

indeed from all the ordinary forms of work, annoyed me one evening after church by whispering in my ear, "I took some good tracts and visited thirty or forty rum shops, and gave them a few of the tracts, and asked them to have mercy on those who must suffer from this traffic. They were all polite to me." There was a character of remarkable firmness, matronly dignity and power, but her ways were her own. Some church members are utterly useless unless you have on hand a little work for the poor. A few old garments to patch are an inspiration to them greater than a prayer meeting. How their fingers fly, and their tongues too, about the gores, and—well, to tell the truth, those pieces and patches I know as little of as they know how to patch up a sermon.

The Sabbath-school can readily keep up these sub-divisions of labor, and thus give play to a very large range of individualities.

George B. is a capital singer; he is not much else unfortunately, has had no early culture, and does not take kindly to later culture. He is meddlesome and troublesome if unemployed. Why not set him to teach a class of little ones the rudiments of music. They can meet him once a week and do him some good, as well as prepare for future usefulness. I am sure that I lack in inventive skill to find out a wide enough range of Christian activities, else every one of my school would be at work in a telling way. As it is, a few do not seem to find a place. I am sure there is something in them, for they are now busybodies in other people's matters. They are the most restless, tireless of all in the school. Deacon B. is general critic. How would it do to put him in office formally; instal him as fault finder. Perhaps it might make him less troublesome. Dr. S. is the one who uniformly votes no. It is his office to sustain the negative. Mrs. N. is a very superior specimen of pure lake-ice. The hottest summer of loving work and grand success, or of severe want, never thaws the lady. She cools our teachers' meetings completely. We have half a dozen for whom I have failed to find just the place. Does not some one need them? For the young

converts there is nothing like work. Just as soon as one of them can be interested, deeply, in some friend, and set at work to win him to a better life, he is gaining strength. He may not be old enough to teach when quite old enough to save souls.

"Christian activities!" these are what we want, a large range of them, to give play to a large range of characters.

Reading and Thinking.

SUNDAY-SCHOOL teachers are often hurried in the preparation of their lessons, diffident of their own ability, and perhaps unaccustomed to independent thinking. They are, therefore, under a strong temptation to resort to commentaries, first and last for their ideas. We say temptation, because the habit of yielding involves the loss of a great good. If it were only last, never first, it would be quite otherwise. But thoughts received at second hand can never have the peculiar interest and power derived from the fresh suggestions of the living Word. Reading can never take the place of thinking. The truth is well told in these words:

Bacon asserts that reading makes a full man; but without digestion fullness is dyspepsia, and creates sleepiness and inert fat, incapable of action. Hazlitt says you might as well ask the paralytic to leap from his chair and throw away his crutch, or, without a miracle, to take up his bed and walk, as to expect the learned reader to throw down his book and think for himself. He is a borrower of sense. He has no ideas of his own, and must live on those of others. The habit of supplying our ideas from foreign sources enfeebles all internal strength of thought, as a course of dram-drinking destroys the tone of the stomach. The Word of God is pre-eminently a book for direct reading, and is never known in its glory if received through another man's comment. Pure and cool are its streams if we drink immediately from the well-head, but when the precious crystal has long stood in earthen vessels its freshness is gone; the truth is there, perhaps, but not the life. We should let texts lie on our hearts till they melt into them, like snow-flakes dissolving into the soil.—*Christian Advocate.*