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"NOT SLOTHFUL IN BUSINESS: FERVENT IN SPIRIT."

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Education.

Sabbath School Convention.

We have received a report of a highly interesting meeting in connection with the above convention, held in Kingston, Canada West, on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, the 11th, 12th, and 13th of February.

A large number of Delegates attended from Sabbath Schools, in various parts of Canada and the United States. Much earnestness was manifested in the discussion of the topics presented. It must have afforded a rich treat to those present. The work of Sabbath School instruction as well as Christian activity generally, will no doubt have a fresh impetus given to it, by this gathering of the wise and good engaged in the work.

We would gladly devote a larger portion of our space to some of the speeches, but to do so, should be obliged to exclude other important matter. They were all good. We have made some extracts which may be taken as a sample of what was heard through the three days of the convention. The number of Delegates was so large, that after accommodation being provided by the people of Kingston, for as many as possible, about seventy-five were obliged to go to hotels. The Treasurer of the City stated that he had been authorized by the Mayor, to say, that he and the citizens (not the corporation) would see that all hotel expenses for the Delegates should be paid. The Finance Committee state in their report, with reference to this handsome conduct:—

"The Committee have to allude to the undoubted generosity of the Mayor and citizens of Kingston, for the handsome manner in which delegates have been entertained during their sojourn in Kingston. Not being satisfied with filling their dwellings to overflowing, they pay the bills of those who were under the necessity of going to hotels."

Two hundred and sixty were present, with regularly filled up credentials from their Sabbath Schools, in addition to which, many were supplied with certificates, who were believed to be fully appointed representatives.

The Hon. James Ferrier presided over the convention with much ability, and afforded great satisfaction to all present.

The Meetings were held in the Wesleyan Methodist Church.

The Rev. Mr. Marling proposed at first that Mr. Mair of Kingston, do assume the Chair as temporary Chairman.

Rev. Mr. Lanton then opened the meeting with a short prayer.

Dr. MAIR then said, this convention had originated in a committee appointed in Kingston, on a previous occasion, to carry out the design then projected. Three committees had been named, one for Montreal, one for Toronto, and one for that city, and the result was manifested in the highly respectable meeting then before him. It afforded him the utmost pleasure to be called to the position he then held; and he would remark, that he had been much struck the day before, with the remarkable intelligence and good countenances, of the numerous Delegates who had arrived for the purpose of holding the Convention. He had lived in countries where he had become familiar with very different faces. He had been in N. S. Wales, and Van Dieman's Land, where he frequently had to encounter persons of the very worst characters, and could state it as a remarkable fact that crime stamped its impress on the countenance. Having had these opportunities then of observation, he could not help comparing the benevolent and intellectual faces before him with those of men who had been familiar with crime, and with everything else which tended to make the heart worse than it naturally was. He cordially entered into the desires expressed in the prayer just offered, and had no doubt the Convention would tend greatly to the advancement of the cause in which all were so much interested. He felt, too, that the Lord would be present with them. It was delightful to reflect that there were present men who merged all their differences in love—love to God—love to Jesus—love of the Spirit of Truth and Holiness. They were all one in Christ Jesus.

After the choice of committees and officers, the Hon. President having taken the chair, he rose and said:—

Christian Brethren: I have repeatedly during the course of my life occupied positions of honor and responsibility, but never before have I felt myself so highly honored, nor have I occupied a responsible position as I do this day, in presiding over this large and deeply interesting

assembly of delegates from Sunday Schools, East, West, North, and South. Were we met in this place to determine what course to pursue in reference to some great political question, affecting the material interests of Canada, how many eyes would be on us! how many would be ready either to censure or applaud the decisions at which we might arrive! But it is for no such deliberation we are called together. The purpose of our meeting is to consider whether more cannot be done in our Sunday Schools, to give to the children of this Province a more thorough Bible education; and if this Convention should, during its present session, devise means superior to those now employed, in conducting our Sunday School work, or if it should excite a stronger feeling in the breast of every delegate in this house, so that we may return to our schools with redoubled energy, to teach the rising generation the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, the end will be fully answered.

Sunday School teaching will, in my opinion, increase the prosperity of our rising country to a far greater extent than any political question which has ever occupied the attention of our Legislature; and it is capable of effecting what no purely secular education can effect, viz.—the establishment of that high moral and religious character, without which there can be no security to either person or property. Gentlemen, I feel deeply on this subject; and I believe that the future destiny of our country depends on the sound religious and moral training which our children receive in the Sabbath School. Let us for a moment look at our Province, divided as it is into two classes—the Protestant and Roman Catholic, and let us note the difference between them, which we attribute to the effects of the Bible. We Protestants believe that God has given us the Bible as his revealed will; that he commands us to read and obey it; and that it is our duty to teach it to our children and all around us. To the Roman Catholics the Bible is a closed book—they are prohibited from reading it, and the result is lamentable in this country as well as on the continent of Europe. I point to these facts to show that the present and future prosperity of our Province depends on the thorough Bible education which we give our children. And I would ask—where are they to get this? The District Schools do not furnish it; neither do the other schools established for secular education; and therefore we have to look to our Sunday Schools as our only hope, and we expect by promoting their interests, to attain the desired end. For ever shall I thank God that I was born in Scotland, and that in the school where I was educated, there were a Bible and Testament class. For about thirty years past, I have been teaching or superintending Sabbath Schools, and during that time, I have seen the glorious effects of Bible truth on the minds of children. I have seen them die happy in the prospect of spending an eternity with Jesus, who said:—"Suffer little children to come to me," &c. I rejoice to be able to report to this Convention, that in the school of which I am the superintendent, there have been during the past year, about thirty young persons converted to God, and that in Montreal our prospects of further success are brighter than they ever have been.

Gentlemen, a great deal has been done, and is now doing, to furnish a liberal secular education to the youth of our Province, and no one can be more anxious than I am to secure this. But let us never forget that the sciences do not teach the way of salvation. Mathematics will never solve the problem—how can a sinner be justified before his offended God?—nor can mental philosophy ever show that the carnal mind is at enmity against God. No! in the sciences, whether physical or metaphysical, there is no voice which tells us of the height, the depth, the length and the breadth of the love of God to man. To the Bible therefore, and to the Bible alone, let us go, and take with us the children and youth of our land, that from the study of that Book of Life, teachers and children may be made wise unto salvation.

The first question for discussion was:—"The best mode of training teachers for Sabbath Schools," on which the Rev. Mr. SMART (Brockville) said, that from an experience of forty-three or forty-four years, he had come to the conclusion, that the best mode of improving teachers was by their frequently meeting together and holding cordial christian communion on the task in which they were engaged. That was the plan which had been adopted at the Fitzroy School in London, with which he had been connected, and where there were 400 or 500 children. He could not tell the number of missionaries and ministers who had gone forth from that school.

Mr. BREG (London) believed that it was of the greatest importance especially in Union Schools, that the teachers should be better instructed in the best modes of teaching their classes. In London, under direction of his pastor, there was a large Bible class for the training of the teachers; and he held that it was the duty of the pastor thus to train the young of the flock.

Mr. HAGAR (Montreal) mentioned, that in the school with which he was connected, there were

several adult or Bible classes. The older scholars did not leave the school, but grew up in it; and when old enough to do so, took part as teachers. From the Bible class, in the past year, several teachers had gone out to supply the schools. There were children and adults, and when the superintendent wanted teachers, he could always apply to these adult classes. The members of these Bible classes sometimes took turn to lead the classes, and they thus prepared themselves and became qualified for teachers.

The following resolution was then moved by the Rev. Mr. JEFFERS (Montreal,) seconded by Mr. AYLESWORTH (Odessa,) and carried:—

That, with reference to the training of teachers, it is desirable and earnestly to be recommended, that a teachers' Bible class, to which the elder and more advanced scholars are invited, and to meet once a week, be maintained when practicable in connection with each school. And that in addition thereto, there be also maintained a superior male and female class, also composed of the elder and more advanced scholars, as a sort of normal training classes, out of which teachers are to be taken to form part of each school, and to meet at the same time and place as the school.

The convention then took up the question:—

Are Sabbath Schools at the present day accomplishing the purposes for which they were established? viz.: the religious enlightenment of uncared-for children?

Mr. CARMAN said every man desired to be considered better than his neighbor, and if it were said that the schools were established merely for uncared-for children, the children who were really uncared for, but whose parents would not admit that they were so, would be driven away from such schools. He had sometimes asked himself, if a school should not be made, separate from the rest, for the wandering children of the streets; but he soon saw the desirability of it, and that as everybody had a desire to be thought to belong to the upper classes, no one would like to send their children to such schools. The teaching of poor children was one of the grandest objects of the Sabbath Schools; but one of the greatest attractions for them was, that they would be there gathered together with the respectable children of all classes of the community.

Mr. THOMPSON (Rochester) had seen a great deal of effort put forth to get into the schools children who did not belong to any Church unless the Church of Rome, and had seen these efforts blessed; but it was no particular machinery that did it. It was the love of God shed abroad in the hearts of those who labored, and though at first there were many little difficulties, it was found at last that the parents could be got at. He knew a brother who really had but one talent, but that one was the talent of trying to do good. He tried to get the French Catholic boys into the school. Fathers and mothers and priests all opposed him, but he succeeded. He was a mechanic, and used to go down to the residences of these poor people, sometimes with firewood, at others with bread or clothes. They found he had a heart, and he thus came to exercise great influence over them.

Mr. FOOTE (Buffalo) thought that Committees would do little to get children to the schools. Give him one little boy or girl zealous in the work, and he had yet to see the place where children could not be prevailed on to come to the school. He had a large file of correspondence on Sunday Schools, and every letter complained of want of teachers. There was no trouble about getting children. He had visited one place where there was a Christian Church, supposed to have great efficiency; but there were from 300 to 500 neglected children there. He appealed to them on this subject, and three weeks after on returning there, he was told that a little Irish Catholic girl had done more than all the Church to collect scholars.

Wednesday Evening.—After the usual devotional exercises, Mr. THOMPSON (Rochester) being called for, said he had never made a set speech in his life, and would not begin in his old age. He had been a Sabbath School teacher forty years, and had seen that God had poured forth his spirit upon these schools like rain upon the mown grass. In Rochester they kept a record of what occurred in the Sunday Schools, and without such a record, a school was not what it ought to be, and when teachers or scholars were united with the church the fact was entered. In the year ending January 1st, sixty five scholars had been united to the church, making in all 655, to say nothing of those who had gone all over the land and made profession in other places. Yet very little had been done for God, though he had blessed that little. But if men would but try to work for God, God would bless them.

Rev. Mr. MILLER conceived that men might already see before their eyes the fulfilment of the promise, that the hearts of the fathers should be turned to the children, in the spread of Sunday Schools, that peculiar enterprise of the nineteenth century. The importance of it was easily shown. In his church, out of a hundred and ninety-nine applicants, of whom one hundred were by profession of faith, the largest

part were from the children of the church. Phidias, the sculptor, being unjustly banished from his native country where his statuary graced the Pantheon, repaired to Elis, far from the land of his fathers; but there he undertook to accomplish a work superior to any he had hitherto achieved, and presented to the world, the statue of Jupiter Olympus. Look at him thus toiling on the shapeless mass, to gratify his ambition and revenge for the injustice of his countrymen! But Sunday School teachers had to do with immortal spirits. On them they were to make their mark; and should they not persevere?

Mr. HUNTINGTON (Rochester,) would give a few statistics of the school of which Mr. Thompson had spoken. They had a book containing biographical records of the school, with the autographs of every teacher and scholar for twenty or thirty years back. It contained three thousand biographical sketches, and his colleague who had already spoken made it his business, if he saw anything in a newspaper, or anywhere else, of one of their scholars or teachers to insert it in the book. Whenever a scholar emigrated to the West or elsewhere, a record was made of the fact, and the collection was well worthy of examination. The school contained 430 scholars, of whom 140 were over fourteen years of age. It had young teachers, and teachers who were fathers. Among the elderly teachers was the oldest man in the Church. As an evidence of what one little boy could do, he would mention that in Western Kentucky a reward was offered to boys who should bring in scholars. The first person that one of these boys applied to was his father. The man said "I don't know how to read."

"We will teach you said the child." The father followed his son; sat on the same bench by him; learned to read; became converted; and finally was sent out as a colporteur. At the end of four years he had established four hundred Sabbath Schools, and 35,000 children, within seven years were, by his instrumentality, gathered in. That boy was now a missionary. In New York there were about 500,000 children and about 200,000 of these were in Sabbath Schools. Among the rest were the Catholic children who went to their own schools, and it was proposed to adopt a plan to bring them all in. In the City of New York, a good deacon and a Scotchman met a few little boys on Sunday morning for the sake of giving them instruction in the scriptures. Mr. Parry proposed one day to visit him and see if he could render any assistance. At the appointed time Mr. Parry went and found his friend engaged with ten or eleven boys; but he had noticed on his way some boys who were playing at marbles. He asked if these had been invited; and was told that they had been but would not come. Upon that he went out and found a lad thirteen years of age and other smaller boys together.

He said to the elder, I have a notion to make and if you will second it, I think I can carry it—it is that you adjourn your meeting and go to the Sabbath School. No said the boy I sh'ant do that. Well said Mr. Parry, you are doing two things that are wrong,—one is gambling, and the other breaking the Sabbath. I protest against them. Oh come along boys said the eldest, and off they went a little further and resumed their game. Mr. Parry returned to the school, obtained a little book with pictures, and got a boy to accompany him. Then he approached the group again, reading the book to the boy and looking at the pictures. The other lads became interested and approached to see what the interesting story was about. At length the eldest boy was left alone and he came up too. Then Mr. Parry asked if they did not all want books, saying that just such were given to the boys at the school, and addressing the elder boy, now, said he, if you go all will go. "Oh, he knew that," he said, and then "well boys! lets all go to school." They went in; but the eldest boy soon slipped away, returning however, soon after with the exclamation—"here Mister—here are some more boys." He slipped out again, and returned in the same manner, so that before the school broke up he had gathered sixty four boys; and he was then made assistant superintendent, and ultimately he became much interested in the work. He was taught the trade of machine manufacturing in the Southern part of Connecticut, and if any of his hearers should ever read of Casper Howard, that was the boy.

Rev. Mr. DENISON (Buffalo,) had had some trouble to come, but had done better than some of his brethren, for he had brought his wife with him; and without saying anything about woman's rights, he would add, that she had come as a delegate. He felt that the friends of Sunday Schools might well congratulate their wives and daughters on the aspect of the Sabbath School cause, both here and in the United States. In both countries, everything which had been achieved was owing to their Christian women; and if ever either country fulfilled the destiny which he believed God had in store for them, it would be because of the exertions of the Christian mothers, and wives, and sisters. When he thought of the Christian union manifested that evening, his heart rejoiced. Per-