

Home Department.—How to Organize a County.

The Home Department work was first started in Conitcook some five years ago. At a meeting of the Sunday-school workers, representing three Sunday-schools, a committee was appointed to canvass the village to secure names of those not attending Sunday-school and would take home study of the lessons. Having completed the canvass, a superintendent was appointed from each school, the names secured, distributed according to their expressed choice. The result was about 100 taking home study. The work thus begun was continued with about the same number of members, they being visited by the superintendents and assistants and supplied with lesson helps, and report of study and contributions gathered.

Two years ago the executive of our County Association decided to make a county canvass. A Christian worker was employed, under the direction of a committee appointed by the executive. The course pursued was to visit each school, call a meeting of the workers, explain the nature and object of the work, secure if possible the appointment of a superintendent and assistants, and spend at least one half day with each in canvassing in their district, usually spending about two days in connection with each school, and leaving them to complete the work and continue to visit the members quarterly and supply them with helps, gather reports and their free contributions, giving them such help and encouragement as suited to their needs.

In this canvass of about eleven weeks some 35 schools and about 500 families were visited, 25 Home Departments organized, with nearly 500 members. The cost was about \$90, raised by private subscription, mostly before the work was begun.

Last year the work was repeated. A lady was employed to revisit those organized, encourage and assist the superintendents in their work, revive some which had dropped the work, and organize new Home Departments. The time occupied in this canvass, not quite two months; results, resuscitating eight Departments, which had ceased the work, and gaining 380 new members; the expense of this canvass, about \$70.

We have now in the county 35 Home Departments, organized with membership of about 700. There are in the county 50 Sunday-schools, about 2,500 membership, besides Home Department members. Ten of the schools are Episcopal, which do not affiliate with us in Home Department work. While some superintendents have not had the success they could desire, and some became discouraged and dropped the work, yet there are many pursuing the work with earnest zeal and grand success, and great good is resulting from this department of Sunday-school work.

In our own town the work begun five years ago has continued to grow in interest and usefulness. Bible study is taken up in many homes where before it was neglected. The visits of the Christian ladies who distribute the helps and literature carry blessing to many homes and hearts, and the visitor in carrying light and sunshine and sympathy to those shut in, receives rich blessing herself.

A school of about 70 has a Home Department with 50 members, all of whom she visited personally once or more during the summer, and all are supplied regularly with Quarterlys.

One Sunday-school of about 100 scholars had a Home Department with 25 members in the fall of 1896, and 48 in the fall of 1897; has now 80 members, and great interest is manifest in the lesson study.

In starting this work, no doubt better results would be attained if a canvasser were employed to canvass the entire county or district for which she is employed, assisted by those who are appointed by the schools as superintendents of the work, as sometimes the canvass is not completed by those in charge of the class or members. But while a general canvass is desirable, yet any church or Sunday-school, or any Christian worker in church or school may take up the work and make it a blessing in the community.

In selecting superintendents and visitors it is important that we select the best and most consecrated Christian workers in the church or school. Many homes are neglecting the study of the Word of God, many hearts are waiting and ready to receive the help and encouragement the Christian visitor can give.

Too many people are electric lights in prayer-meeting and tallow dips at home.