

Religious Education Institutes in London Presbytery

BY REV. W. J. KNOX, M.A.

The Presbyterian Institute has proved to be one of the most effective means for advancing the interests of religious education throughout the church. Where live topics have been discussed, where the work has been properly organized and zealously carried forward, these Institutes have been greatly appreciated by all in attendance.

In consequence of this experience, the General Assembly has asked all Presbyteries throughout the church to make arrangements to hold Institutes annually, in order that all the people may be kept informed of the best methods and material available in the religious education of the young.

The series of six Institutes of Religious Education, conducted throughout the Presbytery of London in January last, was most successful. The fact that a series had been conducted each winter for several years, had made the Institute something to be looked forward to as a regular Presbyterian event, and as care had been taken to make these gatherings of distinct value, the interest deepened and the attendance increased.

For the purposes of the Institute the Presbytery's Committee on Sunday School and Young People's Societies was enlarged and the pastoral charges within the Presbytery were grouped in seven districts in such a way that delegates from the various charges in each district could conveniently reach the point at which their Institute was held. A chairman was appointed in each district, and the success of the Institute was in large measure due to his energy and zeal in perfecting all local arrangements and securing the full quota of delegates from each charge within his district.

Meetings were held afternoon and evening, and about 5.30 o'clock a supper was served in the church where the Institute was held. After the supper an informal talk was engaged in, dealing with the books and pamphlets bearing upon the many phases of the work.

The programme included discussions of the two main features of the Report presented by the Board of S.S. and Y.P.S. to the previous General Assembly, namely: Training for Leadership, and The Unified Curriculum. There was one leader at each Institute who opened out the subject and as many local delegates as possible were given a definite place on the programme. By this means the workers throughout the Presbytery were informed regarding the plans of the Assembly's Board.

Offerings were made at each meeting, and these taken together were sufficient to pay all expenses incurred, such as printing, postage, traveling expenses of speakers, including the expenses from Toronto of the General Secretary of the Board, the Rev. J. C. Robertson. There was indeed a small balance which was handed over to the Presbyterian treasurer.

One of the most important features of this piece of promotion work throughout the Presbytery was the rally of young people held about two weeks after the Institutes.

This convention was announced at all the Institutes as a part of one scheme and in a way served as a climax in which the energies and enthusiasm of the young people throughout the Presbytery were gathered up. The Presbytery's Committee on Sabbath Schools and Young People's Societies assist in this work but the responsibility for the success of the rally rests with a committee of the young people themselves elected at their annual gathering.

This linking of the Institutes with the Young People's Rally emphasizes the unity of the work and interests a larger constituency.

London, Ont.



The Social Life of the School

By Miss Drusilla A. Russenholt

The best all round development of pupil and School into full and effective Christian character and organization is accomplished not merely by word of mouth in the teaching of the regular lesson, but also by the general work and recreation.

Wherever one class joins in the activities of another class, or one Department in the work and play of another Department, or the members of the School as a whole are in any way actively interested in the welfare of any individual or society apart from themselves, there the social life of the School is being developed.

For instance, the different departments of one School follow the list of scripture passages for memory work as arranged by our General Assembly's Committee. When a passage has been memorized by the members of one class, those members are called to the platform before the assembled School and repeat that passage in concert, or individually. This work has been continued enthusiastically and the interest of all classes in the work heard from the platform is very keen. Each