

angelic beings; the work by which guilty rebels were to be freed from sin, made trophies of redeeming grace, and possessors of immortal bliss; this is the grand topic which it is the office of the Sabbath School teacher to unfold.

Compared with the work of expounding to the young the weighty truths connected with man's redemption, how do other pursuits sink into insignificance. Noble is the work of the astronomer who explains the laws which regulate the movements of the planetary bodies as they roll through the depths of space; but nobler is the work of him who labours to direct the minds of young immortals to the day star from on high—the star which from the maze of error and of sin leads to the regions of everlasting day. The geologist digging in the bowels of the earth is enabled by his researches to adduce startling facts with regard to its structure and the changes which at different periods it has undergone; but the Sabbath School teacher leads his pupils to fathom the depths of redeeming love. The chemist analyzes the properties of matter and makes discoveries which gratify curiosity or contribute to the welfare of his species; but a nobler object is contemplated by the teacher who seeks to unfold the workings of divine Providence, who carries his pupils back into the councils of eternity when Jehovah planned the work of mercy by which guilt would be expiated and the sinner saved. The student of Natural History may explain the means by which the vapour that collects into clouds descends and refreshes the earth; but it is the office of the Sabbath School teacher to make known the method of man's regeneration and to show how the Holy Spirit implants principles of holiness in the human heart which take root on earth and are developed to perfection in the heavenly world.

The dignity of the work of Sabbath School teaching further appears from the importance of the object at which it aims. It is one design of this work to train the young to habits of virtue, and thus prepare them to encounter the dangers, difficulties, and temptations of life. The individuals

who are instructed in the Sabbath School and whose faculties are but awakened and beginning to expand are in a few years to occupy the position now held by those who are in the vigor and prime of life. And who can tell what is to be the character in after years of those who now excite but little attention amid the din and battle of worldly business. Some may be the blessings and others the scourges of their race; some the ornament and honor of their country, others its shame and its disgrace. Some will be found diffusing happiness to all around them, while others may prove a source of sorrow to their relatives and friends. If then such important results hang on the destinies of the rising generation, how dignified is the work of the Sabbath School teacher whose task it is to instil into their opening minds those principles which will enable them to maintain a steadfast adherence to virtue amid the stormy scenes of life, and lead them in all their aims to have a regard to the glory of their Maker.

But it is when we view those whom the Sabbath School teacher instructs as immortal beings that we see most forcibly the true dignity of the work in which he is engaged. Not only are the young under his care to perform a part amid the scenes and pursuits of the present life, they are destined to spend an existence which years cannot measure. They have been ushered into life, but shall never disappear from the ranks of being. When the sun which has shone for thousands of years shall have expended his last rays and be extinguished in darkness; when the moon shall have grown dim with age; when the stars which gem the sky in myriads shall be blotted out, the soul of the youngest child now in our Sabbath School shall be participating in the bliss of heaven or sharing in the misery of devils and lost spirits. With what dignity and importance does this fact invest the work of the Sabbath School teacher. His energies are not directed to an object which will be lost and forgotten amid the lapse of time; every duty he inculcates, every truth he teaches, communicates an influence which will stretch into the cycles of eternity. His task is to instil principles of piety into the minds of immortal beings—beings destined to exist through ages countless as the grains of sand on the seashore.

The dignity of Sabbath School teaching may be argued from the nature of the reward which will be conferred upon those who engaged in the work from right motives and who discharge faithfully its duties. Even in the present life the efforts of the Sabbath School teacher are rewarded by the feeling of complacency he experiences in common with all who seek to promote