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Sunday School Banner.

W. H. WITHROW, D.D., EDITOR.

TORONTO, OCTOBER, 1892.

Those Sunday-school Libraries.

It is, we believe, a fact that the books in circulation in our Methodist Sunday-school Libraries, are more than all those in the Public and Mechanics' Institute Libraries in the Dominion. They form in many country districts almost the only literature except that of the newspapers, and sometimes not even excepting them. It is a fashion to sneer at Sunday-school books as being of inferior literary merit. The time for that sneer has happily past. Some of the best and most brilliant writers living find a scope for their talents in writing for the eager young minds in our Sunday-schools. Heba Stretton, Edward Garrett, Mrs. Charles, Miss C. M. Young, and many others whose names will occur to our readers at once.

Certain it is, that not merely the literary but the moral tone of the Sunday-school books are vastly superior to the paper covered literature to be found in the book stalls throughout the country. The great publishing houses of Great Britain and the United States, vie with each other in preparing high-class Sunday-school books. The Wesleyan Book Room and Sunday-school Union in England, the Religious Tract Society, the Methodist Book Concern, New York, the Congregational, Baptist, Presbyterian and other houses besides independent and undenominational houses present a noble catalogue of valuable books. The old-fashioned

"GOODY, GOODY" BOOKS.

have been largely succeeded by many literature. Books of popular science, of interesting history, of religious, missionary and secular biography, of travel—especially in Bible Lands—make up a larger part of a good library than ever before. That list is embodied largely in the present catalogues of our Methodist Book Rooms. These catalogues contain thousands of bright, readable books at the choice of the purchasing school.

There is one difficulty, that is, that some of these books occur only in high priced editions, and are therefore only available for the more wealthy schools.

We would suggest that in addition to the periodical additions to the library—annual or more frequent—that a small sum be kept in the treasury for the purpose of ordering new and important books that may be especially attracting attention, and which are advertised in the *Guardian* or our Sunday-school periodicals, such as "Stalker's Life of Christ," "John Kemington, Martyr," etc.

KEEP UP A FRESH INTEREST.

The scope of our Sunday-school libraries could be greatly increased if the senior department existing in many of our schools were still more widely extended. In no way can a village or rural community get so good a value for their money as by raising \$50 or \$100 and ordering a selection of the best books in standard and current literature. We would suggest that the young people be requested to say what books they wanted. This would create an interest and lead them to examine the book list and to have a greater interest in the books when they came. Of course, a committee would have to decide as to the number and character of the books to be purchased.

There should be a selection of books on practical religion, such as James' "Anxious Inquirer," Binney's "How to Make the Best of Both Worlds," Dr. Wise's books of godly counsel, and other books of that sort. With these the teacher ought to be familiar, and with a kind and sympathetic word should recommend to his scholars at such times as he might judge that they would be most helpful in their religious life. We shall never forget the debt of gratitude which we owe to one of our early teachers, the late Robert Wilkes, for the recommendation of such books as these of Binney and James mentioned above, and others which were of great benefit at the time and have been ever since.

READING ROOMS.

We would suggest, too, that Sunday-schools or Epworth Leagues should, as far as possible, imitate the example of our friends in Bridge Street Church, Belleville, and other churches and schools which have a special, permanent