

REPORT  
OF THE  
SEVENTH ANNUAL CONVENTION  
OF THE  
NEW JERSEY

Sunday School Association,

HELD IN THE

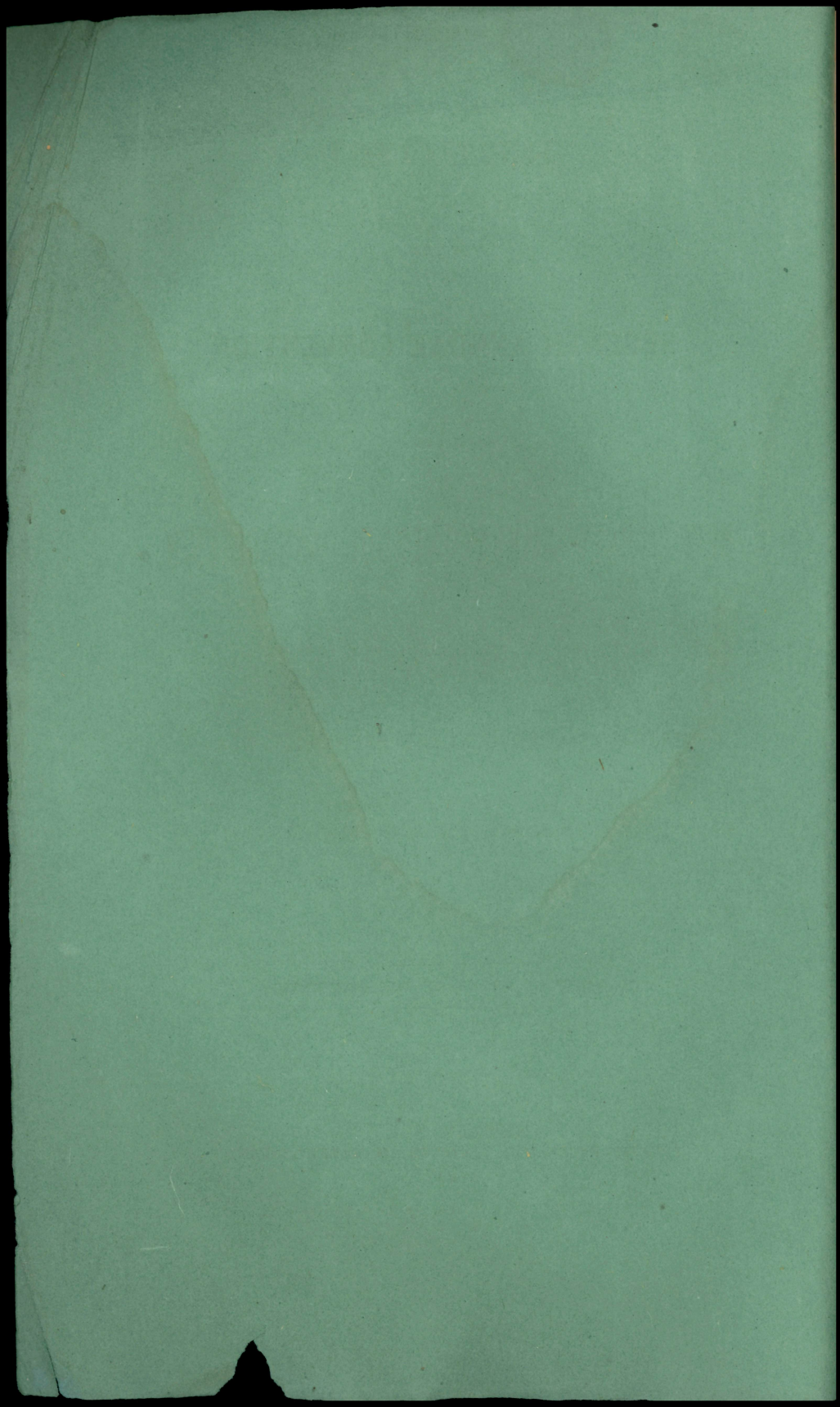
First Baptist Church, New Brunswick, N. J.,

*November 16, 17, & 18, 1864.*

PUBLISHED BY ORDER OF THE CONVENTION.

NEWARK, N. J.:  
PRINTED BY FRANCIS STARBUCK, 123 MARKET STREET.

1865.



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REPORT

OFFICERS FOR 1901

NEW JERSEY SUNDAY SCHOOL ASSOCIATION  
SEVENTH ANNUAL CONVENTION

PRESIDENT

George W. ...

VICE-PRESIDENTS

NEW JERSEY SUNDAY SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

SECRETARY

BUSINESS COMMITTEE

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OFFICERS FOR 1864-5.  
OF THE  
*New Jersey Sunday School Association.*

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**PRESIDENT.**

GEORGE W. N. CUSTIS, Esq., Camden.

**VICE-PRESIDENTS.**

PETER A. VOORHEES, Esq., Six Mile Run, Reformed Dutch.

Rev. Mr. BOGGS, Fairton, N. S. Presbyterian.

A. S. JEWELL, Esq., Jersey City, O. S. Presbyterian.

Rev. F. SWENTZELL, D. D., Newark, Methodist Protestant.

JOHN S. RUSLING, Esq., Trenton, Methodist Episcopal.

FRED'K W. FOOTE, Esq., Elizabeth, Protestant Episcopal.

WM. D. RUSSELL, Esq., Newark, Congregational.

A. T. STOUT, Esq., New Brunswick, Baptist.

**CORRESPONDING SECRETARY.**

SAMUEL W. CLARK, Newark.

**RECORDING SECRETARY.**

GEORGE T. MULFORD, Elizabeth.

**TREASURER.**

J. V. D. HOAGLAND, Millstone.

**BUSINESS COMMITTEE.**

SAMUEL W. CLARK, Newark.

GEO. T. MULFORD, Elizabeth.

J. V. D. HOAGLAND, Millstone.

HENRY LINSLEY, Hudson.

E. S. McILVAINE, Trenton.

## COUNTY SECRETARIES.

<i>Atlantic County</i>	Rev. F. R. BRACE,	Hammonton.
<i>Bergen</i>	JOHN A. PARSONS,	Hackensack.
<i>Burlington</i>	DR. RICHARD S. JAMES,	Marlton.
<i>Camden</i>	A. J. DUMONT,	Philadelphia.
<i>Cape May</i>	Rev. S. C. EDMUNDS,	Fishing Creek.
<i>Cumberland</i>	J. C. BOWEN,	Shiloh.
<i>Essex</i>	W. H. WOODRUFF,	Newark.
<i>Gloucester</i>	DR. JAS. J. CURRIE,	Woodbury.
<i>Hudson</i>	D. M. STIGER,	Jersey City.
<i>Hunterdon</i>	Rev. C. S. CONKLIN,	Mt. Pleasant.
<i>Mercer</i>	W. J. P. MORRISON,	Princeton.
<i>Middlesex</i>	Rev. DAVID COLE,	New Brunswick.
<i>Monmouth</i>	H. H. SEABROOK,	Keyport.
<i>Morris</i>	HON. JOHN HILL,	Boonton.
<i>Ocean</i>	Rev. CHAS. D. NOTT,	Manchester
<i>Passaic</i>	A. STOUTENBOROUGH,	Paterson.
<i>Salem</i>	Rev. A. J. HIRES,	Woodstown.
<i>Somerset</i>	Rev. JAMES LA FEVRE,	Raritan.
<i>Sussex</i>	Rev. C. WM. NELSON,	Lafayette.
<i>Union</i>	B. J. SPALDING,	Elizabeth.
<i>Warren</i>	NABUM STIGER,	Hackettstown.

### Place and Time of next Convention.

TRENTON, November 17th, 18th and 19th, 1865.

## Address of the Business Committee of the New Jersey Sunday School Association.

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In publishing our Annual Report for this year, the Business Committee deem it proper, very briefly, to state the objects of the New Jersey Sunday School Association. There are at least some who misunderstand them, and it is felt for many reasons that they should be stated in a report like this, which may find its way into districts over which the Association has not yet succeeded in extending its influence. We therefore think proper to say what *are not*, and what *are* some of the prominent objects we have in view.

1st. They are not to interfere in any way with denominational distinctions or preferences. The Association is composed of men and women of all denominations, whose hearts glow with love to Christ, and with love for the souls of the young. No one has a thought of promoting the interests of any denomination as such, but all alike are earnest in desiring to promote simply and only the cause of Christ.

2d. They are not to advance the interests of any publishing houses whatever, connected with denominations or not so connected. No publishing house or book agent has ever appeared with even a show of success at the door of the Association. The Association never speaks or dreams of giving impulse to or of interfering with the circulation of any book or paper or map whatever.

3d. They are not to bring superintendents or teachers together for the purpose of instructing them in the art of governing or teaching schools or classes. Much instruction is doubtless incidentally conveyed in regard to these duties by the addresses and discussions, but this is not the main design. The Association at present is not a Teachers' Institute, though whether it shall ever become so is of course for its members to say.

But now the objects *are*—

1. To draw together once a year as large a body as possible of co-laborers in the glorious Sunday School work, from all parts

of our State, that we may learn to know each other, and may strengthen each other by interchange and comparison of views for the work we are called upon to do. It is a social gathering we hold of warm hearted Christian men and women to talk over our fields and our labors, our successes and our failures, to bring out as far as possible the secrets of the former, and inquire into the causes of the latter. We come together that the cold and the lukewarm may catch fresh zeal from the more animated and zealous, that the disheartened may be encouraged to continue in their work, that the tokens of the divine favor upon particular schools or districts may be spoken of and made known, that we may sum up the labors of the year, and learn what progress we are making in winning souls to the kingdom of Christ, &c., &c.

2. To bring out the actual facts of the Sunday School work in our State. Every devoted friend of Sunday Schools desires to know how many schools we have, and how many teachers are at work, also how many children are in and how many are out of the schools. We want to know whether our State is fully occupied with Sunday Schools, or whether any portion of it is destitute of these important agencies. As co-workers with Christ, we earnestly desire to know just how this is, not that we may proceed insidiously to establish schools of any particular denomination, or schools under the auspices of any particular institution, but that we may seek in the broad spirit of a pure catholic Christianity to plant any kind of Sunday School in which opportunity may be afforded to the destitute to learn the way of salvation through our common Saviour. And then we also wish to learn what successes our brethren are having as well as ourselves in their work; how many conversions are occurring, &c., &c. For these purposes, we make it one of our great works to gather in full statistical tables of all interesting facts connected with the condition and history of our schools. This is vastly important.

3. By means of all the agencies employed in the securing of our statistics to infuse working life into every county. Each county, according to our plan, has a central Secretary, who is appointed by and reports to the State Association. This officer secures a subordinate Secretary in each township of his county, whose work it is, as far as possible, to visit at least once a year each school in his township, and, if permitted, to address

it and to obtain its statistics. These he reports to his county Secretary, who sums up the township reports of his county and presents them to the State Association at its annual meeting in November. The Secretary of the State Association receives all the county reports, and these are published in the printed annual report which is circulated freely over the State. This work has been going on in New Jersey for six years, and is becoming more and more perfect every year. It is a work of transcendent interest. No warm-hearted Christian can take up this present report without feeling that he has a very large portion of the State of New Jersey so mapped out in respect to Sunday School matters that he can at once feel the thrill of the Sunday school successes already achieved, and understand and to some extent be able to minister to the destitution still existing. We strangely mistake the spirit of true Sunday school men and women if they do not value this information above all price.

More might be said, but we have no more room. We close by asking whether this is not noble work. May not all the children of Christ, irrespective of denomination, engage in it without the least misgiving, warmly, earnestly and fully? We say "Yes," and urgently entreat our brethren to do it! Let the meetings which have always been refreshing be warmer and warmer every year! Let increased efforts be put forth! Let every county be thoroughly organized! Let the statistical tables be brought to perfection! Let the annual gatherings be large! Let hearts leap to hearts! Sunday school men and women of New Jersey let us know one another! Let us be one in the great cause! Let us present a united front to all opposition, and strive together in one grand effort to bring our children and youth to Christ!

SAMUEL W. CLARK,	} <i>Business Committee.</i>
GEORGE T. MULFORD,	
J. V. D. HOAGLAND,	
HENRY LINSLEY,	
E. S. M'ILVAINE,	

## CONSTITUTION.

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I. This Association shall be called the "NEW JERSEY SUNDAY SCHOOL ASSOCIATION," and shall be composed of delegates from County and Township Associations, and of all the Sunday Schools in the State coöperating with this organization.

II. The objects of this Association shall be to secure the attendance of every child in the State upon a Sunday School; through its auxiliaries to organize such Sunday Schools as may be necessary; and to coöperate with all fellow-laborers in increasing an interest in the Sunday School cause generally.

III. The officers of this Association shall be a President, one Vice President from each coöperating denomination, a Treasurer, a Corresponding Secretary, a Recording Secretary, and a Secretary in each County, to be elected annually. In case of the failure of any of the County Secretaries to accept the appointment thus made at the annual meeting, the Corresponding Secretary shall have power to fill the vacancy.

The duties of the former officers shall be those usually discharged by them. The duties of the County Secretary shall be to call a County Convention of the teachers and friends of Sunday Schools at as early a day as practicable after the adjournment of the State Association; to visit as many Churches and Sunday Schools in the County as possible, coöperating with the Town Committees in awakening and sustaining an interest in the Sunday School cause; to collect facts and statistics for the annual meeting of the State Association, and at some time prior to said meeting to make a report to the Corresponding Secretary.

IV. The County Conventions are expected to form permanent County organizations, and at their first meeting, and annually thereafter, to appoint a Committee of one or more in each Township, to whom shall be committed the general interests of the Sunday School cause as connected with the State Association.

V. The funds needed to carry forward the operations of the State Association, shall be raised in such a manner as the officers may direct.

VI. The Annual meeting shall occur on the second Wednesday after the first Monday in November, at such place and hour as the Association may direct.

VII. This Constitution may be changed at any annual meeting of the Association, by a majority of the members present.

SEVENTH ANNUAL CONVENTION  
OF THE  
NEW JERSEY SUNDAY SCHOOL ASSOCIATION.

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WEDNESDAY, NOV. 16TH.

The NEW JERSEY SABBATH SCHOOL ASSOCIATION met in New Brunswick at 2½ P. M., in the First Baptist church. Hon. James Bishop, of New Brunswick, President, called the Convention to order by reading a portion of Scripture; a hymn was sung, and prayer offered by Rev. Mr. Webb, when the President opened the convention, in the following address:

In behalf of the citizens of New Brunswick, he thanked the convention for meeting there, and said they were most happy in being privileged to open their homes to the delegates here assembled. They were glad to be able to offer them the generous hospitalities of their city, and extended to them in their behalf a warm and hearty welcome.

He then made some very pertinent remarks in connection with the cause in which we were engaged as a country. What God had done for us, having brought us through so great a crisis as the Presidential election, when difficulty was anticipated; but God had kept us safely, and our institutions after having been subjected to so trying an ordeal were stronger to-day, and stood upon a firmer foundation than ever before.

Now what was needed to perpetuate them was the education and cultivation of the children and youth of our land. The Sabbath School was an auxiliary to this.

He then impressed upon the delegates the importance of their receiving as much benefit as possible by our meeting together, and fully improve the present opportunity. To do this effectually we must attend the morning meetings appointed for prayer, and seek a blessing from God alone.

The following enrolling committee was then appointed:

W. B. Merritt, David C. English, Jr., W. B. Freeman.

Reports from the following counties were then read and ac-

cepted: Atlantic, Camden, Cumberland, Hunterdon, Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, Passaic, Salem, Somerset, Union and Warren.

The following nominating committee was then appointed and instructed to name the place of holding the next convention :

Atlantic County	—Rev. F. R. Brace.
Camden	—G. W. N. Custis.
Cumberland	—W. B. Gillette.
Essex	—B. J. Wood.
Hunterdon	—M. S. Stiger.
Hudson	—A. S. Jewell.
Mercer	—Wm. Morrison.
Middlesex	—D. C. English, Jr.
Monmouth	—H. H. Seabrook.
Morris	—J. C. Hines.
Passaic	—Abraham Gould.
Salem	—Rev. Wm. Cornell.
Somerset	—P. A. Voorhees.
Sussex	—Wm. N. Accleston.
Warren	—Saron W. Halsey.
Union	—Henry Seymour.

Report of Treasurer was then called for, and rendered as follows :

Report of J. V. D. Hoagland, Treas. of the State Sunday School Association for the year ending Nov. 16th, 1864.

Nov. 11th, 1864—Balance in hand per last report,	\$ 8 19	
Somerset County,	25 00	
Essex	50 00	
Passaic	25 00	
Gloucester	10 00	
Cape May	3 25	
Cumberland	6 75	
Hunterdon	20 00	
Hudson	5 00	
Middlesex	17 60	
Monmouth	10 00	
Morris	2 00	
Salem	13 60	
Sussex	1 85	
Warren	13 80	
Union	20 00	
Camden	20 00	252 04
Collection at Jersey City during the convention,		120 50
Private donations,		50 00
		<hr/> 422 54

CONTRA.

Balance due on old report,	51 00
J. B. Breed,	9 00
Francis Starbuck, Circulars, &c.,	39 87
do. Paper,	100 00
do. Report,	40 00

Corresponding Sec'y Box,	5	43
do. Traveling expenses,	14	85
do. Paper and envelopes,	6	90
Labor in sending report,	5	00
Postage and Expenses,	12	71
In hands of Treasurer,		284 76
		<hr/> 137 78
		422 54
Due F. Starbuck,	234	25
	137	78
		<hr/> 96 47
Indebtedness of the Association,		96 47

Treasurer moved a committee be appointed to audit the Treasurer's account, was carried, and Elihu Cook, A. J. Dumont, R. R. Seabrook were appointed and reported the Association in debt to the Treasurer \$96 47. Report was accepted, and after singing, the Convention adjourned.

### WEDNESDAY EVENING.

The Convention assembled in First Presbyterian church and listened to a most able discourse from Prof. J. H. McIlvaine, of Princeton, whose topic was, "Education the covenant means of securing the Covenant blessings." We regret that our space does not allow a full report of his address, which was replete with instructive thought, and calculated to awaken a deeper interest in the Sunday School work in the heart of every child of God. He was followed by Rev. Cyrus Foss, of Williamsburg, whose remarks were based upon the proposition, "The Sunday School is the hope of Cities." The address was full of rich suggestions, and effectually plead for the enlargement of effort to gather in *all* the children of our cities into the Sabbath School.

### THURSDAY MORNING.

Association met at 9 A. M. One hour was devoted to devotional exercises—after which the President called the meeting to order; prayer being offered by Mr. Baker, Editor of Sunday School Times—Minutes read and approved. Reports from county Secretaries, not having previously reported: Hudson, Essex, Morris and Sussex. Remarks from Mr. Stiger, of Hudson, were listened to, after which the Corresponding Secretary read his report, which will be found at the close of the proceedings.

Report of Committee on "Worship in Sabbath Schools," appointed last year, consisting of Revs. Geo. B. Bacon, David Cole, and J. T. Crane, was then read by Rev. Mr. Bacon, of Orange. This report will be found at the close of the minutes. Report was accepted.

Dr. Rogers moved the resolutions of this report be taken up, and acted upon separately. It was carried. Rev. Mr. Hillyer remarked upon the resolutions submitted, approving of them in general, but dissenting in some minor particulars, yet liked their sharpness. Remarks were made also by Rev. Mr. Hurst. The report was then adopted, the second resolution alone being excluded.

The following resolution was then offered by Mr. Stiger, of Hudson:

*Resolved*, That the Business Committee be requested to issue a letter suggestive of Sunday School management in Winter, and secure the delivery of such letter to every Pastor and Superintendent, and if possible, Teacher, in the County and State.

Adopted.

Mr. Stites, Missionary from the American Sunday School Union, occupied half an hour on his work in the southern counties of the State, and the destitution that prevailed in that section of our State.

Rev. Mr. Hillyer remarked upon this great destitution, when Rev. Mr. Gillette took the ground that this destitution was not as great as we might at first be led to suppose, but was owing in a great measure to the sparsely populated districts in this part of the State.

Mr. Dumont, of Camden, said that this Association at its organization made a covenant with the children of this State to bring them all into the Sunday School. They did it in this city, and asked how far we had fulfilled that promise, urging greater zeal to bring in the children of the State.

Mr. Lucius Hart spoke of the goodness and magnitude of the work, and of his happiness in being permitted to be among these friends of the Sunday School. Mr. Howell of Jersey City, moved we appoint a missionary to labor in South Jersey, and assess the several schools pro rata to defray such expense.

Remarks by several delegates were listened to with much attention, but without coming to a vote. A motion to adjourn was carried.

#### THURSDAY AFTERNOON.

The regular sessions of the Convention were suspended, that the Delegates might attend the "Children's Meeting," under the direction of the local committee of New Brunswick. The several Sunday Schools of the city were gathered in the First Presbyte-

rian and First Dutch churches, where addresses were made to the children, interspersed with excellent singing from the schools.

In the First Presbyterian church the speakers were Rev. F. Swentzell, D.D., Newark; Rev. Alfred Taylor, Bristol, Pa.; Rev. J. M. Freeman, Paterson, N. J.; and Lucius Hart, Esq., New York City.

In the First Dutch Church the speakers were Rev. Mancius Hutton, D.D., N.Y., and Rev. M. S. Riddell of New Brunswick.

#### THURSDAY EVENING.

The Association listened to an address from Rev. Joel Parker, D.D., of Newark, on the "Relation of the Sunday School to the church," and Rev. Dr. Campbell, of New Brunswick, on the "Necessity of earnest and careful teaching in the Sunday School."

#### FRIDAY MORNING.

After an hour spent in devotion, the President called the convention to order. Minutes read and approved.

Prof. Cole, of Rutgers's College, addressed the meeting. He was sorry to be absent a moment from these meetings of so much interest, particularly the closing hours of the Convention. The citizens of New Brunswick were twice, thrice glad, that the Association had met there. We will remember it in our churches, in our Sunday Schools, and in our families. Heart had leaped to heart, and fire to fire; we will go home to cherish this christian fellowship—whether we again gaze upon each other's faces, these eyes glorified are to gaze upon the gates of God and streets of glass—to walk upon the banks of the river of life—and to look upon Him whom our souls loved. He closed by urging the society to come again to New Brunswick.

The President vacated the chair, which was taken by P. P. Van Arsdale, and one hour and a half was occupied in conference.

The Rev. Jno. B. Thompson, of Metuchen, longed for the greatest practical good to come of the gathering. Teachers needed, most of all, instruction how to teach. There was a lack of means to this end in our Sunday-school system, which stood in the way of greater success. Teachers were little versed, as a rule, in the philosophy of the mind, in the principles of impartation, and had little capacity for much of the work that they were called upon to do. And yet the great body of them love the Lord Jesus Christ, love to work for him, and will work, blessed be God,

with all the energy and the little preparation they have. Now what shall be done for these? The speaker recommended, as one step towards the answer, that the Convention always arrange for one day, in its programme, to be given to instructions in the method of teaching, led by a competent person; and thus 200 to 300 teachers, at least, would be better prepared for the solemn work of instructing immortal minds. But each teacher must train himself, by the proper use of helps, in the books and current periodicals ready to his hand.

The Rev. Mr. Brown, of New Brunswick, reiterated the thought that teachers must teach only Jesus. "We must look to the Saviour ourselves, and teach the children to look to the Saviour." The trouble with children often is, that they can not see Jesus. When they see him they at once love him. This was illustrated by an incident well in point.

Mr. Voorhees, of New Brunswick, suggested the absolute need of the parent's constant and hearty co-operation with the teacher.

D. M. Stiger, of Jersey City, spoke in praise of local teachers' associations as means of instructing and improving teachers. The State Convention was not organized so much to do this work, as for warming the heart and stimulating the zeal of workers, so that they might go down to their fields to employ every possible means to improve themselves for their great work, and accomplish most in it. The speaker made some excellent suggestions for the use of the business committee in future conventions.

A. R. Williamson would exalt the Bible in the view of teachers, as their great text book. An address on this subject was handed to the Secretary.

G. T. Mulford, the Recording Secretary, made some earnest remarks on the subject of prayers in the Sabbath-school, maintaining that they should be brief yet simple and pointed, such as the child could adopt as its own, and would attend to, as to any other exercise of worship. A short form of prayer was read, meeting these wants. Teachers should teach their scholars how to pray. This was the first design and aim of the Sabbath-school.

The Rev. M. S. Riddell, pastor of the church, spoke of the duties of pastors to their schools. He dissented from the idea of employing catechumens. The pastor should centre unto himself the affections of the children, which should not be given to the superintendent, even, above and beyond himself. The church and the Sunday-school is one and the same interest. In his school

they had gone deep into the fundamentals of Christian life and doctrine, and he testified to its value. We need not be afraid of overwhelming children with too much theology. We must simplify it, then they will take it gladly, and it will make strong Christians of them.

The Rev. Mr. Stevenson, of New Brunswick, deplored the little time devoted to Sunday-school instruction, referring to the want of punctuality in opening the school, and to the haste in closing it, at or before the hour, as though they were glad to escape from it. He also urged more attention to the bringing of scholars by their teachers into the sanctuary. Parents and teachers should together secure this attendance in the house of God.

The Rev. Mr. Beatty, of New Brunswick, believed that every pastor should at least make it a point to be present every Sabbath in his school, even if he did not say a word—although he should talk to them personally and collectively, praying with them and for them, and by all his influence lead them personally to Christ.

The Rev. Dr. Rodgers, of Bound Brook, spoke severely against the practice of closing schools in the winter. He had been urged to come to an "anniversary," to be held during the time of the Convention's session. He of course declined, and with some acrimony when he found that the "anniversary" was the "closing" of the school for the winter. The applicants wanted a "rousing speech for the occasion." He felt that they needed it!

Rev. Dr. Rodgers offered the following resolution, which was unanimously adopted:

*Resolved*, That the thanks of this Convention are heartily tendered to the citizens of New Brunswick for their kind and christian hospitality, to the Trustees of the churches in New Brunswick for their kindness in opening to us their houses of worship, and to the several Railroad companies of this State, who have afforded to delegates opportunity to attend the Convention at reduced rates.

The Nominating Committee presented the following list of officers of the Association for 1864-1865, which was adopted by the Convention, and the gentlemen named were declared duly elected.

PRESIDENT—George W. N. Custis, Camden.

VICE-PRESIDENTS—Peter A. Vorhees, Six Mile Run, Reformed Dutch; Rev. — Boggs, Fairton, N. S. Presbyterian; A. S. Jewell, Jersey City, O. S. Presbyterian; Rev. F. Swentzel, D.D., Newark, Methodist Protestant; John S. Rusling, Trenton, Methodist Episcopal; Fred. W. Foote, Elizabeth, Protestant Episcopal; Wm. D. Russell, Newark, Congregational; A. T. Stout, New Brunswick, Baptist.

BUSINESS COMMITTEE—Samuel W. Clark, George T. Mulford, J. V. D. Hoagland, Henry Linsley, E. S. Mellvaine.

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY—Samuel W. Clark, Newark.  
 RECORDING SECRETARY—George T. Mulford, Elizabeth.  
 TREASURER—J. V. D. Hoagland, Millstone.

### COUNTY SECRETARIES.

Atlantic County,	Rev. F. R. Brace,	Hammonton.
Bergen “	John A. Parsons,	Hackensack.
Burlington “	Richard S. James,	Marlton.
Camden, “	A. J. Dumont,	Philadelphia.
Cape May, “	L. C. Edmonds,	Fishing Creek.
Cumberland, “	Joseph C. Bowen,	Shiloh.
Essex, “	Wm. H. Woodruff,	Newark.
Gloucester, “	John Van Forsen,	Gloucester City.
Hudson, “	D. M. Stiger,	Jersey City.
Hunterdon, “	Hugh E. Warford,	Milford.
Mercer, “	Wm. J. P. Morrisson,	Princeton.
Middlesex, “	Rev. Prof. David Cole,	New Brunswick.
Monmouth, “	H. H. Seabrook,	Keyport.
Morris “	Hon. John Hill,	Boonton.
Ocean “	Rev. Chas. D. Nott,	Manchester.
Passaic “	A. Stoutenborough,	Paterson.
Salem “	Rev. A. J. Hires,	Woodstown.
Somerset “	Rev. James Lefevre,	Raritan.
Sussex “	Rev. Wm. C. Nelson,	Lafayette.
Union “	B. J. Spaulding,	Elizabeth.
Warren “	Saron W Halsey,	Belvidere.

The Business Committee submitted to the Convention's decision two candidates for the honor of the Convention's presence the following year—Newark and Trenton. Trenton was selected as the place.

The last half hour having now arrived, it was spent in devotional and parting exercises. The Rev. Mr. Steele and Rev. Dr. Webb, of New Brunswick, spoke of the delightful season they had enjoyed in the Convention and of the blessings they were sure it had brought with it and would leave as a fragrant memory behind it, with other most appropriate parting words.

Rev. J. T. Crane, D.D., of Morristown, on the subject of the early conversion of children, felt that the Church had been putting off too long the day of their conversion. Acting on this belief he had made special efforts for the young, feeling that he was somehow nearer to them, and they to the Kingdom, than those who had sinned long. He determined to form a class for the benefit of those who wished to become Christians. He talked with these children about the necessity of giving their hearts to God, *now*. On the fourth Sabbath after making known his plan, he gave an opportunity to all who “wanted to be Christians” to meet him for twenty or thirty minutes after the regular service

of the school. He desired no one to come from curiosity, or because others came; he wanted to see only those who were anxious to become Christians, and to begin now. To his surprise, *twenty-eight* remained to be talked and prayed with. That little class now numbers *forty*, and 18 or 20 of them have, he truly believed, found Jesus. He had as much confidence in their experience as in that of any adult believers he had ever admitted into the church.

The Rev. Dr. Rodgers now offered the following resolution, which was unanimously adopted:

*Resolved*, That the thanks of this Convention be, and they are, hereby tendered to the Honorable James Bishop, who for three years past has so ably and satisfactorily filled the chair of the presiding officer of the New Jersey State Sabbath-School Association; and wherever Providence may please to lead him, this Convention will follow him with their earnest prayer that the Master may continue to smile upon him.

G. T. Mulford led in prayer, when the retiring President made a brief, but most fitting speech, full of the Sunday-school spirit, and of much tenderness of feeling, exhorting teachers to live near to Jesus, and closing with a fervently uttered benediction.

“When shall we meet again?”

was sung, and the Convention adjourned with the benediction by Rev. Dr. Rodgers, of Bound Brook.

G. T. MULFORD, REC. SECRETARY.

## Report of Corresponding Secretary.

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Your Corresponding Secretary, in presenting this his Second Annual Report to the Seventh Annual Convention of the New Jersey Sabbath-School Association, would express earnest gratitude to our kind Heavenly Father for his continued blessings upon the Sabbath-school cause, and for the growing favor it is finding in the hearts of the people of God. The Association has continued to increase in efficiency and extent of territory reached by its efforts, until to-day we are permitted to report statistics from nearly every county in the State, and in the great majority of them a complete and minutely detailed statistical account of every Sabbath school in the county. It is cheering also to record an increase in every important particular, even in counties that have been thoroughly canvassed before, showing a persistent and determined zeal among the laborers in this blessed cause that must result in great good to the church, the State, and the world.

It seems an easy thing, theoretically, to gather the statistics of the Sabbath-schools of the State with an organization like ours, reaching through the several associations and secretaries to every township, but it is practically attended with difficulties that have hitherto proved insuperable. The great obstacle, however, appears to lie in the apathy of superintendents of Sabbath-schools in co-operating with the appointed officers of the Association. Repeated visits and repeated personal applications are necessary to obtain the return of the statistical form given to each school; and that, too, when the labor required is exceedingly limited and requiring less than an hour's attention. Says one county secretary, in transmitting his report, "I have had more broken promises in the collection of these reports than in any business matter I ever undertook."

This complaint of remissness applies to those counties which have no efficient county organization, with much greater force. These county associations I regard as essentially necessary to the successful working of the Association, and we shall never completely canvass the State, and ascertain its true Sabbath-school status, until we have a complete working Sunday-school County Association, reaching with its shorter arms where the State Association cannot penetrate. We have as yet but eleven auxiliary associations, the other counties being worked by the individual efforts of county secretaries, whose power and appointment emanate from this body. These eleven associations all present *full* reports, with one exception, and in that the county association falls short in its return of the conception and design of such an association by our constitution. In the other counties

reporting we have, on the contrary, not one entirely full report, although many evince untiring efforts on the part of county secretaries.

We congratulate the Association on the completeness of the statistical returns, when it is borne in mind that most of them have been gathered in the heat of a political contest involving the most vital interests of the nation. We can well excuse the remissness of some of our most esteemed co-laborers, when we call to mind the critical condition of our national affairs, and the high religious obligation resting upon every true Christian patriot, to put forth every effort in his power for the perpetuity of the "best government the sun ever shone upon." Were it not for the absorbing interest of the late presidential election we feel assured we should have reached every county and nearly every township in New Jersey.

The last Convention appointed secretaries for every county in the State but Burlington, which was left for the corresponding secretary to fill. The name of Dr. Whittal Stokes, of Bordentown, was placed upon the printed record, with but the partial consent of Dr. Stokes, who was unable to do anything. Late in October, at the suggestion of Mr. Dumont, Rev. Mr. James, of Burlington, was appointed secretary, and has since been doing what he could for the Association in this county.

In MERCER COUNTY Mr. Grosvenor was absent from the State during the entire summer, and your secretary was unable to fill his place, after repeated inquiries and continued research. In October Mr. Grosvenor resumed his residence in the State and connection with the Association, and has done what he could to collect statistics, reaching nearly all the schools in Trenton and vicinity. He has been ably seconded by Mr. Morrison, a theological student of Princeton, who has collected the complete statistics of Princeton and vicinity, thus presenting a fair report of about half the schools in the county.

In SUSSEX COUNTY the appointee of the Board, Rev. G. W. Lloyd, co-operated until the county meeting in September, when Rev. J. R. Nelson, of Lafayette, was nominated by the County Association, and has since filled the secretaryship, with credit to the Association and the cause.

In MIDDLESEX COUNTY the Secretary appointed, at the last Convention, Rev. W. L. Moore, removed from the county in June. At his suggestion I appointed in his stead Mr. W. R. Freeman, of New Brunswick, who has been doing the cause good service by his hearty labors in aid of the Association.

OCEAN COUNTY has never been represented by a county secretary in our conventions.

In BERGEN COUNTY, Mr. John Parsons was the appointed county secretary, but in a letter from him received last week I learn that he has not been able to do anything in the line of gathering statistical information.

Owing to the causes above capitulated we have made no gain in the number of working counties, although we have largely advanced in the completeness of our returns from those so reporting.

From the detailed statistical tables presented yesterday by the county secretaries, and appended to this report, we are able to present the following summary of Sunday-school returns from the several counties :

	<i>Last year.</i>	<i>This year.</i>
Number of Schools in sixteen counties, . . . . .	943	1,114
Number of Schools reporting, . . . . .	827	923
Number of Teachers, . . . . .	11,497	13,164
Scholars enrolled, . . . . .	77,112	86,687
Average attendance, Teachers, . . . . .	8,127	9,757
Average attendance, Scholars, . . . . .	53,096	59,751
Number of Scholars over 18 years of age, . . . . .	4,152	4,788
Number of Teachers church members, . . . . .	8,653	9,703
Number of Scholars church members, . . . . .	4,065	4,875
Number of conversions, . . . . .	1,574	1,941
Number of deaths, . . . . .	488	528
Number of Scholars in Infant Classes, . . . . .	14,221	16,668
Number of volumes in Library, . . . . .	222,103	252,985
Amount of Benevolent Contributions, . . . . .	\$12,583 04	\$16,515 26
Number of Schools holding Prayer Meeting, . . . . .	161	173
Num'r of Schools having Monthly Concerts, . . . . .	132	159
Number of Schools discontinued during winter, . . . . .	282	359

Although it does not lie within the scope of this report to make a complete digest of the statistics thus presented, yet we cannot refrain from drawing a few palpable inferences from the figures before us, and refer to some of the deductions suggested by the reports under consideration.

The gains made in the reports are as follows :

No. of Schools in sixteen counties, . . . . .	171
“ “ reporting, . . . . .	96
“ Teachers, . . . . .	1,667
“ Scholars, . . . . .	9,575
“ “ over 18 years of age, . . . . .	636
“ Teachers church members, . . . . .	1,050
“ Scholars “ “ . . . . .	810
“ Conversions, . . . . .	367
“ Scholars in Infant Class, . . . . .	2,446
“ Volumes in Library, . . . . .	30,882
Amount of contribution, . . . . .	\$3,932 22
No. of Schools holding Prayer Meetings, . . . . .	12
No. of Schools holding Monthly Concerts, . . . . .	17
Additional Schools closed in Winter, . . . . .	77

From these figures it is clear that the increase in each item reported is greater than can be accounted for by the additional number of schools, showing increased activity in the Sunday-school work, and a healthy vitality in the laborers at work in this great field.

There are 3,407 teachers engaged in the Sabbath-schools who are not members of churches, and of whom it is fair to suppose the greater number are unacquainted with the saving power of divine grace upon the heart. How such persons can be efficient *teachers* of the way of salvation is a mystery we cannot solve. It is a lasting disgrace to the church of God, with her hundreds of thousands of professed followers of Jesus, that one-quarter of the Sabbath-school work of the State is undertaken by those who are spiritually blind. A responsibility rests upon the church, she can never shake off, to *feed* the lambs of whom their Saviour is the great Shepherd, and not leave to strangers the work that the Master has left to them. We are glad to record an improvement in this regard, since our last report. There being 1,050 additional teachers members of the church of Christ.

One fact in the report fills our hearts with devout thankfulness to Him who said, suffer the little ones to come unto me. Who can estimate the value of the 2,000 souls who, it is believed, have been gathered into the fold of the Redeemer during the last year, through the direct agency of Sabbath-school labor? Who can calculate the power for good, thus set to work, in its influence upon the world? This heaven, working in a thousand families, many of them prayerless and thoughtless, must be effective for good beyond human calculation. And yet there is much in this item which should beget serious thought in the Christian heart. While the aggregate is seemingly large, is it the limit of God's power to save among so many? With thirteen thousand teachers laboring and praying for a whole year, ought we, ought the church to be satisfied? Has the whole duty of the Sabbath-school been done? What are these among so many? One county, Essex, has been the scene of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit during the past year, and more than one-third of the whole number reported are numbered among the scholars of that county. In one county, with a force of 701 teachers, but fifteen conversions are recorded, and in another, over 800, with but *nineteen*. Ought we not, in view of these facts, to go from this Convention fully resolved to do our whole duty in this matter, and labor as we have never labored for the great end of Sabbath-schools, the conversion to God of these precious immortal ones?

The large amount contributed by Sabbath-schools for benevolent objects is a cause of great gratitude. The habit of Christian benevolence, the duty of enlarged liberality, cannot be too clearly impressed upon the youthful heart, and we regard it as one of the most hopeful signs, for the future of the church, that our youth are being trained to their duty in this particular. As a Christian people, we are immeasurably behind our duty in *giving* as well as *laboring* for God, and we look forward with hope to the time when the amount now recorded will be but a tithe of the offerings of our children toward the spread of the blessed gospel of truth.

We are pained to record an increase in the number of schools

closed for the winter. Hudson county sets a noble example to her sister counties, *every school* having an active existence during the whole year, while one of the counties has but twenty-three per cent. of the entire number continued through the entire year. This subject has occupied the attention of this Association for several conventions, and been the source of sincere and continued regret, and yet the evil seems to be upon the increase.

Can we not, as an association, devise some means to awaken attention to this important defect in our Sabbath-school system? We are satisfied that the fault does not lie in the inability or disinclination of the children, but in the apathy and inertness of the Christian church, and it should arouse the whole church to the necessity of the abatement of this crying evil.

There are many other lessons which we might well deduce from a careful comparison of the figures presented in our reports, but we are prevented from making them by the haste which is necessarily imposed upon your secretary in their compilation. Many of the reports were not given to him until the session of the Convention, and thus the entire summary has to be prepared after the Convention has begun its work. If the instructions to town and county secretaries were fully complied with, the complete returns would have been prepared before the annual Convention. We hope when the county organizations, whose formations we have heretofore urged, shall have been perfected, to present such a digest of the report as shall be worthy of the cause in which we are all earnest co-laborers.

Respectfully submitted,

SAMUEL W. CLARK, COR. SEC'Y.

## COUNTY REPORTS.

### ATLANTIC COUNTY.

HAMMONTON, N. J., Nov. 10th, 1864.

Samuel W. Clark, Esq., Sec'y State Association.

*Dear Brother*—It is cause of gratitude to God, that notwithstanding the minds of the people have been so intensely interested in the all-absorbing topics connected with the welfare of our beloved land, the interests of Christ's Kingdom have not been overlooked. If not as much as might have been desired, something, at least, has been done to extend the Redeemer's kingdom. Thirty-three of the scholars of our Sabbath Schools have experienced the converting grace of God, while the unseen influences of the Sunday School, which are silently doing their work, and which ever accompany the faithful teaching of the word of God, are acting on many a young soul, and will bear fruit to the glory of God in future years.

Our association has held two meetings during the past year; one in the month of April at Unionville, where a very large

concourse of people assembled; the other at Steelmanville in the month of September. At this last meeting, the crowd was so great that the church could not contain all. Many stood outside, near the doors and windows. We find that the Sunday School cause is taking a deeper hold upon the affections of the people of God, and also upon others, who seem to have very little interest in the subject of personal religion, but who see that their children are benefited by attending the Sunday School.

We report six more schools this year than last year. There has consequently been an increase in the number of scholars. The contributions for benevolent objects have increased. While one school reports only thirteen volumes in its library, most of the schools are well supplied with suitable books for the pupils.

Our Town Secretaries have been more active and faithful the past year than formerly. On the whole, on looking back upon the operations of the past year, we think that we have no reason to be discouraged, but rather the contrary.

In the hours of the gospel,

Yours,

F. R. BRACE.

*County Secretary.*

#### CUMBERLAND COUNTY.

The duties of County Secretary for Cumberland county, having now devolved upon me one year, I have felt a deep interest in the good work of the Sabbath School cause. I have been in the Sabbath School ever since a child and the longer I labor in it, and the more I see of what it is doing, the more am I convinced of its great influence for good. My first business, after appointment last year, was to communicate with all the Township Secretaries asking their cooperation, and stimulating them to zeal and earnestness, most of whom replied in a very satisfactory manner.

My engagements were such as to prevent my engaging in the business of visiting schools until the latter part of January. Since that time I have visited over one-half of the seventy schools in the county. This has been attended with much labor and expense to me, but I entered upon my duties with a determination to do all I could, with the help of God. The cause in Cumberland is on the advance. It has been some six years since the County Association was organized in this County, and some of the warmest friends of the cause were at that time doubtful of its expediency or rather of keeping up an interest, but their doubts have all been removed and their fondest hopes have thus far been realized. We hold two meetings of the Association each year, and they are growing in interest. The last one, held in Deerfield in September, was one of the best ever held in the county. We report an increase in the number of schools, and an increase in the number of children and teachers. There is one thing very much to be regretted, and that is, that so many of our schools are discontinued during the winter. It seems to me

a great evil, but I find that as a general thing children are more ready to go than Teachers. If teachers, parents, and friends of the Sabbath School were as willing to labor here as in their daily duties, much, very much good would be done. There are reported in the different schools five thousand, eight hundred and forty-eight scholars enrolled, with an average attendance of four thousand two hundred and fifty-nine. Of this number four hundred and forty are church members, showing that something had been done, but oh! how much there is yet for us to do. Of the number of scholars five hundred and two are over eighteen years of age, showing that there are some who do not consider themselves too old to be learning in the school of Christ. But in this day and age of the world many consider themselves too large to be learners in a class, as soon as they are in their teens. During the year there have been one hundred and four hopeful conversions. Oh! my friends, we have great reason to thank God for His goodness and mercy, and to take courage and labor more earnestly, and pray more fervently and with stronger faith. According to the statistics there has been but one death to every one hundred and forty-six children. Again we have great cause for gratitude that the lambs of the flock have thus been spared.

Most of the schools, if not all, are favored with superintendants who are men of piety and are laboring for success. Who can estimate the good influence of over nine hundred teachers who are praying for those under their care and are each week leaving their impress upon the youthful mind? The church should indeed be proud of such an institution as the Sabbath School, and her sons and her daughters should cheerfully take the little ones by the hand and lead them to Jesus. The object of the Sabbath school is the conversion of the children, and we should labor with that end in view. From the success which has attended our labors in the past, and from the good condition of the cause in this county, we are encouraged to labor and pray on, assured that our labor will not be in vain. We will try to do our whole duty until called away to that bright world above.

J. C. BOWEN, *County Secretary.*

SHILOH, Nov. 11, 1864.

#### HUDSON COUNTY.

Your Secretary for the County of Hudson, in making this his Second Annual Report to the County and State Association, expresses his acknowledgment of God's goodness and blessing in the healthy progress and increased acceptableness of the Association and its objects; and records the warm and cordial welcome with which he has been received by the schools of all denominations throughout the county.

At the annual meeting of our County Association held in the First Baptist Church in Hoboken, on the 12th day of October, at two o'clock, P. M.—Henry Lindsley, Esq., President, in the chair—the session was opened by the reading of the scriptures,

singing, and prayer by the Rev. J. M. Fitzgerald. After preliminary business brief addresses were made by Rev. Wm. Verrinder, Rev. Dr. Vancleef, Messrs. R. G. Pardee, W. K. Moore, P. P. Vanarsdale, John M. Morse, and others, in relation to extending and improving the Sabbath Schools of the county.

The following persons were elected officers for the ensuing year: President, P. P. Vanarsdale, Esq., of Jersey City; Vice-Presidents, N. B. Lane, Esq., of Bergen Point; Jno. M. Morse, Esq., of Hoboken; Wm. Plumer, Esq., of Hoboken; A. Spadone, Esq., of Hoboken; A. A. Bynon, Esq., of New Durham; T. H. N. Wilks, Esq., of Hudson City; John Burst, Esq., of Jersey City; A. S. Jewell, Esq., do.; W. H. Sutton, Esq., do.; Henry Lindsley, Esq., of Bergen. Secretary and Treasurer, D. M. Stiger, of Jersey City. Assistant Secretaries—Dr. Talson, of West Hoboken; James T. Kitchell, Esq., of Hudson City; John T. Seymour, Jr., Esq., of Hoboken; Stephen St. John, Esq., of Lafayette; Henry Holt, Esq., of Jersey City; George Noble, Esq., of Harrison.

After further valuable conference and suggestions, adjourned till half-past seven o'clock in the evening.

In the evening, after singing, and prayer by Rev. Wm. Verrinder, a most excellent, appropriate and impressive address on the incidental benefits of Sabbath Schools was delivered by the Rev. Dr. H. C. Fish, of Newark, N. J. The exercises were interspersed with fine singing by the children of the Baptist Church, and with both speaking and singing the audience were exceedingly pleased and profited; meeting then closed with prayer by Rev. A. Harris. The absent sustained a great loss.

Of about 18,000 children and youth of our county, between the ages of five and eighteen years, there are about 10,700 in our Evangelical schools (about 3,000 in the Roman Catholic schools)—leaving about 5,000 without Sabbath School instruction. Great effort should be made to bring these under religious teaching; who will make it? and why not now? There are no children and youth in our county that may not with ease attend some organized school.

Many of the schools of the county have increased largely during the past year—both in number and efficiency. Our mission schools continue to be managed admirably—they are worthy the care of the churches—God is owning and blessing His word in them.

During the year four mission and two church schools have been successfully commenced—one mission at Weehawken numbering twenty-two scholars the first Sabbath, now contains ninety, and is growing; two in Hudson City under the care of the Baptist denomination of West Hoboken, and one in Jersey City under the care of the First Presbyterian Church. The schools in Jersey City number five hundred and forty-five more than they did last year.

Schools not reported—Methodist Episcopal, Bergen Neck and

Bull's Ferry; Reformed Dutch, Weehawken; Episcopal, Greenville, Bergen, Point Bay-view, Bergen, West Hoboken.

Estimated number of Teachers, 73. Estimated number of scholars, 525.

Schools discontinued—Scott Memorial, Harrison; Alms House, Jersey City.

Increased attention to and value of thoroughly committed *short scripture lessons*—the more wise selection of hymns in use in the schools, viz.: those which are sung with less bluster and more of a spirit of worship, and containing instructive and devotional sentiments is obtaining—as also quiet and thoughtfulness in time of prayer, and diligent improvement of time during the whole session—all these your Secretary has noticed and fostered with great pleasure. The schools generally are coming up to the high and proper position they should have, as a part of the Christian Church, and their assembling being regarded as the meeting of a part of the congregation for religious teachings and worship.

Many of our schools are increasing their benevolence and sustaining in whole or in part schools in the West, or scholars on heathen ground, the destitute at home—in the army, the hospitals and abroad—each sharing in their benefactions.

A number of our schools have organized themselves into Missionary Associations, and meet monthly, in separate sessions from the school hour, for addresses on the duty of sending the gospel to every creature, and the many ways of spreading its holy influence and teachings at home—these meetings are attended largely by members of the congregations, and thus the children, teachers and superintendents are encouraged and strengthened, and the Church led to feel that the school is a part of itself and is moved to more love, more prayer and more care for the school. This your Secretary looks upon as a most valuable movement in the right direction, and encourages with all his heart.

Many of our schools hold regular monthly meetings for prayer, and the utility of these meetings has been especially spoken of by recent converts.

Your Secretary has felt and said in his field of labor that the time has come when our schools in order to greater usefulness and efficiency must have more family aid and the public influence of parents—aid at home in preparation of the lessons—encouragement to economize for charitable purposes, and council, with example, impressing on the minds of children that something is to be learned. That repentance, humility, faith, love and obedience are to be manifested as the fruit of a real Christian life in childhood. How shall we accomplish the vastly important object of enlisting the parents to aid thus their children in the way of life? Happy Christian life in early childhood? How? School missionary organizations are doing something toward this, and *short* practical sermons monthly by our pastors, interesting both parents and children would prove profitable. Continued, special

and constant attention to forming and sustaining Bible classes for young ladies, young men and adults, in connection with our schools is *exceedingly important and desirable*—some of our schools are fully alive to this great feature and aid, and there is hope that this part of the work will prosper. The peculiar population of our county (opposite to New York) specially demands this effort—while our people seem to be awake to the importance of the religious teaching of children and youth, some make little or no effort for a large class of young persons (not really and yet in many instances they are) members of Christian families, and who because from home have special claims on the religious teachers, pastor and Christian: to these the Bible classes of our schools afford blessed opportunities.

I take great pleasure in mentioning our Teachers' Associations, of which we have two—one in Jersey City, in which eighteen schools are represented, meeting on the second Monday evening of each month, and one in Bergen, including Hudson City and West Hoboken, meeting the third Monday evening of alternate months. These associations we highly value, their increasing influence for good is very great, and is deservable in the schools whose teachers are regularly profited by their meetings.

Recently the Teacher's Association of Jersey City has procured the services of some one of our city pastors once in three months to occupy the evening in giving a model lesson or expressing particularly his ideas of the proper mode of teaching a given portion of scripture; this promises to be of great service to our good cause, mutual acquaintance, sympathy, prayer, worship, the discussion of topics of interest—losing sight of denominational differences; hearing delegates from other associations, and sending delegates to them, and hearing quarterly reports of the condition of our schools—we find to encourage, strengthen and quicken us as co-laborers in this blessed work.

Our county, and more especially Jersey City, was greatly profited by the meeting of the State Association in our city last November. Many are the pleasant and profitable remembrances among us of the brethren from other counties, and hallowed the influence which with the Master's blessing they left with us; we would gladly welcome you there annually.

Your Secretary would not represent that all is being done in Hudson county that should be done, or that the Sabbath School friends are striving to do; very much remains to be done; thousands not in our schools are to be gathered; many more Bible classes should be formed; our schools enlarged; the dull are to be interested; parents enlisted; teachers qualified; the schools led on from one degree of acquired Bible knowledge to another, and all the work legitimately growing out of, and belonging to this field is to have more and more prayerful and untiring attention; to all these we are endeavoring to provoke one another.

We acknowledge with gratitude and humility God's great goodness in visiting our schools by His Spirit, and calling some

into the kingdom and quickening and strengthening others. Thankful that we have been aided by the Master to do something in the past year, we pray for and rely on the Holy Spirit for the future, and consecrate ourselves anew to this work of our Divine Lord.

All of which is respectfully submitted,

D. M. STIGER, *Sec'y for Hudson Co.*

JERSEY CITY, NOV. 16, 1864.

#### HUNTERDON COUNTY.

The Corresponding Secretary for the county of Hunterdon rejoices that, under the blessing of the Great Head of the Church, he is enabled to report a steady and very encouraging progress in the Sabbath School cause, during the past year.

The statistical reports, which have been forwarded to the Corresponding Secretary of the State Association, show that we have 85 organized schools connected with our County Association, embracing 969 teachers and nearly 6,000 scholars. This is an increase over last year's report of 11 schools, 100 teachers and nearly 1,000 scholars.

In many of the townships in our county there are Township Associations, and they have proved a very efficient means in building up our schools and establishing new schools in destitute places. One great defect in our Sabbath School system is the want of properly organized and associated effort amongst the friends of Sabbath Schools in the different townships and school districts, and this subject is respectfully submitted to the consideration of the State Association.

Our County Association held its annual meeting at Readington Vilage, September 21st. The attendance of delegates was larger than at any previous Convention, and the occasion was one of great interest to all friends of the cause. I have the pleasure to lay before the State Association one hundred copies of the proceedings of our Convention, for distribution amongst the members. These proceedings will, I think, satisfy the State Convention that there is some little life amongst the friends of Sabbath Schools in Hunterdon county.

At your last Convention I was honored with an appointment as delegate to the N. Y. State Convention. I regret that unexpected ministerial engagements prevented me from attending that Convention.

Having recently returned from a visit to the West, after a protracted absence, I shall not be able to attend your present Convention. I will, however, be with you in spirit, and shall earnestly pray for God's blessing on all your deliberations.

As there is a probability that I may be called to another field of duty during the present year, it will be necessary for me to decline a re-appointment as Corresponding Secretary for Hunterdon County. I am grateful to God if I have been enabled to contribute, even in a very small degree, to the success of the cause in our State. In taking leave of the Convention and of the

friends of the Sunday School cause in New Jersey, I feel that I am severing some of the most pleasant associations which I have been permitted to form, and I regret that the calls of duty have laid this necessity upon me. I beg leave to tender to the members of the Convention my sincere Christian regards, wishing them all needed good and most abundant success in their efforts to advance the cause of Sunday Schools in the State of New Jersey.

Very respectfully,

P. A. STROBEL, *County Sec'y.*

CLARKSVILLE, N. J., Nov. 14, 1864.

#### MERCER COUNTY.

The Secretary for Mercer County, when he accepted his appointment one year since, hoped to be able to report a full year's work. This county has had no Secretary for two or three years, and consequently no county organization; and the labor of inaugurating a system of communication with the several Sabbath Schools must be repeated with nearly all the difficulties that would be met with if there never had been any systematic effort in the county. It was hoped that during the year an organization might be effected, and a full report be made of the several schools at the State Convention. But this has been impossible. Before Spring opened the Secretary was called to leave the State, and accordingly resigned his position in order that another person might be appointed, and thus the work goes on. On his return in the Autumn, as no one had been appointed, and he was requested to withdraw his resignation, and work for the short time remaining previous to the convention of the State Association, he did so hoping that something might be done in the way of collecting statistics.

In less than two months immediately preceding the Convention, with no town secretaries, and with other duties that precluded the possibility of visiting the several townships, we could hardly expect to obtain returns from all the schools, much less to do anything towards effecting a permanent organization. We did hope however, to receive a sufficient number of reports to enable us to give some idea of the condition of the schools. Blank reports were sent to all the schools so far as we were able to ascertain them. Probably not far from one-third of them have reported.

We can but express the hope that this beginning, small as it is, may be the forerunner of something better, and that Mercer county another year may not fall behind the other counties in the State in this interesting and important work.

GEO. S. GROSVENOR, *County Secretary.*

#### MIDDLESEX COUNTY.

DEAR SIR: Having accepted the appointment late in the year, I have not been able to do more than collect and arrange the returns as sent in by the efficient town Secretaries.

There are from 70 to 75 schools in the county; 52 schools have reported this year, being an increase of 16 from last year.

Thirty-seven Schools report no teachers prayer meetings.

Twenty-one " " discontinued in winter.

We have as yet no county organization, and therefore know but little of the assistance such a union would give, by friendly co-operation and counsel together. But one neighborhood is reported as needing a Sunday School, although doubtless there are others.

The Secretaries from some of the towns report a growing interest in the Sunday School cause—the schools increasing in numbers and the *teachers* more interested. We regret that *all* of the evangelical churches do not find it convenient to unite with us. Some have neglected, while others have *refused* to give us the statistics requested. Should such attend the meetings, to be held here, and become enlightened as to the real objects and aims of the Association, we think next year's report would show a more cordial co-operation by all branches of our enterprise.

Respectfully submitted,

W. R. FREEMAN, *Sec'y Middlesex Co.*

#### MORRIS COUNTY.

*To the New Jersey Sunday School Association:*

Amid the excitement of war, and the heat of party politics, the Sunday School cause in Morris county the last year has not been lost sight of, but more than usual interest taken in this good work.

Pursuant to a call of your Secretary, a convention of the friends of Sunday Schools in our county was held in Dover, July 11th; a large and very interesting meeting. A society, auxiliary to the State Sunday School Association was formed, a constitution adopted, and officers elected.

The first meeting of the Association was held in Mendham on the third Tuesday of September, which was largely attended and topics of interest discussed. In the afternoon there was a large and interesting gathering of children, who were addressed by several warm friends of Sunday Schools. The meeting was a successful one, and all felt that we had inaugurated a society which must become an institution of good in the county.

Owing to the late period of organizing our Society, and the appointment of town Secretaries, we are unable to render as full statistical reports as we should desire. [See Statistics.] We feel that when our Society once gets into good working order, the fruits of our labors will be seen, and Morris county stand with her sister counties in the State in the good work, and vieing with them to be foremost in the early and religious training of the young.

Hoping to be able to present a more favorable report at your next meeting, and praying that God's blessing may crown the labors of your convention, I remain,

JOHN HILL, *County Sec'y.*

## MONMOUTH COUNTY.

Although, as the years roll round, bearing from our natural sight one after another of our friends, we feel thankful to the Lord that the command "Go work in my vineyard" remains in full force, for although many pass away there is no diminution in the number of those who may be benefitted by our labors.

As nearly as we can ascertain, there are 75 Sunday Schools in Monmouth county, but we have reports only from 65, which is but few more than reported in 1860; but we find, by comparison, that we have an increase in number of scholars and teachers of more than 25 per cent. over the returns for that year.

Our reports sum up as follows: 65 schools; number of teachers, 854; average attendance, 653; number of scholars, 5,057; average attendance, 3,506; number of scholars over 18 years of age, 256; scholars in infant class, 690; average attendance, do., 508; number of teachers, church members, 595; scholars, church members, 186; conversions during year, 28; deaths during year, 19; volumes in library, 17,903; benevolent contributions, \$175 25.

Owing to combined causes, our County Association, which met on the fourth Thursday in August, was not numerously attended, however, there was no lack of interest exhibited on the part of those present.

We feel to thank God and take courage that so many have obeyed the order to "fall in" the ranks of the Sunday School army, hoping there may be increased faithfulness on our part towards accomplishing the desired end.

The Annual County Convention will be held on the fourth Thursday in August, 1865, in the Baptist Church in Holmdel.

Respectfully submitted,

H. H. SEABROOK, *Co. Sec'y.*

## PASSAIC COUNTY.

The annual report from the county of Passaic this year presents nothing new. The Secretary in the name of this Association has visited nineteen schools and in every instance found the teachers and scholars to give him a hearty welcome. Some of these schools were the largest and some were the smallest in the county. These visits have opened a communication between the Association and the schools, that imparts an interest in the welfare of each other, and will enable the Secretary to obtain fuller statistics in the future. He has endeavored to gather the returns from every school in the county, but has failed to receive answers from five. The political excitement, coming on about the time of sending out the circulars, has doubtless interfered much with the returns. Though the country, in this its time of need, should receive the undivided support of every citizen, and his duty to it faithfully done, yet he should not leave the work of the Sunday School undone.

In the report of the Corresponding Secretary of last year we

find that 2,591 teachers, more than one quarter of the whole number given, are not professors of religion. While we commend them and encourage them to assist in these labors, we would ask all that love the Lord Jesus Christ, and are neglecting their duty in this particular, to profit by their example. Cannot this fact, accompanied with the Saviour's command, "Go work in my vineyard to-day," be presented *vividly* to the mind of every professor, who is not engaged in the Sunday School cause. May we not hope, that the Macedonian prayer, "come over and help us," will influence every professor to engage willingly and earnestly in his Master's service. If teachers, superintendents, and pastors in particular, will lay the claims of the Sunday School before these persons during the present year, many valuable laborers may be secured.

The grand object of all Sunday School instruction being the conversion of the soul, we have to rejoice over 164 scholars connected with the schools in this county who have, since our last report, passed from death unto life. And we would say with the Psalmist, The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad.

Abstract of Sunday School returns from Passaic county : Number of schools, 39 ; number of schools reporting, 34 ; number of teachers, 588 ; scholars enrolled, 4,964 ; average attendance, teachers, 455 ; average attendance, scholars, 3,184 ; number scholars over 18, 301 ; teachers church members, 344 ; scholars church members, 373 ; number conversions, 164 ; number deaths, 37 ; number scholars in infant class, 1,209 ; number volumes in Library, 9,987 ; amount of benevolent contributions, \$795 ; number schools holding prayer, 9 ; number schools having monthly concerts, 8 ; number schools discontinued in winter, 10 ; amount collected for Association, \$20, which has been received from the following schools :

Methodist school, Market st., \$3 ; 1st Presbyterian, \$2 50 ; Baptist, \$2 20 ; Primitive Methodist, \$2 ; United Presbyterian, \$2 ; Congregational, \$2 ; 1st Ref. Dutch, Paterson, \$2 ; Methodist, North Paterson, \$1 ; Methodist, Prospect st., \$1 ; Baptist, Sandy Hill, \$1 ; Presbyterian, Newfoundland, 80c. ; Methodist, Passaic, 50c. ; \$20.

A. STOUTENBOROUGH, *County Secretary.*

#### SALEM COUNTY.

*To the New Jersey Sunday School Association :*

The Sunday School Association of Salem County, auxilliary to your body, was organized on the 16th of September, 1863 ; up to which time we had no organized co-operation in the Sunday School work among ourselves in the County, and no connection with the State Association.

Our second meeting was held in the First Baptist Church of Salem on the 21st day of September last. This meeting was one of marked interest ; the attendance was large, and the discus-

sions and addresses all that could be desired. The crowning meeting of the day was the assembling of the children of the several schools in Salem, filling the body of the spacious church edifice in which we met, who united in singing, as children only can sing, some of those sweet songs which are a rich boon to the Sunday School cause, and for which we and our children owe a large debt of gratitude to the writers and publishers, and to listen with unbroken interest to several excellent addresses.

The reports of the Town Secretaries manifest a good degree of interest in our work in most of the townships. In one, however, having relatively a large population, there is not a Sunday School, and in another but one. From two other townships we received no reports. In proportion of population there are probably fewer Sunday Schools in Salem county than almost any other county in the State. The reason is obvious, when we say that a large proportion of our community is made up of Quakers, who, until very recently, have done nothing in Sunday School effort, while their influence has been decidedly adverse to the cause. The conviction, however, is slowly gaining ground among them, that it is better for their children to receive instruction in Sunday Schools than to be allowed the license which they otherwise obtain on that day to their injury. We have knowledge of several schools thus organized by them during the year, and have no doubt that they will soon become prevalent.

Owing to the lack of entire co-operation in the county, we cannot yet present a complete exhibit of our Sunday School operations. Reports are received from 33 schools, with the following general statistical results: 506 officers and teachers, with an average attendance of 227½; scholars enrolled, 2,740, with an average attendance of 1,620; scholars over 18 years of age, 122; in the infant department, 336; teachers, church members; 331, scholars, church members, 153; volumes in library, 9,554; scholars 78 scholars are reported as hopefully converted during the year. Seven teachers' prayer meetings only are reported, and but three Sunday School Missionary organizations. Further details may be found in the statistical table.

When we think of the influences for good or for evil which the children, around whom we may now cast the moulding and blessed influences of the Gospel, will exert in widening circles over families and communities, over Church and State, and in all the relations of life, it becomes us with renewed consecration to give ourselves to the work of moral and religious culture in their behalf. And when we consider, too, the worth of their undying souls, and the temptations to evil surrounding them, we cannot certainly be too earnest in our work, or too fervent in our prayers, if by all means we would save some.

Respectfully submitted,

A. J. HIRES, *County Secretary.*

WOODSTOWN, Nov. 12, 1864.

## SUSSEX COUNTY.

*To the New Jersey Sunday School Association :*

So short a time has elapsed since the office of Secretary passed into my hands that I have found it impossible to furnish a complete report. I am happy to say, however, that the report this year is the fullest that has ever been presented from Sussex Co.

There are reports from every township but one—that for some cause has failed entirely. Two townships report only one school in each. This I am satisfied is not for the reason that there are not more schools but from other causes. We are making an earnest effort to get the machinery in working order, and we intend, by the blessing of God attending us, to do it. We want it known that there is some life in Old Sussex, and it only needs for the fire to be properly kindled, and kept brightly burning, to produce a light which shall shine from Sussex to Cape May.

We are making improvement in sustaining our schools during the winter. Some of them, finding that what they thought an impossibility can be easily accomplished.

The great need of our field is earnest self-sacrificing teachers, who will esteem it an honor to win souls to Christ in this department of christian effort.

We only report 18 conversions; and yet we would not undervalue the worth of an immortal soul, for we know that it has been said by the Saviour, "there is joy in heaven among the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." There is a great work to be done, and it can only be done by making our county and township organization, living, energizing, acting as a galvanic battery upon the masses.

Our report of benevolent contributions is very meagre, owing chiefly to the fact that neither the parents or the children have been properly trained in that good work. We have good hope of better things in the future.

Respectfully submitted.

U. C. NELSON, *Co. Sec'y.*

## WARREN COUNTY.

BELVIDERE, Oct. 25th, 1864.

The Secretary of the New Jersey State Sunday School Association, for the county of Warren, in making his annual report to the county and State Association, desires first, to acknowledge God's goodness in the outpouring of His Holy Spirit on many of the schools of this county during the past year.

We have in our county about nine thousand nine hundred children and youth, between the ages of five and twenty. Of this number there are reported about six thousand, two hundred and seventy-one under Sabbath School instructions; leaving a balance of three thousand, six hundred and twenty-nine. Are these without the blessings of a Sabbath School? And is there

no means of bringing them in? Are not our schools so organized that all the children in the county may attend with ease?

We have seventy-eight schools in active operation, with an aggregate number of nine hundred and thirty-one teachers, and six thousand, two hundred and seventy-one scholars; of this number two hundred and thirty-three are over eighteen, nine hundred and forty are in infant classes. Six hundred and twenty-one teachers, and two hundred and thirty-eight scholars are church members. In these schools there have been, during the past year, one hundred and thirteen conversions and twenty-three deaths.

The whole number of volumes in the different Libraries amount to seventeen thousand and three hundred.

The amount of benevolent contributions is six hundred and seventy-six dollars and seventeen cents. Only nine of these schools hold regular monthly prayer meetings. As an association, can we expect the blessing of God upon us? Is it not time that we as teachers wake up to a proper sense of our duty in regard to more fervent prayer for the blessing of God upon our labors? Yes, fellow teachers, if we expect the outpouring of his Spirit upon our schools, we must be more fervent supplicants at the throne of grace.

All of which is most respectfully submitted,

S. W. HALSEY, *Co. Sec'y.*

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## REPORT OF SPECIAL COMMITTEE

ON

### *Worship in Sabbath Schools.*

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At the last annual convention of this Association, a resolution was adopted calling for a committee "to inquire what measures can be taken to make our Sunday-schools a more efficient means for instructing the children in the united and public Worship of God; and that the committee be instructed to report at the next annual convention."

In accordance with that resolution, the committee beg to present the following report:

The introduction of this general subject of worship in Sunday-schools seems to us not only timely but even necessary. As yet it has not had its share of careful and deliberate attention, and what of practical experiment has been attempted in relation to it, has been, it is feared, somewhat unintelligent, and has not been based on well-established principles. It is not difficult to

discover the reason for these facts. Hitherto the energies of the friends of Sunday-schools have been mainly devoted to the work of setting forth the excellence and value of these organizations and of enlarging their sphere by bringing the greatest possible number of children under their influence. The great desideratum has been to enroll upon the records of the Sunday-school the name of every child within the limits of a given district, county, or State. So much of thought and effort has been given to work of this sort, that the questions of detail with regard to the instruction, worship and order of the schools have been, until recently, a good deal neglected. Too much the question has been, "how shall our schools be made *attractive*, so that every child shall come and shall be glad to come to them?" rather than "how shall our schools be made most useful, so that the children who *do* come, whether they be few or many, shall be most profited by coming?"

This mistake is one so natural, so almost inevitable in the first stages of the history of the Sunday-school work, and one so likely to be corrected as that work advances, that it would be foreign to the province of this report to dwell upon it, were it not that this matter of worship in Sunday-schools has suffered gravely by reason of it. It is time now that we began to give a greater share of our attention to the various questions of detail, by the decision of which the real effectiveness of the schools and their internal growth and profit may be secured and advanced.

We wish then to take up, one by one, the several acts of worship which are practised probably in all our schools, though not in all of them intelligently.

I. First and most obvious of these is prayer. This act of worship is found, no doubt, in every school. And yet it is doubted whether it has the prominence which it ought to have, and is conducted with the propriety, reverence and wisdom with which it ought to be. Sometimes, it is feared, the prayer in the school is brief and hurried and formal, and is regarded by the children as something which they have rather to listen to than to unite in. Traces of this mistaken notion pervade, to a perceptible extent, our Sunday-school literature, as when, for instance, a favorite hymn declares,

"We purpose to be always there,  
To listen to the opening prayer,"

[S. S. Bell, I, 115.]

as if the prayer were simply something of which the school were the object, standing in relation to it as the oyster knife to the oyster,—a thing to open it with,—and as if the attitude of the children were one of receptivity only, "to listen" rather than to join. Now this mistake is natural enough, even where all possible precautions have been used against it; and certainly it ought not to be fostered. We cannot too often nor too earnestly impress upon the children that the prayer which is offered is not, as has been said, merely an instrument to open the school with,—that it is not at all something to which they have merely to

give attention,—but that is something in which they are to join, simply, heartily, and, when they can, audibly.

This last word “audibly” suggests as worthy of special comment, the great importance of the use of the Lord’s Prayer, repeated by the whole school. This practice prevails so largely that it may perhaps be said to be general. And it supplies what is especially needful for children, the opportunity for them to express in words their worship. It is somewhat difficult for a child to follow, silently, the words and thoughts of an unwritten prayer. It is not always easy even for “children of a larger growth.” It requires some effort of mind and power of restraint over thoughts that are always ready to be diverted and to wander. Therefore these prayers should be brief, simple, of short sentences, of distinct petitions. Better, a great deal, three short prayers than one long one. It is easy, however, and not uncommon, to go to the opposite extreme. For instance, in the attempt to secure great exactness of order and the most complete economy of time, the prayer is sometimes too brief and too formal. In one of our Sunday-school journals, not long since, was published what was evidently regarded as a model order of exercises. In it there was room for just one prayer, and that one just three minutes long, (including the Lord’s prayer with which it closed,) the time being regulated, perhaps, by an inexorable tap of the bell. Now such an order as this proceeds on the principle that an exact economy of time is of more importance than the devout and full expression of the worship of the assembly,—that it is better for a Sunday-school to be characterized by “snap” than by religious devoutness; that variety and precision are worth more than prayer. A most mistaken notion. It kills a prayer to hurry through it as if some swift vengeance was upon our heels, or to straighten it within such narrow limits of formality. It is the death of reverence to make the exercise so brief as almost to be trifling, or to push it into an unobtrusive place in the service, as of trifling importance.

These two things then should be remembered, first, that there should be full time given for prayer. Our excellent corresponding secretary closed his report a year ago with the suggestion that we need more prayer in our schools. It is true. Not longer prayers than the average, perhaps, but more of them. Prayer is not so attractive perhaps as the singing of lively tunes, or the telling of funny stories; but, for all that, it should not be shoved into a corner, nor cut off at both ends. Better run some risk of wearying the children—though that risk, with the exercise of Christian common sense, would be a very slight one—than run the greater risk of undervaluing this act of worship by thus limiting it for time or space.

Secondly: let us remember to encourage by all the means in our power the actual participation of the children in the prayer. Remind them, when they are called to prayer, that they are engaged in a direct address to God, and that he is waiting to

hear them. Instruct them that the words of the one who leads are not his own words merely, but are for them as well. And especially insist upon the use of the Lord's Prayer, exhorting every one to pray that prayer, not only with his heart but with his lips as well.

II. The second act of worship,—not of such universal prevalence as the act of prayer,—is the devotional reading of the Scriptures. The use of the Scriptures is not always an act of worship. When we study our lessons from them we use them not for worship, but for instruction. There are certain parts of Scripture, like the gospels, the epistles, and the historical books which can hardly be used in any other way than for the purpose of instruction. But, on the other hand, there are certain parts, like the Book of Psalms, which are and were designed to be *forms* of prayer and praise, and which ought to be used constantly as the vehicles of worship. It is gratifying to recognize the extent to which this use of the Scriptures has already been made available in our schools. But it is mortifying, on the other hand, to see how unintelligently they are sometimes used. For instance, sometimes one of the psalms of David is read responsively, one verse by the superintendent and one by the school, and the reading is, as it ought to be, an act of prayer or praise. This is the way in which these psalms were meant to be employed. And they constitute an inspired liturgy for the use of the church in all ages. But sometimes the passage which is read responsively is from the book of Acts or from the books of Chronicles. But these cannot be used for worship. These are not prayers and praises as the psalms are. These are histories. And there is no more propriety or force in reading these responsively than there is in the responsive reading of a leader from the daily newspaper.

It is probable that this method of using the Scriptures was originally adopted, and is still practised as a mere device for fixing the attention of the school. But though it may seem to do this outwardly, it is believed that really it is mischievous. It spoils a narrative to read it this way. Try it, for instance, on a chapter out of Bancroft, and see if it will stand the test. It breaks the continuity, it disturbs the interest, it distracts the mind. And if Bancroft cannot stand it, neither can Matthew or John.

Not that the use of a chapter from the gospels, or the historical books, or the epistles is not very valuable in our schools. It is. That part of Scripture which constitutes the lesson for the day ought to be read, or some other portion. But it should be read not by the superintendent and the school alternately, but by the superintendent alone, as distinctly, as impressively, as forcibly as he can, pausing if necessary for a word of comment, or to call back the wandering attention of his hearers.

Your committee are not alone in thinking that this course is the most effective and the only proper one for the portions of

Scripture from which our lessons are most frequently taken. To read these alternately is often quite to destroy the sense by pauses, breaks, changes of emphasis and inflection. As a device for fixing the attention of the children it is a failure. Nay, according to the expressed opinion of one or two of our foremost educators, it is positively mischievous.

Far otherwise is it with the reading of the psalms. They were made to be given responsively. In the Jewish worship, sentence answered back to sentence, verse to verse, from different parts of the worshiping assembly. So in the Christian church from the earliest ages, and in some portions of it, at the present day. So in some of our Sabbath-schools. This is using the Scriptures in worship: for these psalms are prayers and praises, and it is fit that they should be uttered either by the voice of one, or by the voices of the many, or, best of all, responsively, first by one voice and then by many.

Under this head, then, the committee also make two suggestions: first, that the reading of the Scriptures for instruction, which is usually the lesson, should be read not alternately, but by the superintendent alone. Secondly: that there should also be the responsive reading of a psalm or a portion of a psalm by the superintendent and the school alternately. Both these acts are valuable. Neither can be dispensed with. But the purpose of the two is entirely diverse. One is an act of instruction, the other is an act of worship.

The committee are glad to know, in this connection, that it is probable that an edition of the book of Psalms, prepared for this use, will shortly be published. The necessity for it is already so widely and deeply felt, that its preparation cannot much longer be delayed. The responsive use of the verses is better than nothing, but it would be better yet if the responses could be given according to the exact parallelism of the original text.

III. The third and last act of worship, which is generally made use of in our schools, is the act of singing. But here too it is necessary to repeat the remark which was made with regard to the use of the Scriptures. Just as every use of them in our public service is not necessarily an act of worship, so the singing is by no means always worship. Sometimes, indeed, startling as it may seem to say so, it is even false worship, well nigh idolatrous. Prayer, if indeed it be prayer at all, cannot be anything but worship. Not so with singing.

Out of the failure to recognize this fact has come vast confusion, and, it is feared, vast damage. Music and song are most potent influences, the means either of immense good or of immense evil. "Let me make," said one—"the songs of a people, and I care not who makes their laws." It is a maxim which applies with almost equal force in church and state. How much the piety, how much the theology of the church has been influenced by its hymns, no one can tell. At first the expression of that piety, they come to be afterwards the mould of it. The

most pestiferous heresies in church history have been propagated by means of them. And it ought to be regarded as a matter of the first importance to secure such hymns and songs as shall at least be not injurious in their character and tendency. It is a matter of too much importance to be left to incompetent, or careless, or undevout men, self-appointed to the work, and performing it only with mercenary or ambitious motives. Noteworthy in this connection is that action of the recent Methodist musical convention in New York city, which recommended "that a selection of hymns for Sunday-school purposes be embodied in the church hymn-book, and engrossed in the general index." This action is worthy of approbation, because it recognizes the power of Sunday-school singing for good or evil, and the necessity of its being overlooked and managed.

There ought, then, to be a careful discrimination in our books between those hymns which are really of a religious sort, and those which are simply secular, or merely tinged with a little weak, semi-religious sentimentalism. If we examine the songs and hymns of our Sunday-school music books, we find very few, a fearfully small proportion, that are worthy to be called hymns of worship, or are in the least degree the vehicles of worship. There are indeed some notable exceptions. Take, for instance, the sweet hymn, "Saviour, like a shepherd lead us," or that other one, less direct in form, but full of the true spirit of worship,

"I ought to love my Saviour,  
No earthly friend can be  
One-half so kind and faithful  
As he has been to me."

[*Golden Shower*, p. 16.

These are specimens of hymns most worthy to be sung, most fit and graceful forms for prayer and praise, perfectly adapted to the wants of children, and entirely free from the faults by which our books are so largely characterized. But how large a proportion of Sunday-school hymns are of this sort? It is amazingly small. A fearfully large number are the merest doggerel, of which the children themselves soon learn to see the emptiness and worthlessness. Consider, for instance, the hymns about heaven, which are almost innumerable, and frequently gross in their imagery, and even senseless, as the one which promises that

"To that beautiful shore where the loved ones are gone,  
To the flowers and the evergreen glade,  
We shall one day pass like the brave of yore,  
And bask in the beautiful shade."

[*Athenaeum Coll.*, p. 45.

Now, to speak of basking in the shade may be rhyme but it certainly is not reason, nor even sense. It may be very desirable to "bask," and even heavenly, according to the notions of a Mohammedan heaven, though it does not seem to your committee a scriptural or a Christian idea; but it would puzzle any one, Moslem or Christian, to bask in shade—for if there be any one condition in which basking is impossible, it is surely that. So, take another so-called "hymn," of the same class, which pictures heaven in the following materialistic way:

"No poverty there. No, the saints are all wealthy;  
Nor sickness can reach them—that country is healthy;"

a description which sounds like an extract from an advertisement of California lands. The tendency of hymns like these can only be degrading, instilling false notions of the blessedness of the immortality which is through Christ.

Then, if we take hymns of another class, which are simply sentimental, we swell the number of those which are of no value in worship, but of positive injury. There is one, for instance, of which the leading thought is,

"Bury me in the morning, mother."

Now, it is conceivable that there might be children in a morbid state of mind whose desire to be buried and to have their funeral services attended in the forenoon, might be so strong and irrepressible that it would find a grateful expression in the use of this sentimental ballad; but it is doubted whether, on the whole, the children of our Sabbath-schools would be profited by the use of it. And yet, as it is arranged to a pleasing melody, it may, doubtless, be widely used, because there is nothing positively wicked in it, and because it sounds pretty. For it is a lamentable fact that the popularity of a Sunday-school hymn depends very largely, not on its religious value, but on the liveliness, or plain-tiveness, or effectiveness of the tune to which it is set.

There is, however, yet another class of tunes, by far the largest class and perhaps the most harmful. These are the hymns devoted to eulogy of, and sometimes almost to the worship of, the Sunday-school. One of the most singular phases in the history of Christendom is that which records how men came by degrees to value the *church* as an end, not a means, and how they almost abandoned the worship of God and transferred their adoration to the church. This form of idolatry is not yet extinct in the world. Men trust in the church yet in some nominally Christian lands; even yet they give the tribute of their praise and reverence not so much to God as to the church. Some such danger as this is gaining ground in the Sunday-school. What is the burden of a very large proportion of the hymns in our Sunday School books? Is it the praise of God and of his love in Jesus Christ? No; it is the praise of the Sunday-school. In all sorts of verse and metre the dignity and worth of the Sunday School is extolled. The Sunday-schools are represented as of all places in the world the most beautiful, the most fascinating, the most seductive. Children cry for them. There is the most irrepressible and ardent longing to get into them, and when they are entered to remain in them. If there is an allusion to the seasons it is only to set forth the peculiar loveliness of the school in each of those particular seasons. Sunday-schools in spring, Sunday-schools in summer, Sunday-schools in autumn, Sunday-schools in winter, in the morning, in the afternoon—rain or shine, wet or dry, cold or hot, they are presented under all these phases, and their worth and glory under each and all of these circumstances especially extolled. Instead of hymns in which the love of God is celebrated, we find, too often, those in

which the glory of the Sunday-school is celebrated. Instead of a hymn in which the love of Christ to little children is praised and thanked, one in which the desirability and excellence of the Sunday-school is enlarged upon. Is this as it should be? Are your committee wrong in thinking that this branch of our literature indicates a tendency towards the elevation of this blessed instrumentality to a fictitious and even an idolatrous dignity?

Of course it must not be overlooked that songs of earnest fellowship—songs intended to stimulate an *esprit du corps* in the school are valuable and have their place, especially in Sunday-school concerts. But it is submitted that they have at least usurped an undue proportion of the time and thought and voice of the children, to whom these schools are after all only a means and not an end.

Under this head, then, your committee offer, very briefly, the following suggestions:

First—That a greater proportion of hymns of direct worship ought to be employed in our schools.

Secondly—That a greater care ought to be exercised to exclude from use hymns that are false in sentiment, defective in taste, or incorrect in expression.

Thirdly—That no hymn or song should be used *merely* because the tune to which it is attached is popular or attractive.

Fourthly—That to as great an extent as practicable it is desirable to use in the Sabbath-school such hymns and tunes as may be also used in the worship of the church—in order that in its worship, as well as in its instruction, the school may be not in any way antagonistic but auxiliary to the church.

In conclusion, the committee beg to renew the expression of their conviction of the vast magnitude and importance of this subject. It has so grown upon their hands that they could not compress their report into smaller space. And they trust that the suggestions which they have made, though sometimes strongly expressed, in order that they may be more readily grasped, will be received as prompted by the sincere conviction that the Sunday-schools are already an immense power for good, and ought to be still more unqualifiedly so. They trust that more and more the voices of this great multitude of children, who are gathered innumerable into our schools, may express the simple and spiritual worship of the God who like a father pities them, of the Saviour who like a shepherd leads them, of the Holy Ghost who like the whispering wind revives and purifies them!

They submit, as embodying the views of this report, and for the more convenient consideration of the Convention, the following resolutions:

1. *Resolved*, That as the assemblies of the church on the Lord's day are not for instruction only, but for united worship, so the Sunday-schools should also furnish ample opportunities for united worship as well as for instruction.

2. *Resolved*, That it is our conviction that the time usually allotted to worship in the Sunday-schools is insufficient.

3. *Resolved*, That it is desirable to secure variety in worship by the use not only of unwritten prayer, but also of hymns and spiritual songs, and also of such forms of worship as the Scriptures furnish.

4. *Resolved*, That we regard with high satisfaction the progress which has been made in this direction by the somewhat general use of the Lord's prayer, repeated audibly, and of selections from the Scripture chanted by the schools, and by the universal, though sometimes erroneous, use of the service of song.

5. *Resolved*, That it is the duty of those who conduct the worship of the school to impress upon the children the solemnity of their several acts of worship; and to guard against the use of hymns and songs that are faulty in sentiment, false in taste or incorrect in expression; and also to study to make the exercises of worship simple, diversified and hearty.

6. *Resolved*, That greater use may be made with advantage of the forms of worship contained in the Scriptures, either by more frequent chanting or by alternate reading, and that we recommend such further use of them.

7. *Resolved*, That so far as possible, the worship of the Sunday-school should be auxiliary and preparatory to the worship of the church.

GEO. B. BACON, Ch'n, }  
 DAVID COLE, } COMMITTEE.  
 J. T. CRANE, }

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### Notes by Corresponding Secretary.

Several changes have been made in the list of County Secretaries since the sessions of the Association, owing to the resignation of the parties elected. Their places have been filled by the Corresponding Secretary. Since the first part of this report was printed, John Parsons, Esq., County Secretary for Bergen County, has resigned, and his place has been filled by the appointment of Jasper Demarest, Esq., of Hackensack.

We regret very much the omission of the detailed Statistical Report of each County in the publication of our Annual Report, but the increased expenses attending such publication was beyond the reach of the finances of the Association. We earnestly hope to resume them in our next report.

