

terest that increasingly centres round the Sabbath-school, we propose to advert to some of the more salient points of this important document. From the first two articles of the "preliminary" section we quote:

"The Sabbath-school includes the session, members and adherents of the congregation, together with their children, and all others who may be enrolled from time to time:

"And is understood to be the church at work, by the congregation assembled on the Lord's Day to study, teach and learn the Word of God."

These words sound a high key-note, and are evidently intended to enlarge the school until in respect of membership it is identical with the church. Now, is the proposal feasible? We doubt it, except on one condition, which is distasteful to not a few, namely,—that there be only one formal sermon each Sabbath, and that the other service be converted into a large Bible class. If the minister preaches twice, and then teaches the congregation in the shape of a Bible class, the strain upon his heart and brain will be enormous, especially if the audience is not content to take what is meagre in thought or slovenly in expression.

The second clause of the "Constitution" deals with *Text Books and Instruction*. Among other things it provides that "portions of Scripture shall be systematically memorized, to such an extent as may be decided upon by the officers and teachers." We would propose that this be struck out. The fact is, that portions of Scripture are not memorized, except by the infant classes, in the majority of schools, nor is it clear that the omission of it is harmful. It is more useful to learn the phrases and expressions of Scripture by a frequent study of the thoughts. Whether, however, our view be correct or not, it is a question whether this exercise

should be formally inserted in the Constitution, which all are presumed to obey.

As to "Helps," this clause recommends those published by the Presbyterian Board of Publication, Philadelphia. Strictly, a recommendation should hardly be placed in a Constitution. To pass over this slight objection, the question of "Helps" is of more than usual importance.

The success of the class hangs upon the power of the teacher, and the power of the teacher largely depends upon his mode of study. If he glance hurriedly over a leaflet thirty minutes before the school hour, he will not be a prodigy of teaching talent. The stern law is that the truth must first impress the teacher if he is to make it tell upon the class. He should be stirred to think *into* the lesson, as if aids were out of his reach. At the same time, sound expositions should be at his hand to prevent his mistaking the sense of the verses. A scheme to combine these two objects would be a splendid boon to the Sabbath-school, for we are somewhat dubious about the majority of "aids." What wonder that, swarming upon us from the press as they do, and furnishing questions and illustrations ready-made, they who teach are at times very lazy?

The fifth article requires all appointments of teachers by the superintendent to be submitted for the approval and ratification of the session—certainly a move in the right direction. When a vacancy occurs, too often the superintendent secures hastily the first person who appears. The natural result is a low standard; and the impression prevails that anybody, even a numskull with a sprinkling of grace, has enough talent to instruct a class. This article prepares an ordeal which is not very severe, but which will cause the entrant to pause and measure his fitness for the office.