

receive them. We have abundant evidence also that *buildings* were erected and set apart for the purpose of instruction, and a canon ascribed to the sixth council of Constantinople, speaks of schools for children, to be instituted by presbyters in *towns and villages*, where a gratuitous training should be given, and of schools in *churches*, under the *care* of the bishop. It seems then to my mind very plain, that the Church, at an early period, took in hand the instruction of the young, and that in this work she employed *teachers not in holy orders*. Various modifications of the system have been made at different times.—There has been greater or less need of such helps, as the Church has been more or less adequately supplied with ministers—as the Church has been more or less free from schisms and separations. At the present time, and for some time past, during these “*last days*,” which, as the apostle prophesied, are marked by “*want of natural affection*,” the neglect of *parental instruction* has made still more needful than ever the intervention of a third party between parent and child; and, so great is the number of those who, having cast themselves off from the Church, have left their children without any regular spiritual guidance; and so small is the band of ministers in proportion to the population of this diocese, that the Church herself has thus spoken in the exigency.—“Every minister of a parish shall encourage the formation of Sunday Schools, and the efficient prosecution of instruction in them, in conformity with the principles of the Protestant Episcopal Church; and he shall report the number of scholars and teachers in his annual report!” *Here, then, in few words, are the obligations of the Sunday School teacher*—here are the *bands* which tie him to his work—First, *God’s general command*, “while we have time, to do good unto all men,”—his comprehensive call to every man, not only to come to the waters of life *himself*, but *hearing the call to repeat it to others*, “and let him that heareth say come.” Rev. xxii. 17. And, second, the more definite summons of the Church, who seems to say through her 11th Canon, “Come ye whose hearts are moved with a desire to do God’s will, and aid me in the efforts which I am making to fulfil that will, in reference to the *lambs of the flock* and those who are not of the flock, and therefore have so much greater need of the shepherd’s care.

Though these lectures are addressed to Sunday School teachers, yet it is reasonable to suppose that many not actually engaged in the work are now present in this place, and I therefore avail myself of the opportunity thus afforded to put it to the consciences of such, whether the obligations we are now considering bind not them? Are not you called by the voice of God to do some work of benevolence in his wide vineyard? When you look over the dense and dangerous human masses which fill this city, and observe every where the miserable, fatal consequences of ignorance and vice—when you see the *young* fast ripening amid the

hot-beds of immorality, for a prolific maturity of crime—springing up amid God’s wondrous manifestations of grace without a thought of God—knowing that there is a God, only because in passion and disappointed rage they are taught to *swear* and blaspheme *by His name*—taught by those around them, who have grown gray in sin, a cunning like that of the fox—a savageness of disposition which assimilates them to the wolf—a fellness of purpose that rivals the diligent staunchness of the blood-hound tribe tracking their prey—O! when you look and see that these are the *fruits* which *may* grow—which *do grow*—which *must* grow out of a neglected soil filled with a corrupted seed, do you not hear the voice of God saying unto you, *go ye into the highways and hedges*? Can you with *time* and *capacity* for the work of instruction, still ask when the charge of gross neglect is preferred against the Christian Church, “Lord is it I?” Yes, *it is you*. *God* calls, the *Church* calls, *just such as you* to the work, and on you, possessed of talents, and favoured with leisure for this important work, on you will be pronounced the sentence uttered against Ephraim,—whose “*Children being armed and carrying bows*, turned back in the day of battle.”—Ps. lxxviii. 9.

II. If such be the *obligations*, what are the *duties* of the Sunday School teacher? *Mainly*, in my opinion, those suggested by the text, “*Go ye into the highways and hedges*.” The whole object of Sunday Schools it appears to me has almost been lost sight of among us. The Sunday School was *never meant to be a substitute for Pastoral instruction*—it was never meant to be a *refuge for parental indolence*! The Rubric, is now as it ever has been in full force, which says, “The minister of every parish, shall diligently upon Sundays and holy days or on some other convenient occasions, openly in the Church *instruct or examine* so many children of his parish, sent unto him, as he shall think convenient;”—and there is another rubric as express, which says to the worshippers of every congregation—“All fathers, mothers, masters, and mistresses shall cause their children, servants, and apprentices who have not learned the Catechism, to come to the church at the time appointed, and obediently to hear, and to be ordered by the minister, until such time as they have learned all that is appointed for them to learn.” It is plain, indeed, from the whole current of her instructions, particularly in connexion with confirmation and baptism, that the *parent* is held responsible for the child’s due initiation in the first principles of godliness, and the *pastor* for his subsequent preparation and progress! Sunday Schools were never intended as substitutes for such obligations on the part of pastor or parent. What then was their object and aim? Why manifestly this. *The instruction of those beyond the reach of pastoral care and destitute of the blessing of parental influence*. The gathering together of those who wandered about as sheep having no shepherd—as sheep