

for such children as are under wholesome parental instruction, there is still a large margin not accounted for, estimated in the report at at least 39,000! But even of those who pass through the Sunday-school, less than one half are admitted as members of the church on profession of their faith. This state of things is not confined to the Presbyterian Church in Canada. It is felt and deplored in all the churches. There is a missing link between the Sunday-school and Bible-class and adult membership—a gap very difficult to bridge, but which is at present exciting a great deal of interest and effort.

At last meeting of our General Assembly in connection with the Report on Sabbath-schools, it was moved by Rev. T. F. Fotheringham, seconded by Professor Coussirat, and resolved:—

“That the committee be instructed to enquire into the working of the scheme for the Welfare of the youth of the Free Church of Scotland; consider whether it, or some modification of it, would be suitable to the circumstances of the church in Canada, and, if so, to prepare such a scheme for consideration by next General Assembly.”

It naturally fell to Mr. Fotheringham to make the necessary investigations, and he has gone into the matter carefully, and embodied his views in a circular addressed to the members of the Sabbath-school Committee, of which we shall give a brief outline.

Mr. F. says, “In the Free Church of Scotland, there is a central committee with a corresponding member in each presbytery. These latter ascertain and report to the secretary, the names, &c., of intending candidates. From their reports, the committee are enabled to designate the places at which it will be most convenient to hold examinations, and mail the answers to the examiners. Each examiner values all the answers to the questions, and the reports of the examiners are received and tabulated. Printed instructions, covering every detail, are sent to all parties concerned. The papers are set by professors and others who are specialists in the respective subjects, but the work of valuing the answers is distributed amongst a number.

“In the English Presbyterian Church there is a “committee on Instruction of Youth,” of which Drs. Dykes and Gibson are Joint Conveners. There are Vice-Conveners on “Bible Band” (for the encouragement of daily, systematic and thoughtful reading of the Bible), on “Sabbath Schools,” on “Higher Instruction,” and on “Day Schools” (necessary in some

parts of England.) The third section, that of “Higher Instruction,” corresponds to the “Welfare of Youth” of the Free Church. The system is substantially the same; differences lying merely in details. In both churches—medals, prizes and diplomas are given.”

The following gives an idea of the range of subjects prescribed by the church for the last year and the current one.—For 1887 88:—

Division I. *Biblical*.—St. Luke, chaps. 14-24 (inclusive.) Text Book. Dr. Lindsay's Bible class primer on St. Luke. Price 4d.

Division II. *Doctrinal*. Shorter Catechism. Quest. 20-38 (inclusive.) Text Book for Juniors, Prof. Salmond's B-cl. primer. Price 6d. Text Book for Seniors, Dr. Whyte's B-cl. Manual pages 45-100. Price 2/6.

Division III. *Essays*. Juniors, “Elisha.” Seniors, “Milton.”

For 1888-89.

Division I. *Biblical*. Seniors—The Life of Christ. Text Book. Prof. Salmond's B-cl. primer. Price -/6. Juniors—Joshua and the Conquest. Text Book, Prof. Croskerry's B-cl. primer. Price -/6.

Division II. *Doctrinal*. Shorter Catechism, Quest. 30-81 (inclusive.) Text-books as before.

Division III. *Essays*. Juniors—“Life of Joshua.” Seniors—“Luther.”

“In addition to its scheme for the instruction of youth, the Free Church Com. endeavours to promote their “welfare” by the organization of a “Guild,” which is a union of all the young people's Societies of the church. Young people passing from one congregation to another, carry their guild certificates with them, as an introduction to the Society of the Church with which they may connect themselves. The constitution is very broad, and would embrace Literary Societies, as well as Societies of “Christian Endeavour.” Its aim is to call out the co-operation of the young, and bind them closer to the denomination.”

The following syllabus, in outline, is suggested for the consideration of our Sabbath-school Committee:—

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| I. Biblical. | IV. Historical. |
| II. Doctrinal. | V. Evidences. |
| III. Practical. | VI. Essays. |

I. The Biblical Department should be supplementary to the International S. S. Lessons.
II. The Doctrinal Department should embrace the standards of the Church, especially the Shorter Catechism.

III. The “Pilgrim's Progress” stands unrivalled as an epitome of practical Christianity. It should certainly find a place on our curriculum.

IV. In the Depart. of Church History, our young people should be made familiar with the story of their own church; its origin and early purity, the innovations introduced by Queen Margaret and her sons; its reformation in the 16th century, and its gallant resistance to usurped authority in the seventeenth. They should know that we can meet Anglican pretensions on historic grounds. The history of the early church should be studied; while the Reformation period would require a year to it.