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Sunday School Banner.

W. H. WITHROW, D.D., EDITOR.

TORONTO, DECEMBER, 1889.

Report of Secretary of the Sunday-school Board for the Year Ending July 1st, 1889.

THE OPERATIONS of the Sunday-school Board of the Methodist Church during the past year exhibit a very gratifying increase in extent and usefulness. In every department of our Sunday-school work there has been marked progress. It is cause for devout gratitude to God that year after year we are enabled to report a continuous increase in the number of schools, in the number of scholars, and in the number of teachers and officers. The number of scholars enrolled is 218,381, an increase of 7,557. The number of teachers and officers is 27,238, an increase of 1,113, or together, 245,619, an increase of 8,670, in 2,922 schools.

The most gratifying feature of all is that, through the blessing of God upon the self-denying labors of these devoted teachers, 9,728 conversions are reported among the scholars, with 36,166 meetings in class. Although 29,876 scholars are reported as learning the Methodist Catechism, it is felt that the number should be much larger, and teachers are earnestly requested to do all that they can to promote the study of that invaluable compendium of Christian doctrine. In order that every facility may be afforded for the study of the Catechism, the questions are printed in the Sunday-school papers, which circulate in the schools to the extent of over 300,000 copies every Lord's-day.

THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL AID AND EXTENSION FUND.

The number of grants to new or poor schools have reached the large amount of \$2,781.74. The fund had thus been enabled to assist with grants of books and papers a very large number of very poor schools, and to promote to a great extent the establishment of new schools in destitute neighborhoods where none previously existed. This fund pays also for the printing and mailing of Sunday-school schedules and reports, and for express charges and postage on donations of Sunday school libraries. For these there are always numerous requests, and schools replenishing the libraries can do much good by sending their old books to the Secretary of the Board.

TEMPERANCE IN THE SCHOOLS.

It is cause for congratulation that our schools are so efficient in inculcating temperance principles and in pledging the scholars against the twin evils—intoxicating liquor and tobacco. During the year 36,166 are recorded as having taken the temperance and anti-tobacco pledge. This number, added to those previously recorded, makes a great army of pledged abstainers, who in a few years will exert a great influence in public and private life—at the polls and in the homes—against the national evil and crime—the liquor traffic.

MISSIONS.

The amount raised for missions during the year is \$27,851.62. But this is very unequally distributed. The Montreal Conference leads the van with \$6,338. Of this Montreal District raises nearly half, or \$2,902, showing that may be accomplished by systematic effort. Toronto Conference comes next with \$4,418, of which the two Toronto Districts raise \$2,697. Thus these two Conferences raise \$10,756, against \$17,105 raised by all the others. Were all the schools to do as well as those in these two Conferences, the missionary income would be very largely increased. Nevertheless in this respect there is a very marked improvement, the missionary givings of the schools having increased about 70 per cent. since the Union of 1883.

LIBRARIES.

The work accomplished by our schools in supplying instructive and interesting reading, often of a direct religious tendency, is often overlooked or underestimated. The number of books reported in the library is 248,177. The schools are also, more largely than ever, drawing their supplies of books from the publishing houses established by the Church, and they thus possess a better guarantee as to the religious character of the books than when they are purchased from irresponsible houses.

SUNDAY-SCHOOL PERIODICALS.

The circulation of these papers continues steadily to increase, year after year, till now we think there is no Church in Christendom