

Obituary.

MR. GEO. LAKE, OF FORTUNE, NEWFOUNDLAND. Died in the Lord, on July 4th, aged 71 years. During the residence of the Rev. T. Fox on this Circuit, our departed Brother was led to feel his desperate state as a sinner. While calling upon the name of the Lord with a penitent heart, he realized that his prayer was heard, and that God for Christ's sake had pardoned his sins. Unhappy he endured but for a season. A combination of untoward events caused his faith to forsake its hold, his connection with the church ceased, but many virtues continued to adorn his character. He was an affectionate husband, a kind father, and in him the poor found a faithful friend. His charity was not of that stolid kind which contented itself by saying "be ye warmed and be ye filled," but with a willing mind and liberal hand he relieved the wants of the poor and needy.

In January 1867, a series of religious services were held in Fortune, which were instrumental in causing him to again seek and find the "pearl of great price." He reunited with the Church and met regularly in Class, where he gave the most cheering evidence of his acceptance of the Gospel. His last illness was short and severe, but his end was in perfect peace, and he was enabled to glorify God in the furnace of affliction. Very precious was it for his minister, and children, and godly friends to behold him with unshaken faith grasping with the "last enemy" and triumphing through the blood of the Lamb.

His funeral was attended by almost the entire population of the place in which he resided, and numbers from the adjoining seas. The last tribute of respect to an old and respected inhabitant of the community.

MR. TAMY LAKE.

The beloved wife of Mr. Jas. Lake, fell asleep in Jesus on the 18th day of July, in the 38th year of her age; leaving a blessed testimony that she had gone from a world of suffering to one where the "inhabitant shall not say I am sick; for there there shall be no more pain."—For fourteen years she was the subject of almost constant bodily affliction, occasionally indescribably severe, which was borne with fortitude that never faltered, and with patience that seemed perfect. Our departed sister not only had to endure the pain incident to suffering humanity, but her confidants with the "accuser of the brethren" were often peculiarly severe. As though a professed follower of Christ for the last fourteen years of her life, yet she was frequently harassed by perplexing doubts and fears, and in heaviness through manifold temptations, but by the grace of God she obtained the victory, and endured unto the end. Her removal from earth is to her a happy release—eternal gain, but to the bereaved an irreparable loss. The parting with the father, her dear husband, and her two daughters, was to her a trial indeed, but here too, grace triumphed over nature, and she was enabled with the utmost confidence to leave them in the care of their heavenly Father. When she felt the time had come for the final separation, she called them to her bedside, and gave them her dying counsel, and encouraged them with the thought that in a few years they would meet her in the mansions of the redeemed.—All things feeling that Christ was unspokeably precious, she was often peculiarly severe. At times expressed fears that this might not be realized in the final struggle; and now her dear husband whose weak faith had been strengthened and falling hands upheld by her prayers and loving counsel in many times of perplexity and discouragement, was the means of comforting her soul, by reminding her of the faithfulness of God her Saviour who had said "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." And so it proved, all fear was removed, the sting of death was away. Her last words were "I have loved God, and with uplifted hands and looking upward, as if already beholding the white-robed multitude before the throne, she exclaimed "How I long to be there, and her glory to share. And to long to see my Saviour's breast."

Grand Bank, N. F., Sept., 1868.

Our Sabbath Schools.

No institution is more popular than the Sabbath school. It is thus with the churches generally—and in every place. The interesting fact easily admits of explanation. Long may our Sabbath schools be held in highest estimation, by all the people of Christ. The day on which they assemble is the best of days, suggestive of holy thoughts of the risen Saviour, and of the final and eternal rest of heaven. The exercises of the school are the most quiet, pure and peaceful—the mind is here familiarized with "the truth as it is in Jesus." Lowly prayer and fervent praise assist in imparting foretastes of the joys of heaven. Then how interesting beyond adequate expression are the little ones who form the classes! They are the hope and delight of their parents—subjects of ever changing glances and smiles—they are beloved by the God Shepherd as the lambs of his great flock, and he has given this commandment concerning them, "Feed my lambs." The gospel school exercises conducted in the spirit of the gospel always produce results of highest value to men and honour to the Father of spirits. All therefore who are engaged in this branch of Christian work may well cheerfully persevere, looking less on the inconveniences which may sometimes be felt, and more at the hopefulness of the labour, and the great reward of fidelity. It may be true to say, that increasing attention is directed to Sabbath Schools in every part of the Methodist Church, whose widening limits are now almost coextensive with the habitable parts of the earth. Reference shall here be made only to the Conference of Canada, to that of Britain, and that of Eastern British America, with the single design to quicken the lovers of Christ, and the souls of men in their helpful regard to these seminaries of the church.

The Committee of the Conference of Canada (Ontario and Quebec) present each year an elaborate report—and make practical suggestions for the increasing efficiency of the schools. The report for the current year is most encouraging, a brief quotation will subserve our purpose. It begins "Your Committee are happy in being able to come before the Conference with tidings of cheer from our Sunday Schools in every part of our extended work." In the report of the year there appears an increase of 20 schools; but it is believed the net gain does not exceed 50, and that the remaining 39 should have appeared in the returns of last year. The increase in the staff of Teachers is 698, and of scholars 3,126. There is also an increase of 705 scholars meeting in class. The amount raised for Missionary and Sunday school purposes is \$1,358,05, an increase of about \$2,500 over the previous year.

Our Sabbath Schools. The Book Standard publishes at Toronto for scholars the "Sunday School Advocate" fortnightly—and for teachers "The Sunday School Banner," which is a monthly paper. The Conference has adopted a Constitution of the Sunday School Union of the Wesleyan Church in Canada. Also a "Constitution for a single school." At present their scholars number 410—the teachers are 7608, whilst the scholars amount to 51,321, of whom 4,311 are meeting in the classes of the Society. By the general adoption, and hearty working of the recently published constitution for a Sunday School Union, it may confidently be expected that this department of the Church may rapidly extend, and become fruitful as the garden of the Lord.

Concerning the growing interest in Sabbath Schools by the parent Conference in England, it must suffice to say that for a few years past it has been one of its very able and energetic ministers—the Rev. John C. Fox, who relieved from more circuit responsibility gives his whole time and direction of the general Education Committee to visit Sunday Schools—to consult with the officers of them, and to collect all kinds of appropriate information with a view to promote the greater efficiency of these institutions. Most beneficial has been the result of this appointment, perhaps the first of its kind in universal Church history. The Sunday Schools of the Methodist Church in the father land, and scholars are rapidly increasing in numbers. In the "select classes" there are upwards of 17,000 scholars, an addition of many hundreds to those of former years. The cost of Sunday Schools at home is more than £35,000 per annum. Mr. Clidow's observations in widely separated sections of the country—combined with the experience of superintendents have led to the formation of a new set of Rules for Sunday Schools, which have been adopted by the Conference whereby an improved system of management will be introduced into the schools, and their instrumental for good be largely increased. Thus the great work of religious instruction of the young goes bravely on. All are anxious for its progress—every one lends a willing hand towards the issue cannot be doubtful. In the existing families of Christians—and their number shall be constantly enlarged.

Our Sabbath Schools. In our view taken of our own Sabbath Schools as they are presented in the minutes of Conference it may give occasion to useful and seasonable thoughts. The Conference of Eastern British America, fully alive to the importance of suitably caring for the young of our church, resolved upon forming a committee to meet in the month of August, to consider of a minister from each District, whose business it should be to collect, and preserve the statistical and other reports of the Sabbath schools of our church, and to report thereon to the Conference. This Committee have discharged their duty it is to be hoped faithfully each year, for besides a statistical table, the published minutes of Conference have exhibited wide and thoughtful observations on the general subject.

Let us here compare the tabulated returns on the two last Conferences. The results perhaps may be unexpected to some. The number of schools in 1867 was 281, and in 1868 it is 268, by a decrease of nearly 13 schools. In the former year the number of teachers was 1989, and in the latter 1965, a falling off of 24 teachers. In 1867 the scholars amounted to 14,961—in 1868 there were only 14,673, showing a loss of 282. In one respect however the number is higher in the latter year, that is in the books in the Libraries. They are now 21,309, an addition on the year of 1867 of 1,800 volumes. This comparative view of the numbers in our Sabbath Schools during two consecutive years will suggest several questions—As, Whether the returns were collected in the same manner in both years? Whether enquiry was made in any District Meeting into the reasons for a falling off in this vital department of our work? And when the Committee's report was presented to the Conference, whether the Districts and the Circuits on which the Sunday school decline appears were particularly noticed, and the reasons therefor ascertained, and the superintending of these Circuits were allowed an opportunity to explain to the Conference the cause of smaller numerical returns in this part of its great charge? And then one might ask whether the apparent decline in our Sunday Schools might be regarded as an indication of the diminished influence of the gospel in the places concerned—or whether it arose from entirely other causes, the operation of which might be local and temporary, as their existence is local. And whether any steps were taken that this matter should receive the best, the earliest attention that could be given to it. The writer is more than willing to believe that the state and prospect of our Sunday-schools did receive adequate consideration both in the regular District Meetings and at the Conference. He will, therefore, cherish the hope that the returns next year, whoever may be to make them and receive them, will exhibit such an advance in their progress as will call forth abundant thanksgivings to the God of all mercies.

It may be permitted here to suggest to the Committee to consider whether they should not ask the Conference to authorize more detailed reports of our Sunday-schools from every Circuit. Should it not be known what number of teachers are members of the Church—whether Teachers' Meetings are regularly held—what number of the scholars meet in class—and by what means is the Christian character of the scholars laboured to attend the public services of the church—and whether there exist separate rooms for Bible, select, and infant classes? An endeavour to ascertain the condition of our Sunday Schools in these respects will elicit useful conversation, and prompt to the wisest measures in the circumstances for the improvement of the schools in all time to come. The entire history of "our Sabbath Schools" affords ample ground for encouragement and hope. Their progress in ten years has been marked, as any eye will discover who will compare the returns of 1858 with those of the present year. There are now 281 Sabbath-schools, then there were only 189. At the earlier date there were 1341 teachers, at the latter 1989. Ten years since the number of scholars was 10,400; at the last Conference it was 14,661. Most clearly showing an increase in this period of 92 schools, 648 teachers, 4,261 scholars. In 1858 the Libraries were not reported. In 1868 the number of volumes in the whole is 21,309. It is impossible to contemplate these returns, and not to estimate the wide field over which they are spread, and their adaptation to benefit the young, without feelings of thankfulness, and perceiving in them a ground of cheerful expectation for the future. If those who have at heart the religious training of the children of the church, and of those parents who unhappily are not communicants with any part of Christ's people, prayerfully persevere in the course of earnest and wide activity which has been so greatly blessed in the past ten years—still

The Silence of Scripture.

In the Baptist Quarterly for July Rev. Dr. Gardner furnished the essay on "The Silence of Scripture," which was received with much favour at the Pastoral Conference, at Worcester. After tracing the fact of this Silence in reference to a very curious question about God, he says: "The silence of Scripture on this subject is not a proof of the non-existence of God, but a proof of the immortality of the soul, and of the immortality of the spirit." The silence of Scripture on this subject is not a proof of the non-existence of God, but a proof of the immortality of the soul, and of the immortality of the spirit.

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Close of the Exhibition.

Among the appropriate ceremonies at the close of the recent Provincial Exhibition, an address was given by Hon. Jas. Howe, some portion of which we copy:— It is to be conceived that the benefits derived from Industrial Exhibitions justify some expenditure of time and money, then we may assume that the one we are about to close has been well timed. The Province is passing through political changes. It was our duty to take stock of the present—to survey our industries, as they exist, and to see what practical and enduring methods we could adopt to improve them. This has been done, for us and for all time, by the gentlemen who, with honourable industry and perseverance, have organized this Exhibition. What Nova Scotia is like in this good year 1868, has been made patent to the eyes of a class of living witnesses, many of them young enough to transmit to a new generation some knowledge of what they saw—while the catalogues and prize lists of the Commission-ers always be open to those who have not been able to visit Halifax in person. It is not to be judged by comparison with great centres of industry, where science, in the lapse of centuries, has become wedded to the mechanical arts; nor is it fair to contrast the rural districts of Nova Scotia, so recently won from the wilderness by hardy pioneers, with the trim details of building up character; but it opens to our view the sure foundation Rock in Christ. It talks not idly, not castrating, nor patronizing, nor indulgently, nor sentimentally, nor vaguely; but it talks to men earnestly, strongly, pugantly, with great pertinency to the present and prospective wants, and with great power to stir the soul's lethargies, to enlighten, to arouse, to save. Verily, the voice of truth, which has never been silent, speaks with authority, in no other than the voice of God.

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Bathurst Missionary Meetings.

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