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Those interested in missions will do well to look carefully over the lists of mission books mentioned in later pages.

## \* The Relation of the Elder to the Sabbath School

By Robert Munro, Esq., Superintendent Crescent St. Church Sabbath School, Montreal

The relation existing between many elders and the Sabbath School may be described somewhat as follows:—

At the Session meeting, the nomination list of Superintendent and Officers of the Sabbath School for the ensuing year is submitted; the motion is put, the elder says "Carried", and so his duties in regard to the Sabbath School are discharged for another year.

Do not say this remark is unkind; for I admit at once that it is unkind, if not true, but if true, it were equally unkind to be silent.

To-night we are asked to consider the ideal, rather than what may be in some instances the actual relation.

I would lay down just one root idea, and gather some of the thoughts that spring from it.

The elder is charged with the spiritual oversight of the congregation, each elder being specially entrusted with the oversight of a section or district. When the specific district or list of names is allotted, the elder's first thought bears on the state of family religion in these homes, how is it, and how can it be advanced? On getting to work he generally finds that the Sabbath

School teacher has been there before him. The Sabbath School has been already offering to *assist the parents* (for that is our ideal)—I say, to assist the parents—in the greatest work of their lives, the religious instruction of their children.

The elder who labors in the district for which he has become responsible, finds the Sabbath School to be one of the channels through which his obligation to the congregation is discharged. I will not say the most important channel; for we are not discussing that point, but a leading and fundamental aid in the discharge of his spiritual functions.

The Sabbath School, then, is one of the aids of the elder in his effort to promote family religion in his congregational district.

In this view, what is the relation of the elder to the Sabbath School? You may describe it variously. To my mind, as one accustomed to business organization, it suggests the elders in their several districts not as heads of departments so much as active partners in the general management, the School Superintendent the departmental head, the teachers the departmental assistants, the scholars the material on which the object of the department is set. I say department, because the elder has departments of work other than the children.

If this root idea is a just one, if the Sabbath School is a channel through which the elder's efforts are seconded and his aims promoted, how will this relation develop itself? How will this senior officer most surely act towards the Sabbath School?

1. He will at least see it sometimes. (Of course every elder does that.)

2. He will know whether the children of

\*An address given at a meeting of the Presbyterian Sabbath School Association of Montreal.