

THE
BIBLICAL REPERTORY, AND THEOLOGICAL
REVIEW.

FOR APRIL 1830.

CHURCH MUSIC.

How shall a reform in the music of our churches be effected?

In a former number of this Journal, we endeavoured to show, by comparing the original design of church music with the art in its present state, that a reform is both necessary and practicable. The argument, thus far, we presume, has been satisfactory. But here, in the minds of many, a serious difficulty presents itself. A good thing, which is in its own nature practicable, cannot always be carried into effect against the habits and prejudices of the community. To obviate this difficulty, it is necessary to show, somewhat in detail, how a reform can be effected. This is the object of the present article.

We shall take it for granted that in the present day of activity, some share of enterprise and self-denial might be easily enlisted in favour of a reform in church music, if once its full importance were to be distinctly seen. There are men in our country who know how to give an impulse that will be felt in every portion of the land. Only let it be seen that such an impulse is really needed, that the best interests of religion and of good order in the community require it, and the thing will be certainly done.

dently possessed of a strong, clear, discriminating mind, appears sincere in the pursuit of truth, and evinces an extensive acquaintance with writers of mental philosophy. We most cheerfully recommend his work to the attention of the public.

THE AMERICAN SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION.

*The Annual Reports of the American Sunday School Union,
from 1825 to 1829 inclusive.*

In perusing the history of mankind, from their origin down through the successive ages to the present, we find scarcely any fact so much calculated to arrest our attention as the occurrence of discoveries and inventions whose effects upon society have far exceeded the expectations, and even conceptions, of those by whom they were made. To prove this assertion, we might refer to a hundred instances, in which results have flowed from the inventions which science, or experiment, first indicated, which never had a place even in the excited imaginations of their sanguine authors. Little did Schwartz, or Guthenberg, or Galileo, or Copernicus, or Jenner, or Harvey, or Newton, or Franklin, or Arkwright, or Watt*, or Lancaster, conceive of the stupendous consequences which have resulted from their wonderful inventions and discoveries.

Even the *moral* and *political*, not less than what may be denominated the *physical*, history of man, strikingly illustrates the truth of the remark which is contained in our first sentence. How often has the adoption of principles in morals and religion, which seemed in themselves to be purely speculative, and comparatively unimportant, produced, by the doctrines inferred from them, the most astonishing

* The inventor of steam engines constructed upon the principle now universally adopted.

effects upon the opinions and conduct of men! And have not the assumption of certain abstract political principles or axioms, and the inferences which have been deduced from them, broken up long established orders of things, and overturned, and are destined still to overturn, the thrones of kings, and even to obliterate the very names of regal authority?

And even those remarkable events which characterize the more recent history of our race, and which, one would suppose, were likely, from their nature, to excite the highest anticipations of those who were actors in them, might be adduced to show how far the results have transcended the thoughts and expectations of those by whom they were brought about. Ardent as was the mind of Columbus, little did he dream of the amazing consequences which have resulted to mankind, and will yet result to the latest period of time, from the discovery of the continent which we inhabit. Little did the pilgrim fathers of our country foresee of the grand, and truly astonishing, effects which their faith, and zeal, and love of liberty of conscience, were destined to accomplish upon the history of mankind. Strong as was their faith, and large as were their hopes of great and good results to the church of Christ and to posterity, which they believed would flow from their self-denial, and patience, and zeal for God and his religion; could they have foreseen what has since been evolved in the dispensations of the Highest in regard to his church and the world, as the rewards of their labours and sufferings;—the re-establishment of freedom upon the earth, and the revival and wide diffusion of the religion of the gospel, which have followed their settlement in this western world;—they would have breasted the difficulties which they had to encounter, with redoubled (if possible) alacrity and perseverance. Little did that band of devoted Christians, which met in London in 1804 to provide means to supply the poor in Wales with Bibles, expect that their deliberations would issue in the formation of a Bible Society to supply the whole world with the sacred scriptures; and that before a quarter of a century should elapse, nearly ten millions of copies of the sacred oracles should be distributed among the nations, by the influence of that society, and that they should hear of whole states, and even an *entire nation of twelve millions of inhabitants, resolving to supply every destitute family within their boundaries, with the holy Chart of life!* And little did the origi-

nator of Sabbath schools know what an instrument he had found for the moral renovation of the world, when he first resolved to carry into operation the idea which a benignant providence suggested to his mind !

Having made these remarks, which we deem not inappropriate as preliminary to the consideration of the interesting subject which we are about to discuss, we proceed to take an extended view of Sabbath schools, and particularly of the noble Institution named at the head of this article, and whose annual reports we have recently re-perused with great delight. And that our remarks may be somewhat methodically arranged, we shall consider this subject under a variety of aspects.

I. *We shall give, in the first place, a cursory view of the origin and progress of Sabbath schools.*

With regard to the inquiry, "who was the founder of Sabbath schools," we have some hesitation in saying that this high honour must be accorded to him whose claims to it seem to be almost universally admitted to be valid. We mean the late Robert Raikes, Esq. of the city of Gloucester in England. For Sabbath schools were unquestionably established throughout the diocese of Milan, a most beautiful and fertile region included between the Alps and the Apennines, by Charles Borromeo, Archbishop of that diocese, in the sixteenth century. But these schools were designed mainly, as far as we can learn, to instruct youth in the rudiments of the Christian religion, and, particularly, in the peculiar tenets of the Roman Catholic faith. They were therefore chiefly catechetical; and although reading and writing were taught in them, yet instruction in the Catholic catechism appears to have been the primary object. The following extract of a letter written in the year 1823, during a tour in Italy, by the Rev. Daniel Wilson, the excellent author of the "Evidences of Christianity," a brief notice of which is contained in our last number, gives us some interesting intelligence respecting these schools.

"After our English service, we went to see the catechizing. This was founded by Borromeo in the sixteenth century, and is peculiar to Milan. The children met in classes of ten or twenty, drawn up between the pillars of the vast cathedral, and separated from each other by curtains, the boys on one side and the girls on the other. In all the churches in the city there are classes also. Many grown people are mingled with the children. A priest sat in the midst of

each class, and seemed to be familiarly explaining the Christian religion. The sight was quite interesting. Tables for learning to write were placed in different recesses. The children were exceedingly attentive. At the door of each school the words Pax Vobis, "Peace be unto you," were inscribed on boards; each scholar had a small pulpit with a green cloth in front, bearing the Borromean motto, *Humilitas*. Now, what can, in itself, be more excellent than all this? But mark the corruption of popery; these poor children are all made members of a fraternity, and purchase indulgences for their sins by coming to school! A brief of the Pope, dated 1609, affords a perpetual indulgence to the children, in a sort of running lease of six thousand years, eight thousand years, &c. and these indulgences are applicable to the recovering of souls out of purgatory; then the prayers before school are full of error and idolatry. All this I saw with my own eyes, and heard with my own ears, for I was curious to understand the bearing of these celebrated schools. Thus is the infant mind fettered and chained. Still I do not doubt that much good may be done on the whole; the Catholic catechisms contain admirable instruction, and evangelical matter, though mixed up with folly and superstition."

It appears also, from a discourse delivered at Edinburgh, before the Sabbath School Union for Scotland, by the Rev. Dr John Brown, "that the honour of establishing the first Sabbath Schools in Protestant countries, for the purpose *solely of religious instruction*, is due to Scotland."

But although it seems quite certain that Mr Raikes was not the founder of the *first* Sabbath school, yet there can be no doubt that his exertions in this noble cause led, through the Divine blessing, to the glorious result, which the world now witnesses, of nearly, if not quite, *one million seven hundred thousand youth* receiving instruction in Sabbath Schools! And as there is no reason whatever, as far as we can learn, to suppose that he knew of any similar efforts being made elsewhere, and the schools which we have mentioned, conducted as they were, were not likely to be rapidly multiplied, let the meed of praise, which is due, not be denied to Mr Raikes, certainly one of the greatest benefactors of the human race.

The incident which led Mr Raikes to engage in this work is thus related by himself. "One day in the year 1782, I went into the suburbs of my native city to hire a gardener. The man was from home; and while I waited his return, I was much disturbed by a group of noisy boys, who infested the street. I asked the gardener's wife the cause of these

children being so neglected and depraved. "Oh sir," said she, "*if you were here on a Sunday, you would pity them indeed; we cannot read our Bibles in peace for them.*" Can nothing, I asked, be done for these poor children? Is there any body near that will take them to school on Sundays? I was informed that there was a person in the neighbourhood who would probably do it. I accordingly hired a woman to teach these poor children on Sundays, and thus commenced the first Sunday school." Three other schools were shortly afterwards established in Gloucester by Mr Raikes, to which he and the Rev. Mr Stock gave much of their personal attendance every Sabbath, and superintended the instruction given, which was chiefly confined to reading, and committing to memory the Church Catechism.

Mr Raikes used to relate this anecdote, that when he was revolving in his mind the practicability of establishing a school on Sunday, the word "TRY" was so powerfully impressed on his mind as to decide him at once for action. And he remarked to a friend, "*I can never pass by the spot where the word TRY came so powerfully into my mind, without lifting up my hands and heart to Heaven, in gratitude to God for having put such a thought into my heart.*"

In the year 1785, three years after he had established these schools, Mr Raikes was induced, by seeing their happy influence upon the morals of the children and their parents, to publish in the Gloucester Journal, which he edited, some account of their success, and shortly afterwards gave a more extended account of the mode of conducting them, in a letter to Col. Townley. This letter being published in the Gentleman's Magazine and other journals throughout the kingdom, brought this novel plan and its success into universal notice, so that schools were established in all parts of England in a few years. In the same year (1785) "the Society for the establishment and support of Sunday schools throughout Great Britain," was formed; and in the succeeding year the Dean of Lincoln, and the Bishops of Salisbury and Landaff, openly espoused the cause of Sunday schools. And so did Bishop Porteus, then Bishop of Chester, and the Rev. John Wesley, the founder of Methodism; the latter of whom, then in the 84th year of his age, in a letter to the Rev. Mr Rodda, says, "I am glad you have taken in hand that blessed work of setting up Sunday schools in Chester. It seems these will be one great means of reviving religion

throughout the nation. I wonder Satan has not yet sent out some able champion against them."

Successful efforts were made in the year 1789 to introduce Sabbath schools into Wales. Through the instrumentality of the Rev. Mr Charles, many schools, both for children and adults, were established. Perhaps in no other part of the world has this institution flourished as much as in that Principality. One consequence of its introduction into that part of the kingdom was a greatly increased demand for the word of God, which led ultimately to the formation of the British and Foreign Bible Society, in the year 1804, one year after the formation of the London S. S. Union, which was the first Society in Great Britain which assembled under its banner Christians of all denominations, and thus, in some degree, lowered the walls of prejudice and mutual alienation, which had too long and too widely separated the "Lord's redeemed." Subsequently to this event Sunday School Unions for Scotland and Ireland were formed; and so great was the progress of this blessed institution that, in the year 1811, when Mr Raikes ended his benevolent course on earth, there were more than 300,000 youth under its salutary influence. And it has continued to make progress ever since, and has spread over various parts of the world, so that now the number of youth in Sabbath schools in Great Britain, Ireland, and other foreign lands, is probably not less than 1,200,000.

In the year 1791 the first Sabbath school instituted in our country, as far as we can learn, was established in the city of Philadelphia. A meeting composed of "the Right Rev. William White, D.D., Dr Benjamin Rush, Dr William Currie, Mr Thomas Mendenhall, Mr Thomas P. Cope, Capt. Nath. Falconer, Mr Sharpless, and others, was held on the 19th of December 1790, for the purpose of taking into consideration the establishment of Sunday schools in the city." The measures adopted at that meeting led to the formation of the "First Day, or Sunday School Society," on the 11th of January 1791. This Society supported three schools for many years, and employed teachers whose salaries were paid from its funds, which were raised from the voluntary contributions of its managers and friends. From 1791 to 1800 more than 2,000 pupils were admitted into these schools, and during the nineteen years' existence of the Institution before 1810, \$7,639 63 were received into its treasury, and almost

wholly expended in paying teachers' wages. The Society we believe continued to employ hired teachers until 1815, when, as far as we know, this practice entirely ceased in this country.

In the mean time, Sabbath schools were slowly introduced into various other places. In New York they were commenced by the late excellent Mrs Isabella Graham and Mr Bethune, in the year 1803; and about the same time in New Brunswick, N. J. and in other towns and cities. About the year 1816, the Institution began to be more generally known and introduced, by means of the intelligence which was diffused through the medium of religious newspapers, which were commenced about that period. In the year 1817, "The Philadelphia Sunday and Adult School Union" was formed. This Society commenced with about 5,000 scholars, and at the expiration of seven years had nearly 50,000 children in its connexion. One of the principal objects of this Union was to supply the neighbouring schools with the requisite books and apparatus, of the best kind, and at the least expense; and the advantages of such an establishment were so obvious, that in a few years auxiliaries to this Society, of every sect, were found scattered through seventeen states, and its publications, during the last year of its existence, exceeded 210,000, consisting of reward books, tracts, spelling books, &c. &c. for the use of schools. Having thus become national in character, not by any wise scheme of man, but imperceptibly and unexpectedly—a fact which itself proves the necessity of such an Institution—the Society assumed a general name, in conformity with the wishes, and at the suggestion indeed, of several large Unions, in different parts of the country, which proposed to co-operate with it.

Accordingly, on the 25th of May 1824, the American Sunday School Union was formed in the city of Philadelphia. The capital and schools of the Philadelphia Sunday and Adult School Union were transferred to the National Society. The schools generally throughout the country soon attached themselves to it, and enrolled themselves under a common standard. This Society, like its predecessors, is composed of different religious denominations, and is under the direction of a Board of 36 Managers, of whom 24 reside in Philadelphia and its vicinity. These gentlemen are all laymen, and among the most distinguished and efficient mem-

bers of the different denominations of Christians in our land. And in the organization both of its Board and its Committee of Publications, there is every security that there need to be, that no undue influence will be attained by any one denomination represented in the Society. The Union commenced in 1824 with 723 schools, 7,300 teachers, and nearly 50,000 scholars, and the good hand of the Lord being upon it during an existence of *five* years, there were reported to be in its connexion in May last (1829) 5,901 schools, 52,663 teachers, and 349,202 scholars! At present the number of schools is probably above 6,000, teachers 60,000, and scholars at least 400,000, and its auxiliaries are to be found in all parts of the country. We ought to add, that in the Society's publications every thing like *sectarianism* is studiously and conscientiously excluded. And with the *peculiar* doctrines taught in the schools connected with the American Sunday School Union, there is not the slightest interference,—these being left, where we think they should be, to the regulation of the different churches to which the schools are attached; so that there is no sacrifice of principle, or compromise of duty, in the union of the friends of Sabbath schools.

During the period which we have just passed over, an "Episcopal Sunday School Union" was formed, embracing that portion of the denomination which is called High church. This union contained at its last anniversary about 18,000 scholars. And within two years a "Methodist Episcopal Sunday School Union" has been established, embracing the largest portion of that church. This Society has about 130,000 scholars. The peculiar organization of the Methodist church, and especially the circumstance of their having a large book and printing establishment, belonging to the General Conference, were the causes which led to the formation of a Union of their own. The Lord has blessed, and we hope and pray that he will continue to bless, both these Societies, which are engaged in the same good work with the General Union. May this emulation be a holy emulation. May the sweet bond of Christian love and harmony never be severed. And let not the spirit which dictated "we forbade him, because he followeth not with us," ever influence those who are engaged in the same good work. There is enough for all to do, and let all be saluted with a cordial "God speed you."

II. Having glanced at the *origin and rapid increase* of Sabbath schools, we shall notice some of the *improvements* which have been successively made in the course of instruction pursued in them.

1. At first, Sabbath schools were confined to the instruction of the children of the *poorer classes*; but now they embrace the children of the *rich* as well as of the *poor*. And even the children of those who bestow most care upon the religious instruction of their offspring, are now to be found richly participating in the spiritual blessings which are constantly descending upon the Sabbath school.

2. At first, and for a long time, they were taught by *hired* teachers; and in England these teachers generally received at the rate of about thirty-three cents per Sabbath—that is, about \$17 16 per annum. But now, with the exception of some schools belonging to the established church in England, and some in places where voluntary teachers cannot be procured, they are taught by those who give their services *gratuitously*, and who desire no other reward than what they have in their own bosoms, and in seeing the improvement of their pupils. Sabbath schools are now so arranged into classes that much more attention is bestowed by several teachers, than can possibly be given by one. We may add that if the teachers belonging to the American S. S. Union were to be compensated for their labours at the rate above mentioned—although it is so low that few teachers would teach through the week at the same rate, amounting to but \$102 96 per annum—it would require an amount, annually, exceeding \$1,000,000. And this sum ought to be considered as really given by the teachers towards the instruction of the rising generation.

3. Sabbath schools at first were chiefly *secular* in their character, and differed but little from common schools. Writing and arithmetic were taught in most schools. *Now*, more attention is bestowed upon the religious instruction of the scholars. It is true that the art of reading is taught in almost every school; but it is subsidiary to the moral cultivation which is now esteemed of paramount importance. And the fact that thousands and tens of thousands have become pious in these seminaries, attests the great importance of cultivating the *heart*, by rendering the mind acquainted with the pure word of God.

4. The fourth improvement consists in the formation of

Sunday schools for *adults*. This was first attempted, with great success, in Wales, by the Rev. Mr Charles, in the year 1811. And in the year 1814, he wrote as follows to Dr Pole, "In one county, after a public address had been delivered to them on that subject, the adult poor, even the aged, flocked to the Sunday schools in crowds; and the shopkeepers could not immediately supply them with an adequate number of spectacles." In this country adult schools are confined to the coloured population, thousands of whom are learning to read. And indeed Sunday schools may be said to hold out to this unfortunate portion of the community the only hope that it may not for ever be said of them

"But knowledge to their eyes her ample page,
Rich with the spoils of time, did ne'er unroll."

5. The introduction of *libraries* indicated the commencement of a new era in the institution of Sabbath schools. These libraries consist of books of various sizes, and on various subjects, and adapted to various ages—from the very small book suited to the capacities of a child of six years old, to the larger volumes, intended for youth of fifteen or twenty years of age. The American S. S. Union has published more than two hundred different kinds of such books, and is making great exertions not only to bring forth new ones, but improve what it has published. Of the importance of this improvement no adequate idea can be formed. A better device, it seems to us, could hardly be thought of, to make the whole population a reading one.

6. The next improvement consists in the introduction of the plan of learning definite portions of scripture, with books of questions relative to these lessons. The Society has published two volumes of such questions. No doubt, improvement will be made upon this course. It may be found best to study the scriptures in a manner less broken and interrupted; or upon the plan exhibited in the *Help to the Gospels*. Improvements will doubtless be made in the questions which have been published. But we are sure that the present system is preferable to the old one—at least whilst teachers are, as they generally are, very inadequately prepared for their work,—which allowed the scholars to commit as many verses as they could or pleased, whether they understood what they repeated or not. Where the new

system is adopted every Sunday school is an interesting assemblage of Bible classes, as far as it regards those that can read.

7. Another improvement consists in the introduction of higher Bible classes, for those who have passed through the age which is ordinarily spent in the Sabbath school. In these classes they pursue the study of many things highly interesting and profitable, such as Sacred Geography, Jewish Antiquities, Evidences of Christianity, &c. &c., and are thus prepared to become teachers themselves. And it is found that many who would otherwise leave the school with unrenewed hearts; are here brought into a state of cordial reconciliation with God, and obedience to his gospel. This improvement is recent, but it has been introduced into a few schools with great advantage.

8. The last improvement which we shall notice consists in an extension of the Bible class system above described, so as to include the whole congregation in the Sabbath school. In some of the congregations where this system has been adopted, the course pursued is the following. The interval between the forenoon and afternoon services, varying from one to two hours, is devoted to the Sabbath school. The children are formed into classes, and instructed by their teachers in one part of the church; whilst that portion of the congregation which is adult is formed into larger Bible classes, under the instruction of the officers of the church, and other competent persons; or into one class, and taught by the Pastor, who has a general supervision of the whole. This may be appropriately called a congregational Sunday school, and where circumstances require it, might be held in the afternoon, or during an hour before the regular services of the sanctuary commence. In some of the schools of this description which we have heard of, are to be found men of the greatest respectability,—the young man in the vigour of life, and the old man whose head is white with the blossoms of age. We are happy to learn that the plan exhibited in Dr Alexander's "Suggestions," has been carried into operation in a church in a neighbouring city, under prosperous omens. Now what can be more desirable than to see a whole congregation engaged every week, not simply in the *reading*, but in the *study* also, of God's Holy Word, the most wonderful Volume in the world?

We have specified some of the improvements which *have*

been made. But as the system is yet in its infancy, many more improvements will doubtless be introduced into it; and as this is one of the principal objects of the American S. S. Union, let us not cease to beseech the God of grace to impart to the Board of Managers richly of that wisdom that cometh only from above.

We shall now turn our attention to another topic, which we intend to consider somewhat more fully:—

III. *The plans and operations of the American Sunday School Union.*

The objects of the American S. S. Union are two: 1. *To improve the character of Sunday schools which are already established.* 2. *To promote their establishment wherever they are needed.* We shall briefly consider these two departments of the Society's labours in the order in which they are named.

1. *The improvement of Sabbath schools.* For the purpose of accomplishing this, the Society, in addition to what is done by its agents and missionaries, and which we shall hereafter notice, has devoted much of its attention to its publications. It publishes a most valuable Monthly Magazine for Teachers, designed not only to convey much information to them relative to the best modes of giving instruction, the best helps for qualifying themselves for their important work, and of the books which are published for the use of children, but also to advance the interests of education generally. We cordially and earnestly recommend this valuable miscellany not only to Sabbath school teachers, every one of whom ought to read it, but also to *parents* and the friends of education. Two other small publications are issued monthly for the benefit of scholars. Besides these, the Society has published large quantities of New Testaments*, Sunday School Spelling-books, Hymn-books, Catechisms of different Churches, Union Questions, Manuals for Teachers, &c. &c.

But in addition to all these, the Society has published more than 200 different kinds of books for rewards and for libraries. The first *six* series of these books, embracing those that are quite small, containing from 8 up to 54

* The Society has wisely, we think, relinquished to Bible Societies the publishing of the *Bible*.

pages, 32mo. each, and costing from 60 cents to \$6 25 per hundred copies, include more than 100 different kinds, and are designed for rewards, although they may be profitably used in beginning a library. Those above the 6th series, and containing from 72 pages to 250 and more, and costing, when bound, 18 cents and upwards, per copy, amount now to more than 100 different kinds.

The object of the Society in publishing these books, is to supply the youth of our country with interesting and profitable reading—a most important object certainly. Every one who remembers what was the character of the books read by youth 15 or 20 years ago, will at once say that more silly, useless, and pernicious books could hardly be written. With the exception of a very few, we had none that were fit to be put into the hands of children of 10 or 12 years. And as it regards those of 5 or 6 years, we had absolutely nothing which they could comprehend. We believe that one great reason why so few men comparatively are fond of reading, is to be attributed to the fact, that after having spent months in the drudgery of learning to spell, without acquiring a single new idea, they were then made to read what they could not understand. The consequence is, that although a child may learn to read at 5 or 6 years of age, yet, because it finds nothing which it can read understandingly and with pleasure, it soon dislikes the sight of a book; and years roll away before knowledge can be acquired by reading, and by that time the mind has contracted a disgust for the practice, or has become absorbed by other objects of pursuit. Now to prepare books for little minds is a far more difficult task than many suppose. It is not simply necessary to write a *little* book; but the author must, as it were, again “think as a child and speak as a child.” We do not indeed think that all the small books which the Society has published have attained this perfection. Some of them are certainly deficient in simplicity. Shorter sentences, smaller words, a more childlike (if we may use such a word to denote a character of style) form of expression, without any thing low however, would render many of them more intelligible to very young minds. Perhaps there are none of them that are not susceptible of improvement; and we have no doubt they will be improved in subsequent editions. But notwithstanding this partial defect, we believe that much has been done towards supplying the rising gene-

ration with a most valuable set of volumes: such as have not been possessed by the youth of any other country or age. A large portion of these books is biographical, and highly interesting and useful. A number of those which are less substantial in their character may be dispensed with, especially as more valuable ones can now be substituted for them. On this point we know that our views fully accord with those of the Committee of Publications. We are happy also to be able to say that great efforts are making to increase the number of valuable books, especially such as are intended to aid Sunday school teachers, and parents who desire to render themselves better acquainted with the sacred Scriptures. Works on the Evidences of Christianity, Biblical Antiquities, Biblical History, Sacred Geography, Canonical Authority of the Scriptures, &c. have either been recently printed or will be soon. A most valuable Dictionary of the Bible has just been published, and there is a prospect that a commentary for teachers will ere long be prepared. Some of the ablest pens in the country are now enlisted in writing books for the Society. And if the Christian public do not withhold the means, there will be hereafter no want of suitable publications for Sunday schools. We would however most respectfully suggest to the Committee of Publications the importance of making every effort to improve what they have published, to discontinue such as are least valuable; and if they publish but *ten* works in a year, and let it cost what it may to get them, to see to it that they be such as possess great excellence. We are not indeed of the number of those who think that books for a Sunday school library should be ponderous with solid theology. They should however be not only *interesting*, but also instructive, and always calculated to make good moral impressions, and lead the youthful mind to a clear knowledge of duty and eternal life.

We would add that all the books which are published by the Society, must be approved by the publishing committee, which is composed of an equal number of persons belonging to the Presbyterian, Baptist, Methodist, and Episcopal churches. That this committee hold a most important post, and need to be sustained by the prayers of the friends of Sunday schools, is most obvious. That they should never commit a mistake as to the character of a book, seeing they read such a vast number, not one in five of which probably

is approved by them, is what ought to be expected of no men living. Few we believe *know* the immense labours of this committee, which, it should be stated, are wholly *gratuitous*. It is no trifling affair to read a large number of volumes, many of them in manuscript, and often far from being very legible.

To those who are disposed to find fault with the publications of the Society, we have only two things to say. 1. The Society has aimed at doing the best it could in the circumstances in which it has been placed. It cannot *create* by a volition just such books as it wants. It has had to take the best it could obtain. Most of those published in England do not suit us, and many of them are very useless. And it is but very recently that men of talents in this country began to think of the importance of writing books for children. 2. Let them prepare better ones, and we undertake to assure them that the Society will most readily publish them.

2. The second branch of the Society's operations relates to *the establishment of Sabbath schools wherever they are needed*.

The importance of this department of their labours is unquestionable. For Sabbath schools must be increased *six-fold* before they are established wherever they are needed. Only a beginning has been made. We remarked in another place that at the last anniversary of the American S. S. Union there were about 350,000 scholars in the Sunday schools in its connexion. If we suppose the number now to be 400,000, and estimate the youth belonging to other Unions at 150,000, we have 550,000 as the total number of Sabbath scholars in the United States. But the number of children and youth who ought to be in such institutions is not far from 3,000,000; if we may judge from the census of New York taken last year. From this we see that not *one-fifth* of the youth are yet gathered into these nurseries of piety and knowledge. And when we consider the mournful fact that the majority of them receive little or no religious instruction from any other quarter, our tenderest sympathies must be awakened. Not one parent out of five in our country makes a profession of religion! When we cast our eyes over the fifteen states which lie east of the great Alleghany mountains, containing a population of eight millions, we cannot select *one*, where one-fourth of the children are in Sabbath schools! And when we look beyond, to the great valley of the Mis-

Mississippi—a region of immense extent—embracing nine states, parts of two others, two large territories, and a vast extent beyond not yet reduced to organized territories,—already containing a population of 4,000,000, and destined to be the abode of a population equal, at least, to that of Europe,—we find that out of at least 800,000 children, who ought to be in Sunday schools, there are not more, in all probability, than 75,000! Indeed there are not quite 42,000 belonging to the American S. S. Union! And excepting the state of Ohio, no legislative provision has yet been made in behalf of common schools! And even in that state the effort is only inchoate. Now, what is to be done? Is it not certain that the population of that vast country will in 20 years exceed that of the other parts of our country? And is not the tide of infidelity and Romanism setting strongly into that great valley? Is it not known that missionary societies are forming in Austria and other Catholic countries in Europe, to send forth missionaries into that region? And is it not well known that a large number of Catholic missionaries have already commenced their labours, and that these labours are directed mainly to the establishment of *free schools, and female seminaries*? All this is doing by those whom we believe to teach the most ruinous doctrines; and yet the Protestant community is doing little or nothing to promote Sabbath schools in that important part of our country!

We have given this survey, to show how much remains to be done. Appalling as the picture is, we feel encouraged, by the success which has attended the feeble efforts which have been made, to hope for great results when the friends of this cause awake fully to a sense of its great importance, and put forth their energy to promote it. Now it has been found by experience that the most effectual way, both of establishing schools where they are needed, and improving those which already exist, is to employ suitable men, who shall inform themselves well on the whole subject of Sabbath schools, and the best modes of conducting them, and who shall devote themselves entirely to this business. And such a Sunday school missionary or agent will not only establish Sunday schools himself, but also interest others, who, in their respective spheres, will do much to establish and sustain these institutions. There are thousands of neighbourhoods in our country where there are no ministers of the gospel, or missionaries to promote Sunday schools. And

where there are ministers, it is a lamentable fact, that many do very little, and some nothing, to establish Sunday schools, or sustain them when established! This often arises from an unwillingness to undertake any new labour. But if it can be demonstrated that Sunday schools afford great facilities for the discharge of ministerial labour among the young, and are really a labour saving machine to the pastor who employs it aright, no faithful minister, who cares for the salvation of his flock, will refuse to promote them with all his might. It is often the case that ministers are unacquainted with the best modes of conducting Sabbath schools, and also of the benefits to be derived from them. To such a minister, a good Sunday school missionary may be of great service. We are well acquainted with a congregation in the country, covering an extent of about 10 or 12 miles in diameter, and under the pastoral charge of an active, eloquent, and excellent young man, who had taken but little interest in Sunday schools; until he was visited by a Sunday school missionary from the American S. S. Union, about three years since. The missionary addressed the congregation, for a few minutes, after the sermon of the pastor, exhibited the advantages, and explained the new system, of Sabbath schools. The people and the pastor were deeply interested. And the next Sabbath a school was commenced, which soon had a library which cost from 10 to 15 dollars,—embraced more than 100 scholars, and was taught by about 20 teachers. Now mark the results which have taken place in that congregation from one or two visits of a Sunday school missionary.

1. The pastor has become devoted to the cause; before, he thought little about this interesting institution.
2. The number of the schools increased the first summer to *five*; the second summer to *ten*, and the last to *fourteen*, taught by more than 100 teachers, and embracing nearly a thousand youth, and coloured adults.
3. All the elders in that church are superintendents of schools, and the most intelligent people, old and young, are teachers.
4. Every school has a library; which has created a great thirst after knowledge among parents as well as children. The books are read with great avidity.
5. Many more religious papers and magazines are now read by that congregation, than formerly, and the general intelligence of the people is rapidly improving. Private libraries are consequently increasing.
6. So great is the interest which is felt in the Sunday school

cause that several new houses for their accommodation have been erected. 7. The schools are all held on the afternoon of the Sabbath, so that the pastor preaches only in the morning and at night, and spends the afternoons in visiting the schools in succession; where he examines the scholars on the Bible lessons, addresses the children, teachers, and parents, who attend often in crowds to hear him. 8. The teachers of each school spend an evening together, every week, in going over the Bible lessons for the Sabbath, and thus preparing themselves for their several tasks. 9. A far deeper interest in the grand benevolent operations and movements of the day is felt, and five times as much money is contributed to promote them, as was given before. And lastly, *nearly 200 persons have become hopefully pious*, the majority of whom received their serious impressions from instruction received in the Sabbath school, from the private exhortation of the teacher, the perusal of the books, or, as in most cases, from the addresses of the pastor! We may add that the gospel has gained access to many parents through their children, and has led the careless to frequent the house of God! See here the good resulting from the labour of a Sunday school missionary in a congregation which has a pastor. And similar results have often occurred.

But it is with painful emotions that we have to state that the Society has not been able to support any thing like the number of missionaries which the wants of the country require. At least two or three devoted labourers of this sort should be employed in every state. Instead of this, the Society had only fourteen last year, and most of them only for two months. And during the present year it has but sixteen missionaries and agents, and it is doubtful whether it will be able to increase that number. Now we ask again, what is to be done? Will not the churches awake to the consideration of this subject? Will they not sustain this Society, and give it the means of planting, with the co-operation of sister unions, a Sabbath school wherever there is a sufficient population? Will they not give the Society the resources requisite to support the Sunday School missionaries, whom it ought to employ? Why should not an association be formed in every church, to contribute annually to this object, as is done with reference to our Missionary, Bible, Tract and Education Societies? Is this institution less important, or doing less for the salvation of our coun-

try? And yet the whole amount which it received last year in the shape of donations, was less than a fourth part of what was contributed to the American Home Missionary Society, the smallest of our national Institutions. We do not wish other institutions to be diminished, but *this* to be supported in a manner corresponding with its vast importance. Sunday School missionaries, we repeat it, must be employed, and at least, to the extent mentioned above, if the blessings of this institution are to be extended to every neighbourhood in our country. And we put it to *patriots*, to real *statesmen*, as well as to the *Christian*, to say in what other way as much can be done, and in as good a manner, to preserve our admirable civil institutions? Let a Sunday school with its library be established in every neighbourhood, and it will do more to purify the morals of the community than any other means whatever, save the faithful proclamation of the gospel. Shall the Society then have the means of establishing this noble institution, so simple, and yet efficient, in its machinery—this cheap defence of the nation—in every neighbourhood throughout our country? Shall it possess these means soon? Or must it wait until the combined, systematic, and powerful, foreign efforts* to propagate error and superstition throughout our land, shall be brought to bear upon us with all their influence? Shall not contributions be made in all our congregations, and that speedily, to enable the Society to go forward immediately? The answer to this interrogation belongs to others. Let them consider it.

We will farther add, that the necessity for employing Sunday School missionaries is not superseded, as some may suppose, by the missionaries sent forth to destitute places, by other societies. It is indeed true, that this cause is greatly promoted by the labourers employed by the Home Missionary Society, and the Board of Missions of the General Assembly. But these men confine their labours to but small spheres comparatively, and their devotedness to another object will not allow them to do much beyond the circles of

* It is, we believe, admitted by Roman Catholics themselves, that twenty-seven missionaries were sent to this country from Europe last year, and one hundred thousand dollars expended in propagating their doctrines by tracts, books, and schools.

their ministerial labours. And we may also say, that the ministerial labours of Sunday School missionaries, who are ministers of the gospel, are worthy of the compensation which they receive; and the labours of those who are not ministers do much incidental good, in promoting often a greater attention to the subject of education, and other important religious concerns.

We wish, in passing, to say a word or two on the pecuniary condition of the American Sunday School Union, to counteract an erroneous opinion which is entertained by some, that the Institution has become *rich*. This is far from being the case. It commenced with but a small amount of capital, and our readers can judge of the probability that it could accumulate wealth. Its sources of income can only be *two*;—*donations*, and *profits on the sales of its publications**. With regard to the first, they have not amounted in any one year, to six thousand dollars, and have not averaged \$4000 annually. With regard to the second, the prices of the Society's books are so low, for the accommodation of the schools, and with a view to render them every possible advantage, and in many cases so long a credit is required, that the profits are much smaller than is commonly supposed. On the other hand, the expenditures which must be defrayed from these sources of income are great;—in the necessary expenses incident to carrying on so large a system of operations—the employment of clerks and other hands—the expenses connected with the branch depositories, although as small as possible, are yet considerable,—the employment of a corresponding Secretary and an editor of the Magazine, who is also the superintendent of the publications generally, a work requiring the most indefatigable industry, and exceedingly arduous,—the support of the Sunday School missionaries and agents employed, men who have as hard labour to perform as can be undertaken,—and lastly, the interest upon a large amount of borrowed money used as a capital; for the society has had to depend

* It is hardly necessary to say, that when we speak of "profits on sales of books" in this article, we do not use the expression in its strict commercial acceptance. We use it to denote the excess of the price of the books, over the cost of manufacturing them. The prices at which they are sold, are fixed at an advance upon the cost, sufficient to pay the incidental expenses of the business.

mainly on such a capital. From this statement it is apparent that the Society cannot be *rich*. It is struggling along, and endeavouring to accomplish as much good as possible. It has not invested a dollar in permanent funds, unless any one chooses to call their buildings such, which were purchased, and have been partly paid for, by the extraordinary efforts of a number of the friends of the cause in the city of Philadelphia, without touching a dollar of the ordinary resources of the society.

Although the society has encountered, and is still encountering many embarrassments from want of that support which it needs and merits, we would not convey the idea that it is *insolvent*. Its excellent Board of managers, in which are some of the most distinguished merchants in our country, have conducted its affairs with great care and prudence. And although they will probably not deem it judicious to go much further in borrowing money, or depending upon borrowed capital, they have not proceeded in a reckless manner. No institution maintains a better credit. Its stock of books, stereotype plates, and debts due from auxiliaries, will always be sufficient to counterbalance what it owes. So that it is safe, unless some very calamitous event should occur. Let therefore the Christian public grant it the means of establishing schools wherever they are wanted, and this glorious cause will, with the blessing of God, continue to prosper.

We have sometimes heard this question propounded,—“Wherein consist the advantages of a union of all denominations of Christians in this work?” We answer, that by this means greater resources are obtained and concentrated. The principle of Christian union is itself good, sustaining and encouraging, where nothing essential is compromised. But especially this is gained, that schools may be established in many places, by a society of a catholic nature, where they could not be, by a denominational, or as it would be considered, *sectarian* Institution. The agent of a Society, constituted upon the former plan, can easily repel objections arising from a suspicion that sectarian influence is at the bottom, and enlist in the school the feelings of all. But the representative of a sectarian society could do nothing, except where there are enough of his own denomination to form a school; which is not the case in some thousands of neighbourhoods in our country. And if every denomination

had its own society, and depositories, not only would great additional expense be incurred, but a vast population in our land, belonging to no denomination, and having strong prejudices, would exclude themselves from the benefits of Sunday schools; for none are more afraid of *sectarianism* than those that have no religion at all. And further, should those who manage any school desire to have other books besides those published by the Union, and any that may contain such peculiar views or doctrines as are held in their neighbourhoods, they need have no difficulty in obtaining them; for the Union, although it does not publish such books, is always disposed, we believe, to procure them from the booksellers, and furnish them, on as reasonable terms as they can, to any school that may order them.

We entirely approve of the course which the Society pursues with regard to *catechisms*. It publishes, and has constantly on hand for sale, the catechisms of all the denominations belonging to the Union, and leaves it to the proper authorities of every congregation to decide what catechism, if any, it is expedient, in their circumstances, to use in their schools. With regard to their use, we believe that the propriety of it will depend greatly upon circumstances. If the school is composed of children belonging to *one* denomination, there can be no difficulty in their use. But where the scholars belong to several denominations, or many of them to none at all, and especially where but one school can be sustained, as is the case in the country generally, it would be great folly to force the study of the catechism upon the school at the hazard of destroying it. We, as Presbyterians, do *ex animo* approve our catechisms, and wish to see our youth well indoctrinated in them; but we entertain no fears that Calvinism and Presbyterianism will perish from the church, unless the Westminster or the Heidelberg catechisms are used to sustain them. We have no fears from the simple study of the plain Bible. And we further believe that it is the duty of every *pastor* himself carefully to instruct the youth of his charge in the doctrinal catechisms of his church. This need not interfere with the Sabbath schools. It is the appropriate work of the pastor. And that minister of the Gospel who neglects it, or attempts to crowd it into the Sabbath school, in order to deliver himself from the labour, neglects, in our opinion, a most important duty.

We shall notice a few objections which have been made

to the Society, and then take leave of this part of our subject.

The enemies of this Institution say that "it is a great money making concern, designed to enrich its managers." With regard to the first part of this charge, we have already said enough to convince any candid man that it is untrue; and as to the *second*, we only name it, to have the opportunity of saying that there are few men in the world that would render the same amount of service for the public good *wholly gratuitously*, or incur pecuniary responsibilities as great as those of the Board of Managers of the American Sunday School Union.

It is brought as a charge against this society that it aims at the "Union of Church and State." Verily this is a charge, one would suppose, too silly for even the credulous opposers of all that is good, to believe. If to teach children to read, and then to instruct them in the duties which the *Bible* inculcates, is going to unite church and state, they must have a singular affinity for each other! The American Sunday School Union has nothing to do with politics. Its only aim is to promote knowledge and piety. Not a word about political measures is ever heard in Sunday schools.

The Society is charged with monopolizing the printing of books, and ruining both printers and booksellers. But the most intelligent booksellers in Philadelphia have publicly stated that the American Sunday School Union is doing more for them than any other Institution in the country, as it is raising up an immense reading population; which indeed is already manifest in the great demand for books for youth. It is believed that quite as many books of this kind have been published by the booksellers in our principal cities, within five years, as have been published by the Society. What has created this demand for such books, but Sunday schools? And who has been benefited by it, but the booksellers and printers? The society owns no printing presses, but pays for the printing which is done for it, just as fairly as any bookseller does. Would the most of the books, which the Society has published, have been published at all, if the Society did not exist? Besides, a whole set of the Society's publications would not make ten octavo volumes of 400 pages each!

Another charge has been brought against the Society, that its committee of publications has taken unwarrantable lib-

erty in modifying the books which they have republished. On this point we have to say, that we presume all will allow that there is no impropriety in abridging a book which is not a copy-right book and which is of course *public property*. This liberty has been often taken, and is not denied by anyone. Again, we suppose that modifications may be made in such books as are public property, so as to leave out passages which it may not be adviseable, for some cause, to retain, *provided that it is explicitly stated that such modifications have been made*, so that those who prefer the original work may not be deceived. Perhaps the Society has not given such explicit and full statements, as ought to be given, of the modifications which they have made in the books which they have republished. But the best remedy for difficulty on this point, is that the society should direct its attention mainly to the publication of original works, prepared for its use. There is sufficient native talent in our country to furnish all the books needed by the Institution, and all that is wanted now is proper encouragement to elicit it.

Again; the Society has been charged with extravagance in purchasing buildings, &c. We said enough, in reply to this, when we said that they were purchased by the extraordinary efforts of its friends, without touching a dollar of the money not contributed for this specific object. It was real economy to procure such buildings, which can always be sold for what they cost, because of the increasing value of the property in that part of the city.

And lastly, the Society is said to be a sectarian Institution. But that this cannot possibly be the case, we have already shown. The society has not done a single act which could support such a charge. And surely the gentlemen composing the Board, and belonging to various denominations, have quite as good opportunities as its enemies to know whether the Institution is sectarian. Or can any one believe that they would all combine to render it such? He that can believe this, has strong *credulity*. We proceed now to another topic.

IV. We shall briefly consider *some of the influences of Sabbath schools*.

1. *Their literary influence*.—They are promoting literature, inasmuch as they are affording opportunities of learning to read to thousands, who, if it were not for Sabbath schools, would live and die with minds unilluminated by the

pages of written instruction. This fact ought of itself to render the *true patriot*, the *real statesman*, as well as the *devoted Christian*, their decided friend, and unflinching supporter. They are cultivating the minds of our youth by directing their energies to the study of the most wonderful volume in the world. And whether we consider the amazing truths and doctrines which this volume contains, or their affecting relation to *us*, we shall be convinced, that the *Bible* is the best book in the world to arouse, invigorate, and discipline the mental powers. They are promoting literature by raising up a vast reading population by means of the libraries attached to them. Already has their influence in this respect become immense. Valuable neighbourhood and congregational libraries are arising out of Sunday school libraries. Nor is their influence on the parents and other members of the families less remarkable than upon the children. The books written for youth are just such as are calculated to interest the great mass of the people, whose education and reading have been very limited. Many will read a little book because it is a *little* one. Nothing is more common now, where the Sabbath school library system prevails, than to see whole families spending their evenings in reading the books obtained from this source. Now let this system become *universal*, and what a delightful spectacle will our country afford! Many men of fine talents, and who are now rising to important stations in our country, received their first desires after knowledge in the Sunday school. In many places Sunday schools have improved the character of common schools; and a manifest difference is perceptible in the common school, between those who attend the Sunday school and those who do not. We venture to assert that if the friends of this institution do what they ought to extend its influence to every neighbourhood, within *twenty-five years* there will be an amount of reading and general intelligence among all classes of people, and an increase of valuable private libraries, and a circulation of newspapers and other periodicals, such as the world has never witnessed, nor the most sanguine amongst us have ventured to hope for.

2. *The moral influence of Sabbath schools.* The moral influence of Sabbath schools has been perceptible in every neighbourhood, village, town and city where they have been for any considerable length of time established. They fur-

nish indeed what has long been a *desideratum* in the business of education. The secret of their success lies in the circumstance of their supplying a remedy for a most ruinous defect in the ordinary systems of education, which aim almost exclusively at the cultivation of the *intellectual* powers of the mind. Now the excellence of Sunday schools is that they aim at the cultivation of the *moral* nature of man. And this they accomplish by bringing the influence of *moral truth* (with the co-operation of the Holy Spirit) to bear upon the *heart*; and this too at the proper period of life, the season of childhood and youth, and under the most favourable circumstances; for their instructions are kindly and gratuitously bestowed upon those who voluntarily receive them, and no coercion is used, save the irresistible force of kindness and love. "The Law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul."

Our limits will not allow us to refer to many facts to confirm these remarks. We will however present a few, out of thousands.

"It was stated before a Committee of the House of Commons in England, by persons who had been extensively engaged in Sunday schools, that *they had never known one of their pupils become a common beggar.*"

"At Botany Bay, the grand receptacle of the most abandoned and profligate of the English nation, General M'Quaine, the Governor, declares *that in consequence of the establishment of Sunday schools, only one of the children of the convicts, during the whole of his administration, had been convicted of a single offence.*"

And the effect is the same in this country. In a letter addressed to the editors of the New York Observer, the chaplain of the State Prison at Sing-Sing, writes as follows: "I have lately made pretty thorough inquiry among the convicts here, for the purpose of learning who, and how many, have ever enjoyed the advantages of a Sabbath school. The result is, *that out of more than five hundred convicts, not one has been found who has ever been for any considerable time a regular member of a Sabbath school; and not more than two or three who have ever attended such a school at all.*" The testimony of the Rev. Mr Dwight, who is the secretary and agent of the Prison Discipline Society, and who has explored many of the prisons in our country, is *that he has seldom found a Sunday scholar in a prison.* And

let it be remembered that a large portion of our convicts are under twenty-five years of age, and nearly *half of the whole* under thirty!

These facts in regard to the moral influence of Sabbath schools need no comment. They speak for themselves, and ought to secure the cordial friendship and support of every patriot as well as of every Christian.

The great moral influence of this institution was early foreseen by Dr Adam Smith, the celebrated author of the "Wealth of Nations," who says, respecting them, "No plan has promised to effect a change of manners with equal ease and simplicity, since the days of the Apostles." To this striking testimony,—the more remarkable coming as it does from an infidel,—let us add that of our own distinguished Chief Justice Marshall. In a letter to the Board of Managers of the American Sunday School Union, he uses the following language: "I can not be more perfectly convinced than I am, that virtue and intelligence are the basis of our independence, and the conservative principles of national and individual happiness; nor can any person believe more firmly, that Sunday School Institutions are devoted to the protection of both."

To this decided and illustrious testimony in behalf of Sabbath schools, we will add that of the beloved and venerated Washington to the importance of such institutions as promote religion and knowledge. It forms a striking contrast to the sentiments of another distinguished man who has followed him to a Bar where every decision knows no error or partiality. And this testimony is the more needful now when irreligion is rushing in like a torrent through the flood-gates which infidelity is opening:

"Mobilitate viget, viresque acquirit eundo."

When the Father of his country was about to retire from the toils of office to the shades of domestic life, in the last legacy, which he bequeathed to a grateful people, he thus expresses his views on this subject: "Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of patriotism, who should labour to subvert these great pillars of human happiness,—these firmest props of the duties of men and citizens. The mere politician, equally with the pious man, ought to respect and

cherish them. Promote then, as an object of *primary* importance, institutions for the general diffusion of knowledge. In proportion as the structure of a government gives force to public opinion, *it* (public opinion) *should be enlightened.*" Such sentiments need not our commendation.

3. *The religious influence of Sabbath schools.* Scarcely a week passes without bringing to our ears tidings of joy, respecting the hopeful conversion of children and teachers in Sunday schools. We seldom see an account of a revival of religion in which the Sabbath school, if there is one within the sphere of the Spirit's powerful influence, is not mentioned as having shared largely in the heavenly blessing. This, however, is no more than what we might reasonably expect. And not unfrequently do we hear of the conversion of parents, through the influence of the truth carried home to them from the Sunday schools by their children. Blessed be God for the establishment of Sabbath schools in our land! "No one," remarks one of the ablest civilians in our country, "can form an idea of the spreading influence of infidelity, who does not mingle much with the world. I see much of it in the courts. And there is this remarkable difference between the progress of infidelity thirty years ago, and at the present; *then*, it was confined to the educated, and to the higher ranks of life; *now*, it abounds among the lower classes. *And there is, in my opinion, no remedy but in Sunday schools.*" Who does not say, let them be established every where? And who can read facts like the following, and not lift up his heart in prayer for, and put forth his hand to help, an institution which has accomplished so much spiritual good?

"From the Reports of the American Sunday School Union we learn that *nine thousand seven hundred and fifty-eight* teachers and scholars are reported as having professed religion during their connexion with the Sunday schools belonging to that society; and this is supposed by the Managers not to be one half of the whole number who have been taught by the Holy Spirit, and have publicly professed their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, since their connexion with this institution.

"In the Report of the New York Sunday School Union, auxiliary to the American Sunday School Union, for the year 1828, it is stated that *eighty-six* of those who were once connected with the schools belonging to that Union *are now either in the ministry, or preparing to enter it.*

"It is stated that a large part of the devoted ministers of the Gos-

pel and friends of religion in England, under forty years of age, and nineteen twentieths of the missionaries who have gone from that country to the heathen, are the fruits of Sunday Schools. Morrison and Paterson and Henderson became pious at Sunday schools."

At the last anniversary of the London Sunday School Union, held on the 12th of May, the following striking testimonies were borne to the influence of Sunday schools upon missions. The Rev. Dr Philip, a distinguished missionary in South Africa, said in his speech, that "he commenced his labours in the cause of Christ as a Sunday school teacher. The first prayer that he offered up in the presence of others was in a Sunday school. The first attempt he ever made to speak from the Holy Scriptures was in a Sunday school. And he was fully persuaded that had it not been for his humble exercises in the capacity of a Sunday school teacher, and the advantages which he there acquired, he should never have had the confidence to become a minister of the gospel, or a missionary of Jesus Christ." He was a teacher in the Sunday school in Dundee. "During the period that he laboured there, twelve or fourteen young men went out into the field of ministerial labour, many of whom became missionaries. One of them was the lamented Dr Milne; another was the amiable Keith."

The Rev. Mr Hands, late missionary in India, said that "like the Rev. gentleman who had already addressed them, *he* might say that he owed every thing to the Sunday schools; for it was there that the heavenly spark had first caught his soul. It was there that he had first lifted up his voice for the purpose of imparting Christian instruction to others. If it had not been for that opportunity he should probably never have offered himself to the Missionary Society. Therefore he had every reason to bless God that he had begun by being a Sunday school teacher."

The Rev. Mr Mundy, also a late missionary in India, said, "he had been for some years a labourer in India, and he might safely say that if he had never been a Sunday school teacher he should never have been a missionary."

And what must be the influence, on the minds of our youth, of the examples of such men as Schwartz and Buchanan and Martyn and Brainerd and Obookiah and Mills and Parsons and Fisk and Pearce exhibited in the books contained in the Sunday school libraries? Will they not elevate, among the rising generation, the standard of piety, benevo-

lence, and Christian enterprise, and enlist deep sympathy in behalf of "men benighted?" We can add nothing on the necessity of Sunday schools to prepare multitudes to read the tracts and Bibles which are now distributing, and even to hear the preaching of the gospel in a profitable manner, as our limits forbid it.

V. *The respective duties of those who are concerned in Sabbath schools.*

1. *Duties of teachers.* To them is committed a most responsible work. The great object which their office contemplates is the formation of the characters of the children for "eternal life." And since they undertake to teach God's Word, what labour should they bestow upon their preparation for the serious task! Every help should be diligently employed, and the teaching of the Holy Spirit earnestly invoked. What exemplary conduct should be exhibited! What pains taken to give the children clear and definite ideas of what they learn! What ingenuity ought to be exercised in the choice of suitable and familiar illustrations, and simple modes of enforcing truth! It is a great thing to be a good Sunday school teacher. And the teacher that would win the hearts of his pupils to Christ should have strong *longings of soul* for their conversion, which will lead to much wrestling in prayer, and to faithful instruction. But we can do no more than glance at this important topic.

2. *Duties of Parents.* Dr Chalmers has rightly remarked in his "Christian and Civic Economy of Large Towns," that "family religion is not superseded by these schools so as to make Christianity less the topic of mutual exercise and conversation between parents and children, than before the period of their institution." If any father supposes that because his children go to the Sunday school he is relieved in any measure from the duty of instructing them himself, he has greatly and grievously erred in his notions of his duty as a father. Not only should parents co-operate with the school, so far as to send their children constantly, but they are bound to follow up the instruction there given, by their own faithful inculcation and holy example at home.

Nor should parents ever be absent from the monthly concert for Sabbath schools. This we regret to know is very greatly the case. Whom should we expect to be at such a meeting to pray for the conversion of children, if not their parents? Do parents mean to consign not only the *instruc-*

tion of their children to others, and these generally young persons, but also the solemn work of *praying* for them? That parents who can afford to do it should contribute most liberally to support Sunday schools, the rich benefits of which their children are constantly receiving, is a most manifest duty. But surely there is a great deficiency here, or else this valuable institution would be a hundred fold more amply supported. And we are decidedly of the opinion that every parent who has health, and is not prevented by domestic duties, should enter the Sunday school as a *teacher*, if he is at all capable. And if he is not capable, he ought to go to work to render himself capable as speedily as possible; for he is certainly not capable of performing the duties of a parent, if he is incapable of teaching a class in a Sabbath school. Parents ought to make the very best teachers, inasmuch as they have had opportunities of acquiring much experience. It was long ago thought that "days should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom." We rejoice indeed that a change is taking place in this respect, and that some parents of great respectability and affluence in our cities, and even judges and legislators are now to be found as teachers and superintendents in Sabbath schools. May this noble example be universally imitated!

3. *The duties of ministers of the Gospel.* We believe it to be the duty of every pastor to become the patron and general superintendent of the Sunday schools in his congregation; to visit them in succession; to spend much of his time in this work; to take measures to have a Sunday school established wherever there is none, if it be at all practicable to accomplish it; to induce suitable persons to become teachers, and to instruct and prepare them for their work; to examine frequently all the scholars assembled in the church, and thus display to parents the progress of the children and the importance of the institution; to see that suitable books are selected for the libraries; to attend the monthly concert for Sunday schools, and enjoy it upon parents as well as teachers to be there; to *study* the utmost simplicity in his manner of exhibiting the truth to juvenile minds;—a point in which ministers greatly fail, and sinfully so, because it is a defect which every one can overcome, if he is determined to do it. In a word, we could hardly express our views better than by holding up the example of

faithful ministerial labour in Sunday schools which we presented in another part of this article. We cannot conceive how a minister, who does not preach in more than one place on a Sabbath, could do more for the cause of Christ, than by spending the afternoon of the Sabbath in promoting Sunday schools throughout his parish, and even beyond it, if it interfere with no other labourer in the vineyard. To be training up several hundred youth in the knowledge of the Scriptures is a great work. Ministers have devoted an undue proportion of their labour to those that are grown up; whilst the young, by far the most hopeful part of their congregations, have been almost wholly neglected. It has been justly said, that there is reason to believe that the amazing want of success in the use of the divinely appointed means of saving men, has been owing in part to the fact, that we commence our efforts to lead mankind into the paths of holiness at a period of life too late by ten or fifteen years. There has been, and still is, too little instruction of the youth.

And is it not the appropriate work of ministers to promote Sunday schools? Do not all expect it of them? Does it not coincide exactly with their occupation and business? And would it not often open a way for them into the houses and affections of those (for there are such within the bounds of every congregation) who seldom attend the preaching of the Gospel? What would be the effect of a minister's spending much of his time in his Sunday schools, talking kindly and faithfully to his dear children, encouraging the timid, leading the inquiring to Jesus? Would it not be of the most desirable kind? A Sunday scholar becomes sick; the pastor hears of it, and kindly visits the little sufferer, talks to him of the love of Jesus, exhorts him to put his trust in Him, prays with him and his afflicted parents, soothes his fears, assists him in preparing to die, sustains his feeble head in the last agonies of failing nature, and closes his fixed, and now sightless, eyes. Oh! will not such kindness open the heart, however long and fast it may have been closed by prejudice, and furnish the opportunity, long desired by the faithful minister, of doing good to the souls of a whole family which had hitherto been without the pale of his influence?

God commands his pastors to care for the lambs of his flock. Our blessed Lord whilst upon the earth did neither despise nor forget them. He tenderly took them into his arms and blessed them. It had been predicted of him, that "He would carry the lambs in his bosom." And it was one

of his last commands, addressed to one of the most distinguished of his apostles, "Feed my lambs." Oh! how blessed will be the lot of that faithful Shepherd who has been the means of saving many of the precious lambs of his flock! Who will be able to say, at the coming of the Great Shepherd, "Behold I, and the children which God hath given me!" But how awful will be the condemnation of that unfaithful pastor who now permits the lambs to wander from the fold, on the dark mountains of sin, to become a prey to ravenous wolves ever ready to devour!

This cursory view of the history of Sabbath schools, their importance, and the operations of the American S. S. Union, we design as an introduction to our future labours in this department. Our readers may expect often to find in the succeeding numbers of the Repertory brief reviews of books prepared for the instruction of our youth, and especially such as are written for Sabbath schools.

REMARKS ON A CERTAIN EXTREME IN PURSU- ING THE TEMPERANCE CAUSE.

MESSRS EDITORS.

Every friend of religion, of good morals, and of human happiness must, undoubtedly, have rejoiced to witness the recent triumphs of the Temperance cause. The formation of Temperance Societies in every part of our country, and the zeal manifested by many of these associations in enlightening the public mind, in overcoming prejudices, and in rescuing to all appearance multitudes of the young and the old from the jaws of that monster which is daily swallowing up thousands;—cannot be contemplated by any benevolent man without heartfelt pleasure; without cordial thankfulness to that God who has put it into the heart of his people to take these measures, and who has been pleased thus far to crown them with an abundant blessing.

It is also the firm opinion of the writer of this article, that