

tion, and that very soon, but having in them the Spirit of the Word and of the Christ, they contain the guarantee of their perpetuation and expansion. Sunday School workers have an obligation in this respect, to promote the highest efficiency not alone of a few scattered workers, but of all. Let the standard be raised all along the line.

To determine what the school of the future may be, it is necessary to observe the elements and tendencies of the present. The school of to-day may be said to be the outgrowth of four tendencies, marking as many periods:—First, the Formative Period, marked by a philanthropy which sought the general education and protection of childhood; secondly, the Spiritually Aggressive Period, which relegated elementary and literary education to the Day Schools, and sought to make the Sunday School evangelistic; thirdly, the Conservative Period, when Organization became a leading feature; and fourthly, the Educational Period, in which direct, systematic and consecutive instruction has been given on Spiritual topics. The last period was reached some twenty-one years ago, by the introduction of the International System of Sunday School Lessons. We are now confronted with the fact that, except for the comparatively few parents who attend our Bible Classes, our Sunday Schools represent a generation of Berean scholars! There is as much difference between the Sunday Schools of the days preceding the introduction of systematic work and that of to-day, as between the public school in the old log school-house of the days when teachers “boarded out,” and were counted efficient if they could teach the “Three Rs” and the trained “modelite” of to-day. Twenty-one years of systematic Bible study have put elements into our Sunday School work which must affect the future, and probably we are in danger of underestimating, rather than otherwise, what the effect may be.

There are two dangers to be avoided: First, Memoriter work without proper explanation and unfolding of meanings; and secondly, Instruction without securing a grasp of the Text. The old-time school gave us the first method, and our work in school was recitation, enlivened by a sort of holy rivalry in the number of verses recited. We had the words, and oftentimes what peculiar meanings we attached to them! The second method is that of