

scarcely to be expected that they know the wants of our Canadian schools better than those who have had largely to do with them, and nothing could be more offensive than to ask clergymen and Sunday school teachers of long experience to go to these conventions to be lectured to by strangers to the country and its needs. Now this has been habitually done. The system which these strangers have generally exhibited has been entirely unsuited to the circumstances of 99 out of every 100 of our schools. It might be adopted in Montreal, Toronto, and a few other places where facilities for obtaining apparatus and teaching assistance can be procured; but the great thing is to make the most of our materials in country districts and small towns and villages. The conventions have done little towards solving the difficulties to be encountered in our schools, such as the best way of getting the assistance of male teachers, and of retaining the interest of older boys in the work of the schools. The circulars calling the conventions have generally led those invited to believe that discussion would take place on certain points materially affecting the prosperity of Sunday schools; but an opportunity has never been afforded to those attending to let themselves be heard on such topics, owing to the monopoly of the time by long and often windy addresses by strangers. Perhaps as conventions are peculiarly American "institutions," those in our country who are admirers of the ways of our neighbours may think that these annual gatherings are too good opportunities of assimilating our views and feelings to those of the American people to be lost, and hence the platform of the convention is made the means of disseminating Yankee sentiments; but if this is the wish of the wire-pullers they should honestly confess it, and not bring Christian people together under false pretences. As for us we do not desire that American views of things should prevail in this country. The people of the United States do everything in crowds—this seems to be the natural outgrowth of republicanism—they live only in public. Now this is contrary to the British tendency. It is in the family that the task of governing Great Britain is accomplished. The family is in the land of our fathers, the basis on which religion as well as politics is made to rest. The people of the United States, like the French people of 1789, have no individuality; they only live for the republic. British government is on the other hand Abrahamic rather than Robespierrian.

The Sunday school system of the Americans is shaped by the same social tendency that moulds their other institutions. The home training is ignored; their teachers proceed upon the assumption that all the religious training the young obtain is gained in the Sunday school. Hence they exalt it into a position of individual importance such as has never been accorded it in our country. But that these conventions are begetting the same tendency in Canada is evident from the fact that one of the subjects discussed at the late one was "the relation of the Church to the Sabbath School." This beats the arrogance of the presumptuous Englishman who wrote, "I and my King." It is as if men should talk of the relation of the sun to the earth, of the parent to the child, or of the body to the foot. We protest against raising up the Sunday school into a position of distinction and individuality like this. It is nothing if it is not in connection with and in subordination to the Church. And we wonder that clergymen could sit quietly and listen to the pretensions set up for it to be independent of the Church. No pastor is justified in abdicating his right to guard the instruction of the young any more than that of the old, he should look upon the young as an integral part of the Church, and if he cannot personally superintend their religious instruction, he should be at least responsible for the doing of it by others, and so have the appointment of his own delegates. The only circumstances in which the principle prevailing in the convention in regard to the appointment of teachers would be proper, would be in the case of Union schools, like that of the Five Points, New York, intended to operate upon those children who are not connected with any Church. A voluntary society combining to rescue the children of vicious parents, has a right to govern itself as it chooses. And for schools of this description the system of the Americans, *as they are styled*, is admirably suited, and the mode of proceeding exhibited by their representatives at Canadian conventions, with object-lessons and blackboards, could not be surpassed—facilities for obtaining all the necessary apparatus, and for procuring workmen of the right stamp in places like New York, being very great.

This leads to the remark, that we take exception to the principle running through all these normal systems of training: the idea of duty on the part of the young to