

of the times will make that evident. It is not to be supposed that, with the advances sure to be made in every other department of Christian activity, this work alone will stand still.

What directions will the new movement take? It may seem like venturing upon very uncertain ground to attempt a forecast; and yet already certain practical developments are so much in the air as to suggest fuller realization before we go very far into the coming years.

Ist. Better grading.

It is one of the elements of staying power in this work that in an ideal school one teacher is not supposed to be teaching scholars of varying ages and attainments, but takes in hand a class, all the members of which, approximately speaking, are on the same level. An assembly in the Sabbath School stands on a different footing in this respect from an assembly at a Church service. There, all kinds of people at every stage of life are present together; and the problem before the teacher who occupies the pulpit is not a little embarrassing. From a common platform he endeavors to reach all classes; and yet starts out with a definite consciousness that his hearers, as a matter of fact, have very little in common. It is no light undertaking, in such circumstances, to secure and hold intelligent, responsive interest, so as to touch the heart, enlighten the understanding, and sway the will into submission to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. What appeals to one does not appeal to another; and the real wonder is, not that some go to sleep, but that so many keep awake. In any Sabbath School where there is a proper system of grading, this weakness is largely remedied.

The question arises—and it is a question for the new century to solve—What is a proper system of grading? A year ago, the Sabbath Schools of the Presbyterian Church throughout the Dominion were asked, "Is yours a graded school?" It was officially reported that, in response to this inquiry, fully one-half of the schools did not know whether they were graded or not. Ordinarily, a

school will consider itself graded if it has what is often called an "Infant Class," and then, in regular succession, classes that have come out of that, one after the other, till the highest is reached, often called "the Bible Class"; though in not a few churches, especially in the larger centres of population, the Bible Class meets quite apart from the Sabbath School.

In most places, a teacher, if not lacking in perseverance, may stay with a class, year after year, on the principle of a fixed pastorate, teaching at the start a class of small boys or girls, and in the end the young men or young women into whom these little things have grown.

Much, no doubt, may be said in favor of the peculiar influence which a prolonged attachment between a pastor and his people, or between a teacher and his class, creates; but it is very doubtful whether either prolonged pastorates or prolonged connection between Sabbath School teachers, and their classes will be the rule in the coming years. The system of grading that is struggling for the mastery, as the new century dawns, is one that corresponds more to a system of itinerancy in which, not the teachers, but the scholars, itinerate. The teachers will remain in their respective departments pretty much as they do in the secular schools, and the scholars at stated intervals will be promoted from one class to another. Each department will have its own recognized place in the building, and great care will be taken to put new comers into the right department at the outset, having due regard, of course, to special cases.

The principle of promotion, whether by examination or otherwise, will have been discussed and determined by the teachers, each of whom, through steady practice in teaching scholars of the same attainments, will become a specialist in his or her department. In the Primary Department will be included all who cannot read; in the Intermediate Department, all for two years after they can read; in the Junior Department, those who are passing through the next four or five years; in the Senior