

Sabbath-School Conventions;

THEIR IMPORTANCE AND OBJECTS, AND THE BEST METHOD OF CONDUCTING THEM.

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One of the most wonderful facts to be observed in the Christian Church of the present day is the position occupied by the Sabbath-school. Of comparatively recent origin, it embraces a million of teachers and six millions of pupils. A power in the old and wealthy congregation, an important agency in the new and struggling Mission Station; an angel of light and joy to the dens of wretchedness in the crowded city, and a messenger of glad tidings to the distant country settlement, its blessed influence has grown with astonishing rapidity; and its results in proportion to the mental and pecuniary wealth of capital employed, have shown it to be an evangelistic agency of high value to the Church of Christ. In the creation of a new literature of most extensive influence, in re-modelling Church Architecture, in rapidity of growth, in vastness of equipment, and power of earnest working, it stands alone, as the great fact of the day.

The great object of the Sabbath-School enterprise is the salvation of the young. We seek to lay hold of the young life and have it given to Jesus; to reach the fountain of influence in the human mind, and impress it for eternal life. A pebble or a few grains of sand may decide whether the rain drops falling on the crest of the Rocky Mountains shall flow Westward to the Pacific Ocean, or Eastward to the Gulf of Mexico, but let the little rills combine into the broad and deep river, and what power can turn it from its course? So a gentle influence may turn the tender heart of the child into a heavenward course, but if that child is left alone until evil passions have grown strong, these passions become like the irresistible river. To draw the lambs to Jesus, to labour for the development and training and working out of a Christian character, and to train up the youth to a ripe Bible scholarship are the aims of Sabbath-School workers. Who then are qualified for such a work? In the urgent call for labourers many must be employed who have not had great advantages in early life as regards scholarship, and comparatively few have had much experience in the principles and practice of Sabbath School teaching. They may have a fair education, they may be careful students of the Bible, and they may be earnestly pious, but without experience or special training, they work at a sad disadvantage either in the general management of a Sabbath-School, or in the teaching of a class. Even were opportunities of training in all the qualifications of good teachers much more abundant than they are, a very great deficiency would be practically felt, arising from the rapid development of the Sabbath-School work, and the wide extent of its field of operation. To be a good Sabbath-School teacher involves a number of qualifications, as, earnest piety, a good education