

the question, "What is this convention called for?" "What are the crying needs of the hour, in this Sunday-school field?" Then they should plan the programme to meet the requirements of the place and season. And they should select a few of the more important and immediate wants of the locality for consideration, instead of attempting to discuss all the possible needs of the field. Not everything can be done at once. One point at a time, in the class, or at the desk, is better than a dozen, for the teacher or superintendent to press on those whom he would instruct. One lesson at a time is better than more for study in a school. One subject in an hour at any convention is better than two would prove. And the successive subjects of discussion should bear such a relation to one another in the order of their arrangement, that when the first topic is closed the second would follow almost as a matter of course, and so a natural and stimulating progress is made from the beginning to the close of the convention.

For example, if it was known that in this county only half of the Sunday-schools had adopted the International Lessons, many of the others having never tried a plan of uniform study, that few of the schools had teachers' meetings, and that parents generally seemed to have little interest in, or co-operation from the Sunday-school teachers of their children,—there would be quite enough indicated in these facts to fill the programme of a local convention for one day and evening. To bring out the needs of the neighbourhood, it might be well to open with an exhibit of "the field in review," showing by brief reports from the several schools what is the practice and what the lack on points in question. To confine these reports to desirable limits, the chairman might name the particulars on which the superintendents are to make report. Then a carefully selected person, whose school has found the advantage of uniformity in study, and who knows how to show this, might open the theme of "Uniform Lessons: their advantage and uses," or "International Lessons: their value and how to use them." When this theme has been well presented in an address of say fifteen minutes, and fully discussed in five minute

talks, the convention will be ready to take up "Teachers' Meetings: why and how to have them." Under this head might be included the discussion of union teachers' meetings in connection with the study of the International Lessons, or sectional meetings of teachers in the same school for study, in different parts of a country township, where not all can come together at a common point on a week-day evening. Perhaps two topics had best be made out of this general theme, such as, "The importance of teacher's meetings," and "The teachers' week-day work," or "The teachers' preparation for his work," and "The exercises and methods of a teacher's meeting." These exercises would fairly fill the forenoon and afternoon sessions of a convention, in addition to proper devotional services. The evening session could be given to addresses on some more popular theme like "The Home and the Sunday-school," "Parental co-operation with the teacher," "Co-work of the parent and teacher: what it is? and how to secure it." A convention limited to such themes in such a neighbourhood would be likely to accomplish far more good than a convention occupied in the discussion of twice or three times as many topics having no special relation to one another in their order of presentation.

But this programme would not be the best for all neighborhoods. Perhaps the Uniform Lessons are in common use in this county, but the schools are looked upon as chiefly for children, few adults sharing in their exercises, while the teaching in them is at the best but very poor. In this case, a good opening theme would be, "Who should be in Sunday-school? and how to get them there?" The question of "The time and place of holding the Sunday-school," so as to secure a large adult attendance, might be a proper one for free discussion at this point. "The need of better teaching, and how to have it," would follow naturally the consideration of the make up of the Sunday-school. Perhaps it will be well to discuss "The pastor's work for his Sunday-school;" "The superintendent's sphere and duties," "How to get good teachers," or "The teacher in his class," in the same convention. Possibly the need of local evangelization should have precedence, or the importance of Sunday-school work all the year round. Such themes as "Where to have Sunday-schools, and how?" or "When to have Sunday-schools, and why?" would then be in order. "The conversion and Christian culture of children," would prove a good evening topic at either of the conventions named.

In short, the first thing in planning a programme for a local convention, is to decide what work and reforms are most needed just here and just now; then the aim should be to select a very few of these, to arrange them in all the addresses and discussions of the gathering. Too much is usually attempted in a local convention; hence too little is done. The fewer subjects the better, within ordinary limits; but those few should be of chief importance to that neighborhood at that particular time.