

## THE BIBLE CLASS EXERCISES.

CONDUCTED BY REV. A. J. NELSON, A. M.

*Mr. Nelson*—I think myself most highly honored, that while we have men here from New York and New Jersey and other places, I am here to represent the open Bible. I have no lecture to make to-day to the convention, but shall simply conduct the class as I conduct it as pastor of my people. I wish to put a half a dozen Bibles into the hands of some who will respond, and who will be my class for this occasion. [Distributes some Bibles to persons sitting in front.] Turn to the tenth chapter of Luke, commencing with the twenty-fifth verse. I have never seen this class before, and I shall treat them just as they are. Will they please rise. [The class rises and reads alternately with Mr. Nelson the parable of the good Samaritan.]

There are three things in every Bible lesson: The place in which the events occurred, the events themselves, and the lesson to be derived from them. These are reducible to two thoughts which will compose every Bible lesson. The first one is the topography; the second is the analysis.

Now where did this occur?

*The Class*—At Jerusalem.

*Mr. Nelson*—Jesus was at Jerusalem when this lawyer spoken of in the verses read stood up and enquired of him this great question, and all the events that are connected with the lesson lie within twenty-four miles on the west side of the Jordan. [Mr. Nelson by a diagram on one side of a blackboard represented the different objects presented in the parable as the lesson progressed.] Here on the blackboard I have represented the Jordan and the Dead Sea. This place is between what is called the Great Crossing of the sea and the city. From the city there winds a road through the mountains to Jericho. Behind Jericho there stands a great white mountain which you see here. It is a limestone mountain, and is called the Place of Temptation. Jericho is six miles from the Jordan and eighteen miles from Jerusalem. You see I have written the figures 6 and 18 to show the number of miles. This is a very mountainous region, and between this mountain and the city occurred the events to which Christ referred this lawyer. It is called the Wilderness of Robbers.

We have now the places before us, and we will look then at the analysis. [Turns the blackboard around and proceeds to make on the other side another diagram illustrating the actors in the scene and what they did.] The lesson reads: "Behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tempted him." The discussion then is between Jesus and the lawyer, and the query is the question of eternal life, for the lawyer did not believe in soul-sleeping. Now we have the lawyer's question. What did the lawyer do? The first thing he did is, he stood up. What does that mean?

*The Class*—It was to ask the question.

*Mr. Nelson*—It was to put himself in the attitude of discussion according to the old custom. He stood on his feet in the midst of the

multitude where Jesus had just been talking. What else does he do? What was his motive?

*The Class*—To tempt him.

*Mr. Nelson*—Yes, he tempted him. Then what did he say?

*A Scholar in the Class*—"What shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

*Mr. Nelson*—Yes, that is it. He proposed to do something. He was a very sensible man. A man that proposes to do something to inherit eternal life has got hold of the right idea. For what purpose?

*A Scholar*—To "inherit eternal life."

*Mr. Nelson*—"Inherit," well, what does that mean?

*A Scholar*—It means to come into possession of.

*Mr. Nelson*—Does he mean to try to earn it? He is talking about doing something: does he propose to work himself into eternal life? He wants to know what he shall do to obtain it. "Inherit" means what? Why it means to enjoy; that is it. It is, what shall he do, not to earn it, but what shall he do to enjoy it. That then is a very sensible question. We are here to ask that question to-day, all of us, and we are here as Sunday School workers to answer this question wherever we go.

*A Scholar*—We have got to become an heir in order to inherit.

*Mr. Nelson*—Very well; we will see what Jesus said about it. His opinion on this subject is of greater value than the opinion of all the learned doctors of the world. What does Jesus say? Just two things. He says: "What is written in the law?" What did Jesus mean when he asked this question? Did he carry the Scriptures with him? "How readest thou?" he says. Did this lawyer have the Scriptures with him? He was in Jerusalem.

*A Scholar*—Yes, but he was learned in the law.

*Mr. Nelson*—It was his business to know what the law was. He had not only to read the manuscript in the old Hebrew, but to interpret it. He had a long garment on and a long, broad hem on the garment. What do you call that?

*A Scholar*—A phylactery.

*Mr. Nelson*—And on this broad hem was written the law, and it was his business to recite it twice a day and interpret it. Now Jesus says: "How readest thou?—look on your garment." What else did he say? What is the distinction between those two questions: "What is written in the law?" and "How readest thou?"

*A Scholar*—Does not the emphasis come on the word *thou*?"

*Mr. Nelson*—Yes; it is as if he had said, "How do you interpret it? You have read it." No doubt he read it to Jesus in that conversation. "Now," he said, "how do you interpret it?" What did the lawyer answer?

*A Scholar*—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself."

*Mr. Nelson*—That was what the law was. The lawyer understood it, and I think the lawyer said this before a certain question comes in: "How readest thou?"—"How do you interpret that?" Then what does Jesus answer?

*A Scholar*—"Thou hast answered right?"

*Mr. Nelson*—That is, he had read it correctly. "This do;" that is the second thing—the second point he makes. But it seems he was not quite ready to do that, and for what reason? He puts another question. For what reason?

*A Scholar*—To justify himself.

*Mr. Nelson*—Yes, "willing to justify himself." What is the meaning of that? What did he mean to do? What was his spirit there? "Willing to justify himself"—willing to escape from the answer.

*A Scholar*—As an excuse.

*Mr. Nelson*—Yes, begged leave to be excused; but I will ask you another question, and what is that? What is the next question he puts then? Instead of answering this question he says what?

*A Scholar*—He says, "Who is my neighbor?"

*Mr. Nelson*—Yes, he asks another question: "Who is my neighbor?" Did he understand whom that word "neighbor" meant?

*A Scholar*—No.

*Mr. Nelson*—What does it mean?

*A Scholar*—Any one to whom we can do good.

*Mr. Nelson*—The word used by Jesus means the man who has the most claim upon us; that is the thought. Bret Harte would translate it in these days the "Heathen Chinese." Probably that is included in it—the one that has the greatest claim upon us. We have just had those claims presented, and there is no violation of the text to say they are included. How does Jesus answer the question? He takes the old way of answering it.

*A Scholar*—He answers it by a parable.

*Mr. Nelson*—Do you call this a parable? I have just made a picture on the other side of the blackboard; is that a picture of a parable? Is not Jerusalem a true place? Is it not eighteen miles from Jericho, and Jericho six miles from the river?

*A Scholar*—If it is not a parable, will you be kind enough to tell us what a parable is?

*Mr. Nelson*—Well, I have not time for that. It would take up all the time of the lesson. It is a fact, is it not? How do you call it a parable? Is there anything said of a parable? Jesus said a certain man did a certain thing. Is that a parable?

*A Scholar*—It would seem to me that it may or may not be a parable.

*Another Scholar*—I asked the Teacher what a parable is.

*Mr. Nelson*—A parable is an equal truth, an equal teaching, equal to some other truth to be taught. I think the whole context and everything else show that this fact actually occurred and the lawyer knew it. There was a common understanding among the people that there was a man went down and got robbed and half killed. This is not imagination. I have the fact; indeed, the imagination is on the other side. We are never bound to imagine anything when we have a fact.

*A Scholar*—If Jesus had no reference to any particular man, but simply spoke of a general fact, would not that be a parable? He supposes a case that did not actually exist.

*Mr. Nelson*—He does not say so. He says a certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho.

*A Scholar*—Once he said, "A certain King." He always spoke in that manner.

*Mr. Nelson*—We should never depart from the text unless there is reason for it.

*A Scholar*—Will the Teacher deem it an intrusion to ask whether the story of the rich man and Lazarus is a parable?

*Mr. Nelson*—That is not in this lesson. To return to our subject again. What does he say about this man?

*A Scholar*—He "went down from Jerusalem to Jericho."

*Mr. Nelson*—And he meets three other men going down there. What became of this man?

*A Scholar*—He fell among thieves.

*Mr. Nelson*—What else?

*A Scholar*—They stripped him of his raiment; they wounded him; they left him for dead.

*Mr. Nelson*—You have answered right. Now, this was no marked occurrence. It was a frequent thing through those mountains. But we will look at the point which is brought out. First, "there came down a certain priest that way." There is nothing marvelous about that.

*A Scholar*—What is the meaning of the word "chance" in the lesson?

*Mr. Nelson*—Well, it is not a very good thing in these days of speculative philosophy to say "by chance." It means that he went that way on his journey. We say accidental, on business.

*A Scholar*—Was it not providential?

*Mr. Nelson*—Oh! I think so. Every thing is providential in this world. Now, again, as to the priest. He came down that way. That is nothing wonderful, for there were twelve thousand priests living in Jericho at that time, it is supposed.

*A Scholar*—In Jerusalem?

*Mr. Nelson*—No, they did not live in Jerusalem, any of them. They lived in Jericho. It was not at all marvelous that somebody should go down there every day, for they did it every day, going over the same route twice in a day. It was eighteen miles, and they generally rode; but there was nothing said about this, because there were no horses needed on this occasion. Well, when the priest saw this man, what did he do? There are three things the priest did. His going that way is the first; the second is, he saw the man, and the third thing is, he passed him by. All these things, you see, I have represented on the blackboard, in the illustration of the analysis. The fourth idea was that it was on the other side. What was the priest doing down that way? Had he heard about this man, and was he going to relieve him?

*A Scholar*—No.

*Mr. Nelson*—Where was he going?

*A Scholar*—To Jericho.

*Mr. Nelson*—Where a good many priests ought to go. And when he saw him, was he looking for him?

*A Scholar*—No.

*Mr. Nelson*—Are you always looking about the Master's business? We see a great many things that we do not look for. A great many things present themselves to our eyes in this world that we do not look for, and they are providential. That brother is right over there [referring to the scholar who asked if this was not providential.] The providential occurrence he saw pointed out his duty. What did he do about it? He passed by. He did not stop, and not only that, but how did he pass by?

*A Scholar*—He passed by on the other side.

*Mr. Nelson*—That is, he got as far away from him as he could. The path is very narrow down there, but it is not a difficult thing for a man to turn around a little mountain or hill, or rock, in that place. Now we have what the priest did. The next was the Levite. What did he do first?

*A Scholar*—He came to the place.

*Mr. Nelson*—Second?

*A Scholar*—He saw him.

*Mr. Nelson*—Third?

*A Scholar*—He passed by.

*Mr. Nelson*—"He came and looked on him and passed by on the other side;" followed right in the path of the priest.

*A Scholar*—Will you please point out the difference in the actions of the priest and the Levite?

*Mr. Nelson*—Well, the Levite walked in the track of his priest. That, most people do, most Levites.

*A Scholar*—The priest gave a passing glance, but the Levite stopped and looked at him.

*Mr. Nelson*—I do not know whether he stopped or not. He looked at him. Then the Samaritan came down, and what did he do?

*A Scholar*—He saw him and he had compassion on him.

*Mr. Nelson*—He pitied him. What else?

*A Scholar*—He bound up his wounds.

*Mr. Nelson*—Where do you suppose he got anything to bind up his wounds with? Brother Moody told us last night of a man who took off his coat that he had on and bound up the wounds of a little boy who had been run over by the cars; and I have no doubt this Samaritan did the same thing. Now tell me what else he did.

*A Scholar*—"He set him on his own beast, brought him to an inn, and took care of him."

*Mr. Nelson*—Yes; he paid his bills. How much did he pay?

*A Scholar*—Two pence.

*Mr. Nelson*—How long would that keep a man there? It would not keep him long in California. They charged me sixteen dollars a day in California when I first came here.

*A Scholar*—It would keep him there two weeks.

*Mr. Nelson*—It would keep him two days. So he paid his bills. Did he do anything more?

*A Scholar*—He promised to pay his future bills.

*Mr. Nelson*—Yes, and he would take care of him. Now, Christ was

ready to put the question; and I must put it because my time is out. Which was neighbor to him that fell among the thieves?

*A Scholar*—The Samaritan.

*Mr. Nelson*—Well, not because he was the Samaritan. This man that fell among the thieves was a Jew, and the Samaritan, was he a brother to him?

*A Scholar*—He was a foreigner.

*Mr. Nelson*—No Jew would look at a Samaritan. If he saw a Samaritan drowning he would not help him. What was the answer to the question?

*A Scholar*—"He that shewed mercy on him."

*Mr. Nelson*—There are two things I wish to speak of before I close. First, there is the lesson here. What lesson did Jesus try to teach this man?

*A Scholar*—Brotherly love.

*Mr. Nelson*—To treat all men alike. And I think there is taught here the layman's commission. Every man is commissioned to go and help his neighbor. [Applause.]

Judge R. Thompson, of San Francisco, here stated that he understood there were a number of Christian workers from other States present, and he moved that they be invited to sit as members of this Convention. The motion was seconded, put, and carried.

After singing hymn No. 70, from "Hallowed Songs," "Come, brother, do'n't grow weary," the President announced that the next thing on the programme was the

#### QUESTION DRAWER.

CONDUCTED BY MR. MOODY.

*Mr. Moody*—The first question that has been handed to me is this. "Is it beneficial for children to attend more than one Sunday School?" Well, I will say that depends upon circumstances. I have in our Sunday School in Chicago, between two and three hundred children that live in drinking saloons, etc. I would like to have them in the Sabbath School all day if I could get them, even in four or five sessions. But if a child has a good christian home, has a good teacher, one Sabbath School is enough.

"How many scholars should we have in one class?" If we have a hundred scholars, but only one good teacher, put them all into one class.

"Should a teacher be disturbed during the lesson?" No more than you disturb a minister that is preaching; not a bit. I was in one of our schools in Indiana some time ago whose Superintendent's wife had a class of thirty or forty young ladies; and I watched and I saw that in the thirty-five minutes she had to teach the lesson, she was disturbed seven times. Now I consider it a great failure to have these interruptions. The Librarian came up and whispered to her and took her attention away from the class, and that took the attention of the whole class. Then the Assistant Librarian came up, and it was not

long before the Superintendent came up, and the Assistant Superintendent came up, and then the Secretary came. I kept account, and I think it was seven times that she was thus interrupted. I would like to know how these ministers would get along if some one should come up and ask a question in the midst of the sermon. Suppose the minister has studied all the week on his sermon and is just making his application, and some deacon should come up and say, "Did you give the notice for that Wednesday evening meeting?" They would take that deacon and put him out of the church. But I would sooner disturb a minister in the midst of his sermon, than a teacher in the midst of his lesson. Here for instance is a teacher studying all the week to make an impression on his class, and no librarian or secretary has a right to come and interrupt him while he is teaching. I have heard some one say "you can't get along without the library, unless you do it." Then I would take the library and put it out of the window. If the library comes in collision with the word of God let the library go. [Applause.]

"Is it best to turn a scholar out of the Sabbath School for bad conduct?" That question was answered by Mr. Vincent, last night. That boy may make a reformation. There may slumber there a Wesley, or a Martin Luther. Do n't turn them out; I would rather turn out the good boys and keep the bad boys. [Applause and laughter.]

"Should a superintendent scold the teachers before the scholars?" No, nor any other time. You do n't make anything by scolding people. I have learned that a long while ago. If I attempt to scold my teachers, they button up their coats and say: "I can take it just as hard as you want to give it." But if I take love, that does something. It does n't do any good to scold. A superintendent never ought to find any fault or complain before the scholars, because if you do that the scholars will lose confidence in the teacher. Therefore, if there are any mistakes the teachers have made, get them alone around the Cross after you have had a good prayer meeting. Then tell the teachers their faults, and the teachers can tell the superintendent his faults, and in that way you can keep the teachers straight.

"Would you have an unconverted teacher in your Sabbath School?" I don't think I would. If that question had been put into my hands five years ago, I would have said Yes; but I have got over it. I have got a Sabbath School of about a thousand scholars, and during the months of July and August a great many children are away, and I take a blackboard and teach the whole school; and I find I can do that very well. And if I can teach a thousand, a great many superintendents can teach their schools—no doubt about it. I think it is better for a man whose heart is in the work to teach more scholars, than to put them into the hands of unconverted men to teach them about Christ and heaven. The blind cannot lead the blind; therefore, if we have not got Christian teachers enough, let us double up our classes and have those teach who know how to teach; for how is an unconverted teacher going to lead scholars to Christ and heaven?

*Mr. William F. Peters*—Suppose there is no converted person in the district?

*Mr. Moody*—I would not discourage any body from doing the work of God. If an unconverted man should come to the school and want a class, I would say to him "I would like to see you after school is out." I would take him into a side room and put my arms around him and say: I am very glad to see you to-day, and that you want to do something for Christ. I understand you are not a professed Christian. Why not give your heart to the Saviour this afternoon?" Then I would get down and pray with him, and I tell you, you can lead these unconverted teachers to Christ. If they have a desire to work for Christ, there is life there, and you want to lead them to Christ at once, and then they make the very best of teachers. [Applause.]

"Should children, however small, be received into the church as soon as they give evidence of being Christians?" By all means. It is cruel; it is wicked to keep them out. What is the church for but to strengthen, and encourage, and feed one another. And don't these little lambs need it? But do n't take them into the church and then neglect to look after them. That is worse yet, I think. At the prayer meeting they do n't get much food, as they are conducted, and they do n't get much from the sermons; and there ought to be the very best men and women in the church selected, whose business is to feed them and assist those young converts, and when they get discouraged and disheartened, and some person laughs at them because they do not do any better, let the spiritual father or mother encourage these children, and lift them up and help them; and in that way children would be active Christians, if only encouraged and stimulated.

"Are Sabbath School concerts important, and how often should they be held?" Well that depends upon how profitable they are. I think the Sabbath School superintendent ought to be a man of good, hard, common sense. I would never have a concert for the sake of having it. But if you can have a spiritual, living concert, I would have it, and have it just as often as you can make it profitable and spiritual.

"How soon after taking a class may we look for conversion?" Thirty minutes. [Laughter.]

"Is a weekly teacher's meeting necessary to a successful school?" Is it necessary for a minister to study his sermon before he preaches it? How long would you sit under a minister who does not study his sermon at all. There are a great many teachers who do not study because they get hold of a verse of Scripture and don't see anything in it. But let some teachers get together, and let one mind bear on another, and by and by it begins to open, and they see thoughts in it. Why, a teachers' meeting helps teachers a hundred per cent! I have got fifty or a hundred teachers in the Sabbath School that never come to teachers' meeting, and I do n't care that [snaps his fingers] for them. I am trying to get them out as soon as I can. The time is coming when we have got to have hard work in our Sabbath Schools. It has been superficial long enough. What an idea—our teachers come into Sunday School and not study! In our day schools, where we send the children to learn to read and write, we think the teachers can't teach without having studied for years; and here the eternal truths of God are taught by people who do n't study. That thing must be abolished;



and the sooner the better. I was once in a public assembly in England where an agent from Germany reported that he had planted so many Sunday Schools there. The German said he didn't know what to call them, but he would call them things—so many things in Germany. "What do you call things?" they said, in England. "Why, Sabbath Schools without teachers' meetings." Teachers who are too lazy to attend teachers' meetings should be taken out of the Sabbath School cause.

"Should any one who is not a member of the church, who has not made a public profession of Christ, be permitted to teach in the Sunday School under any circumstances?" Well, that same question has been put once before, and I want to tell you one little incident where I changed my mind on that question. A young man in Chicago I had known some time came in, and wanted to take a class in my Sunday School. I gave him a class. I hesitated when I did it. In that class there was a boy who had been anxious for some time about his soul. He worked in a drinking saloon, and tended bar, and it was that that kept him from coming to Christ. That teacher took a class, and I thought I had made a mistake, but I was short of teachers, and I let him have the class. Within four weeks that teacher went into the saloon where this boy was tending bar; and not knowing the boy, forgetting that he was in the class, called for a glass of liquor and drank it. I missed the boy from Sunday School some Sundays after that, and I asked him when I saw him, "Why do n't you come to Sabbath School?" He said, "I, do n't like the teacher. I believe he is a hypocrite. He came into the saloon where I was and took a glass of liquor; and I do n't believe a Sabbath School teacher ought to do it." The boy never went back to his Sabbath School. I lost my hold upon him, and three or four weeks before I left Chicago I saw him come out of one of the saloons reeling drunk; and I said, "If I had given that boy a good, faithful, Holy Ghost teacher, he might be on the way to heaven and be saved, and I am responsible for that soul." Sunday School superintendents, we can't be careful enough whom we give to teach these scholars. We want them with the love of God in their souls. It is not every one who comes into the Sabbath School that can teach, and we can't be too careful. We had better have less teachers and better ones.

"How shall we counteract home influences in our classes?" Well, by visiting these homes and by taking just as much interest in the father and mother as you do in the child. Go there often. Make those parents a subject of prayer. Visit them and give them books and papers to read, and try to lift up the father and mother with the boy, and try to throw into that home the influences of Jesus Christ, and in that way we can help these boys wonderfully.

"Is it best to have boys and girls in separate classes?" I do n't know. It is a question in my mind. I have been for the last two years mixing up my school a good deal, and I have been putting a great many boys and girls in the same classes together, and it has worked well.

"In what way can I most glorify God in the Sabbath School?" By living close up to the side of the Son of God.

"In what way can Sabbath School children be got to attend the preaching of God's word in the churches?" Well, by the father or mother taking the child into the church, and taking them right into the pew with you; and if the father and mother don't go, let the teacher say, "Johnny, I would like to have you go with me to church to-day; I would like to have you sit in the pew with me." And they would be glad to go. There is no trouble about it. The minister may be sometimes a little above him. He may not get all the sermon, but after the meeting take him by the hand and say, "Johnny, I am glad you have come," and then take him up by the hand and let him shake hands with the minister, and Johnny will go home and say, "That is the best minister I ever saw in the world." Probably they will ask him, "What did he preach about?" "I don't know, but he shook hands with me;" and shaking hands will do more than the sermon some times. You must take an interest in the children.

"Is dancing prohibited by the teaching of the Bible?" The Apostle Paul would look well dancing, wouldn't he? Peter, John, and the rest of those early apostles would look well dancing, wouldn't they? The trouble was they didn't have any time for it. And now I say to the people of the Pacific coast, if you can't find anything better to do than dancing, do it; but I think there is something better than that.

"Which of the three following hours is the most suitable for Sunday School: immediately before the morning service, or immediately after, or in the afternoon?" Well, I tell you if it comes just before the sermon, I think the children have a pretty hard time, if you expect them to attend the church too. If you have your Sunday School at nine o'clock, and then take them into church, it makes some three hours. Bear in mind that a great many of the children that go to the Sabbath School don't have places where they can touch their feet to the floor, and it is just like sitting on that melodeon. [Pointing to the melodeon.] If you don't believe it, try it three hours and you will have some sympathy for the children. If you have the school after the sermon it comes in collision with the dinner hour. I don't know how it is with the boys now, but when I was a boy I used to get awfully hungry about twelve o'clock, [laughter] and if the Sunday School came so as to interfere with my dinner, I hated it worse than anything, and I don't think it did me any good. I think it is the best plan for the minister to preach the best sermon he can in the morning; then go home and rest a little, and then come back at three o'clock, and then instead of preaching, teach the word of God. I believe that is as good as having a text, and going all over the world for a sermon; to take some passage of the Scripture and teach it to the people. What is preaching, but teaching? You shake your head, but it is so. Why, preaching is teaching, and if you can get it into the hearts and heads of the people that way, it does more good to them than to have them go away, and be unable to tell the text. You can have a Bible lesson or you may call it a Bible study, Sabbath afternoon, where the old and young are expected to come. Why, I believe we would just reach the people by hundreds and by thousands, for I believe that the Bible study can be

made the most interesting study there is. A man, for instance, is in the habit of working out during the week, and he goes to church, and gets tired, and is thinking of his business or that crop of corn, or some trade during the week. Now, if you had a Bible class and a minister conducting it should see that this man was wandering away from the lesson, he would say to him: "Bro. Jones, what do you think about this?" "Well," he would say, "I do n't know;" but it rouses him up, and he thinks the minister is going to ask him another question, and so he is attentive. I think that is the way to preach the gospel. It is just teaching the word of God, and if we can have one good sermon—which is all a man can carry away really—one good sermon Sunday morning; teaching in the afternoon, and a good rousing prayer meeting in the evening, you will just do the work of the Lord. I think a great many of our ministers are breaking down because they have to preach two sermons. Then the people complain if they don't visit and do pastoral work, attend to funerals, and marry the people and all that. But if they preach one sermon, with a Bible class in the afternoon, and as I said a good rousing prayer meeting afterwards, that will help the ministers and everybody else, and then you have a good, healthy, vigorous church.

"Should the Superintendent explain the lesson before the lessons have been taught by the teacher?" By no means. Why, I supposed we had got beyond that ten years ago, till a few Sundays ago, when I was in a school where the Superintendent took up a Bible and read a verse, and explained it; read a verse and explained it thirty or forty minutes, and then gave it to the teachers. The Superintendent had n't ought to say a word about the lesson until the teachers have got through, and then he can go through the lesson and ask the children what they know about it; what this boy knows, and what this little girl over yonder knows, and make the application and send it home. But the Superintendent has not got the right to take the lesson out of the hands of the teachers. His work comes after the teachers have gotten through.

The time here allotted to the Question Drawer having expired, Mr. Peters stated that the remainder of the questions would be answered at some time during the progress of the Convention. After the benediction had been pronounced by Rev. Dr. Wythe, a recess was taken until two o'clock, P.M.

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#### AFTERNOON SESSION.

The session was opened by the reading of the first chapter of the second epistle to Timothy, and prayer by Rev. Dr. Bannister.

The hymns "Come, thou fount of every blessing," and "I will sing for Jesus," were here sung, and then was taken up the subject of

## SUNDAY SCHOOL MUSIC.

ADDRESS BY PHILIP PHILLIPS.

That is just what we want. We want to get you all to sing for Jesus, for I know of no higher note than the one which we strike when we undertake to sing for the Master. I believe when any person gives himself to the service of God, that God at the same time commits to that person some peculiar talent by which he can best serve him. I don't believe that God ever called a person into his ripened vineyard without giving him something to do, and strength to do it; and I have often thought how important it is for each one of us to know what we are best calculated to do. Then when we know our place and our duty, oh, it is a glorious thing to be found there doing it, and doing it in earnest.

Now, I can't awaken the people on the subject of Christian work like Bro. Moody; I leave that for him. Every one has his mission, and when looking over the vineyard I have felt that perhaps I could better serve the Master in helping the music along than in any other one way. Therefore, I have been trying to do it for the past fifteen years as best I could; for I believe that by the use and power of music much good can be accomplished. I don't know but we can sing the gospel into the hearts of the people as well as to teach it, and that is what I am trying to do every day of my life.

Literally speaking, the music of America to-day is our Sunday School songs. I well remember "My Old Kentucky Home, Good Night," "Massa's in the cold, cold ground," and "Lilly Dale," they were beautiful melodies. I have nothing to say against them, for they have never been equaled by any person. The great mistake was that the author put such frivolous words to them that the melodies all died out after the transaction of certain circumstances, when if he had put such beautiful words as "Sweet hour of prayer, sweet hour of prayer," and the like, these melodies to-day would have been ringing all through the land and in the hearts of the people, and would have been the songs of to-day. And that is a pretty good lesson to those who undertake to link words to melodies.

I believe it is a very good way to test a hymn, by imagining how it would sound if a minister should read it from a pulpit on Sunday. Did you ever think of that? I tell you there are some of our Sunday School songs which, if a minister should read on Sunday, would cause the people to think they were on a picnic or in some other place during the week. I know of a great many instances where wicked, unconverted men have been led to Jesus through the instrumentality of the children singing our simple Sunday School songs; and if God sees fit to bless the instrument, I don't know why we should be slow in grasping and wielding it in the name of the Master.

I was thinking while coming here—indeed this part of the programme I knew nothing about till this afternoon—I was thinking I had it in the preface of "Hallowed Songs," and I don't know anything more practical, perhaps, than to read on page five these few practical suggestions, and then we will talk about them.

[The following are the suggestions referred to in the preface to "Hallowed Songs":]

Question. "What is the chief object of Sunday School music?"

Answer. "To make more impressive and enduring the lessons taught in the school."

Q. "Should we ever sing for pastime and amusement in our Sunday Schools?"

A. "Never. The Sunday School is no place for music that only serves to amuse or jingle sweetly."

Q. "What kind of songs should be used?"

A. "Only such as are praiseworthy, full of the gospel, and adapted to the lesson."

Q. "How can we avoid light and meaningless hymns in our Sunday Schools?"

A. "By discarding them entirely."

Q. "How much time should be devoted to singing in a Sunday School session of one hour?"

A. "Not more than fifteen minutes, which should be at the beginning and close of the lesson."

Q. "How can children best be taught new songs?"

A. "First let the chorister sing one verse alone, after which let him sing with the children alternately, one or two lines at a time, until the tune is committed."

Q. "How can our Sunday School hymns be rendered more impressive?"

A. "After the tune is committed and the sentiment of the poetry well understood, let the words be sung from the heart as the spirit of the verses demand, sometimes loud or soft, fast or slow, always pronouncing the words distinctly. Frequently a solo or duet, with full chorus, may be rendered with effect."

Q. "Should there be singing meetings for children, and when?"

A. "Yes; thirty or forty minutes just before or after the Sunday School session; or perhaps a special service in the afternoon may be more convenient. In either case the time can be well and profitably employed teaching the children new songs of Jesus, and also rehearsing such hymns as are adapted to the next lesson."

Q. "Can there be a general rule for the best method of conducting our services of song in church and Sabbath School?"

A. "If Sunday Schools would use more of the solid, substantial hymns and tunes, such as are used in church, and our churches adopt the Sunday School mode of rendering their music, which is universally congregational, then would our Sunday Schools avoid light or meaningless hymns and tunes, and our churches would attract the 'lambs of the flock,' and old and young would grow up to love and praise God together."

The trouble is, we sing such pieces sometimes that the children never learn the songs which we sing in our churches. When the Sunday School is over, they think that is their church, and they go home and are engaged in something else. If we would just cater a little to their

taste in our churches and sing once in a while a real spiritual Sunday School song that the children could all join in, we should do well. Indeed, I believe we should sing about the same kind of songs in our church, and Sunday School and prayer meeting, and not have so many kinds of songs. I believe that would be the best way. Then we would have congregational singing much better.

I do not think that we should sing "Old Hundred" every time in a slow, dragging way. When you sing these old solid hymns, sing them with spirit and animation. The children love to sing them. In Ralph Wells' school, in New York, they do not sing anything else but some of those old solid hymns, such as Doctor Watts and Mr. Wesley wrote. The old hymns and tunes are the best of all. If they were not the best, they would wear out like hundreds of our flashy tunes that we sing a while, and then when we get tired of them we come back to the old solid hymns, such as "Rock of Ages cleft for me," and "There is a fountain filled with blood." I sometimes think, when we strike them up, as we have here, that saints in glory look over the battlements of Heaven and almost join us in the strain; but those new, little, flashy songs they do not know much about, and we do not sing them long enough to have them remain with us a great while.

I do not know as I have anything more to say about it. I do not know that it would look well for me to say anything more. [Merriment.] I will ask you now to sing another hymn with me. It is found on page ninety-eight, "Hallowed Songs."

[This hymn, the "Congregational Chorus," was then sung by the assembly, under the direction of Mr. Phillips.]

A certain professor, the greatest musical authority living, says that the only kind of music that does not discord is congregational singing. You never heard a congregation who will do the best they can, make discords. Exclusive choirs will do it, and quartettes and solo singers will often flat from the key; but in congregational singing, if a person does have a disposition to flat a little from the key, his neighbor will bring him up a little higher so they will be together. [Applause.]

Mr. Phillips here took the hymn, "Outside the gate," and taught the assembly to sing it in a very short time, by singing two lines and letting the congregation sing them after him, and so on to the close of the first verse; after which, by request, he sang "Your Mission." The congregation then sang "Work, for the night is coming."

The next subject on the programme was

#### THE SUPERINTENDENT AND HIS WORK.

REMARKS BY MR. D. L. MOODY.

Before speaking about the Superintendent's work, I would like just for a moment to say what kind of a man he should be. I have heard a great many persons accuse Sabbath School men of this country of being men of one idea. I want to say the Superintendent ought to be a man of one idea, if that idea is Christ, because the man that has one idea