

into contact with good and pure and loving teachers; imbued them with a taste for reading, and a desire for knowledge; inspired them with the hope of a better life, and encouraged their endeavors to attain it; trained them to honesty, to virtue, to godliness, so that they have become, in no one can tell how many instances, upright and worthy citizens, successful merchants, men eminent in the professions, mayors of towns, members of Parliament, Sunday-school teachers, ministers of religion, missionaries of the gospel; in no one can tell how many instances children have been prepared for early and happy death, or for a long and useful and honorable life, whether in our own country or in far-off colonies of the empire. I pretend not, I solemnly confess my utter inability, to estimate the great good in manifold ways which Sunday-schools have done and still are doing.

I am free to confess, that whilst it would be comparatively easy to name the faults which have been found with Sunday-schools as they now exist; easy to use strong language with regard to those faults, it is not so easy to suggest the remedy. We can admit that *superintendents are rare* who possess all the qualities which fit them to govern a school with wisdom, and firmness, and tact, and gentleness, so that order shall be maintained and work be well done; that *teachers are rare* who have adequate knowledge and skill in teaching, together with zeal and industry; that the *schools are few* where thorough discipline is maintained, valuable instruction given, hallowed influences widely and constantly diffused; that *not often* do teachers succeed in binding scholars to themselves, to the school, to the chapel, and to Christ in any large numbers. All this we may admit, and sorrowfully admit; but when we ask what is the remedy, and who will work the cure, what answer is there? I can well suppose that you may be now ready to say in reply, "We know that as superintendents and teachers we are not all that we could wish to be, still we are willing workers. We do what we can. We labor to the best of our knowledge and ability. God has been pleased to own our labors. The Church has not yet pro-

vided other workers to come in and do our work more effectually than we are doing it. If we were to give it up, who is there to take our place, and see that the work does not cease? And it seems to me that such an answer must for the present be taken as a sufficient reply to the complaints that are made. So then let us neither on the one hand flatter and deceive ourselves by exaggerated notions of the value of our work, nor on the other hand be discouraged and distressed as though we were doing no good at all. The Sunday-school, thank God, is still doing a noble work, and is capable, and as I believe, is destined to do a vastly nobler work in time to come.

I submit the following suggestions for the consideration of the managers of our Sunday-schools. 1. That they should not be anxious to have large numbers; but to maintain real efficiency and thorough usefulness. No more children should be received into any Sunday-school than can be well taught and carefully looked after. 2. That they should be willing to gain and to keep up the attendance of scholars by excellence of management and valuable instruction, and to discountenance all attempts to get or to retain scholars by means of amusements, excursions, treats, or rewards. I do not mean that there should be none of these things, but that they should not be used for the purpose of inducing children to come to school or remain in it, instead of the higher attractions of thoroughly good teaching, and the wise and loving personal care of the teacher. 3. That the utmost endeavors should be put forth to secure good teachers. 4. That means should be adopted whereby teachers already at work may become better qualified,—by access to books, by lectures, by instruction in Scriptural knowledge and in the methods of teaching. Means of this kind might be furnished by a Sunday-school Union, which could not be supplied by any single school. 5. That teachers should set themselves by study and prayer to learn how to interest the minds of their scholars, and to affect their hearts towards Jesus Christ, aiming at the conversion of the children and their early consecration to God. That they should consider themselves as pastors of their little flocks, shepherds of the lambs of the fold—to feed