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The Sunday School Banner.

W. H. WITHEROW, D.D., Editor.

TORONTO, OCTOBER, 1883.

Progress of our Sunday School Work.

THE Sunday School work of our Church continues to exhibit very gratifying progress, as is indicated by the statistics submitted to the late Conferences.

The most encouraging feature of all is that the number of conversions reported during the year is 4,022, being an increase of 389 over those of the previous year.

No department of our general Sunday School work exhibits more rapid development than the circulation of our connexional Sunday School literature. The reports show a decrease in the circulation of other papers besides our own, to the extent of 7,896, but their place has been taken by an increased circulation of our own papers of 16,391. But since those statistics were collected, in April and May, the circulation

of our own Sunday School periodicals has further increased from 93,559, the number then reported from the three Western Conferences, so that now the issue to all the Conferences has reached 174,900. Still the fact that 21,702 copies of other papers were taken in these Western Conferences shows that there is yet much to be done—in which the aid of the ministers is invoked—to secure the patronage of our own schools for our own connexional literature.

It may safely be asserted that for amount of matter, style of illustration, general character and price, our own periodicals will challenge comparison with any that are published; indeed, I believe them to be the cheapest in the world. They will be found, moreover, loyal to the institutions of our own country, and to the doctrines of Methodism, while the foreign papers patronized by some of our Schools are often hostile to both. Even were our papers only equal to others, the special prominence given to the missionary and other interests of our own Church should secure their support in preference to others.

For the first time the number of scholars having taken the temperance and anti-tobacco pledge is given. The number reported is 6,680, which it is hoped will be largely increased, as the Sunday School papers are most pronounced in their inculcation of temperance principles.

There is one more topic to which very serious consideration is invited. There are a very large number of appointments—there must be some hundreds in the aggregate—in connection with which no Sunday Schools are yet organized. These are chiefly in the missions in the more recently settled parts of the country, and in its more sparsely settled regions. The assistance of the ministers is urgently solicited, that in every place where there is Methodist preaching there may also be a Methodist Sunday School. It is in helping this work that the Sunday School Aid and Extension Fund has been most useful in the past, and may be expected to be increasingly useful in the future. Scores of new Schools have been established by its help. If brethren will only organize, in every place where even a handful of children can be gathered, a school under Methodist management, the Society will grant liberal aid in the way of Sunday School helps.

PUT a man into a factory as ignorant how to prepare fabrics as some teachers are to watch the growing of juvenile minds, and what havoc would be made of the raw material!—*Horace Mann.*