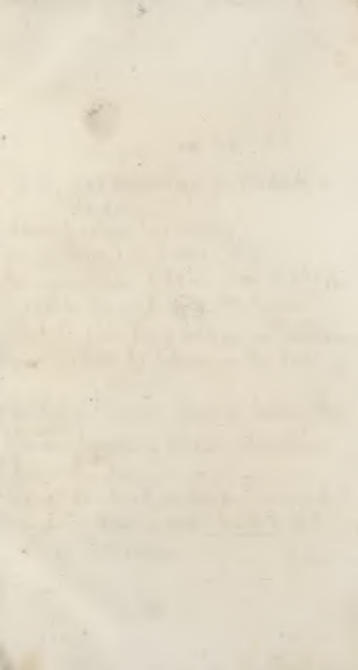




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Wakefield's Directions for Students in
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Wilson's Shorter Catechism - Versified.

Blanchard's Address at the Death of Mrs.

E. Patterson

20th March

Dear Mother

I have just received your letter of the 17th and was glad to hear from you. I am well at present and hope these few lines will find you the same. I have not much news to write at present. I am still in the hospital and have not yet been allowed to go out. I am getting a little better but still have a long way to go. I shall write again when I have more news to tell you.

I am sure you will be glad to hear from me. I shall write again when I have more news to tell you. I am sure you will be glad to hear from me. I shall write again when I have more news to tell you.

AN

ADDRESS,

ON THE DEATH OF THE LATE

MRS. CATHARINE PATTERSON,

DELIVERED BEFORE HER FELLOW TEACHERS, IN THE

PICTOU SABBATH SCHOOL;

BY

THE SUPERINTENDANT.

by Solomon Blanchard Esqr

“ Oft have I marked thee, soothing pale distress,
Beneath the lowly cot of wretchedness;
Heard the lone orphan grateful for thy care,
Lisp thy name in fervency of prayer;
But never did thy generous deeds impart,
A fairer charm to captivate the heart,
Than when employed in sweet instruction’s hour,
Dropping thy dew of knowledge on the flower
That but for thee, lone, pitiless, and rude,
Had sprung, and pined, and died in solitude.”

Pictou, N. S.
PRINTED BY W. MILNE,

1829.

0838-34680

to Mr. Blanchard, respectful an-

The subject of the following Address, was the daughter of Mr. Daniel Fraser, and the wife of the Rev. R. S. Patterson. She was married in July, 1828, and died in November, 1829, at the age of 25 years.

The writer takes this opportunity of apologizing to the relatives of the deceased, for all omissions in the address. Though happy in her friendship, for several years, there were many points of character, with which he could not be sufficiently acquainted, and others that he was reluctant to make the subject of extended public remark.

Dec. 1829.

ADDRESS.

For some time, I have been honoured with the office of Superintendent of this school. That I have ill performed its duties, I am pained to acknowledge; but, that the neglect originated in indifference to the interests of the Institution, I will not confess. Under the government of persons with whom I would ill compare in the requisite knowledge and management, I was persuaded that my presence could contribute little to its efficiency. There has, however, lately happened an event, too melancholy not to have excited a strong feeling in you as teachers here, and quite too important to be permitted to pass without distinct and solemn notice. I mean the death of the late Mrs. Patterson. To call your attention to that afflictive dispensation, I am now here. In this school, she was many years a teacher, and her resignation of the office, some months previous to her death, does not render less imperative, the duty in which we are about to engage. Now, for the first time, propriety permits us thus publicly to advert to her excellencies: mere removal did not warrant, even to lament her separation from the school. We were assured, that, while in life, she would be well employed, wherever Providence might cast her lot; and the holy doctrines which are here inculcated, are altogether unselfish. United to a faithful minister of the gospel; placed in a situation where religious knowledge did not greatly abound; we had reason to rejoice, and we did rejoice, at her prospects of usefulness. The wide extended kingdom of Christ is one, and it little matters in what corner any particular servant labours. Fellow workers in his cause may be separated by continents and oceans; but they are ever united in the bands of love.

Though when assembled here, it is chiefly as a Sabbath School Teacher that our lamented friend recurs to memory, yet to restrain our thoughts to that particular feature in her life, would be unwise and unjust. Her whole character merits commemoration; and a brief sketch of it, may prove useful to these young hearers, and not without advantage to ourselves. Death has removed her from among the inhabitants of the earth; but he could not deprive them of the benefits, which may be derived from the memory of her virtues. These let us enshrine in our hearts, and imitate in our lives.

Our friend was blessed with a mother, who both by precept and example, early instilled into her mind the principles and duties of religion. Never was a more kindly soil presented to the good seed. An understanding above mediocrity, and an innate amiableness of disposition, combined to encourage cultivation. The result was gratifying. Before the years of childhood had passed, she had grown into a companion for her mother, and abundantly repaid early attentions. A change in her father's circumstances, soon required and produced, increased returns of usefulness. In mercantile transactions, he experienced reverses, and a heavy calamity from fire, followed in the train. But "affliction is the wholesome soil of virtue." The Mother's strength of mind, and prudence of conduct, soon became manifest: She betook herself to teaching, as an auxiliary to the support of a large family. Our friend, then only fourteen years of age, immediately became an essential part of the establishment, both as a comfort to her mother, and an efficient assistant in the duties of the school.

Were the moral scenery of the world spread out to view, it would be difficult to find a more attractive specimen, than the one now mentioned. A mother, from affluence, reduced to the labour of teaching, cheerfully assisted by an affectionate daughter, whose

years, would in other circumstances, have detained her among the number of the taught.

The labours of the school soon devolved chiefly upon our friend, and she continued in their faithful performance, until last year. Ten years did she thus pass, in the useful and honorable employment of instructing the young. To her it was no drudgery. She felt an interest in the youth confided to her care, and delighted to contemplate the fruits of her cultivating hand. To view the growth of the tender mind can never fail to be grateful to unperverted hearts; but, when the heavenly graft of religion begins to blossom, the felicity of the beholder is bounded only by the narrow faculties of his soul. This pleasure was also hers.

Attendance as a scholar at this school, early convinced our friend of the utility of the system. In accordance with this opinion, she became a teacher in the first Sabbath school established at St. Johns, New Brunswick, where she then resided; and immediately after her return hither, became similarly engaged & devoted her heart and labour to the interests of this Institution. Never having been a regular teacher myself, and confessing inattention to the duties of the office which I hold, a few words in praise of those who are willing to labour in this work of love, cannot be improper from me, nor out of place before these children.

To the benevolent mind, there cannot be a more gratifying sight, than a well ordered sabbath school. Surely, "this is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." A knowledge of the doctrines of the gospel, furnishes the only materials upon which the spirit of God can operate in the salvation of men; and, in these times, when immediate revelation has ceased, this, like other branches of knowledge, can only be acquired by the use of means. When in connexion with this, we consider the superior pliability, and susceptibility of improvement, which the mind of children possesses; the uncertainty of their reaching an age capable of self improvement; and

the carelessness and want of scriptural knowledge so often visible in parents and guardians; we will be disposed to place sabbath schools high on the list of benevolent institutions. If so, their teachers must stand equally high on the list of philanthropists! Apart from a sense of duty, sabbath school teaching cannot fail to be irksome. It is casting bread upon the waters. The good effects are always slow of development; often imperceptible; and, on earth, can never be fully ascertained. The sacrifice, in the mean time, is not small. The knowledge of religion which books afford, must, to a certain extent, be resigned; and personal inconvenience overlooked.

Thus much it was necessary to state, in order to place, in its true light, the character of our friend, as a sabbath school teacher, without reference to her personal qualifications. These will stand any test. Of you all, who manifested more zeal, and more skill, than our departed friend. Among the living, it may be invidious to draw comparisons, but none of you would wish me to withhold justice from the dead: and I am sure none of you will claim precedence to her, in the careful and affectionate performance of the duties of your common office. Her zeal, too, she communicated to others, and all her friends, were friends and contributors to this school.

Here it may be profitable for us to rest a moment, and meditate upon the glorious results to this little province, which, with the divine blessing, a competent number of such persons, might accomplish. That the world is sadly below the virtuous, and dignified, and happy state at which human nature may arrive, all will acknowledge. Respecting the cause and the cure of the evil, men will not so readily agree. Some attribute its origin to bad legislation, and look to legislators for its remedy. Others, with equal confidence, declare ignorance the cause, and hail the extension of education as the cure. They are both fatally in error. Sin is the great source of all evil, temporal and eter-

nal; and it is idle quackery, to pretend to remove the bitterness of the streams, while the fountain head retains all its baneful qualities. Sin being the cause, religion must be the cure, of the evils we deplore.

“The frenzy of the brain may be redress’d
By medicine well-applied, but without grace
The hearts insanity admits no cure.”

Christ alone is able to destroy the works of the Devil; and this he does, only through belief of his power. But knowledge of him must precede belief; and we have already seen that youth is the best, and, it might almost have been added, the only certain time, for practical purposes, to acquire this knowledge. It is only when children are trained up in the way they should go, that the promise of their walking therein, when old, applies. But conveying religious knowledge forms a main part of right training; and this circumstance, in connection with the previous considerations, and also, with the acknowledged influence of prudent zeal in any community, will enable us to form a faint idea of the triumphant results, throughout the province, which a competent number of persons, possessing the character of our departed friend, might rationally be expected to produce.

Do not suppose that I have suggested these particulars for your consideration, merely to show what may be done, but what, by a continuance in well-doing, you may contribute to effect. The zeal for religion which evaporates in mere speculation upon the probable happiness of mankind, is as unproductive of advantage to the speculator, as to the world. It is the glory of modern times, that none, however poor or humble, need waste their energies in empty wishes. The sabbath school system has brought within the reach of all, an illimitable scene for noble exertion. On it, the meanest in rank and wealth, may display a character and conduct, which will exalt them above the mighty of the earth, and cause them to “shine as the stars forever and ever!”

These thoughts naturally arose from a consideration of the zeal and usefulness of our departed friend; and I gladly availed myself of this opportunity of bringing them before you, knowing, that when the mind is chastened by affliction, it is more open to the suggestion of duty. For the same reason I now address myself to the youth under your charge.

You cannot be ignorant, Children, of the interest which your late teacher took in your eternal welfare. She was not personally connected with you all, but you all had her prayers, and the benefits of her assistance, in the general management of the school. For her care over you I do not ask any return of good offices: She is beyond the reach of your kindness. Neither do I ask you, on her account, even to encourage a spirit of thankfulness; for she can receive no pleasure from your affection: But for your own sakes, and as a duty which is expected of you, and attention to which, as in all other duties, will be profitable; I implore you to cherish in your breasts sentiments of grateful love and respect for the memory of your departed teacher, and exemplify these in following out her good intentions in your favour. In particular I enjoin you, who were under her personal superintendance, to meditate upon the joy which it will afford her, in heaven,

“ Again to lead you gently to the Lamb,
And bring you to the living waters there.”

Much of the time and attention of our friend as the sabbath school demanded, she did not overlook other public institutions. Her best wishes and support followed every society for religious purposes. Every meeting, where the good of souls was the object, commanded her presence. It will be long ere she fail to be affectionately remembered at such meetings, by some who are likely to be present. On all occasions, whether public or private, her opinions and example were ever on the side of virtue. A more consistent profession of christianity, is of rare occurrence. She

never herself indulged in foolish conversation which is not convenient, nor suffered her friends, that erred in this respect, to pass unproved: Yet were her reproofs so prudently and affectionately administered, that they never occasioned offence, and seldom failed to be apparently beneficial. Neither did gloominess form any portion of her disposition. Possessing a mind at ease with itself, innocent cheerfulness ever lighted her countenance, and spread, thence, over those around her. By these means she recommended religion to her friends and acquaintances, and her liberality of sentiment contributed to usefulness. Satisfied that our Saviour's love is not limited to a sect or party, she felt, that to circumscribe her affections by any human pale, would be poorly following his example. Though firmly attached to presbyterian doctrines and modes of worship, she was too modest to claim for her belief the homage of others; and the zeal, which would waste itself on the non-essentials of christianity she studiously repressed.

A less public, but not less valuable part of our friend's character—her unwearied attention to the sick, now claims our notice. Their temporal and eternal concerns—their bodily and spiritual comfort, were all objects of her care. Extensively connected, in this place, by the ties of relationship, the demands of the sick bed upon her were numerous. Many of you have witnessed her tender assiduities to the sick and the dying; and all of you know, that, to the house of mourning, her presence was ever cheerfully yielded. Though seldom, I have sometimes visited the dwellings of the afflicted, and am not without personal knowledge of the high estimation in which her attentions were held. One occasion of sickness “I remember and will ne'er forget.” For several days and nights, there were many watchers in the house of a much loved person; for whose recovery, even fond affection, could scarcely hope.

“ Our sighs were numerous, and profuse our tears.”

Our friend, as usual, continued actively engaged in administering to the comfort of her who was sick, and impressed all present, with exalted notions of her real worth.

This was a relative; but the afflicted stranger equally shared in her affectionate attentions. Many of you know how long she waited and watched beside the sick bed of a friendless female who died here a few years ago. Nor did her kindness cease with death. The woman had an only child, for whom she possessed all the religious anxiety of a christian mother. She could not die in peace, and leave her helpless girl, unprotected from the snares of a wicked and inconsiderate world. Our excellent friend relieved her mind, by assuming the burden of bringing up the child. Until her lamented death she amply fulfilled the duties of a mother. Once more I would address myself to the children who are present. Remember, that you are not more deserving of the kindness of Providence, than the little girl just mentioned. Yet, she has been twice deprived of a mother, while most of you are still basking in the sunshine of maternal affection. See that you yield not “ penurious gratitude.”

The preceding excellencies of our friend, the world had an opportunity of witnessing, and, upon them, we have a right to comment. It might savour of exaggeration, to say all that the subject warrants. Aware that some might be incredulous, respecting the public good, which could be ascribed to one of her years, and situation in life; I ventured to digress upon the influence, which sabbath schools are calculated to possess, over the virtue, dignity, and happiness, of our race. We have seen how her short life on earth, was chiefly spent; but it belongs not to us, to limit the advantages derived from her labours of love. Who can

enter the precincts of eternity, and pronounce upon the utility of ten years, faithfully devoted to training, up the rising generation, to knowledge and virtue. Persons imbued with the spirit of Christianity, cannot pass through the world, without benefitting those around them, but, when actively employed, like our deceased friend, in some of the most important duties of society, the profit is vastly increased. In this view, her death cannot be called premature. Though young in years, she was old in all for which years are given. In deeds of mercy and usefulness, she would rival too many, who totter to the tomb, in the feebleness of old age. Their death alone, can be called untimely, who leave behind no benevolent trace of having lived. The age of the inferior animals may well be counted by the passing of years; but, by acts alone should immortal man register his existence! To live well is to live long!

“ She has died young, but there are silver'd heads,
Whose race of duty is less nobly run.”

We now come to the more private character of the departed. In showing how she first became a teacher, her excellence as a daughter, was strongly illustrated. But feeble is the idea of her constant dutifulness, which any portraiture of words can convey. You who knew the kindness of her heart, in less intimate relationships, may, in this, attempt to estimate her worth. She was all that the most amiable disposition, guided by the principles of piety, could make her. As a sister, too, she was ever kind. The character of a mother she did not long sustain. It pleased an all merciful Providence, to take her helpless infant from trouble here below, and thus prevent the pain of leaving it behind. Its funeral, I well remember. None could much mourn its early departure; but the thoughts suggested by the circumstances, were sufficiently melancholy. Fifteen months before, our friend was unmarried, and in the very height and bloom of youth

and health. Now, she was the wife of a fond husband, necessarily absent--was worn down by disease--had for a few months been the mother of an infant about to be removed to the silent tomb, whither she, also, would soon follow.

Of her character as a wife, I am not prepared to speak. That she was dutiful and affectionate, we cannot doubt. She who so faithfully performed the duties arising out of all the other relations of life, was not likely to fail in this, the most intimate and endearing. To her sorrowing husband, our thoughts here naturally turn. On the mournfully interesting occasion of her funeral sermon, who of those present, did not give full scope to their feelings. A youthful preacher pronouncing a sermon on the death of his amiable partner and only child!

Desolate consort--vainly wert thou wed!

The husband of a year! the father of the dead!

I shall now consider a quality of her mind, to which, could I embody in language the feelings of my heart, I might well claim to do justice. As a friend she was altogether unexceptionable. Possessing the higher qualities of human nature, she was also particularly endowed with the nicer feelings, equally essential to a refined and lasting friendship. To a proper estimate of the beauties of virtue, she added a high relish for the beauties of nature and of literature. With her and some of yourselves, I have often strolled down summer's suns in the most perfect of earthly enjoyments. One of the last of these occasions, is painfully fresh upon my memory. On the eve of a departure to distant lands, from which, it was at least possible that I might not return, there was cause for sadness. We conversed upon the uncertainty of sublunary happiness, and the chances that that might be the last of our delightful walks. Our friend, as you know, was then in the exuberance of health, and I little imagined that the

dreaded evil could be realized, by the event we now mourn.

“ Loves, friendships, hopes, and dear remembrances,
 The kind embracings of the heart, and hours
 Of happy thought, and smiles coming to tears,
 And glories of the heaven and starry cope
 Above, and glories of the earth beneath,—
 These were the rays that wandered through the gloom
 Of mortal life; wells of the wilderness,
 Redeeming features in the face of Time,
 Sweet drops, that made the mixed cup of Earth,
 A palatable draught—too bitter else”

To the advantage, as well as the pleasure of her friendship, some of you of her own sex, can well attest. It sought not your earthly good alone. You also know, that, while here, her kindness to friends ceased only with their life. The memory of the late much esteemed Mrs. John McKay, and Miss Margaret Burton, will recur to most of you. Neither was she forgetful, in death, of the absent whom she loved. One female friend, whose kindness had been unbounded, may well be mentioned. In very early youth a mutual affection subsisted, which neither time, nor separation, nor worldly changes, could, for a moment, interrupt. Only one day previous to our friend's death, she addressed to the companion of her childhood, and faithful friend of maturer years, a few lines, which reached not their destination, till the writer had passed into the world of spirits.

But were proofs wanting of her affectionate disposition, what better could we wish, than the amount of regard which followed her through life, and has flowed in tears of sorrow for her death. It is only the affectionate, who thus secure affection. Love alone, can purchase love. Those who reproach the world for its want of kindness, are themselves, I fear, too often in fault. Bad as is human nature, and who can deny its fearful wanderings—there is much about it to admire, and I proudly adduce the estimation in

which our departed friend was held, as an instance of disinterested willingness to be just.

Having thus briefly noticed a few features of our friend's character, during the healthful part of her life, it only remains for me to turn your attention to her, in the approach of death. Considering her extensive acquaintance with the doctrines of the gospel, and her ability to converse upon religious subjects, she spoke little of her hopes, in the prospect of eternity. This may, perhaps, in part, be attributed to a want of absolute certainty that she was not to recover—the disease under which she laboured, is proverbially flattering—perhaps, in part, to debility; and doubtless, in a great measure, to a desire to avoid paining her weeping relatives.

— “ Sweet patience, feigning oft relief,
Lit her sick eye, to cheat a parent's grief.”

It should be the subject of grateful recollection to her friends, that Death approached so gently, and with so little of suffering.

He came not, clothed in terror, to destroy his victim; but as an Angel of peace, to separate a pure spirit, from its earthly clogs! “ Oh Death! where is thy sting? Oh Grave! where is thy victory!”

“ Woe unto us not her; for she rests well.”

Should we, then, mourn our friend's departure. We may. The better feelings of our nature force tears for those she left behind. Her parents' grief, who can comprehend? Thus, in mid time of her days, to lose one, who had long been all that a daughter, a friend, and companion could be—the soother of their afflictions—the comfort of their declining life. For her brothers and sisters, we may also mourn. But her husband claims our deeper sympathy. At the outset of life, to be deprived of her to whom he looked

for the happiness of life, is surely a cup of unmingled bitterness. To this affliction of a friend and companion from our boyish days, it well becomes me to drop a tear of sorrow. For those whose spiritual concerns would have secured our friend's attention, had Providence spared her, we may also lament: and for our own irreparable loss, we cannot, if we would, suppress the grief of our hearts.

While casting our memory over past years, when she went up with us to the house of God; when she came hither to perform her duties to these children;—when she attended the meetings for prayer and consultation in their behalf;—when she was always near in sickness and affliction;—always ready to receive the confidence of our hearts, and manifest her affectionate concern in their troubles; I will not believe, that either Philosophy or Religion, prohibits indulgence in moderate grief.

But to wish to detain among the thorns and briars of earth, one that is ripe for the rest and peace of Heaven, would be selfish indeed. How trifling our loss, compared with her gain. Though we might not be here to mourn, in a few short years, at most, her death must have occurred. Prolonged life, too, is often only protracted sorrow. Within the past week, the respected maternal grand-father of our deceased friend, left this world, at the extremity of old age. It is many years since his enjoyments and usefulness apparently terminated, and since he was willing to depart. But, because one is left longer than we think necessary, and another taken at the very commencement of usefulness, shall we dare to brave high Heaven, and say, "What doest thou?" "Shall mortal man be more just than God?" As worthy your consideration I extract the following sentence from a letter of condolence to myself. "The ways of Providence are inscrutable," but we are taught to walk by faith and not by sight; to trust implicitly in God, satisfied, that, though "clouds and darkness are round

about him; righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne!"

Let us then uncomplainingly submit to the dispensations of Providence, and derive profit from all that passes before us.

The event which we now mourn, enforces upon us the solemn injunction, to "work while it is day." A merciful God is ever reiterating in our ears "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." A compassionate Saviour affectionately exhorts us that we "sorrow not even as others who have no hope." "For we know" saith the word of truth, "that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." Though earthly connexion with our much lamented friend, has ceased forever, there is another, and better state of existence, in which, by the goodness of God, it may be everlastingly renewed. These amiable clings to creatures of a day, were surely not bestowed upon us as a mockery—these yearnings after eternal friendship, were not given us for naught. Our friend can no more return to us; but

"When a few suns have roll'd their cares away,"

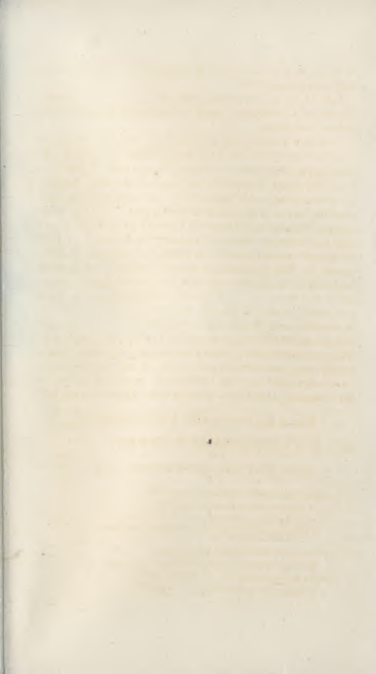
we will be kindly permitted to follow her,

"'Tis the great birth-right of mankind to die."

"Is it not sweet to think, hereafter,
When the spirit leaves this sphere,
Love with deathless wing shall waft her
To those, she long hath mourned for here?"

"Oh! if no other boon were given,
To keep our hearts from wrong and stain,
Who would not strive to win a heaven
Where all we love shall live again?"







X

14-12-90

