

ebb tide, in England and America, the flood to which is the lay teaching of the nineteenth century, as will be shown later.

All along the line of Christian history there have been both men and times that have clearly indicated reforms, in Church and State, which seemed to give gleams of hope that a permanent day was soon to dawn. But these partial hopes have been revived only to be more or less clouded; not until the year 1800, when the influence of the Sabbath-school first began to be felt in England and America, was there anything to prevent the relapses that had so often darkened, not to say dissipated, the expectations which immediately followed the face-to-face teaching and preaching of the primitive Church.

A glance at the history of that day would indicate a darkness that could only be penetrated by some new luminary; and if this light was to be permanent, it must be kept so by a more widespread teaching of the new Testament than the schools of learning had hitherto furnished. True, the gospel had been faithfully preached by many most efficient teachers, but only in important centers; and Church history had not developed an almost costless theory, which, like the first teaching of the gospel, should be commensurate with the wants of the entire race. We shall endeavor to show that this achievement has been accomplished, and may, in a high, natural, and important sense, be attributed to the Sabbath-school organization of the nineteenth century.

What could be more natural than that the immediate fruit of this teaching to the masses should revive a missionary spirit, which is the glory of our century; and that this struggle of men and women to bring souls to Christ, should give to the general proclamation of the truth a power that it never had before, and create a sympathy that would not rest until every individual bought by the blood of Christ was brought within its influences.

Nor is it but natural when this sympathy of the pew with the pulpit, and the masses with the Sunday-school teacher is once created, that the funds should not be wanting; stimulating, not preceding, the personal moral force, the lack of which would make money a curse instead of a blessing for the accomplishment of every reform of the Church, if we should not add, of the State?

May we be forgiven for pausing here a moment to complain of our good magazine writers, of the statisticians or statistical writers of our age, of the professors of learning, nay, of the Church at large, in that the Sunday-school is ignored by them, its teachers held to be a non-commissioned band; although it is one of the greatest of moral forces, holding in its hand, in England and America alone, 16,000,000 of teachers and pupils. If the critical scholar shall, as we have said, claim that to other causes may be attributed the moral force which we have attributed to the Sunday-school, we will imperatively demand that they show us these causes and their capacity to do it; and if this can be done successfully, then we may not close our Sunday-schools but will add to them their better theories of lay labor.

While we are thus pleading for the greatness of our organization, let us not overlook the fact that it has grown out of the simple command, "Go teach!" and not "Go organize!" The first was insisted upon by Christ and His apostles, and the latter was left to such organization only as should preserve the spirit of the first great commandment; and obedience to this command is the only guarantee of its capability of universal expansion. Nor can it be denied that such is the educative power of teaching that the Sunday-school has furnished in its reflexive influence the broadest and the best,