherish their interests, and promote their welfare in opposition to every discouragement. Remember you profess that your efforts are perfectly gratuitous, and therefore to be consistent you should make them dependant upon no wages, not even the effusions of a grateful heart. Do good for its own sake, and let your reward arise from the consciousness of doing it. "A good man shall be satisfied from himself." Imitate the conduct of your admirable Redeemer, who ever went about doing good, without a degree of horrid insensibility and vile ingratitude, sufficient, one should have thought, to make infinite mercy herself weary in well doing.

3. *Sometimes you are cast down by the uncer-*

which is manifested by the senior, and more respectable members of the church.

It can never be sufficiently deplored, that so large a fund of knowledge, wisdom, and experience, as is to be found in the senior branches of many of our congregations, should be entirely withheld from the interests of the children; and the regret is considerably increased by observing the total indifference with which such persons frequently regard the whole concerns of the school. This arises from a mistaken idea, that these things belong exclusively to the young. Is there any thing, I would ask, in this business, which would render it a disgrace for the most affluent, aged or pious members of our churches to display a solicitude in its prosperity? Did even the Saviour of the World interest himself in the care of young children, and can *any one* of his followers think such a concern beneath him? I am not now asking the aged to sit down upon the bench of the young, or to sustain the toils of labor amidst the infirmities of age. I am not urging the father to neglect the souls of his own offspring, in order to instruct the children of the stranger. All I ask, all I wish is, that they would discover a lively and constant solicitude in the welfare of the school, and give it as much of their time and their attention as their bodily strength would allow, and prior claims admit. The hoary crown of a righteous old age, occasionally seen within the precincts of the school, sheds a lustre upon the institution, and encourages the ardor of youthful breasts. The children are awed, the teachers are animated by the occasional assistance of men whose standing in the church, and ripened piety, command respect. Where this, however, is unapplyingly shewn, and the young are left without the counsel of age to guide them or its smiles to reward them, instead of

yielding to the discouragement, endeavour by your own renewed exertions to remedy the evil and supply the defect. The less others care for the children, the more anxiety to be diligent should operate in your heart.

4. *The mind of a teacher is very often discouraged by the want of efficient co-operation in his fellow laborers.*

Perhaps you are lamenting that your co-workers are either too few in number, or lamentably defective in suitable qualifications. Plans of usefulness which you know are adapted to promote the great end are opposed, or counteracted by the ignorance and stubbornness of your fellow teachers. You are left almost to struggle alone. You cannot do the things you would. Thwarted and impeded, you are often ready to quit the field where your operations are cramped, and your usefulness diminished. This circumstance, instead of being a reason for your resignation, should operate as a very powerful inducement for your continuance. The fewer there are to carry on the school, or the more slender their qualifications, the more criminal would it be in you to retire. This would be to forsake the cause in its emergency, and take your place amongst the many friends of its prosperity. Nothing can be more noble, than to see a man struggling the more for a benevolent object, the more he is opposed by some, and neglected by others: this is the glory and triumph of great minds; a sort of heroism in the cause of mercy. Perseverance may bring its reward with it by collecting round you, in process of time, a band of laborers like minded, who will rejoice to put themselves under the direction of such a leader.

CHAPTER SEVENTH.

THE MOST EFFECTUAL MEANS OF KEEPING UP
THE SPIRIT OF THE OFFICE.

It is a fact which all experience proves, that the most important object by being constantly in sight, loses much of its power to interest. Zeal is apt to languish, when it is no longer excited by the stimulus of novelty: and the fervor of first love, without great care, will soon sink into dull formality. It is not to be wondered at, if among the active supporters of a Sunday School, the vice of lukewarmness should sometimes be found. Hence it is of importance to ascertain the best means for keeping up the spirit of the teacher's office. By this I mean, *the prosecution of its duties with vigor, interest, and delight*, in opposition to that lifeless and indolent manner of dragging through them which is but too common with many.

1. *Keep in view the ultimate object of your labors.*

The more importance we attach to an object, the less danger we shall be exposed to, of ceasing to regard it with solicitude. Whatever is momentous, must be interesting. Hence the necessity of keeping steadily and clearly before your mind, the salvation of the soul, as the ultimate end of all your efforts. What can have such a tendency to engage the feelings, and keep them engaged, as this? The mere endeavour to teach them reading and writing: the effort at only intellectual improvement, cannot in the very nature of things have such power over the heart of the teacher, as the steady contemplation of the immortal soul: salvation is a noble prize, and

eternity a wonderful excitement. If any thing can "keep up the spirit of the office, it is to bring the mind from time to time under the influence of such inducements as these. When you feel your heart losing its ardor, and sinking into a lukewarm state, look afresh to the world of immortality, and behold in the crown of eternal life, the object of your pursuit. If any thing can keep your attention alive to the interests of the children, it will be the constant repetition of this sentiment: "I am seeking their everlasting salvation."

2. *Well conducted Sunday School Unions have a powerful tendency to promote the spirit of your office.*

The occasional meeting of fellow laborers from different schools, together with the interesting communications and mutual exhortations which are then delivered, have a very enlivening effect. The very sight of so large a body of fellow teachers, engaged in the same cause, has an exhilarating tendency, especially when one and another, details the result of successful exertions. Not only do neighbouring flames brighten each other's blaze, but even dying embers upon the hearth, by being brought into contact, mutually rekindle the expiring spark. Thus the communion which is established by these associations promotes, in a very powerful manner, the feelings essential to the character of a good teacher. A holy emulation is also excited, which, if it do not degenerate into envy, leads on to the happiest effects. The annual meetings, which are necessarily connected with the union, add the general impression, and keep up the interest to an unusual degree. It has been universally admitted by those who have tried the plan, that it is pregnant with advantages to that particular object, which

and now considering. The teachers who are connected with the best regulated unions, can testify from ample experience, to their adaptation to keep up the spirit of the office.

3. *Occasional meetings among the teachers of the same school for conversation and prayer in immediate reference to their joint labors, are exceedingly beneficial.*

At these meetings every thing should be communicated which occurs in the course of individual experience, that is at all calculated for general encouragement. Each one should feel himself under obligation to render these friendly interviews as interesting as he can, by making known every thing he sees, or hears, or reads, that is of an instructive, or stimulating nature; especially taking care that nothing be done for the sake of vain glory or pride, as it would effectually counteract their beneficial influence, to have them converted into occasions for display.

4. *Ministerial assistance in the way of exhortation, inspection, and advice, would powerfully contribute to keep up the true spirit of the office.**

* It is matter of great surprise and equal regret, that many ministers appear to take little or no interest in the concerns of the Sunday Schools supported by their congregations. They are scarcely ever to be seen among the children, or attending their progress and instruction at the meetings of the teachers. The usual excuse which they preach for the benefit of the institution, is that they are not bound by them as a legal discharge from all further concern; and that as it is their duty to preach, and till they sit down to consider their course for the next anniversary it is neglected and forgotten. But what can such an evasion be attributed? They are not ignorant that a school containing two, three, or four hundred scholars, is an object below their notice, or beyond their power. Will they shelter themselves under the excuse that they are not bound by the charge of the congregation, they did not choose to involve themselves about the school. Doubtless they are not, but they are not to be moved to their duty by such excuses. They are to be moved by their own hearts, and by the love of their people, and by the love of their souls, must of them greatly ignorant and wicked, assembled every week within the sphere of their labors.

Engage your respective ministers to meet you occasionally in your social interviews, that by the breadth of animated exhortation they may fan the expiring spark, and feed the holy fire. Accustomed to public admonition, they know how to touch the springs of action, and to awaken the dormant energies of the human mind. It is no pride in me to say, that if a minister's heart be engaged in the work, and he be respected by his people, he has it in his power to awaken an interest in the minds of the teachers which scarcely any thing else can supply. Use every means, therefore, to engage his zealous concern in the welfare of the institution.

5. *A constant perusal of publications that relate to Sunday School instruction, especially the details of successful exertion, would be exceedingly useful.*

Any particular taste is vigorously stimulated by the perusal of books that treat of its appropriate subject. Be ever watchful therefore to meet with new information and facts illustrative of the advantages of the work in which you are engaged. You

for religious instruction, and yet scarcely ever enquire how they are going on? Do not such ministers strangely neglect the means of increasing their own personal influence, who suffer so important an institution to be in constant operation amidst their people, and yet have little or no share in directing its movements? Is it not tempting their congregations to act independently of their pastors, and to diminish the weight of their office, already in the estimation of many far too light? Do they consult the interests of the church by neglecting those of the Sunday School? If a proper share of attention were given to those poor youths, in all probability its happy result would often prove a balm to heal the wounds occasioned by a want of ministerial success. Here they would find means to build up their dilapidated churches, and strengthen the walls of Zion, which have been long mouldering beneath the heavy garrets of death. "The tree, in many cases the pastor himself, are already nearly full of cares, and his arms weighed down by the number of his congregation, and the weight of his engagements, which would add much to his influence, his usefulness, and his comfort."

rise from reading an encouraging anecdote with fresh eagerness. You see what others do, and how they do it; thus while you are directed, you are also excited. I recommend, with peculiar earnestness, the *Teacher's Magazine*, already alluded to in the Introduction, as eminently adapted to preserve in your breast the true spirit of your office.

6. *An imitation of the best examples would promote the same end.*

In every school we shall find some whose superior qualifications and zeal entitle them to be considered as models. Instead of observing them with envy, mark them with admiration, cultivate their acquaintance, and endeavour by the glowing ardor of their spirit, to rekindle the fervor of your own.

7. *Occasionally devoting a portion of time to examine the state of the mind in reference to your duties, would be a means of improvement.*

The true spirit of religion is very powerfully assisted by extraordinary seasons of devotion. The attention is more arrested and fixed by what is unusual, than what occurs in the ordinary routine of customary engagements. Half an hour occasionally devoted to a serious examination of the state of the heart in reference to the object you have embraced, when you could deliberately survey its magnitude, ascertain the manner in which it should be regarded, recollect the way in which it had been pursued by you, reouse your zeal from its slumber, and stimulate your heart to fresh activity, would be attended with the happiest effects.

It should be impressed upon your mind, that there is in the human spirit a lamentable propensity to lukewarmness, which can be effectually roused only by a violent and perpetual struggle with ourselves.

To all that I have enjoined should be added a constant supplication at the throne of divine grace, that God by his Holy Spirit, would keep alive in your heart those feelings of holy benevolence and pious zeal, in which the spirit of the office essentially consists.

CHAPTER EIGHTH.

MOTIVES TO DILIGENCE IN THE WORK.

IF in addition to what has been already advanced, any thing be still wanting to stimulate your zeal, yield to the influence of the following motives.

1. *Dwell upon the value of Sunday Schools to all the present interests of society.*

As Britons and as Christians you must love the country that gave you birth: and that man is unworthy to tread the soil, or breathe the air of England, who is insensible to the blessings of this "bright speck upon the bosom of the ocean." Now, if we love our country, we must desire to see her great amidst the nations of the earth, safe amidst her greatness, and happy in her safety. And who needs to be informed, that wisdom and knowledge must be the stability of her times? Her greatness, her safety, and her happiness, all rest upon the moral character of her population. Whatever elevates this, exalts the nation. Next to the labors of an evangelical ministry, no plan that ever was devised, has a greater tendency to improve the highest state of society than the institution of Sunday Schools.



—*They lessen the crimes which disturb its peace.*
 It is to be recollected, that the instruction communicated by you is strictly *moral and religious*. How far more general knowledge, independently of revelation, would operate in improving the moral character of a people, we can scarcely presume to determine, because the experiment has never been tried; but that the communication of *religious* knowledge has a most beneficial tendency, it would be supremely ridiculous to attempt to prove. It may be useful however to remind you here of those great national facts which are so often appealed to in illustration of the good effects of religious education among the poor. It is generally known and allowed that Scotland, and the lower counties of it in particular, are distinguished from all other parts of the British Empire, by the attention which is bestowed on early education, and the provision which is made for the wide and regular diffusion of its benefits. It is provided by law in Scotland, that there shall be a school established, and a master appointed in every parish. Many additional schools are also founded by donations and legacies: so that in the southern parts of the kingdom, it is very rare to find a person who cannot both read and write; and it is deemed scandalous not to be possessed of a bible. Now what are the effects of all this upon the national character and habits of the Scotch, and on the morals and order of society? It is principally owing to this, says Mr. Howard, the philanthropist, that the numerous emigrants from that country, dispersed over almost all Europe, appear with credit, and advance themselves in their several stations. From the tables of the same justly celebrated writer, it appears that in the whole of Scotland, whose population, at the time of these calculations, was

estimated to amount to, at least, one million six hundred thousand souls, only one hundred and thirty-four persons were convicted of capital crimes in a period of nineteen years; being, on the average, about seven in each year. In a subsequent table we are informed, that in the single circuit of Norfolk, in England, including six counties, and containing it is supposed, not more than eight hundred thousand persons, being but one half of the population of Scotland, no less than four hundred and thirty-four criminals were condemned to death in the space of twenty-three years; which is an annual average of nearly nineteen capital convicts; besides eight hundred and seventy-four sentenced to transportation. The *double* population of Scotland being taken into the account, there is thus a difference in its favor, in this important point, in the ratio of seven to thirty-eight.*

Now it should be observed, that the education in Scotland to which this superiority may be attributed, embraces much that is moral and religious, although there is reason to fear that of late years, some relaxation has taken place.

If we pass over to Ireland we shall find the darkest part of the empire with respect to education, the most fruitful of crimes and miseries. The wretched state of that unhappy country is in a considerable degree to be traced up to the prevalence of a religion, which, with its characteristic cruelty, withholds education from the poor.

Consider then what benefits you are conferring upon society by promoting the religious education of the poor. But besides the crimes which are expiable by human laws, you are the happy

* Extracted from Mr. John Bunster's Sermon, preached before the Committee of the Sunday School Union.

instruments of lessening the prevalence of that host of vices, which although amenable only at the bar of God, convulse society to its centre, and spread distraction and misery through all its walks. Profanity and falsehood; drunkenness and debauchery; excessive rage and ungoverned malignity; and all the dispositions that in the different social relations render man a fiend to man, it may be reasonably hoped, are considerably diminished by the influence of your benevolent exertions.

On the other hand Sunday Schools multiply the virtues that establish the comforts of society. All the particular duties that arise out of the reciprocal ties of society are inculcated, while the general principles of benevolence and submission, which like two mighty columns support the whole fabric of our social interests, are deeply founded in the human bosom. Although the general aspect of society in its lower classes, appears as yet unchanged, and the wintry face of its morality at present seems to throw to a great distance the harvest of your zeal, still let it be a stimulus to your exertions to be assured that you are pouring the principle of fertility through a thousand channels, and that already you see here and there a vernal flower lifting its head amidst barrenness and storms, the welcome harbinger of a happier season. Already innumerable masters bless your labors for faithful servants,—wives pour out their gratitude for industrious and affectionate husbands,—and children, as they gather round the knees of a kind and tender father, well clad, well fed, well taught, turn to you with the thankful smiles of their bliss, as their benefactors, who made their parents what they are. Society through all its ranks, gratefully acknowledges the obligations conferred by your labors, and

earnestly solicits their continuance. The king from his throne, and the senate in full convention, have paid the tribute of admiration to the utility of your exertions. You are admitted to be some of the best friends of the community, and the most efficient philanthropists of the poor. Your efforts are directed to prevent crimes, instead of punishing them, and to prevent misery, instead of merely relieving it. Pursue your labors with increased diligence, since their tendency is to strengthen the foundations and adorn the fabric of society.

2. *Dwell upon the incalculable worth of immortal souls.*

So far as the children are individually concerned, I again remind you that their temporal interests are the *lowest* object of pursuit. Your last and highest end is the salvation of the immortal soul. This is your aim, to be instrumental in converting the souls of the children from the error of their ways, and training them up in the fear of God for glory everlasting. What an object! The immortal soul! The salvation of the human spirit! The soul was the last and noblest work of God in the formation of the world; the finish and ornament of this material fabric, on which the divine architect bestowed his most mature deliberation, and expended his richest treasures. It stood amidst creation the fair and beautiful image of the creator. This was the object which upon his expulsion from Paradise first caught the envious eye of Satan, and in the spoils of which, his malice sought a fiendlike solace for the loss of heaven. This was the object which in its fall dragged the creation into a vortex of ruin. This was the object selected by the great God in the councils of eternity, whose salvation should be the means of exhibiting to the universe the most

glorious display of the divine perfections; on which mercy, wisdom, and power were to exhaust their united resources. This was the object for which the Son of God could justify himself to all worlds, as not demeaning his dignity, or disparaging his wisdom, when for its salvation he veiled his divinity in human flesh, was for awhile made lower than the angels, tabernacled amidst the sorrows of mortality, and closed a life of humiliation and suffering upon the ignominious summit of the cross. This is the object for which all the revelations of heaven, and all the dispensations of grace; all the labors of prophets, priests, and apostles: in short, all the splendid apparatus of redemption was arranged. This is the object whose interests render angels unquiet upon their heavenly seats, and draw them with exquisite solicitude to minister to its safety. Such is the retinue attending upon the soul of man, into whose train you have fallen. What then must be the value of the human soul? Now you see the justice of our Saviour's language: "What is a man profited if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul, or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul." Now you perceive this is no hyperbole, and that literally the globe weighed against the value of one human spirit, is less than the small dust of the balance. Convert the sun into one blazing diamond, the moon into a pearl, and every star that decks the firmament into a gem, all this bears no proportion to the value of the soul. Arithmetic, with all its powers, is here of no use; it cannot aid our conceptions. Think of the immortality of the soul, and this one property of its nature, raises it above all calculation. It is in consequence of *this*, that it has been said with justice, that the salvation of a soul, amounts to a

greater sum of happiness than the temporal deliverance of an empire for a thousand ages, for the latter will come to an end but not the former. By the same argument the loss of one soul is a greater catastrophe than the sum total of all the temporal misery endured upon the face of the globe from the period of the fall to the general conflagration. Say now,—is not such an object worthy all the means that are, or can be employed for its attainment? Do you hesitate? Ponder, intensely ponder again. The subject can never be exhausted; the more it is studied, the wider will its compass appear. Should you be the happy instrument of converting but one soul to God, what honor are you providing for yourselves, what happiness for others.

My fancy has sometimes presented me with this picture of a faithful teacher's entrance to the state of her everlasting rest. The agony of dissolution is closed, the triumph of faith completed, and the conquering spirit hastens to her crown. Upon the confines of the heavenly world, a form divinely fair awaits her arrival. Rapt in astonishment at the dazzling glory of this celestial inhabitant, and as yet a stranger in the world of spirits, she enquires, "Is this Gabriel, chief of all the heavenly hosts, and am I honored with *his* aid to guide me to the throne of God? With a smile of ineffable delight, such as gives fresh beauty to an angel's countenance, the mystic form replies, "Dost thou remember little Elizabeth, who was in yonder world a Sunday scholar in thy class? Dost thou recollect the child who wept as thou talkedst to her of sin, and directed her to the cross of the dying Redeemer? God smiled with approbation upon thy effort, and by his own spirit sealed the impression upon her heart in characters never to be effaced. Providence removed

her from beneath thy care, before the fruit of thy labor was visible. The seed, however, had taken root, and it was the business of another to water what thou didst sow. Cherished by the influence of heaven, the plant of religion flourished in her heart, and shed its fragrance upon her character. Piety, after guarding her from the snares of youth, cheered her amidst the accumulated trials of an afflicted life, supported her amidst the agonies of her last conflict, and elevated her to the mansions of immortality; and now behold before thee the glorified spirit of that poor child, who under God owes the eternal life on which she has lately entered, to thy faithful labors in the Sunday School; and who is now sent by our Redeemer to introduce thee to the world of glory, as thy first and least reward for guiding the once thoughtless, ignorant, wicked Elizabeth to the world of grace. Hail, happy spirit! Hail, favored of the Lord! Hail, deliverer of my soul! Hail to the world of eternal glory!"

I can trace the scene no farther. I cannot paint the raptures produced in the honored teacher's bosom by this unexpected interview. I cannot describe the mutual gratitude and love of two such spirits meeting on the confines of heaven, much less can I follow them to their everlasting mansion, and disclose the bliss which they shall enjoy before the throne of God.

All this, and a thousand times more, is attendant upon the salvation of one single soul. Teachers, what a motive to diligence!

3. Consider to what indefinite lengths your usefulness may extend.

Where you design only the improvement of individuals, God through those individuals, may make you the instruments of blessing multitudes. Where

get intend only to produce private worth. God may employ your zeal to form public excellences. You may be the means of cherishing and developing intellectual energies, which shall one day be of the greatest benefit to the civil interests of society. And what is more important, you may be imparting the first rudiments of that knowledge and piety which in their maturity may be employed by them in the service of the sanctuary. Ministers are already preaching that gospel to others which they themselves first learnt in a Sunday School; and missionaries are arresting the savages of the desert with the sweet wonders of that cross, which was first displayed to their own view by the efforts of a faithful teacher. Such instances, in all probability, will occur again, and are fairly within the scope of your ambition. In such a case who can trace the progression of your usefulness, or tell into how wide a stream it shall expand as it rolls forward in a course never to be arrested but by the sound of that trumpet which proclaims that time shall be no more.

4. *Think upon the shortness of the time during which the children can enjoy your care.*

In a few, a very few years at most, they will all be gone beyond your instruction. Every Sabbath almost, some are leaving the school and retiring, it is to be feared in many cases, beyond the sound of pious admonition, for ever. Beyond the age of fifteen or sixteen, few remain to enjoy the privileges of the school; and but few, comparatively, remain so long. Could we even protract the period of childhood, and lengthen the term during which they consider themselves as beneath our care; could we every instance be convinced that when they leave our schools, they still continue to enjoy the same religious culture, even in this case there would be

no ground for a relaxation of your diligence; the value of the soul, and the importance of its salvation, would demand your utmost exertion. But this is not the case. In a year or two you must give them up,—and to what! To the violence of their own corruptions,—to the strength of their own passions, to the pollution of bad company, without a friend to watch over them, or a single guide to direct them. With the school, many of them take leave of the sanctuary; and when they cease to hear the voice of the teacher, listen no more to the joyful sound from the lips of the preacher. What a motive to diligence! Can you be insensible to its force? Can you read this simple statement and not feel every dormant energy stirring within you? Can you pursue another line, and not resolve by the help of God to *renew* your efforts? Do you not feel the blush of shame for past indifference diffusing itself this moment over your countenance? By all that is dear and invaluable in the eternal interests of the children; by the shortness of the time during which these interests will be under your care, I conjure you to be diligent to the very last effort of your soul.

5. *Remember how transient is the season, during which you can be employed in these labors of love.*

Were you certain of reaching the extreme boundaries of human existence, and had the prospect of extending your exertions far into the season of old age; yea, could you ensure an antediluvian life, and employ it all for the good of others, even under these circumstances, you could not be too diligent in the business of your office. Immortality is a theme that will support the weightiest arguments, and justify the most impassioned exhortations. I again repeat it, nor fear the charge of tautology, the

salvation of immortal souls is the ultimate object of your office, and when professing to labor for such an object, indolence would be inexcusable amidst the range of centuries. But you have not centuries at command. "What is your life! it is even as a vapour that appeareth for a little while, and then vanisheth away." The uncertainty of life is a proverb, which we hear every day repeated; a fact which we see every day proved. You may be soon and suddenly called away from the scene of labor. You quit the school every Sabbath without knowing that you shall return to it again. Death pays respect neither to youth nor usefulness, but mows down together the tender herb, the fragrant flower, and noxious weed. The next stroke of his scythe may reach you. Among the names that will be inserted in the report of the present year's proceedings as blotted from the book of mortal life, your's may be read at the next anniversary amidst the sighs and the tears of your fellow teachers. The place which knows you now may then know you no more for ever. You are laboring in the garden of the Lord, but in the garden is a sepulchre. "Work while it is called to day, the night cometh when no man can work. Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave whither thou goest." Enter upon every Sabbath's exertions with the reflection that it may be your last, and be as diligent as if you knew that it would. But death is not the only way in which a period can be put to your exertions. In a few years the claims and the cares of a rising family may demand your time at home. For however cordially you may be disposed to continue your benevolent attention to the duties of the school and the interests of

the children, the demands pressed by a heart-felt
 engagement must be admitted. The honest desire
 any thing in this way for the cause of God and
 truth and holiness, may soon be removed
 beyond your reach. The opportunity will last but
 a while longer for you to enrich the crown of your
 soul with such gems, or to increase that part
 of the inheritance of heaven, which will arise from wit-
 nessing the raptures of those, whom you were the
 instruments of introducing to the mansion of glory.
 This a golden season that you now enjoy; it is
 rapidly passing away: it will never return: dili-
 gently improve it therefore while it lasts.

2. *Dwell upon the honor of being instrumental*
in imparting moral, spiritual, and eternal benefits.
 I have already pointed out, what indeed requires
 no proof, the adaptation of Sundry School instruction
 to promote the moral excellence of the lower
 classes; and whoever does this must be acknow-
 ledged to be the most useful, and therefore the most
 honorable member of the community. The men
 who have improved and adorned their country by
 the splendid creations of their genius, have had
 their names emblazoned in the temple of fame, and
 secured all the glory which admiring generations
 could confer upon their memory. But what is the
 honor of adorning a city with the classic productions
 of the mind or the pencil, and filling it with
 statues, flowers, and paintings, compared with
 the more useful labor of causing righteousness
 to flourish like a tree, and peace like a river, and
 the Holy Ghost, and sanctification
 to be the fruit of passing the Bible through
 the hands of the ignorant and the poor?
 The honor of being instrumental in imparting
 moral, spiritual, and eternal benefits, is
 the highest and most honorable of all.

and establish the interests of the immortal spirit; to render our fellow creatures happy in themselves, and a blessing to others; to fit them for the communion of heaven, after having taught them to be the humble ornaments of society on earth.

To communicate *moral* good, is the very noblest employment of an intelligent being. It is that very operation in which the great God takes more delight than in all the rest of his works. This was the object on which the heart of the Redeemer was set when he was made flesh and dwelt among us. For this the Holy Spirit was poured out from above. For this prophets labored and apostles preached. In the perfect enjoyment of moral benefits will consist the consummation of heaven itself. What a distinguished honor then to be engaged, although in the humblest manner, in *such* a work. This is to be raised into a likeness of that glorious being who is good and doeth good. A time is fast arriving when it will be seen and felt, that to have been instrumental in conferring spiritual good upon one soul of man, is a brighter and more lasting glory than the most solid achievements of philosophy, or the most splendid discoveries of science.

Let it be manifest then by your diligence, that you are not insensible of your privilege. Put not the glory from you. Stir up every energy of your soul to do all the good you can. It is an object worthy of your hallowed ambition. While the warrior is pressing through human misery to pluck his blood-stained laurels, and thinks little of the inward of his life in the pursuit; while the scholar by intense study, is waisting his strength to gain the prize of literary fame; while the statesman is laboring for the applause of futurity: be it your object to be good to the present and eternal interests of your

low creatures, and in such a career, your ambition is pursuing a loftier flight than all the rest, and ascending into regions far elevated above the highest pinnacle of the temple of fame.

7. *Consider what results might be expected, if every teacher were possessed of all suitable qualifications, and were to devote himself to the duties of his office with all possible diligence.*

It may be safely affirmed that we have never yet seen, that we have scarcely yet conjectured the hundredth part of the benefit which the Sunday School system might be made to produce when applied under all the advantages of which it is susceptible. Its adaptation and capacities for improving the condition of the poor are admirable and incalculable. Take the aggregate number of children and teachers at the conjectural statement in the introduction; then suppose that these twenty thousand young persons, to whom the religious education of five hundred thousand poor children is intrusted, were all fully qualified for their office, and most diligently employed in discharging its duties; suppose they were all persons of exemplary piety; possessed of an enlarged acquaintance with the whole range of revealed truth; well instructed in all the general properties of human intercourse; endowed with peculiar aptitude to impart instruction to the youthful mind, and patient in their temper; with such qualifications suppose they all recognised as the ultimate end of their labors, the formation of true religious habits in the children, which should be connected with the salvation of their immortal souls, and subordinate to this the improvement of their general character, as to render them kind, gentle, submissive, and orderly; then suppose of these twenty thousand persons that

fitted for their work, devoting themselves to their
 weekly business of instruction with intense ardor of
 mind; entering upon the duties of their office
 Sabbath after Sabbath with a deeply interested heart;
 laboring with the most affectionate and unwearied
 solicitude for their present and eternal welfare;
 conducting the whole business of instruction with
 judicious discrimination of the different tempers they
 have to deal with; wisely applying all suitable
 rewards and punishments; punctual and unwearied
 in their attention; dignified yet affable in their
 manner; and mingling with all their efforts impor-
 tant prayer to him who alone can render them
 effectual; in addition to this, suppose them in their
 behaviour one to another to be universally affection-
 ate, respectful, acting in perfect harmony for the
 general good, and animated by one mind: suppose,
 I say, that this were universally the case with the
 vast body of Sunday School teachers, what results
 might we not expect. When we consider the
 adaptation of the system itself to impart religious
 instruction, and produce religious impression: when
 we consider that religious education is among
 God's own instituted means of conversion: when
 we consider how willing he is to pour out the in-
 fluence of his spirit upon the ordinances which he
 has appointed: especially when we add to this the
 good effects which have already resulted from the
 imperfect application of the system, it is scarcely
 possible to conjecture what a glorious revolution
 would be visible in the habits of the lower orders of
 society, if our teachers were universally such as I
 have described. Instead of hearing occasionally
 that here and there a child was under religious
 concern, we should in all probability have the
 pleasing news before us of great numbers acquiring

the way to Zion with their faces thitherward. Instead of occasionally witnessing external reformation of conduct in those who were rude, untractable and violent, we should often receive the gratitude of parents rendered happy by the moral alteration in their once disobedient and rebellious offspring. The church and the world would both together look to the Sunday School institution as one of the greatest blessings ever bestowed upon man.

But ah! some will say, this is a pleasing vision, a Utopian picture. Why then is it a vision? Why is it Utopian? Only let each teacher receive by God's grace, to be all that is here described, and nothing is described that is impossible, and then it becomes a glorious reality. Instead of looking at the whole body with a desponding wish that it were indeed entirely what it should be, let each individual look in upon himself, determined that nothing shall be wanting on his part to realize this blissful vision. If we would obtain the result which the exertions of all would produce, we must seek it by the contribution of individual diligence.

Amidst the complaints which I have often heard of a want of success, it has long been my conviction that this want is to be attributed to the defects of the teachers. Proper views, proper qualifications, and proper diligence in those who have set their hand to the work, would be followed with much greater practical effect than it has ever yet been our felicity to witness. The defect is not in the system, but in those who apply it.

I do not then most earnestly enjoin you to seek a larger measure of suitable qualification, and to display still more diligence in this very important institution, and by a consideration of what would be the result if all teachers discharged their duties with

wisdom and assiduity, let your mind be excited to the greatest exertions.

8. *Anticipate the approving testimony which at the last day the Lord Jesus shall bear to all those who have in any measure promoted his cause.*

That day of righteous retribution, for which all other days were made, is hastening on. Time is drawing to a close; the world is sinking to dissolution; and all mankind converging to "the judgment seat of Christ, where every one shall receive the things done in the body according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."

Before that tribunal *you* must render an account of *your* conduct. To that Judge you are amenable both for your personal obedience and the manner in which you discharge your official duties. Then we shall know the real state of your heart, and the true character of your motives. However diligent you may now be in the subordinate duties of your office, yet if not a partaker of real religion, in vain will be the effort to supply personal defects with official activity, or to turn away the wrath of him that sitteth upon the throne with the useless plea, "Lord! Lord! did we not prophecy in thy name." To be rewarded in that day, as a faithful teacher, we must first be accepted as a real Christian. Without this you must take your place at the left hand of the Judge, with those whom heaven rejects from her bosom, while hell moves to meet them at their coming. But should you most happily work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, and then labor to glorify God in the salvation of your ignorant charge, not a single effort of your zeal, nor a prayer, nor a word shall be forgotten in that day of holy retribution. Publicly accepted first in your person, you shall then be as publicly applauded

for those services, which your humility may now think almost unworthy of his notice, but which his mercy will not suffer him then to overlook. Then when the deeds of heroes shall be passed over in silence, or mentioned with reprobation; when poets, except those who have sung to the harp of piety; and philosophers, except such as have employed their researches to manifest the glory of the first cause, shall sink down without distinction in the general mass, then shall the holy useful teacher, attended by the children he had been the means of reclaiming, be presented before the face of an assembled universe, arrayed with infinite honor and glory: not the mighty host of patriarchs and prophets—apostles and evangelists,—reformers and martyrs,—ministers and missionaries, pressing to receive their crowns shall throw him into obscurity, or deprive him of his reward; but amidst surrounding millions he shall stand single and apart to receive the public plaudits of the judge. "In as much as you have done it unto the least of these my brethren, you have done it unto me. Well done good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of the Lord."

ON PUBLIC EXHIBITIONS OF ANY KIND THAT HAVE
A TENDENCY TO DRAW UPON THE CHILDREN
ADMIRATION AND APPLAUSE.

A PRINCIPLE of just and laudable emulation may be implanted and cherished, without transforming and degrading it into a thirst for admiration, which is almost sure to be the case, where the children are

called upon to make a display of their talents in public. Praise will ever be found injurious in proportion to these two circumstances. First, The publicity with which it is given : and secondly, the ignorance of the person on whom it is conferred. If this be correct, the children of a Sunday School should be exposed as little as possible to public applause. A love of display is very soon produced, and with great difficulty destroyed. Nor is the mischief confined to those who are the subjects of public distinction. The rest of the children, instead of directing their attention to improvement on its own account, begin to regard it, and pursue it only as the road to admiration and distinction. Let either pride or vanity be pretty generally cherished among the labouring classes, and the worst consequences may be expected to accrue to society. The evils which were once predicted would result from the instruction of the poor, were the mere chimeras of a disordered fancy : not so the apprehensions which rest upon injudicious efforts, *to force the growth of their understanding, by corrupting the simplicity of their hearts.* There is not a single vice to which the human soul is subject, that is a more effectual obstacle in the way of its salvation, than pride. "How can ye believe," said our glorious Redeemer to the Pharisees, "which receive honor, one of another."

ON THE PROPER WAY TO JUDGE OF THE BENEFITS ARISING FROM SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHING.

SOME persons have frequently experienced considerable discouragement in this great and good work,

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by not seeing more visible benefit result to the lower classes of society from these efforts. I have said much already on this head. I beg leave however, in addition to what I have said, to remark that there are two ways by which to judge of the benefit resulting from this mode of education. The first is by considering the good communicated, and secondly, the evil prevented. On the first I have already had occasion to dwell. This is incontestable and inconceivable. I shall, however, make a few remarks upon the second criterion—the evil prevented. Now, admitting all that can be said about the present profligacy of multitudes of the laboring classes, and the alarming increase of juvenile delinquency which has been discovered in the metropolis during the last two or three years, still let us take into the account the evil that has been prevented.

It should be recollected, that since the Sunday School System has been in operation, the population of this country has swelled to unparalleled greatness. This has been attended of course with a proportionate increase of population. It is not perhaps saying too much, if we affirm that the laboring classes in most manufacturing districts, have doubled in number since Robert Raikes commenced his exertions at Gloucester. Let it be conceived that what might have been the state of things now, if these accumulated masses of the population had been left as an intellectual chaos for the spirit of mischief to brood upon amidst the clouds of ignorance. The period now alluded to has been a season of tremendous peril to the national morals. Infidelity at one time made desperate efforts to corrupt the people blind not only of the higher, but also of the lower classes of society. Paine's writings were especially addressed to the passions and prejudices of the

