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RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OF CHILDREN.

Messrs. Editors:—The following article is taken, with some omissions and alterations, from a book recently published in England, entitled “The English School Room; or Thoughts on Private Tuition, Practical and Suggestive. By the Rev. Anthony F. Thomson, B. A., Lincoln College, Oxford, for some time Head Master of St. John’s Foundation School, London.” I know no more of the author than is made known here. The main idea of his work, however well suited for the nobility and gentry of England, is impracticable in this country. The book therefore is not likely to be republished here. His suggestions on the highly important subject of religious education, however, are less local in their matter and tone, and indeed seem to be deserving of careful consideration, as coming from a thoughtful minister and practical teacher. Of course, there are some things, even in this part of his work, with which we, as Americans and Presbyterians, could not agree, but as these are not essential or necessary to the chief design of the writer, I have not hesitated to reject or alter them to suit the different classes to whom they will be presented in your pages.

It will be noticed that no reference is made to Sabbath School or other religious instruction outside of the family, nor do I think it necessary that there should be. The religious training of children is the duty of the parents, one which cannot be surrendered to others without sin. If parents wish to be assisted in the discharge of their duty, and know that this can be done in the Sabbath School, they may use its aid, but it does not relieve them in the slightest degree from their parental responsibility.

Yours respectfully,

J. P. L.

“Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.” To seal up the fountain of religious training, when it is most earnestly needed, when the soul is athirst for every kind of knowledge, and especially for the only knowledge that can purify and ennoble all other knowledge, is indeed to stand in the way of Christ’s “little children,” and to bid them drink of the waters of sorrow and bitterness to their certain hurt, not health. We may indeed plant and water, but vain will be the labour, unless we train our children to “seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.” Then, and then only, may we hope for fruit, not leaves; for a blessing, not a curse; and that God, in His good time, “will give the increase.” without religion, education is savorless, vapid, nay, almost worthless,

DR. JOHN BANKS, JR.

Messrs. Editors:—In the interesting article in your number of September last, by Mr. W. S. Young, containing reminiscences of Dr. Banks, there occurs this sentence: "We know not whether the second son [of Dr. Banks] be still living."

This second son was Dr. John Banks, a physician, who resided in the state of New York. I am able to supply the deficiency of information respecting this Dr. John Banks to some extent, having, while at the late United Presbyterian Synod of New York, seen his widow, who supplied the present writer with some facts respecting him, requesting me to communicate them to you. He died on the 26th of August, 1864, in Duanesburgh, Schenectady Co., N. Y., aged 61 years; and at his earnest desire was buried by the side of his mother in the grave-yard of the United Presbyterian Church at Florida. While I was there, Mrs. Banks, his widow, was present overseeing the erection of a tomb-stone to his memory.

It may afford pleasure to the friends of the family, as well as to every pious reader, to state, that, according to the statements of his respected widow, while he suffered much from bodily pain during the last forty days of his life, he evinced decided evidences of Christian piety and resignation.

Let me express a hope that brother Young will continue these, his interesting reminiscences of men of the olden time, who have now passed away from earth, and from the church militant. I beg to congratulate him as the "Old Mortality" of the early Presbyterian churches in our country, and from which we as United Presbyterians derive our descent. Let him go on. "The memory of the just is blessed," and the "righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance." WM. S. RENTOUL.

NEW VERSIONS OF THE PSALMS FOR CHILDREN WANTED.

Messrs. Editors:—While so much has been said and written about obtaining new versions of the Psalms, is it not a little remarkable that so little pains seem to have been taken to prepare new versions specially adapted for children? This, in fact, appears to me to be the chief want,—the want chiefly felt,—in our churches and Sabbath schools. The new versions seem to be mainly suited or designed for adults. Would it not be a very wise thing if those intrusted with the duty of preparing new versions would have a special eye to the wants of the children? Many of our adult people neither feel the want of new versions, nor desire them; but our children need much, versions specially adapted to their juvenile minds, which could be sung to lively and simple tunes, such as they love. We must follow nature more. We should be more considerate of the wants and likings of the young. If, instead of neglecting to provide for these, we were careful to provide, in preparing new versions, "milk for babes," as well as "strong meat for those of mature age," it would greatly tend to attach our children and youth to our churches, and to our Scriptural Psalmody,—to the use of the inspired Psalms. It would do away the false impression, that the Psalms are not suited to the simple capacities of children. I am convinced that versions of the Psalms could be specially made for

children, which would be far more level to their capacity and comprehension, and so, far more attractive to them, than those which have been presented hitherto before the church; much simpler in their words and expressions; and still, close and faithful translations. Let no one interpose the objection, that we would thus have two Psalm books, one for adults and another for the children. These children's versions would be printed as alternate versions with the others, and the only observable consequence in practice would be, that these would be more frequently used in our Sabbath schools and in devotional meetings for children; for example, when pastors preach sermons to the young; and those more suited for adults would be more used in the congregation. Neither would be used exclusively. As children advance in years, they would naturally pass more into the use of the versions more suited to their adult capacities. But besides, be it recollected, that two-thirds or three-fourths of those present in the ordinary meetings of our congregations are children; and why should not a due share of the versions, with the tunes sung, be as much as possible adapted to *them*?

W. S. R., in *Chr. Inst.*

FAREWELL MEETING.

On Wednesday evening, the 20th instant, the congregation of the Third Church in this city assembled to bid farewell to Rev. Joseph T. Cooper, D. D., their pastor, who was about to leave his charge for a short time to go as a missionary to San Francisco, Cal., in accordance with the appointment of the last General Assembly. A very large congregation was in attendance, and a committee was appointed to prepare resolutions. The following were presented and adopted by a standing vote:

WHEREAS, The General Assembly at its late meeting appointed our pastor, Rev. Jos. T. Cooper, D. D., to open a mission at San Francisco, Cal., with the view of establishing a church in that place; and, whereas, he having been appointed on two former occasions to the same field, has now felt it to be his duty to accept this appointment, and intends, Providence permitting, to leave for his field of labour about the 1st of October; therefore,

Resolved, 1. That while we acquiesce in the will of the General Assembly, it is with feelings of heartfelt sorrow that we are called on to bid adieu, even for a short time, to the pastor who has for over a quarter of a century, gone out and in before us, breaking unto us the bread of life, visiting the sick, and standing by the bedside of the dying to cheer them with the consolations of the gospel of him whom he has served for so long a time so faithfully in this place.

Resolved, 2. That in whatever field of labour he is placed he has our affections and warmest sympathies.

Resolved, 3. That while our pastor is separated from us, he will have our earnest prayers that he who holds the winds in his hands, will carry him in safety to his place of destination, abundantly bless his labours in that far off field, and return him again in peace and safety to his flock.

After the passage of the resolutions, a paper was handed round, and a *substantial* token of the love of the congregation for their pastor was raised, in the shape of over two hundred dollars as a parting gift.