

look upon as ensuring its efficiency and influence. It is true many appear to regard these things as essentials. How anxious are congregations to secure the services of the most eloquent ministers,—of those who are best adapted for pleasing the popular ear, and drawing crowds. Is it not the case, too, that ministers frequently estimate too highly the mere social position or worldly influence of their adherents? But in point of fact it will be found that in many, yea in most cases of remarkable success in the gathering of souls, the honor has not been put on mere eloquence or intellectual superiority. Many of those in the present day who are most highly honored in the spiritual harvest are in no degree remarkable for anything but their earnestness. Again, it will be found, on bringing the matter to the test of actual experience, that the congregations that have done most for the work of God, have often been not the most wealthy, or those that have stood highest in the social scale, but those mainly dependent for their support and means on the contributions of comparatively poor but devoted followers of the Lord,—of those who have known the grace of the Lord Jesus.

We believe the principal requisite for real strength and prosperity is, that the members of the church be all WORKING MEMBERS. One of the most serious defects in many churches is, that the work is left to a few, perhaps to the pastor and two or three elders, and Sabbath school teachers. The great body of the people do little or nothing. Some are really obstructives, and do little but find fault. The great mass appear to think that it is sufficient for them to enjoy their privileges, without exerting themselves in any way for the advancement of the work of the Lord. But there is gross inconsistency in such conduct. It is the duty and privilege of all the disciples of the Lord to be fellow-workers in the extension of His kingdom. It should be the enquiry of each true disciple—"Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" In the best days of the church, work was not confined to the ministry and office-bearers, and Sabbath school teachers. In the sixteenth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans we find mentioned the names of many private members of the church, females as well as males, who were "fellow-helpers to the truth." So it should be still. We do not mean that there should be any over-stepping of bounds, or any overthrowing of the established order of things. We do not mean that the office of preaching is to be assumed by all and

sundry. But there are various ways in which the talents of all may be called forth, and we look upon it as peculiarly desirable and necessary that pastors and elders should give their attention to this matter, and seek to set all to work in some way or other. The rising generation must be trained. It may be a work that can only be gradually accomplished. But it should be undertaken, and we believe those ministers will really be the most useful, whether they are the most popular or not, who will give their serious attention to this matter, and make it their study to set their members, and especially the younger members, at work for Christ and for the advancement of His cause. What a power might be exerted by the smallest and poorest of our congregations were the members all influenced by a spirit of genuine benevolence and devotedness! What a mighty influence for good might a church exert that was thus characterized! We have to some extent an illustration of this in what has been done by the Moravians. Numerically they are one of the very smallest christian denominations. They are not distinguished for wealth, or learning, or worldly influence. But they are all working members, and the consequence is that they have been eminently successful as a church, and most highly honored in their missionary efforts. Their missionaries are found in some of the most distant and dreary outposts, and no church has been more signally blessed in promoting the kingdom of the Redeemer. Let us imitate their example, and let us imitate the zeal of the early christians, who were constrained by the love of Christ to live not unto themselves but unto Him who loved them and gave himself for them.

SABBATH SCHOOLS.

The subject of Sabbath Schools has been regularly brought before our supreme courts from year to year. As yet, however, we have not succeeded in securing that general efficiency, uniformity and completeness, which are desirable. The reports laid before the Synod, indeed, indicate that there is much room for improvement. A committee has been wisely appointed to whom the subject has been entrusted, and a full and satisfactory report, capable of being reduced to practice, will doubtless be submitted next June. Meanwhile it will prove beneficial and preparatory to mature action hereafter, if Presbyteries take up the subject in conference, and endeavor to have the subject brought before the sessions, and the teachers of the congregations and stations within their bounds.

There are several things which will tend much to the efficiency of our Sabbath schools, among these are—1. Uniformity in instruction. 2. The presentation of the whole system of divine truth. 3. Systematic progress in the instruction.

In order to attain these ends, it is manifest that attention must be paid to the Class-Books, &c.; and the library and monthly periodical also will not be overlooked. To the subject of Class-Books, however, we now wish to invite attention.

The systems of lessons used in our schools are very various. 1. That by Rev. Mr. Gregg, prepared for the Presbyterian Church of Canada. 2. That by Mr. Topp, of Toronto. 3. That of the Glasgow Sabbath School Union. 4. That of the Edinburgh Sabbath School Union. 5. That of Mr. Kennedy, of the *Evangelizer*. 6. American systems, &c., &c. Surely it would be far better if the Synod were to recommend one system to all the congregations. We have no preference for one above another, but we have seen lately the Edinburgh Series, published by Gall & Inglis, and have learned that a sufficient quantity can easily be obtained to supply all our schools. The seventh series begins with 1861. But we in Canada could easily introduce it in 1862, and thus be just one year behind the church at home. Full notes for aiding teachers in preparing the lesson—a list of Doctrines, to be proved, —texts or Psalms to be learnt,—and the questions of the Shorter Catechism arranged for each Sabbath of the year, constitute the course. To the end is added a scheme of the lessons, doctrines, texts and questions, which it is intended the pupils shall receive quarterly, so that they and their parents may always know the lessons for the day. By adopting such a course, unity would be secured in the whole school, the younger pupils taking only such part of the exercises as they may be able for. These "Notes on Bible Lessons" may be obtained from Hallowell & Adams, Toronto, or D. McLellan, Hamilton, and we would earnestly recommend pastors and teachers to obtain specimen numbers and satisfy themselves in regard to them.

In order to secure the presentation of the whole truth of God in a systematic form, the Presbyterian Church has ever used catechisms. Something simpler is needed for infants; then the Shorter Catechism, then the Proof Catechism, and last of all, in some Bible classes, the Confession of Faith, have been used as text books. The Mothers' Catechism and the Short Catechism for Children are felt by many teachers to have grave defects, arising chiefly from the