

SPEECHES

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REV. DRS. TYNG, PARKER, AND EVERTS,

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AT THE

BOSTON MEETING,

IN BEHALF OF

THE AMERICAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL UNION,

MAY 29, 1844.

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PHILADELPHIA:

AMERICAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL UNION,

146 CHESTNUT STREET.



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MAY 29, 1844.

A MEETING in behalf of the American Sunday-school Union, was held on the 29th of May, in the Park street Church, Boston. JOHN TAPPAN, Esq., of Boston, presided, and prayer was offered by the Rev. BENJAMIN TAPPAN, D. D., of Maine.

The Rev. THOMAS M. SMITH, Agent for the American Sunday-school Union in New England, made a statement of the operations of the Society during the last year, the substance of which is embodied in the following extracts from the Annual Report:

It is now TWENTY years since the AMERICAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL UNION was instituted, and its tendencies have been sufficiently developed to enable any intelligent inquirer to determine to what degree of favour and support it is entitled.

There are two things, one touching its origin and the other its history, which it is well to keep in remembrance.

The first (touching its origin) is, that *it was not premature*. The Philadelphia Sunday and Adult School Union had been successfully prosecuting its work, in a limited sphere, for seven years. And at the anniversary of that Society, in May, 1824, the American Sunday-school Union was organized and its objects were set forth in these words, viz.; "to concentrate the efforts of Sabbath-school

societies in the different sections of our country—to strengthen the hands of the friends of religious instruction on the Lord's day—to disseminate useful information—circulate moral and religious publications in every part of the land, and to endeavour to plant a Sunday-school wherever there is a population.”

The *second* thing to be kept in remembrance in the history of our Society, is *that it has been true to its original purpose*. We have never been diverted from it, nor have we ever connected with it any other, or farther design. The importance of the simple object first proposed was great; and it has grown and extended so as to exceed immeasurably the increase of the society's means. And hence we have never been tempted, for the sake of occupying a wider field of usefulness, to enlarge the original design of the institution. Some time after the organization of the American Sunday-school Union, the American Tract Society, and the American Home Missionary Society were established, both in the city of New York, where our elder sister, the American Bible Society, had already settled. The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions had been long previously constituted, with the seat of its operations at Boston. The location of our Society was thought to be particularly favourable, inasmuch as Philadelphia offered peculiar facilities of intercourse with those distant sections of the Union where its influence was especially needed.

With the aid of an active agency at New York and another at Boston, we are enabled to avail ourselves of the most important channels of business, and to diffuse the benevolence of the Society in all parts of our common country. We are happy to say that both the agencies to which we have adverted, have been favoured with increasing confidence and patronage during the past year.

Your Board feel grateful to a kind providence for enlarging the Society's opportunities for doing good. The value of religious and instructive books for children and youth, which we have put in circulation the last year, is \$69,109. This exceeds the value of our last year's circulation by the sum of \$13,214. The average circulation of the last five years, expressed in pecuniary value, has been \$64,676, and the average since we ceased to give

credit, has been \$61,527. It is not practicable to estimate, with any certainty, the number of distinct works or pages which have been thus distributed through the ranks of children and youth, and among the families where they dwell, by the agency of the American Sunday-school Union. But when it is considered how large a number of these precious though humble volumes are required to make the worth of a dollar, and how limited is the aid which we derive from the established modes of conducting the book-business, we may reasonably congratulate our friends on this gratifying result, and trust to their continued and increasing liberality to accomplish, under the Divine blessing, far greater things in time to come.

The number of reading books published the last year is *twenty-five*, and of these *eighteen* are original. The whole number of distinct publications issued during the year is *ninety-one*. Of the reprints, one is worthy to be particularly mentioned, as well for its intrinsic excellence as for the interesting circumstances which attended its publication. It is a treatise on one of the cardinal doctrines of our holy religion, viz., *the nature and evidences of regeneration*, written by the Rev. George Redford, D. D., and published by the London Religious Tract Society, under the title of "*The Great Change*." The proof-sheets of this work were kindly forwarded to us by our friends in London, and the work has been received with signal favour in our own country. It is among the happiest evidences of the practicability and advantages of Christian union, that "*The Way of Life*," prepared for the American Sunday-school Union, was adopted at once by the Religious Tract Society of London, and that "*The Great Change*," prepared for the Religious Tract Society of London, was adopted with equal promptness by the American Sunday-school Union; thus uniting by far the largest portion of Protestant Christendom, in a common effort to propagate the great doctrines of a common salvation in one and the same language, and in a manner to which none can reasonably except.

The contributions of the Christian public to the great objects of our society, (aside from the distribution of our books by purchase,) have amounted during the last year to \$14,343 29. Though this is quite an inconsiderable

sum, considering the wants which it is to supply, it exceeds the like item of last year by the sum of \$2,038.

We have employed five agents and eleven missionaries during the year.*

We have the best evidence that the labours of these missionaries have been well directed, well received, and productive of great good to the communities on which they have been bestowed. The cause of the Redeemer has been advanced, and multitudes of the ignorant and destitute have tasted the good word of God.

These faithful brethren were commissioned and fitted out agreeably to the plan set forth in our last report, which we have abundant reason to believe is the best that can be devised in the present circumstances of the country, to accomplish the end we have in view.

Of the manner in which their unostentatious but important and efficient labours are rendered, some idea may be formed from a few brief sketches gathered from their periodical reports :

"The result of my whole operations and experience, has but confirmed my mind in the immense importance of the work, and the *absolute impossibility of constituting Sunday-schools* on any other plan than that adopted by the Union. The Lord is wonderfully blessing your labours. Feeble as are my abilities, I have no difficulty in convincing parents of the great importance of Sunday-schools to their children. I find the true plan is, to go from house to house: the hearts of parents are open at once to the facts in the premises, when we see them among their children, at their own homes. Since writing to you, I have been on the constant move, from school to school, and from house to house; have, during the season, visited rising 400 families; and organized 5 and aided 3 Sunday-schools."

We have a worthy and laborious man employed in Wisconsin Territory;—we would have six, if we had the means to pay them. We put in his hands three hundred dollars' worth of books, and told him to distribute them, in the best way, for the Society and the schools. We will concisely describe from his own journal, how and what he does; or rather, how and what the American Sunday-school Union does through him.

* These eleven missionaries have been employed chiefly in Ohio, Illinois, Missouri, Indiana, and the Territories of Wisconsin and Iowa.

As to the general influence which is exerted :—

UNION BOOKS.

"Your books are just what they want in this territory ; for without them, they cannot unite and sustain a school in our back settlements. They will give a new impulse to the work."

NEW SPIRIT INFUSED.

"I find on conversing with the ministers and laymen, they are ready to acknowledge at once, that they have not felt the importance of the work, but are now resolved to meet you, and do their part in labouring and praying for the children and youth in our land. There are a number of warm friends of the Union in this territory, but (for want of books to keep up the necessary interest in the schools) they have heretofore failed in effecting much."

As to the mode of proceeding, the following passages may suffice :—

"Visited a school which was re-organized two years ago—40 or 50 scholars—sold them a library for \$15 26. Another school just organized took \$7 50 in books, and pay \$5.

"Commenced an exploring tour—stopped first at a place where there had been churches for two years—Baptist, Methodist, and Congregationalists—but there had never been a school in the place. After conversation and discussion, they united in a union school, 30 scholars. They have no stated preaching. They took a \$15 library, for which they pay \$10.

"Six miles farther, in the woods, I found a school which was organized in May last—20 scholars—no library, and no stated preaching. I sold them books to the amount of \$6 47, for which they pay \$4 47. Only two professors of religion in the settlement."

"A few miles north-west, I found a school which was started last spring, in consequence of my visit last winter. They have 12 scholars—Methodist preaching once in two weeks. They took \$5 worth of books, and paid \$2 50."

As to the results :—

LIFE FROM THE DEAD.

"At the place where I spent the Sabbath, I found brethren of three denominations—a very small school, in which little or no interest was felt—no library, and not much heart to do any thing. I talked to them in the afternoon, and they resolved to organize anew, a union school. They then circulated a subscription paper, which soon had \$7 upon it. When I first opened the subject, they thought 'it was useless to attempt to raise money for a library, for they had just done subscribing for the preaching of the gospel, of which they had been for some time deprived. But the Lord opened their hearts ;—I added \$4 to their subscription, making, in all, \$11."

"In another village, there is a Baptist meeting-house;—they organized a union school, subscribing \$7, to which I added \$4.

"At a place west of the last, I organized a school of 20 or 30 scholars. There is no church organized in the place. They took a library of \$8, for which they pay \$4; and at the last place in my circuit, I organized a union Sabbath-school, numbering at first from 20 to 30 pupils. They took a \$30 library, and pay \$20."

"I start out again on Thursday."

Now, the above is a plain, simple account of a *few days of Sunday-school labour in the West*. There is nothing very grand or exciting about it, and but little to attract public notice, but it is, nevertheless, an unutterably important work.

The number of specific donations to needy Sunday-schools made during the past year is 243; and their value \$2,350:—a list of which, with the names of places, applicants, &c., has been published in the Sunday-school Journal. These donations have been scattered over twenty-three States and Territories, and have averaged a fraction less than a \$10 library to each school. The amount actually distributed is \$4,742 13; but the reports in detail are not yet received.

The number of schools aided by the above 243 donations of books (so far as reported) is 447, with 2,905 teachers, and 19,447 scholars.

By the reduction of the price of the *Sunday-school Journal* to TWENTY-FIVE CENTS per annum, (which was mentioned in our last report as a contemplated measure,) the circulation has increased from 1500 to 8,000 copies.

On the 1st of January last, we reduced the price of the *Youth's Penny Gazette* one-half. It is now sold in quantities of forty or more to one address, for TWELVE AND A HALF CENTS per annum, or twenty-six numbers for less than *half a cent* each.

The issuing of this little paper, and the favourable reception it found at once, in all quarters, soon led to the establishment of three or four others, by denominational societies, which we hope will still more enlarge the current of good influences which is spreading itself among the children and youth of the country.

So great is the multiplication of the methods and

manuals of Sunday-school instruction, and so assiduous and skilful are the efforts of their respective authors and publishers to secure their adoption, that schools are often perplexed with the difficulty of selection. It is highly gratifying to us to know, that our series of "Union Questions," in twelve volumes, still maintain their place in the confidence of the most experienced and intelligent teachers, whose opinions are known to us. The groundless suggestion which has sometimes been made, that our series of "Question Books" does not open to the teacher and the pupil the whole counsel of God, is not entertained, except by those who lack either time, inclination, or capacity, to examine the subject. There is not a doctrine of the Christian faith, to which our Question Books do not lead the mind with more or less frequency and directness; and hence, if any truth is suppressed, or feebly or partially presented, the sin is upon the teacher, and not upon the book.

Notwithstanding the extraordinary prevalence of religious controversy at the present time, (indeed it may be but a consequence of it,) we have never received more emphatic declarations of confidence in, and adherence to, UNION principles, than within the last twelve months. The formidableness of the obstacles, which disunion and sectarian jealousy present to the propagation of the gospel by ordinary methods, can scarcely be exaggerated.

One of our missionaries, in visiting 423 families, found 2799 persons in all, and of these 1788, or nearly two-thirds, were children. Of these families 287 were attached, in various proportions, to some one or other of the evangelical denominations, and of course held, in common, the principal doctrines of the Protestant faith. It is evident, we think, that a Sunday-school missionary from a Union Society, with Union books, would have peculiar advantages for beginning a good work in such a district of country, with any prospect of success. If he can collect a quarter or even a fifth of the 1788 children, and give them wholesome instruction in the great doctrines which are held by 287 of the families, and send them home with Bibles and Testaments and Hymn Books, and entertaining and instructive reading books,

he will be very likely to secure an amount of good not otherwise attainable.

A clergyman mentions the organization of a church in Iowa Territory, consisting of seven members, who had emigrated thither from four different States of the Union, and belonged to five different Christian denominations; and he laments "the difficulty of keeping together, and building up churches composed of such discordant materials." By such representations, (from ministers of the gospel themselves,) we are prepared to receive with confidence the general testimony of our Western friends, that "in their present condition, Sabbath-schools, well conducted, on the principles of our Union, afford the *best*, if not the *only* practicable means of bringing Bible-truth to bear on the minds and consciences of the children, as well as of many adults."

In consequence of an opinion advanced with considerable boldness, and received by some persons with apparent favour: viz., that efforts to establish Sabbath-schools, *unless in connection with the gospel ministry*, must be abortive; your board have instituted some inquiry respecting this point, the result of which confirms us in our previous conviction, that the Sunday-school, so far from being incapable of great and permanent good without a previous church organization and established ministry, is one of the most important agencies that can be employed to prepare the way for their introduction; inasmuch, as in the absence of those institutions, it is admirably adapted to train a community to religious habits and observances.

The details of information on this subject would unreasonably encumber our report, we will therefore take the opinion of a single individual,* long and well-known at the East as well as at the West, and it may be regarded as the substance of the whole.

"The question is sometimes asked, and asked in a way and in a tone discouraging to Sunday-school efforts, 'whether Sabbath-schools can be got up and can prosper, except in connection with a settled ministry.' Or, in other words, shall we wait in any particular place or neighbourhood, till we can obtain a settled minister

* John Adams, Esq., for many years the Principal of Phillips' Academy, in Andover, Mass.

before we commence a Sabbath-school? As I have resided now more than seven years in this State, and have been deeply interested in Sabbath-school instruction, have extended my acquaintance among ministers and churches of all denominations; having addressed, during the last season, more than fifty Sabbath-schools, parents, teachers, and children, besides many public meetings of ministers, in all which I have been cordially received as a friend of the Bible, and advocate for Sabbath-schools upon the Union plan—surely, with this experience and means of knowledge, I may be permitted to state a few facts in relation to this whole subject.

“In Illinois there are some bright spots favoured with many privileges, social, literary, and religious. In these, each denomination has its own Sabbath-school. This is well. We would not disturb this arrangement, especially where all meet in the ‘Monthly Concert for Sabbath-schools’ in Christian fellowship. But these places are comparatively few in a State almost as large as all New England. The inhabitants are from all parts of Christendom, of all denominations, with their prepossessions and prejudices. Now, this being the case all over the State, it is evident that there can be no Sabbath-schools at all, except in these favoured spots, only on the ground of a plan of ‘Union.’ I will state a particular case. In a place not fifty miles from Jacksonville, there is a settlement of about eighteen or twenty families, scattered along the edge of timber, contiguous to a rich and beautiful prairie. All these settlements have been made in the course of five or six years. Their houses are poor, made of logs, their accommodations miserable, furniture scanty, but abundance of food, for the soil is rich and wonderfully productive. They have no school-house or meeting-house. They are destitute of books, cannot read or write; children growing up in ignorance, the Sabbath is profaned; they have no taste for reading; mental cultivation is unknown to them. Now, shall we wait till they become improved, till they are inclined to settle a good minister? And then, of what denomination must he be? Before answering this question, we will call at each house and inquire. Upon such visitation, we find that three families are Irish Catholics, no Bibles, inclined to believe whatever their priests have told them; and that their religion is the only true religion, and that all others are heretics. Two families are from Scotland, strong, unyielding Scotch Presbyterians; some Baptists; three or four families from England, and holding the doctrines of the establishment. Other families are from Kentucky, Tennessee, and other States, of various denominations, and some infidels or skeptics, who are not for any kind of religion. I now ask the question again, ‘Of what denomination must the minister be?’ Shall we wait till all are agreed, till all can unite? How long will it be, how many years must pass away before such a union can take place? How long shall we wait before each denomination can have its own Sabbath-school? But while in this state,

one of your missionaries visits them. He visits every family, conciliates (as far as may be) their opposition, says nothing sectarian, excites no prejudice, but wishes them to take the Bible for their guide, and to teach it or have it taught to their children. He then invites them all to meet him on the next Sabbath at some place designated, for the purpose of organizing a Sabbath-school for the children, and a Bible-class for adults. Parents must bring their Bibles, and their children with them. More than eighty persons assemble, as special invitations have been given to all. The missionary, after a short devotional service, states to the people the object of the meeting. 'Although you have your preferences as to modes and forms, there is but one Bible—the book of God; only one plan of salvation, and that is clearly spread out on the pages of the Bible; so that not only persons of common intellect, but even children can understand it.' After forming a Sabbath-school and a Bible-class with great unanimity, he says, 'to encourage you, and as a bond of union, I here present you with a Sabbath-school library worth ten dollars, as a present from an unknown friend, and also several religious tracts, and evangelical volumes. Also I have given to each Sabbath-school scholar (who has none) a copy of the New Testament, and by your receiving it, you pledge yourselves to study it much, and to be a constant and punctual attendant on the Sabbath-school which has just been formed.'

"It will not be long, we may be confident, before there will be a school-house, a day-school, prayer-meetings, conference-meetings, a church organized, and the gospel preached, and, with God's blessing, souls saved! Who then will say—wait? No, no! The Sabbath-school enterprise must be sustained. Send us some more ministers, if they come with a missionary spirit, more Sabbath-school missionaries, for there are hundreds of places in Illinois similar to the one I have described, some even in a worse condition. Send us on Sabbath-school libraries, Tracts, Bibles, Testaments, &c., &c. All these are very necessary in helping forward the good cause, and without these but little good can be accomplished at present. I must now close, bespeaking the prayers, the continued persevering prayers, of all who feel deeply for the well-being and salvation of children."

' We have within our own borders, and speaking our own language, and of course directly accessible, probably ONE AND A HALF MILLIONS of children and youth, who are quite destitute of the means of moral and religious instruction. The Sunday-school furnishes an agency for reaching a great proportion of them with the best of moral influences, at an expense not exceeding 25 cents a head per annum! Is it sound philosophy to let such a generation pass through the most susceptible period of its

life, and not attempt a general systematic effort to extend these influences to it? The AMERICAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL UNION is endeavouring, with scanty means to be sure, to give each of this vast multitude of opening and inquiring minds, an affectionate and trustworthy guide, and to put into the hands of each a Bible or Testament, and also some entertaining and instructive book—the reading of which may be had for nothing. In an agency so simple and direct in its working, and so open and palpable in its results, why should not the society enjoy all the support and co-operation it needs? Why should our *preventive* scheme be turned aside, with less than is given to any one of the various and excellent institutions whose object is chiefly *remedial*?

The friends of Sunday-schools, at least so far as our society has claimed to represent their views, have never asked for them a higher place than their *ascertained* importance would justify. We have ever regarded them as *entirely* auxiliary or supplementary to the family and *pastoral* relations—and as but a part of the grand agency for extending the blessings of education and religion.

As Christian laymen, belonging to various denominations, we have associated for the purpose of endeavouring to establish Sunday-schools wherever there is a destitute population, and for the farther purpose of supplying instruction and reading, which shall inculcate the essential truths of our common faith, without reasonable offence to any one touching matters of unessential importance. In all our plans and measures, we act in furtherance of the great design of the gospel ministry and the establishment of the church of Christ. Wherever we succeed, the gospel ministry gains essential and permanent support, and the cause of the Redeemer finds new and faithful friends.

In our individual relations we uphold (and in our associated capacity we are far from opposing) the efforts of the various denominations of Christians to defend and propagate, by all lawful means, their respective views of truth and order. We would not, if we could, interfere with, deprecate, or abridge these efforts. They can be wisely and efficiently prosecuted without trespassing on the common right.

But we find that as Episcopalians, Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, Reformed Dutch, Congregationalists, we can maintain the integrity of our relations to our respective churches and communities, while we can unite to teach *the truth that Christ taught, and as plainly as he taught it*. For, be it always remembered, that if we differ respecting the true construction of some of "the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth," we then say only just what He said, leaving those who read or hear to judge of His meaning. In the doctrines of the supremacy of the inspired Scriptures, as the rule of faith and duty—the lost state of man by nature, and his exposure to endless punishment in a future world—his recovery only by the free, sovereign, and sustaining grace of God, through the atonement and merits of a divine Redeemer, and by the influence of the Holy Spirit—the necessity of faith, repentance, and holy living, with an open confession of the Saviour before men, and the duty of complying with his ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's supper—in these doctrines we find the essential and leading truths of the Christian system; in the reception of these doctrines we agree, and with God's help, we endeavour to teach and inculcate them on all whom we can properly reach.

We do not seal up the sacred volume and require our fellow-men to believe what we or other fallible men have said, or may say, of its contents. We open it wide in the broad sun-light, and ask all mankind to come and read and think and decide for themselves what the Lord their God requires them to believe and to do. We seek to put the Bible into the hands of all the children and youth in the country. We would teach them to read it every day—to keep it open and study it with reverence and delight, and meditate upon it as they sit in the house and as they go by the way. We do not put any human authority above it nor by the side of it, but *immeasurably* below it. We do not believe that any man or body of men, since the days of the Apostles, have had any gifts or graces which clothe their teachings or interpretations with any authority binding upon the conscience or judgment of others. Their diligent study of the Bible—their

humble waiting upon God for the teachings of his Spirit, and their devout and holy lives, of course commend their opinions to our respect and deference. But the Bible is the **ONLY** rule of faith and duty, and every man is required, on divine authority and at the peril of his soul, to search the Scriptures, and see what they testify of Christ and his doctrines. Hence to **OPEN THE BIBLE** to all the rising generation of our country is the grand and glorious object of the American Sunday-school Union. We unite for this purpose, and blessed be God that we can unite ; that as a body of Christians, without distinction of sect, or creed, or custom, we **CAN AND DO** kneel together before the throne of our common Lord and Saviour, and implore, with one heart and voice, upon ourselves and upon the work of our hands, His gracious favour. We **CAN AND DO** inculcate the great truths of the Christian faith on which we rely for our own salvation, upon the minds and the hearts of the ignorant, the neglected, the unthinking and vicious myriads that throng our cities, and rise up, like a dense cloud, all over the newly formed settlements of the land. We **CAN AND DO** scatter far and wide,—through the agency of thousands upon thousands of our teachers, and our millions of Bibles, Testaments, and other religious books, circulating from week to week among a million of children and youth, and through the families and neighbourhoods in which they dwell, the free and boundless blessings of the gospel.

These are all great purposes, and in their furtherance the American Sunday-school Union has been enabled to do much already,—incomparably more than its most sanguine promoters anticipated. Its past achievements are rather the evidences of its capacity than the results of its energy. And if the principle which is wrought into the very joints and marrow of the Society—“**UNION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF THE COMMON GOOD**”—is worth all we claim for it, it deserves a much more liberal and earnest co-operation than it has ever yet received, from **ALL** the friends of civil and religious liberty.

May we not hope that our brethren and coadjutors throughout the country, will regard with new interest, and support with new zeal, the work which is given us

do? If done at all, it must be done **AT ONCE**; and to do it usefully, it must be done **THOROUGHLY**.

The chairman then introduced to the meeting the Rev. S. H. TYNG, D. D., of Philadelphia, who spoke in substance as follows :

Mr. Chairman and my Christian friends,—Perhaps there is no individual present in this meeting here to-day, upon whose mind such remembrances crowd, and upon whom such peculiar feelings are brought to bear, as now impress—almost overwhelm myself. Thirteen years ago I attended a meeting of the American Sunday-school Union in this place, since which period there has been but one meeting of the society, and that only partial in its nature. At that time the Union was in the seventh year of its existence. Thirteen years have rolled away, and now,—in the twentieth year of its existence, its history, its power, its influence, and of the glory it has brought to Jesus—the only true head of the living church,—I stand here to address you again in its behalf. There were present on that day and united with me in my effort for this society, several esteemed and beloved brethren in the Lord, who are now in a higher and holier sanctuary than any which earth can afford, and I cannot but feel that they are now addressing us, as with a voice from the bosom of the heavens, saying—“What thou hast to do, do quickly.”

There stood here then the amiable and practical WISNER, whose enlarged mind, whose sincere devotion, whose unaffected piety, and devout attachment to the welfare of the whole Christian church, stamped him as one of those men not belonging to any one sect or portion, but the property of the whole. There was with us the amiable

and lovely KNOWLES, of another tribe of the Christian family, whose eloquent and persuasive voice, like some gentle evening breeze stealing through the forest groves, bent our minds to his teachings and inclined our hearts to his counsels. There was with us the noble and majestic CORNELIUS, a *man* indeed; than whom I have never seen another man whose brow bore upon it more clearly the impress of divine intellect and power. And, Mr. Chairman, there was another distinguished individual who then filled the place you now occupy—the Hon. WILLIAM REED—a beloved and respected man, whose character is engraven in indelible lines in my remembrance. These four faithful men of God worked here with me then. They have gone to their rest, and I stand here, may I say as their representative from heaven itself, expressing their sentiments and feelings while I speak in their behalf for the American Sunday-school Union. Yes—unworthy as I may be and am, to represent WISNER and REED, KNOWLES and CORNELIUS—they are all now speaking by my voice. There was, too, a Nestor in the church—who combined in himself the wisdom of age with the power of that other chieftain whose arm was capable of casting stones which no other Greek could pick up. Need I say I refer to the eminent BEECHER? Far distant from us now, he works in another sphere of action, but he also may be considered as speaking to us again to-day.

There were six. Four are in glory—another has his station far beyond the mountains which hide from us the setting sun—while the sixth is permitted to stand here to-day and bear witness to those labours in the cause of Christ, for the advancement of which we are now assembled. This peculiar fact that I survive the brethren who

have thus been taken from us, has constrained me, at great personal inconvenience, to yield to the solicitation of the Board, and to appear among you again this day.

Thirteen years have passed! Permit me then to refer more particularly to the facts and circumstances connected with that meeting.

Its origin was the result of a previous assembly of the brethren whom I have mentioned, in Philadelphia, for the purpose of examining into the management and operations of the Sunday-school Union established in that city. I was with them there, and was familiar with their method of examination. Wisner and Knowles and Beecher spent several days in the rooms of the Union, in a thorough and careful investigation of its objects and its action. They examined each peculiar principle, they analyzed each particular means of operation; and they reported, on their return, that no institution in the land received more noble and devoted support from the laymen of the Christian church, none produced more real good by means afforded by laymen, than this Sunday-school Union—this union of Christian brethren in America for the establishment of Sunday-schools throughout the land! They gave that testimony on this floor, and Wisner said here that he was happy to state the result of the inquiries, and to bear witness to the great and beneficial influence of the Union, in the hands of those in whom confidence could be placed. I will read an extract from the speech of Dr. Wisner, delivered on that occasion. He said—

“Does the American Sunday-school Union deserve the confidence of the community? The interests involved renders this an important question. The influence which the Union may exert over many thousands of opening minds, their extensive and various

operations, and the large sums necessary to prosecute their plans, should be in the hands of those only in whom perfect confidence may be placed. Circumstances had led him, in company with other gentlemen from Massachusetts, to examine the subject. They had together devoted three days to it, with the best possible facilities, and he was now happy in stating the result of their inquiries. The managers were Laymen, acquainted with business, and of high respectability. He was much struck with the thoroughness and system that prevailed through all their transactions. He did not believe that there was another benevolent society in the United States, to the concerns of which are gratuitously devoted so much time and laborious attention."

Rev. Dr. KNOWLES also proposed a resolution, which was seconded by Rev. Dr. CORNELIUS, in support of which the former gentleman observed—

"It gives me pleasure, sir, to express on this occasion my testimony, founded on personal examination, to the fidelity, the industry, the general wisdom, the single-hearted integrity, the upright devotion to the interest of the Saviour's kingdom, with which the operations of the American Sunday-school Union are conducted. I believe that the Union is entitled to the confidence and aid of the whole community. She asks our co-operation, and her appeal to New England and to this metropolis will not be heard in vain. She must, she will receive our aid; and will be encouraged to go onward, in her great and glorious work, with renewed strength, and with more cheering hopes of success. She is worthy to be the foster-mother of the rising generation in the great valley. Let her go forth as the messenger of her Lord, like His sun, to light on the evil and on the good; like His rain, to diffuse her blessings on the just, and on the unjust. Though she may meet with ingratitude and obloquy, let her persevere, assured that the Saviour smiles on her, and that generations yet unborn will rise to call her blessed."

But I ask, why appeal to this testimony? There is authority in it, and it has a right to claim a hearing, not only from us, but from our age and from posterity. There are those who forget the services and character of ministers who have departed. But they who have received their instructions, who have felt the influence of their example, who have been guided by their counsels—are bound to transmit and carry down that example, their instructions and counsels to succeeding generations. And for this reason, therefore, I have introduced their names on this occasion.

And now I am ready to inquire if the Sunday-school Union has not the same claim now upon us, that it then had upon our predecessors? If those beloved and respected brethren so confided in it, if their associates bestowed upon it a liberal support—is there any ground now for withholding similar support—is there any foundation now for a want of confidence in its objects and its management? I had been three years in Philadelphia when the distinguished men I have named, made the examination into the principles and management of the Union. I was with them then, and had the same opportunities which they possessed. I agreed fully with them then, and now, after thirteen years, I am ready to confirm the testimony then given. I am personally acquainted with the officers and most of the managers of the Union in Philadelphia; it is my happiness to say that I am intimately acquainted with many of them, and I am entirely satisfied with the correctness and usefulness of the course they pursue in transacting the business of the Society. Thirteen years have only confirmed my opinion of the utility of the Union, and I now say, that if there be any institution in the country which deserves

the prayers of the pious for its continuance and extension, if there be any which does produce, and is likely to produce, great, almost incalculable benefit to the Christian church; if there be any one which has peculiar claims to the support of a Christian community, that one is the American Sunday-school Union. It is designed to carry out and complete, if possible, this peculiar work in the salvation of the world, till not a child shall be unconsecrated to the service of the living God.

* There are at least two millions of children in our country, who should every Sabbath be enabled to drink of the fountain of living water, but who are now scattered abroad, ready to perish. If they are to be gathered into the bosom of the church, by whose influence is the work to be effected? Can any one denomination or branch of the church accomplish this end? We know the power of that denomination whose members, mainly, I see before me. Who does not know what the Congregationalists of New England can do, and have done, when devoting their energies to any great Christian enterprise? Who does not know the power and influence of the other classes of the evangelical church? Yet, let them all combine in this work. It cannot be accomplished by any one denomination. There is a difficulty in it which no one lever can reach; and we must rely upon united exertion. All the efforts of any one branch are required to repair and maintain the waste places in its own grounds, and these two millions, who are now sinking in sin and death, must be saved, if at all, by UNION.

And what is Christian union? Is it a Moloch, to which every reasonable and rational Christian preference is to be offered and consumed? Is it an altar on which

every conviction of judgment and conscientious line of separation must be offered up and forsaken? No! It is not so. I yield to none in my attachment to my own particular branch of the church of God. Increasing years have only deepened and confirmed that attachment. What might have been in youth the tossing mountain stream, is now the deep, still, fixed current of the river as it seeks the ocean. And if asked what I am, I am ready at once to answer—descended as I am on both sides from those of the same faith, and who came here within the few first years of the settlement of the country—I am an Episcopalian. But shall I make that a difficulty in a cause like this? No! I will not consent that those who misunderstand my position shall drive me from it; I will love men whether they will be loved or not; I will uphold them with or without their acquiescence; they may treat me like Ishmael, if they will, my hand shall not be raised but for their encouragement and help.

Upon the principles of this Union we can all unite. And will any one tell me that they are not sufficient grounds for co-operation? Let me read them to you, as set forth in a part of the secretary's excellent report;—

“In the doctrines of the supremacy of the inspired Scriptures, as the rule of faith and duty—the lost state of man by nature, and his exposure to endless punishment in a future world—his recovery only by the free, sovereign and sustaining grace of God, through the atonement and merits of a divine Redeemer, and by the influence of the Holy Spirit—the necessity of faith, repentance and holy living, with an open confession of the Saviour before men, and the duty of complying with his ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper—in these doctrines we find the essential and leading truths of the Christian

system ; in the reception of these doctrines we agree, and with God's help, we endeavour to teach and inculcate them on all whom we can properly reach."

Will any one say, that he in whose heart these principles are engrafted, and in whose life and conduct they are carried out, is not travelling homewards to heavenly mansions, and preparing to sing the song of the Lamb in company with the blessed angels before the throne of the Almighty Father? I answer unhesitatingly—no! And I say that if our people and our children are taught these principles, they are taught that grace of God which bringeth salvation. These are the principles of our forefathers ; they are the principles of every evangelical class of Christians in the land ; and while we leave to all the perfect right to form their own opinions and systems additional, which we claim for ourselves—while we allow that others may not see with our eyes, any more than we see with theirs—we maintain that here is the sufficient foundation of true Christian brotherhood. I hold these to be the principles of the Pilgrims. They are mine, and upon them I found my right to be just what I am in the great family of the living God.

The American Sunday-school Union is a practical institution. Is there any other which will compare with it in that respect? I know of none. To suppose its value, imagine it, for a moment, to be destroyed. At this time of mutual discord, when all the Ishmaelites of the desert seem to be driven into Canaan, when, as it were, the patient oxen will no longer plough together in the field, but devote the strength which they possess to their mutual extermination—at this time suppose this body destroyed, its influence annihilated! Have we anywhere the elements to re-combine it? As well go back to Babel, whose nations of labourers were smitten by the hand of the

Almighty, and attempt its re-construction ; as well go back to Nineveh, and people its countless dwellings, garrison its sixty miles of wall with those who once were there—as attempt to form anew an institution like this. If now overthrown, it is broken up altogether, and the combined influence of Christians in this cause is lost. But let us bless God that it is not so with us. Let us thank Him, that in a calmer and holier day, this institution was made secure, like a nail in a sure place, that no power shall be able to draw from its hold on the walls of the sanctuary ! The effort to sunder us has been made ; but the time will again come when all this turmoil and confusion will pass away, and we shall see the blessed spirit of harmony and peace again descending from Heaven, in the form of the dove, with the olive-branch in her mouth ; the time when Judah and Ephraim shall cease to vex, and agree in sustaining, cherishing and comforting one another !

As a great means to this great end, the Sunday-school Union merits especial regard. It operates upon the children of the land, and its influence is exerted towards bringing up the generation which shall succeed us, in a knowledge of none other than the true and living God, in a spirit none other than of confidence and love in the Lord Jesus !

I rejoice in the spirit now at work. And I hail especially the efforts of the ladies of Boston and vicinity. The \$1250 which they have sent to sustain the Union, could they but know the influence that effort has exercised ; could they but realize the tenderness of sympathy it has called forth ; the enthusiasm ; the determination to labour in the cause, which it has excited, they would feel that the mere money was indeed but a small part of the result their efforts achieved ! That was a glorious

May day! God send us the year which shall be the proper result of such a spring! God grant that the flowers which budded on that morning may bring forth a full harvest of ripened fruit, unto the footstool of the Lord Jesus Christ!

The Rev. Dr. PARKER, of Philadelphia, next addressed the Assembly. He said:—

I rise, Mr. Chairman, without any resolution in my hand to submit for the approval of this meeting. It did not occur to me that it was of any great moment, that what I have to say should be so shaped as to contribute to the support of a distinct proposition. Besides, it is not clear to my own mind what course my remarks will take. I must speak on for a while before I can tell what resolution will correspond with my address. I am somewhat in the predicament of a certain unskilful mechanic—a blacksmith, of whom it was said, that he used alternately to heat and hammer away upon a piece of iron for a while, and that only after he saw the material taking on the shape of some article that would be useful, did he resolve what he would make of it.

I need not assure you, Sir, that I feel a deep interest in the objects of this meeting. Nothing but a conviction of the high importance of the American Sunday-school Union, would have induced me to make so long a journey for the express purpose of being present on this occasion.

One reason why such an assemblage for such an object is useful, is found in the practical demonstration which it makes of the fact that Christians *can* co-operate in those things which are of chief importance in giving effect to the gospel. I say Christians *can* co-operate, and the

truth of this assertion is proved by the fact that the speakers on this platform do act together with entire harmony. You have listened to addresses from two gentlemen, the one an Episcopalian, the other a Baptist, and I am a Presbyterian, or a Congregationalist, (I almost forget which,) and there is no collision between us. There is no more necessity for collision between the churches which we respectively represent.

I hope, Sir, we shall all learn by means of this and similar institutions, to think more of those great general effective principles by which nearly all the good is done, and proportionably, less of those narrower, and more specific things, which distinguish us as denominations.

There may be made a twofold distinction among the influences that accomplish desirable ends. The one is general, the other specific. A pure atmosphere, wholesome water, and the glorious light of heaven, diffuse health and life and comfort.

These great common influences are God's grand means of doing good to our bodies. Yet there are cases of disease and want that demand specific medicinal remedies.

There is something analogous to these two kinds of influences in the provisions for man's spiritual necessities. There is a pure atmosphere of Christian sentiment, there is a clear sunlight of gospel truth, there are healthful streams of waters of life. These are the chief instruments which God has appointed, and which this institution employs. Would to God that we might all learn to rely on these mainly, and to dispense them freely, and that we might, if we must use our denominational peculiarities, resort to them as seldom as possible, and then administer them in homeopathic doses.

The peculiar efficiency of the Sunday-school Union

has been demonstrated by its accomplishing in many cases what no other institution could have effected. There are many parts of our country where the population is so sparse that not more than twenty families are within such distance as to allow of their being assembled at one place. They are of such various denominations that you could not collect more than two scholars and one teacher perhaps that think alike. No one denomination has a quorum for a Sunday-school. Yet these people all believe in the same Sabbath and the same Bible, and if you send an agent among them, they will take your books and form a Sunday-school on UNION principles.

Applications are coming in incessantly from every part of the great West for books and agents from this Society. Where communities are not prepared to agree in a minister of any one denomination, some zealous layman of a catholic and liberal spirit uses the Sunday-school Union as a pioneer influence, a sort of John the Baptist to prepare the way for the ministry. We might adduce from the Society's correspondence a great many instances of this. There is a layman in Illinois employed in teaching four days in the week. On the three remaining days, viz., Saturday, Sunday, and Monday, he employs himself, at a small compensation, in the service of this Society. He travels forty miles in every direction from the centre which he occupies; thus going over a circuit of eighty miles in diameter. He forms new schools, furnishes libraries, and induces the people to erect temporary places of worship, and scarcely a week passes without his accomplishing one or more of these objects. In several instances his labours have been so blest as to

result in the procuring of a minister of the gospel, and the regular ordinances of religion.

A gentleman in Washington Co., Maine, was impelled by observing the spiritual necessities of the people to do something for their religious instruction. He generously set apart \$500 for the work, and consulted with a pious clergyman on the propriety of expending it in establishing Sunday-schools.

The clergyman judged that God had inspired the man with a desire so benevolent, and advised him to select a judicious committee of Christians of different denominations to carry the plan into full operation. This committee proposed to procure libraries that should be acceptable to all the denominations which they represented. Where should they find the books? They could obtain them from no other source than from the American Sunday-school Union.

Nor is it a small recommendation of this society, that it calls into action a vast number of Christian laymen. It is no disparagement to clerical influence to say that laymen often prepare the way for the minister of Christ, and often become most efficient helps to their ministers.

A pleasant instance of this was related to me very recently. It respects a man well known in this part of the country for his usefulness in educating many of those who now occupy the highest posts of usefulness. I allude to the venerable Mr. John Adams, for a long time at the head of Philips' Academy, Andover. He is now at an advanced age, released from the toil and drudgery (for there is no occupation that unites so much drudgery and usefulness as the work of imparting elementary instruction) of a long life.

He has found delightful employment in acting as an agent for this society. Sustained, in part, in this labour by one of his former pupils, and in part by your society, he is turning his mature wisdom and Christian experience to the very best account. He travels around the country in the destitute region where he resides, organizes Sunday-schools, visits them, addresses them, visits the houses of the country people, talks with all he meets; lays his hands upon the head of the children, and blesses them in the name of the Lord.

A vast amount of safe and useful action is secured among females by this Society's operations.

In the great increase of lay action in the church within the last few years, females have been sometimes drawn into improper positions, and induced to hope for usefulness in addressing our popular assemblies. Institutions of this sort correct the extravagance, without extinguishing the zeal that led to it. The Sunday-school gives woman an opportunity of exerting her heaven-born influence, in a way altogether congenial to her character, and to the condition in which God has placed her. She has a stronger sympathy with the children than the other sex. They are under her sole care in the first years of life, and on her they depend for those early lessons which create the very germs of character. The Romish church has established religious houses to call forth and direct female influence. We need no nunneries. This Institution is better as a means of directing female influence. By its means, thousands of our Protestant ladies have taken the veil, and have the happiness of instilling religious instruction into the minds of children.

Such an institution as this, and other kindred influences, seem to me indispensable to our peace and safety as a

people. Let our various denominations all contend with one another, and exclude one another—let them neglect these union efforts, and strive, as the disciples once did, to see who shall be greatest, and what can preserve the balance of power and secure us against certain ruin? Our greatness and our power can do nothing to save us. Armies cannot protect us against sectarian pride and spiritual corruption. Our armies will be converted into the same corrupt mass. Ships of war cannot save us. Strength has no relation to such a deliverance. Let a corrupt hierarchy become predominant in its power, and whole “navies of oak and iron” are at once engulfed in its devouring maelstrom.

Allusion has been made to the evil times upon which we are fallen. A storm of censure and recrimination is upon the church of Christ. We have need of a fixed determination and Christian calmness on the part of those who are co-operating, and who yet belong to different branches of the Christian church. This Sunday-school Union needs the united wisdom and endeavours of all its friends, to carry forward its good work and to perpetuate its influence. I have thought that this necessity might be illustrated by an interesting anecdote, found in the life of one of our excellent New England ministers, known as “Father Hallock.” The story was related by himself, as an instance of the value of calm, united effort in a time of danger, and was applied by him, (as I mean to apply it now,) to induce harmonious action in something relating to the interests of religion.

“During our revolutionary war,” said he, “I joined an expedition, in which a body of troops were to pass across Lake George. We had one vessel of considerable size, on which was embarked the commander of our

squadron and a portion of our men. The rest of us were in numerous small boats. Just at night-fall the heavens grew black, the winds began to roar, and a few big drops of rain fell upon the surface of the lake. Many of us were unaccustomed to such scenes, and no little uneasiness was felt. Just at this moment our commander appeared on the quarter-deck of his vessel, and addressed us. He said that the prospect was, that we should have a very tempestuous night ; but that our safety depended more upon our calmness and self-possession than any thing else. He advised us to keep our little boats as directly across the waves as possible ; and with the rain falling on his bare bald head, he told us to be of good courage, and wished us God's blessing, and bade us Good night. It grew to be very dark and tempestuous. The billows ran high, and at one time we were thrown into the trough of the sea, and our little vessel came very near being foundered. An old sailor, who had not before felt alarm, threw himself into the stern and seized the helm, and held the boat again across the waves. We were alarmed, but we remembered the advice to be calm and self-possessed. We agreed that our present helmsman should keep his position, and then placed in the bow our next most skilful man, to keep a sharp look-out ahead. As we ascended a mountain wave, the man at the bow called out 'Steady, boys,' and as we descended in the trough, the man at the helm responded 'All's well.' Of the rest, no man spoke above his breath. We took our position so as to keep the boat trim as possible ; and there we heard through the livelong night, the cry, 'Steady, boys,' 'All's well'—'Steady, boys,' 'All's well.' This calmness, self-possession and union saved us."

Now, sir, we want just such a calmness and self-pos-

session to secure a safe and happy navigation of our Sunday-school Union. Our friends at Philadelphia are in the stern. The Board have their hand upon the helm. Your own wise men have inspected our craft closely, and you have all heard the report of their proceedings. They have told you that the vessel is well built and well directed. Our friends in New York are in midships, with a great deal of energy and valuable cargo. Now we want Massachusetts, with as much Yankee shrewdness as she can command, to take her place in the bow and keep a sharp look-out. If the waves of controversy roar, let us keep the boat straight across the billows. As you admonish us to be calm, catholic, liberal, judicious, and faithful, by saying "Steady, boys;" we will respond "All's well," while we endeavour to direct this blessed institution in its useful career.

We have reasons enough for asking your hearty co-operation. The Christians of New England are accustomed to be foremost in every good work. The ladies in their recent noble effort for this cause, have encouraged us to ask for more. The children of New England are scattered all over our wide Western country, and we are assured that we shall not ask in vain when we solicit the most hearty union and zealous endeavours along with us to extend those instructions which will cause thousands to bless God for ever, for the existence of the American Sunday-school Union.

The Rev. W. W. EVERTS offered the following resolution :

Resolved, That the American Sunday-school Union is eminently adapted to promote the union, stability, and efficiency of the American church.

In the resolution, the term church is taken according

to its popular use, as embracing all Christians. And in what charitable enterprise can Christians of different denominations more cordially unite, than in the religious education of children? In their instruction, there are fewer inducements to inculcate a particular theory of the gospel than in any measures taken for the conversion of adult classes. And quickened sympathy with the promise of youth, the glowing fervour of parental affections, and the hallowed associations of groups of children—the hope of the church and the state—all are adapted to appease the strife of sectarianism, subdue the violence of party feeling, and soften bigotry itself, into the kindly feelings of an enlarged charity.

If Christians cannot unite in the religious education of children, can they unite at all? When at college, I endeavoured to gather a Sunday-school in a destitute community, where were Christians enough of different persuasions to have supported a flourishing school, but each sect desiring a school of its own, none could be established. Thus, over all the newer sections of this country as settlements are made, and villages spring up, unless Sunday-schools are gathered on the principle of this Union, their organization must be longer delayed, and they longer remain weak and inefficient after having been organized.

But the personal co-operation so extensively provided for in this Society, is especially promoting the union of the American church. Co-operation produces union even in the world, as in the pursuit of trade, or science, or liberty. The fathers of the American Revolution were strangers by birth, and brought together from the remote parts of our extended country; but they espoused together the cause of freedom, they together pledged their

lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honour ; they stood shoulder to shoulder on the battle-field, and mingled their blood on a common soil. Hence sprang the fraternal affection which even now binds the remnant of that memorable generation ; hence the ties of brotherhood between the colonies, and the sacred bonds that cemented this early union. Thus the union of Christian denominations is strengthened and perpetuated, by their co-operation in the catholic design of the gospel. Meting out the whole possible extent of common ground, and co-operating there, union is preserved and extended. But even the present ground of union, if not occupied, is narrowed down and lost. As a general pursuing conquest retains a vanquished territory only by occupying it with forts and garrisons ; so the church will retain their common ground only by commensurate co-operation. It is one of the most interesting features of the reflex influence of this and kindred institutions, that by enlarging the co-operation, they are increasing the union of Christians of different names. They bring together in intimate acquaintance and fellowship, the best men of all denominations, and in all the more retired circles of piety, they are engaging in common objects, the sympathy of the most pious and efficient members of every sect.

Thus originate the golden links of union between individual Christians, and the invisible and powerful bonds that unite denominations. They appear as following the same leader, with the same banner floating over them, the same enemy receding before them, and the same conquests animating their courage. And these catholic institutions, by erecting a truer standard of union than those planted upon the letter of creeds, without the enlarged charity and benevolence of Christ, are drawing

together all in whom the love of Christ rises superior to that of sect, and who almost imperceptibly, relaxing their hold of error and grasping truth more firmly, are approaching that great scriptural union, by which a divided church shall be made one. And while that consummation is expected, these Institutions at once preserve, and are monuments of the union of the church. As the many mouths of some noble stream, rising over their banks and mingling their waters, appear as the same great river, so the different branches of the Christian church, as their piety rises over denominational channels, and mingles in sympathies and charities, in the catholic designs of the gospel, appear as one broad river of life; flowing from the throne of God over the barren and parched desert of human depravity. The Sunday-school Union is also eminently promoting the *stability* of the American church. The character of an individual more frequently receives its cast from the first, than from any succeeding five years of his life: and the differences of training in the nursery, explain the peculiarities of national character, and the comparative stability of religious institutions in every age. It is the training of childhood that gives stability to Paganism and Mohammedanism. It was the instruction of their children when they went out, and when they came in, when they rose up, and when they lay down, more than any outward rites, that preserved the integrity of the Jewish church so many centuries, while menaced by the imposing ceremonies and corrupting influences of Paganism. It is the education of their children with the rosary and the cross, that explains the unyielding tenacity of Romanists to their religion. It was his early instruction in the faith of his mother Eunice, and his grandmother Lois, that distin-

guished Timothy from his cotemporaries in the ministry. —It was his early, rigid discipline in the Jewish scriptures and institutions, more than advantages after conversion, that gave Paul his superiority over Mark, or other apostles. It was the permanent bias of early education, that imparted to Puritans and Covenanters their unbending integrity and martyr spirit. And now we believe the training of the nursery and the Sunday-school is doing more in promoting the stability of the church than any instruction and discipline of adult classes. The apostates from the Christian profession; the disturbers of the discipline and peace of the churches; and the ultraists that identify all religion in one idea, were most of them never taught in the Sunday-school. And when any new heresy sweeps over the land, it unsettles the faith of individuals, and distracts the counsels of churches, chiefly where advantages of early moral culture have not been enjoyed: while the most enlightened, and consistent members, the pillars of our churches, received the cast of their character in religious education prior to conversion.

Thus the Sunday-school Institution is strengthening the very foundations of the church, and giving the fairest promise of her stability amid all the disorganizing influences of error and infidelity. And, though riding on a sea beset by many furtive currents, and deceitful eddies of error, and swept by various winds of speculation, and fierce storms of controversy, casting anchor here, the American church will not be driven from her moorings. Planting herself upon this rock she will resist the chafing surges and angry billows of political, social and moral agitations, as easily as our rock-bound coast beats back the ceaseless dash of ocean waves.

The resolution also declares that the Sunday-school Institution is increasing the efficiency of the church. The Persian Magi and the Spartan lawgiver, to increase the efficiency of the state, enacted systems for the public education of those who were to become citizens: and shall the church be less discerning and mindful of the training of those who are soon to constitute her membership and determine her character?

But in addition to its prospective bearings, its present reflex influence is increasing her moral power tenfold. It is providing for the co-operation of more hands, and enlisting the sympathy of more hearts, than any other religious institution. It is calling out the gifts, developing the piety, and rendering available the talents of the church, training up her missionaries, ministers and office-bearers.

But it is increasing the strength of the church, chiefly, by the comprehensiveness of its plans, and the efficiency of its instrumentalities, for the reformation of society and the salvation of men. Many of the most beneficent and most powerful agents of nature are the most silent in their operation. The gentle breeze that fans the earth and preserves the salubrity of the atmosphere is more beneficent than the noisy tempest; the softly-falling dew, which invigorates and supports vegetation, than the flooding rain or desolating hail; the steady influence of gravity, than the earthquake or the thunder-storm. So the Sunday-school Union, based upon a more comprehensive philosophy, in its quiet and constant efforts, is doing more for the cause of true social reform than all those societies which contemplate the removal of social disorders, by changing the opinions and practices of adult classes, and is adapted to supersede them all. Will you

undertake to reform a man when he is old? Sooner turn back the river falling from the mountain, and bid it flow to its source; sooner re-shape the forest, by turning the trunk of the huge and full grown tree. No. You must begin at the fountain-head—you must commence with the tender twig. Begin with the Sunday-school, and by God's blessing you will see the work performed.

Here planting ourselves in the Thermopylæ of the moral world, we may forestall and beat back Romanism, infidelity, intemperance, licentiousness, profaneness, and Sabbath-breaking, until the harbinger of Christ's coming, the Sunday-school, shall have prepared the way of the Lord, and made His paths straight.

The Sunday-school, also, is conducting the great preparation for the conversion of the world. It goes before the church, preparing her way in every good work; her members are increased by conversions through its silent and self-denying toils, and even extensive revivals spring up from the seeding of its instructions. Its immediate effects may still appear small, but they will be developed in greater extent and prominence as the universal reign of Christ approaches.

If, with an invisible liquid, we draw lines over a canvass, no result is apparent; but spread that canvass to the fire, or to the sun, and figures will flash out over its whole surface. So the toils of Sunday-school teachers, intently and prayerfully drawing the lines of religious instruction over the broad canvass of social character, may appear unmeaning; but let that character be exposed to the intense action of adversity, the quickening agency of the means of grace, and the fervent influence of the Holy Spirit, and the emblems of Christian doctrine, and the figures of salvation will be developed in a thousand

individual families and social scenes. Let then Sunday-school teachers go forth with the word of God as a pencil of heavenly light, and draw the invisible lines of scriptural instruction over the moral character of our cities and towns, villages and extended country ; draw them lengthily over all lands, from pole to pole, and from the rivers to the ends of the earth ; draw them thickly through every family and social scene, writing every where the name of God, Immortality, Judgment to come, Hell, Heaven, Jesus, and Salvation. And when in the fulness of time, the Spirit, in its enlivening and enkindling influences, shall breathe over this work, all lands luminous with divine knowledge, and all hearts instinct with heavenly grace, shall flash out in the brilliant coruscations of millennial glory, showing a world redeemed by teaching children the way of life—the glorious achievement of the principle of the Sunday-school.

The services were then closed with the benediction, pronounced by the Rev. LEONARD WOODS, D. D.

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American Sunday-school Union.

ORGANIZATION.

We are associated, as individuals, for the purpose of aiding in the establishment of Sunday-schools, and furnishing libraries for their use. Some of us are Baptists; some are Methodists; some are Presbyterians; some are Episcopalians; some of us are Congregationalists; and some are of other denominations. *As an association*, however, we have no connection whatever with any denomination, nor has any denomination any connection whatever with us.

The mechanical work of the society, paper-making, stereotyping, engraving, printing, binding, &c., is all done by contract.

All the time and services of the **MANAGERS** are bestowed **GRATUITOUSLY**.

Character and Design of Sunday-Schools.

SUNDAY-SCHOOLS are designed to instruct all who are willing to learn in them—old and young, high and low, rich and poor.

The *course of instruction* is as follows, viz.:—reading, understanding, believing and obeying the Bible.

A circulating library is attached to most of the schools, composed of books of a moral and religious character, and suitable for children's reading. These books are circulated by the children through the families to which they belong, and thus every person, so disposed, may examine them for himself. ☞ The use of the library is **GRATUITOUS**.

We are responsible only for the character of such books as have "Revised by the Committee of Publication," and also the imprint "**AMERICAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL UNION**," on the title-page.

IMPORTANT NOTICES.

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II. To strengthen the hands of the friends of religious instruction on the Lord's day.

III. To disseminate useful information.

IV. To circulate moral and religious publications in every part of the land. And, lastly, though chiefly,

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