

cried Abbott; "not old John Lister and little Dot?"

"Why, do you know them?" exclaimed Mrs. Clack, her face beaming with surprise and delight. "Ay, Don found them here last November—a dreary night it was. Don is my errand-boy, and sleeps on the premises, and he brought them home to me. And the little girl does answer to the name of Dot—which is her real name, I'm sure. The old man had been left by his daughter in the Gardens; he didn't know whether it was on purpose or not."

"Thank God!" said Abbott, standing still in the path, and lifting his hat from his head.

"You know them?" continued Mrs. Clack.

"I know Hagar," he answered, "and she's breaking her heart after them. Thank God I came with you, and did not leave you before you told me this! Where are they? In your house still?"

"The poor, blind old man's dead and buried," she answered bursting into tears. "I bought him a fine new suit of clothes—a great bargain—and it was a fever suit as I knew nothing about; and he took the fever badly, and died. Oh, I wish he'd never done it! It were that as killed him—and he'd have been so happy now; he was always mourning for his daughter Hagar."

"Poor Hagar!" said Abbott, in a low tone. It would be bitter grief to her, he knew; and his heart ached for her; she had been cherishing a hope of finding her father and Dot again, as a sign that God had forgiven her; and he could not persuade her to trust in God's love and pardon without a sign.

"But there is Dot," he added, after a pause.

"Oh, yes, she's all right and well," replied Mrs. Clack; "I left her with my neighbor's daughter, Peggy Watson; I'd been nursing Mrs. Watson through the fever she caught from poor old Mr. Lister, and she would not have nay, but I must go down into the country with her. I'd been nursing the old man before that, and never did I think a man could be such a harmless creature. He lived with me three months, and never said a missword, never."

"I must come home with you," said Abbott, "and we will take poor Dot to her mother at once, this very night. She is almost broken hearted, poor thing!"

It was quite dark in the narrow court as they passed into it, but the single lamp in the midst of it had not been lit, as the glass had been broken the day before. Mrs. Clack knew her way perfectly in the dark, but Abbott stumbled over the uneven pavement as he followed her. At the farther end a dim gleam of candle-light shone faintly through a dusty window in the Watsons' dwelling-place, where Dot was to be found. They made their way towards it, and Mrs. Clack knocked hurriedly at the door. The casement overhead was opened, and Peggy craned over her dirty face and rough, untidy head to see who was below.

"I'm Mrs. Clack, come home," she said, "and I want Dot."

"Oh, Mrs. Clack!" she cried, "we lost Dot yesterday; and she's not been heard of again yet. None of the police have seen her."

The Indian Summer of Life.

In the life of the good man there is an Indian summer more beautiful than that of the seasons; richer, sunnier and more sublime than the most glorious Indian summer the world ever knew—it is the Indian summer of the soul. When the glow of youth has departed, when the warmth of middle age is gone, and the buds and blossoms of spring are changing to the sere and yellow leaf; when the mind of the good man still vigorous, relaxes its labours, and the memories of a well spent life gush forth from their secret fountains, enriching, rejoicing and fertilizing; then the trustful resignation of the Christian sheds around a sweet and holy warmth, and the soul, assuming a heavenly lustre, is no longer restricted to the narrow confines of business, but soars far beyond the winter of hoary age, and dwells peacefully and happily upon the bright spring and summer which await within the Gates of Paradise evermore. Let us strive for and look trustfully forward to an Indian summer like this.

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger. Our Sabbath Schools.

The "International Lessons" are admirably adapted to awaken a deeper interest in the study of the Bible, and should be in all our Sabbath Schools. If more of the older members of our churches would form themselves into Bible classes, and take up these same lessons, they would receive great benefit.

If scholars and teachers, at the opening and closing exercises, would always quietly move up to the front seats, (instead of being scattered over the house), so as to unitedly engage in these interesting exercises, a much better effect would be produced than is often seen in our schools.

The catechism questions are an improvement. These important questions answered scripturally in concert, and repeated a few times, fixes the truths on the youthful mind, and are not easily erased. We were much pleased with the mode adopted in the Lockport Sabbath School by the Rev. Mr. Durkee in regard to this part.

MISSIONS AND TEMPERANCE.—Our Sabbath Schools should have the subject of Missions and Temperance presented to them occasionally, if not regularly. In regard to "mission work" the youths ought to be trained to giving systematically, even though in small sums; if so, the "mission cause" would not only be aided financially, but the members of our Sabbath Schools would become imbued with a missionary spirit and zeal, which would doubtless follow them all through their future life.

In addition to "mission work" some Sabbath School workers encourage the teachers and scholars to enrol their names on an S. S. temperance pledge book, thus fortifying them in youth against the wiles of the liquor vendors.

The writer has had some experience in these matters in connection with Sabbath Schools, and invariably found that scholars manifested much interest, being not only willing to pledge themselves against the use of liquors, but to give to and collect for the "mission cause." If our youths thus become well indoctrinated in pure Scriptural principles, their future Christian lives will have greater probability of being consistent, and their influence over others beneficial.

Many good meaning but misguided church members of to day are inconsistent, and set a bad example to others, simply because of wrong youthful training. Self-sacrifice for the good of others ought to be enjoined on the youthful mind. Kind words and kind acts have their sure reward, and cannot be too strongly urged on the attention of all. The use of tobacco should be spoken against as well as other vices.

A great work is before the Sabbath school teacher to carefully train the youths of our land for lives of usefulness, and such work done in the Master's name will receive its reward.

REV. L. DRURY'S SERMON. All who have not perused this able and deeply interesting discourse on the past 100 years' progress of our denomination, published in CHRISTIAN MESSENGER, February 16th and 23rd, ought to do so in a most careful manner. The facts there laid down are surely very encouraging, and should stimulate our people everywhere to renewed effort in sending forth the "Book of Life" and the living preacher, so that the pure principles of the Divine Word may permeate the masses of mankind, turning them from "darkness to light."

THE MESSENGER, coming to us, as it does, filled with such a variety of useful and wisely arranged matter, ought to be weekly perused by all the members of our churches. The religious press has a powerful influence in our land to-day.

"UNION IS STRENGTH." This is true, especially in regard to our "denominational enterprises," and the fact of our people heretofore being so united and earnest in their christian work, has been under the Divine blessing, the chief cause of the wonderful success of our denomination the past 100 years and more, as referred to above.

OUR INDEPENDENT MISSION has been entered upon in good earnest, and, to make it a success, it is important that our entire people should be heartily

united in the Master's name in pushing it forward. Let there be frank expressions of even diverse views in regard to mode of operation, etc., then sink all minor considerations and self in the one grand desire to supply the world with the gospel.

MONEY. Our people are able and willing to supply the necessary means to push this noble missionary enterprise forward, but our leaders should be in harmony. Feb. 21st, 1881. W. J. G.

For the Christian Messenger. The Convention Scheme.

BY REV. DR. WELTON. The following paper on the above subject was recently read before the Kings County Ministerial Conference. In compliance with the request of the Conference it is offered for publication. The writer said:

The most that I propose in this paper is a brief statement of what the Convention scheme is, a naming of some of the arguments which may be adduced in its favor, and a suggestion or two as to the best method of carrying it out. In this way I would simply introduce the scheme to the consideration of this Conference, hoping that such steps may be taken as will lead to its immediate adoption by the churches of this County, and that at no distant day it will be embraced and worked by all the churches of the Convention. The results that would hereby be achieved in every department of our denominational work would exceed anything that has been witnessed among us in the past, or that many of us have allowed ourselves even to anticipate in the future. Our financial resources would be hereby more than doubled or quadrupled, and a corresponding largeness and efficiency given to our various endeavors to advance the kingdom of Christ.

The scheme before us is called the "Convention Scheme" because it was formulated at and by the Convention, and a Committee appointed by that body to bring it before the churches, and in some measure superintend its working among them. It is not maintained that it is more perfect than any other scheme that has been or could be devised simply because the Convention has given it its approval. In respect of the amount asked from the churches it may be said to resemble the old "Union Society" Scheme, which required the payment of a dollar annually from each of its members. But the Convention scheme is superior to that in this respect, that it asks not a dollar from each member of our several churches, but an amount from each church equivalent to a dollar per member, it being taken for granted that some members of each church will give more than the dollar each, and some less, according to their means, in making up the required sum. This feature of the Convention scheme gives it some resemblance to that laid down in the 2nd verse of the 16th chapter of 1st Corinthians: "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come." This scheme, coming to us with apostolic sanction, we regard as absolutely perfect. It lays the duty of giving, not upon a few, but upon all, and that according to the measure of prosperity or ability which God has given. If any of our churches prefer this scheme to that recommended by the Convention, I have no objection to offer. But what I am contending for is a scheme of some kind,—a scheme that will place our giving upon a systematic and equitable basis, and so call forth and direct to noble ends a vast amount of energy now lying dormant. I think the Convention scheme is adapted to this end. If it is not as perfect as that recommended by Paul, it yet agrees with it in some of its main principles, and is greatly to be preferred to a poor scheme, or to no scheme at all. But how many of our churches have adopted Paul's scheme, or propose to do so? Perhaps not half a dozen in the Maritime Provinces; perhaps not one. Is it not, then, desirable that the churches which have hitherto failed in this respect—and they may be counted by the score—should now embrace the Convention scheme, or some other good scheme in carrying forward their benevolent operations? The plan of gathering up a few dollars just before the meetings of the several Associations,

to make up which perhaps not more than a fourth part of the members of the several churches contribute,—this plan does not deserve to be called a scheme; it is only a miserable pretext and apology for one, and should receive no countenance from any church professing to have intelligence enough to know how to do its work, and christianity enough to do it in the right spirit.

Let it be understood, then, that the Convention does not dictate to any church what its scheme of raising benevolent moneys shall be; it only urges some scheme, and, in lieu of a better one, it recommends its own.

This scheme proposes that each church shall raise, or rather attempt to raise, for the Benevolent Objects of the denomination, an equivalent of a dollar per head of its membership. Attempt to raise, I say, for the attempt, even though it should fail to realize this amount, would yet be sufficient to put the church making it in the Convention-scheme category. The Convention scheme recommends an equivalent of a dollar per head of the membership of the churches as the minimum which each church should attempt. Some churches may not find it easy to reach this figure, other churches may easily go beyond it.

The Convention has appointed three brethren, one for each province, to receive the benevolent funds of the churches, to apportion them according to the scale recommended, and then forward them to the different denominational treasuries. The brethren appointed to this office in Nova Scotia is Rev. Dr. Day, of Yarmouth. Each church working under this scheme has but to transmit its moneys—all its benevolent moneys as they come in from time to time during the year—to him, being careful to make the last remittance not later than the first of August of each year, when the accounts should be closed for presentment to the Convention. In this way each church will get credit for all it has done, and its name will appear in the Year Book, with the total amount of its contributions set opposite.

The scale of appropriation recommended by the Convention is that of every dollar contributed to the Convention Funds, 40 cents go to Home Missions, 25 cents to Foreign Missions, 25 cents to our Educational Institutions, 21 cents to Ministerial Education, 21 cents to Infirm Ministers, &c., &c.

Now some of the churches have been rather disposed to retain the appropriation of their moneys in their own hands; and it should be remarked here, that the Convention does not take it upon itself to dictate to the churches in this matter. Each church has certainly the liberty of designating its money as it pleases,—a liberty which the Convention has no desire to interfere. It only recommends the scale just defined, and it is very doubtful if it can be improved upon. Its general acceptance is justified on several grounds. I mention only one: It secures to each of the great enterprises of the denomination about that proportion of the contributions of the churches which its relative importance demands.

The work of planting new churches in these Maritime Provinces, and assisting feeble ones till they become self-supporting, is one that especially engages the attention of the denomination at the present time. No object should take precedence of it. It seems perfectly right, therefore, to assign to this object 40 cents of every dollar that is contributed by the churches.

The importance of our Foreign Missionary operations is not overrated by allotting 25 cents in every dollar to them; and the same might be said of our Educational Institutions, which sustain a most vital relation to our missionary enterprises, Home and Foreign, as well as to the development of our denominational strength and influence generally. Now it is quite possible that, should each church designate its own moneys, some of these great objects might receive more and others less than their intrinsic or relative importance demands, and some of them might consequently flourish at the expense of the others.

The united judgment of the Convention in this matter ought to be as safe a guide, or even safer, than that of any single church or individual.

In favor of the Convention scheme in its entirety it may be said:

1. It is a scheme; it contains a plan or system for raising benevolent moneys. The superiority of systematic over unsystematic methods of doing work should be sufficient to commend system to the judgment of every intelligent person. The man who works according to a definite plan will be sure to make the most of himself and his resources. And what is true of individuals is true also of churches and religious denominations. Something may be done, indeed, by a few professing Christians acting under the stimulus of a spasmodic impulse, but it is the concerted, continued doing of the many acting under the healthy impulse of Christian principle that tells most mightily in the end. How many churches have been astonished at the magnitude of the results they have achieved, when, abandoning their old method, or rather lack of method, they have systematically and unitedly concentrated their efforts for the accomplishment of a specific object. Some churches have in this way increased the amount of their annual contributions five and even ten fold. If I have not misread the statements of the last Year Book, there are Baptist churches in these Provinces numbering over one hundred, two hundred, or even three hundred members, whose contributions to the benevolent funds of the body have not amounted to more than ten cents per member. But this has been the result, not so much of lack of ability or willingness on the part of their several members to give more to the cause of Christ, as of proper means to secure their contributions.

2. This scheme commends itself to us again in that it lays the duty of giving upon all, and so accomplishes a larger total result, while single individuals are not burdened. By requiring all to give it really confers a benefit upon all. The Christian who contributes of his substance to advance the cause of Christ, not only helps that cause, but hereby also gets a blessing to his own soul. Why should only a few of the members of our churches do all the giving, and so appropriate to themselves all the blessedness? But while the blessed reflex effect of giving may be deemed a sufficient compensation to him who properly engages in the act, professing Christians should yet give for the purpose of benefiting others,—of extending the cause and kingdom of Christ. And manifestly the greatest amount of good may be done by our churches in this direction when all their members contribute something.

It is not unfrequently the case that many of those who do nothing towards making up the amount that is annually raised, are yet as able to do something as those from whom that amount entirely comes. Why should the few do all, and the majority be excused from doing anything? But this scheme, while it proposes that an equivalent of a dollar per member shall be raised by the churches, proposes that all their members shall share in the effort. And how very desirable that this measure of liberality,—the average dollar per member,—be reached. Is not the demand for more means to carry forward and enlarge our denominational work most pressing at the present time? The Home Mission Board required \$7,000 at least for the work which has been marked out for the present year. If a united and general effort is not made to sustain and enlarge our Home Mission operations, many of our feeble churches will, ere long, lose their visibility, and many mission fields now essentially Baptist will pass into the hands of other religious bodies. Our Foreign Mission operations also require enlargement. New recruits, necessitating additional expense, must be sent out to the foreign field, if we would keep our Foreign Mission in an efficient state. Then our Educational Institutions in all their departments require complete equipment in order to meet the growing wants of the denomination and of the times. The Government grant will probably be withdrawn; but whether this be done or not, nothing must be permitted to hinder us from maintaining the independent position in educational matters which we have taken. A failure to do this would be disastrous every way,—would throw us into the background, and greatly weaken our influence and power for usefulness in the country. For nothing is more certain than that they who do most towards educating the mind of a