

tant churches of Britain and America, it is a part as essential as their forms of worship, and a congregation without one or more Sabbath Schools would justly be considered a dark spot amid surrounding light, a beam in the eye. On this subject, Dr. George remarks:

"The Church of Rome boasts that she has ever had her class of catechumens and ever has, as a church, been attentive to the religious instruction of the young. It must be confessed that, for a long time, Protestant churches could make no such boast."

The Churches of Christ in their administrative capacity, generally receive annual reports of the state and progress of Sabbath School instruction within their bounds. They justly conceive that they would occupy an inconsistent and unscriptural position, if they neglected the Saviour's solemn and tender injunction; uttered by him in loving and condescending recollection of the little ones belonging to "the Church in the house," when the glories of his Father were about to veil him from the view of his disciples—"Feed my Lambs." Our Church at home, which in an official capacity as the Established Church, has charge of the parish schools, and has made this admirable system, by its management, a praise in the earth; and by voluntary effort, also, has supplied the educational wants of a population vastly increased, and differently located, since the establishment of the parish schools, receives annual reports, carefully prepared, on the subject of Sabbath Schools. Many Sabbath School Associations in connection with the Church, have been formed, in which central plans and organization are brought to the aid and promotion of individual and local efforts. The Sabbath School Association in connection with the Church of Scotland in Glasgow is an example of what may be effected in this way, of success attending such attempts rightly directed, and of the interest taken by our Church in the important mission of Sabbath Schools among our neglected children, the wild and ragged little "A rabs" of large cities. A very excellent report appears from a committee appointed last year by our sister-church in Canada, which furnishes, also in the Juvenile Presbyterian, suitable instruction for the children of the Church. There can be little doubt that the more the Church of Christ increases among men, the more revived, zealous and laborious she becomes, and the more thoroughly and beautifully she fills her true place in human

society, the more extended will be the Sabbath School system, and the more spiritual and penetrating will be its operation. Then every Sabbath School will be, not a dry piece of clockwork each week, but a quickened organism—not a thing of habit, associated with cold hearts, dull faces, dry speeches, and ill-concealed longings to get away, on the part of teachers and taught; but a thing of life.

The author of the above-mentioned work embodies in his account of our modern Sabbath School system a curious remark, in which he seems to argue the future disappearance of Sabbath Schools in our Church. "You, therefore, perceive that neglect on the one hand, and *Christian Love* on the other, led to the establishment of our modern system of Sabbath Schools. Were piety in the Church sufficiently powerful to give parental authority its due force, the benevolent effort would not be needed: and yet, were the piety of the Church extremely low, the effort could not be made. Not to speak it paradoxically, our modern Sabbath school institution is at once the glory and shame of the Church. And we cannot but hope that the time may come, when, if properly conducted, it will *destroy itself*, by so elevating the piety of the Church, that each parent will become the able and zealous teacher of his own children." There is no appearance of this grand consummation being realized at the present day. It is much to be feared that, though parents now possess many helps that were not within reach of former generations, parental training is actually more neglected. In America, especially, we look in vain for that conscientious, prayerful and scriptural culture, which Scotch parents, in particular, used to impart to the members of their family. It can hardly be denied that, influenced by selfishness or mere godliness, or by the crude and short-sighted theories of secular educationists, the Shorter Catechism occupies a place in their regard inferior to that held by manuals of arithmetic, geography and grammar. The most manifest defect in the fireside-schools of the present generation, however, is the non-assertion by parents of that *authority* which nature and the word of God assign them, over the members of their household, followed by an habitual insubordination, under which the parent, contrary to nature, is led by the children, the counsels of age are despised, and the seeds of family lawlessness are sown at the elementary