

The Next International S. S. Convention.

THE Executive Committee of the International Sunday School Convention held an important session at Chautauqua, August 8th and 9th. Fifteen members were in attendance, representing thirteen different States, and the District of Columbia, and the Province of New Brunswick, and Dominion of Canada. An important part of the committee's work was the general outlining or plan of programme for the next international gathering. It is too early yet to speak of the plan, as the details are left to a sub-committee or further arrangement. The next meeting of the International Convention will occur at Louisville, Kentucky, on the 11th, 12th, and 13th days of June, 1884.

We have just had the pleasure of visiting Louisville, and no more central or delightful place could be found for the Convention. We are sure that the large-hearted hospitality of our Southern friends will give as cordial a welcome to visitors from the North as we had the pleasure of giving them in Toronto at the last Convention.

The Prepared Class.

A TEACHER should prepare *himself* for his work; he should prepare his materials for teaching; and he should prepare the lesson. But it is certainly of importance that he should have a prepared class; that his scholars should be under proper authority, willing to learn, and that they should themselves be prepared with their own contribution to the general stock of knowledge, exposition, and illustration of the lesson. It is no slight gain to a teacher when the spirit and temper of the scholars are right. Then the good ground is ready for the good seed. But it is doleful work when Sunday after Sunday time has to be spent in subduing disorder before a lesson can be given.

Such a prepared class would not only be a blessing in the Sunday School itself, but its members would be witnesses for Christ in their study of His Holy Word at home. It is no slight matter that there are so many of the houses of irreligious parents in which attention is gained for the Bible by the reading of it by children who are Sunday School scholars.

The prepared class in the school will be a permanent blessing to the Church. It will train youths to study truths, the doctrines of Christianity, and the various subjects relating to religion, so that in after years they will be thoughtful and intelligent hearers in the congregation.

Such thorough preparation as is most desirable is not gained by mere human effort. No matter how docile a scholar, or how able a teacher, the great want is the influence of the Holy Spirit. In these times we are in danger of over-estimating the importance of literary preparation, and personal decency of behaviour; and of thinking too little of the need and power of the Holy

Spirit. And yet we should let our history as a people teach and admonish us.

The vital power of Methodism must be sought—not in its form, but in its spirit. It is the result, not of the work of great men, but of the Holy Ghost. Our work is over if we begin to trust on human expedients, and turn aside in the least from Him who was the strength of our fathers. In school as in chapel, among scholars as among congregations, we have a definite aim and work. We have to save souls. We may try many plans, but we have only the same Gospel to preach that was the power of God unto salvation among us from the first, and we must seek to have our hearers and our pupils prepared of the Holy Spirit. We wish to bring our scholars to the faith of Christ. But religious faith is not a mere logical conviction. We make our appeal to youths as well as to men—to the spiritual nature, laying not much stress on mere technical theology or learned distinctions as a qualification for saving souls; and if, to use the striking words carved on Philip Embury's tomb, in America, we are "to beautify the earth with salvation," we must ourselves be prepared, and our classes must be prepared by the blessing of the Holy Spirit, who shall teach us the whole truth and guide us.

The "Prepared Class," then, will be one disciplined in good order; interested in the work of the day; diligent in preparatory study of the lesson; not negligent of mental improvement; not forgetful to read good and helpful books; and above all, under religious influence and the influence of the Lord. Of such a class there may be members who are not consciously under this Divine influence, who may not pray for it, but for whom the blessing may be gained in answer to the earnest prayers of pious teachers and fellow-scholars.—*Wesleyan S. S. Magazine.*

The Prepared Teacher.

MUCH is said now-a-days about preparation classes, preparation of lessons, and so forth, with reference to Sunday School work; and the importance of the subject cannot be very well overstated, but it is just possible that if it be the one chief theme of conventions and speakers, other thoughts of great importance will be kept in the rear, and mischief will follow.

Surely before a teacher prepares the materials out of which a lesson is to be built, and before he prepares the lesson itself, he should prepare himself. A prepared teacher is as necessary as a prepared lesson. It is in the class as it is in the pulpit, the man should be adapted for his work. The best teacher is the one who not only can give a good lesson, but who is a lesson.

As a rule, a good Providence indicates our work and place, and if every one to whom direction is given to work in our schools would watch honestly for the sign, and obey the injunction, there would soon be a noble contingent of the Lord's army coming forth to do valiant things for Him in this department of toil. But God signals to many who will not see. They look to the signals as Nelson did at Trafalgar when he