

fewest advantages for self-culture, and observation, and will probably reap the greatest amount of benefit from them;—they afford an opportunity for females to attend them,—a privilege which they rarely enjoy in connection with the Provincial Convention;—and lastly, being much smaller, and more manageable, many persons will suggest questions, or take part in the discussions that may arise, who would feel abashed at the very thought of doing so in the larger assembly. While, therefore, we look to the Provincial Association for the motive power, figuratively speaking, of all our machinery, we must do our utmost to secure the formation of County Associations throughout the Dominion, so as to bring that power into the widest possible use. The latter are but the complement of the former,—the one is the great throbbing heart of the Sabbath-School enterprise,—the others are the *arteries and capillaries*, carrying its warm pulsations of love and mercy to the farthest extremities of the system.

4. Sabbath-School Conventions are exerting a most powerful influence in the extension of the Sabbath-School enterprise. Apart from the increased interest it has awakened in the work itself, our Provincial Association has already done good service, by revealing the destitution existing in some of the newer parts of the country, and arousing the Churches to the necessity of more vigorous measures to supply them. The statistical returns presented at the annual meeting in Montreal last year,—by far the most complete yet obtained,—show a total of 1294 Sabbath-Schools in (what was then called) Canada, with an attendance of 86,726 scholars; or in the Western Province alone, 1183 schools, with 78,089 scholars. The same year there were in operation in the same Province, (now Ontario,) 4,303 common schools, with an attendance of 383,052 scholars. Hence, if these returns afford us even an approximation to the truth, it will be seen that scarcely more than one fourth,—more complete returns might possibly increase the proportion to one third,—of the children of this Western Province, are as yet gathered into her Sabbath-Schools.

Here is a field for christian enterprise, the extent of which would never have been known but for our Sabbath-School Association, and which only some such organization can properly explore and cultivate. Already has it set its hand to this work, and sure are we that there is none more worthy, or that will more readily command the sympathies and support of the Christian Church, of all denominations.

And here again, we see the necessity for the formation of County Associations. Upon them ultimately, or upon those, at least, who ought to form them, and sustain them, must rest the responsibility of their own particular sphere. It is for them first to explore, and, if possible, to occupy the field. Every man must build "over against his own house." Or, if the work be found to be too great for the County Association, let them then appeal for help to the Provincial, making their prayer meanwhile, "to the Lord of the harvest, that He would thrust forth labourers into the harvest." Willing hands and praying hearts are all that we need, with God's blessing, to make the most desert and desolate places of our land, to rejoice and blossom as the rose.

Such then, in our view, are the objects contemplated and promoted by Sabbath-School Conventions. Their importance can hardly be over-estimated, and if we have been able to show that they are, to any considerable extent, attainable by their means, no other argument will be needed to prove the desirableness of establishing one in every County in Canada.

It is time, however, to turn our attention to the second part of our subject, viz.,—

#### II.—THE BEST MODE OF CONDUCTING THEM.

Their usefulness will very largely depend upon the intelligence, and business tact, of those who have the management of them. Such meetings oftener fail of