

baby. Hadn't we better adopt it?" But the Executive Committee looked wise, shook its head and said: "No, we had better not adopt it; but we will recommend it."

And they did.

Then, of course, the different States and provincial associations heard of the baby, and took a look at it, and they said: "What a grand baby! Look at the head on him! There is good, hard sense in it! Look at his feet! Why, he has 'religion in the soul,' sure enough"—and they spelled it "s-o-l-e." "And just feel his pulse once. What a heart he has! Let us help nurse him; let us rock the cradle; let us adopt him as an association measure and push him to the front."

And they did.

Well, time moved on, as it always does, and so did the baby.

One day one of the "leading denominations" went out for a walk, and so did the baby. They met each other in the road, and Mr. Leading Denomination stopped and looked at the child; then stepped forth and said, "Who are you?" The child made answer:

"I am the son of Dr. W. A. Duncan, of Syracuse, N.Y. I am travelling through the country, not for my own health, but for the health of the churches and the Sunday-schools. I advocate the open Bible in the home, the study of the regular Sunday-school lesson every week in the home by persons who either cannot or will not attend the main school."

"What is your name?" asked Mr. L. D.

"My name is Home Department of the Sunday-school."

"Well," said Mr. L. D., "you have a good name, you are good-looking, and you are in a good business. Come along with me. We need you. I want to introduce you to our Conference."

As that was just what the sturdy youth had long been waiting for and hoping for, he went right along; and when the Conference got a square look at him they saw the beauty of him, the power of him, and felt the need for him, and they said, "Let us adopt and recommend him, and urge our Sunday-schools to use him, and send in reports of his work."

And they did.

Long live the Home Department! I verily believe it is destined to do as much good in the world as its more lively and precocious twin sister, "Christian Endeavour"—by whatever name she may now be called.—Pilgrim Teacher.

Don't Close the School.

The season approaches at which a few of our rural schools close for the winter. The reasons usually given for this step are that the weather is cold and the roads are bad. Having had some experience and observation in this very matter, we are inclined to believe that in many cases these are not the true reasons. They furnish good occasions for other causes to operate, but they are not themselves the prime causes.

The principle cause leading to the close of a Sunday-school for the winter is that it was a poor school through the summer. If there is maintained throughout the spring and summer a deep and genuine interest on the part of teachers in the work of rearing a generation in the knowledge and love of God's word, the teachers will be relied upon for the continuance of that work throughout the year. If this spirit and this work have been duly responded to by the pupils, so that they have worked faithfully and have felt the dignity of enlarging knowledge and the joy of a growing religious experience, the pupils will be unwilling and even ashamed to desert such engagements for the slight discomfort caused to vigorous young life by the weather and the roads. These same young people, if they were denied the pleasure of assembling in midwinter parties of a social kind because the weather was bad and the roads rough, would wonder why they are required to do a thousand and one other things with greater exposure in the same kind of weather and over the same rough roads. And does any superintendent or parent suppose that these young people fail to see the logic of the course pursued in regard to the Sunday-school? What we need is to be thoroughly honest with ourselves in this matter. If on any Sabbath the weather and roads are actually too bad for us to encounter, then for that day stay in the house and use the time for further study of the lesson and in preparing the lesson for the next week. In this way the staying at home will be providential, will need no explanation, and will do no serious harm. But when parents and teachers agree to deliberately abandon this kind of work for a whole season for fear the weather and the roads may interfere, we fear there is something in that community colder than the weather and rougher than the roads.