

if we may not say the most effective, college of Christian teachers in this century that the world has yet produced.

Glance at the one million of voluntary Sunday-school teachers, bending over the pages of the Bible with the immediate object of bringing its sacred truths into contact with fifteen million pupils. Grant that it may be rightfully claimed that, without the theological seminary and the ordained ministry, as this country enjoys them, the world would sink back into unbelief, infidelity and barbarism. Still, we maintain, that without this spiritual host, the home and foreign missionary societies could not maintain their present standard, much less furnish a ministry commensurate with the wants of the race.

But perhaps we should more clearly present the intrinsic value of this movement by enumerating the increase in the missionary societies it has begotten since its influence has begun to be felt. At the beginning of the century there were seven missionary societies; now there are 147, not to count many of the smaller ones.

But the reader is ready to inquire, Have not other causes beside the Sunday-school produced all this?

As we have admitted above, other centuries have had Bible teaching, more or less effective in given localities; but may we not justly claim that there has been no such uniform progression as that which we now behold, and which we attribute to the institution whose results we are here reviewing. Holland, Germany, Sweden—in short, all the countries of Europe—have had more or less of a preached gospel; but, until the latter part of this century, it may be doubted, if not disbelieved, that there has been any ascertainable ratio of progress. This was not from the want of general intelligence, nor even adequate civilization, but from a want of zeal produced by efficient lay teaching.

But if we contrast more specifically the moral condition of England and America in the year 1800 with their present condition, and state the change which, if rightly claimed, have been the fruit of the Sunday-school, we shall have before us the grounds of encouragement, which will not only enable us to anticipate what the Sunday-school is yet to be, both in its home and foreign work, but also the help that it shall give to every other religious enterprise which shall bless the future of our race.

While at the demand of the Sunday-school community, England organized her British and Foreign Bible Society for the supply of Sunday-schools with Bibles, she has taken in turn some of our Sunday-school improvements and adopted our public school system, and, in general, the improvement in her institutions has been little less than our own; we shall only have space to chronicle the noble inventory applicable to our own country.

We have taken the accumulated corrupt populations of the old world and made of them a country that, morally, will favorably compare, if we may not say, greatly transcend, any country in the world. We have peopled a territory equal in extent, and nearly equal in population, to any other civilized country, and elevated it into a free Republic, with institutions of learning equal, if not superior, to any other on the globe. We have transplanted the seedlings of liberty from our Eastern border on the Atlantic to the Pacific slope, and there placed the Sunday-school, the State, for the occupancy of future millions. Our Sunday-schools have originated seventy-five per cent. of the churches in the Western States, there to develop and guarantee the future perpetuity of our nation. In the hour of trial these Western States sent the force necessary to help the East in working out the problem of the freedom of more than four millions of slaves.