

Think out all sorts of ways to keep things going, and the Bible Class need not suffer during the summer days.

Toronto

An Institute Tour

A very helpful series of Sunday School Institutes were held, from June 21 to July 25 last, in the Presbyteries of St. John, Prince Edward Island and Miramichi. The general manager and director of the Institute in each of the Presbyteries, was the Convener of the Presbytery's Committee on Sabbath Schools. Associated with him were Rev. J. C. Robertson, B.D., General Secretary for Sabbath Schools, and Rev. J. H. A. Anderson, B.D., Florenceville, N.B., Convener of the Synod's Committee on Sabbath Schools. Centres were chosen within convenient distances of the various congregations, the aim being to bring an Institute within a few miles of every Sunday School worker in the Presbytery. No set addresses or papers were given at these gatherings, but, instead, free and informal conferences were conducted on the practical problems of the School.

Written Examinations in the Sabbath School

By Rev. E. McQueen

After ten years of preparation for the ministry, I found my field of labor in a country district, covering a territory seventeen miles by fifteen miles. The field was already occupied by ten week-day schools, and one central academy, but there was no Sabbath School to meet the wants of some two hundred and fifty children and young people. I began with a Bible Class in the church. The Bible Class was very well attended, but it did not solve the difficulty of reaching every child in my field of labor. The problem of organizing a Sabbath School in every district was then faced, when the difficulty of securing teachers was met and overcome. Preference was given to the day school teachers, where these were available. Thus a Sabbath School was formed in every district of the congregation; but there was no opportunity of knowing what progress, if any, was being made by the children, what was the quality of the instruction given. And, to make matters more

trying, there was no opportunity for my helping in the work. Hence the idea of a written examination.

The method chosen was that of the Government Examination in our High Schools. As the greater number of our Sabbath Schools are forced to close for the winter months, the written examination covers the Lessons for the summer six months, that is, from April to September, inclusive. The last Saturday of September is set apart, from the hours of two to five p.m., in all the schoolhouses, for the written examination. All the day school teachers are notified by letter beforehand, and requested to give their services for the afternoon of the examination. The men of our congregation who are especially interested in Sabbath School work, act as deputy examiners, one man being sent from the manse to each school, on the day of the examination, carrying, in a sealed letter, the list of questions, and also the papers to be used by the pupils in answering the questions, all cut and bound together.

The day school teacher opens the letter, and writes on the blackboard the questions for examination. At the close of the examination, the deputy examiner returns to the manse with the papers and answers.

The written examination not only entails considerable labor, but calls for the service of an experienced and trained worker. Mrs. McQueen, a trained and experienced teacher, has charge of this work. The setting of the questions and the examination of the answers are under her sole care. After trial, it was found necessary to set two papers, one for seniors,—those twelve years old and above,—and one for juniors,—those under twelve years. Ten questions are set, covering the work of the whole six months, the maximum marks being 100. In the annual printed report of the congregation, the pupils are classed according to merit, the number of marks obtained being recorded after the name of each pupil. The schools are then classed according to the percentage of marks obtained.

After six years of experience, we are prepared to say that the written examination yields the most satisfactory results:

1. It has awakened a desire for definite Bible study.