TEACHERS'-MEETINGS: THEIR NECESSITY AND METHODS

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A Necessity in Every School

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The "teachers'-meeting," as that term is employed in America, is a weekly gathering of the teachers of the Sunday-school for conference over the next lesson which they are to teach to their scholars. In Great Britain, such a gathering is known as the "preparation class." It matters little, however, what the gathering is called, if only its nature and purpose be understood while its discussion is in progress.

Not every Sunday-school has a teachers'-meeting; yet without a teachers'-meeting there can be no true Sunday-school. This paradox represents a truth that cannot safely be lost sight of in considering the Sunday-school and its needs. In the very nature of the Sunday-school, a teachers'-meeting is a necessity; and without a teachers'-meeting a Sunday-school in

name is not really a Sunday-school in fact. It lacks a prime essential.

The modern Sunday-school in its integrity includes the grouping of children and others into separate classes under individual teachers for the study of the Bible, and the combining of those separate classes into a school whole for united work under a common influence. Without the grouping into classes, there is no opportunity of reaching the scholars individually. Without the combining of the groups into a common whole, there can be no unity of impression on the entire membership of the school.

In a true Sunday-school there must be both class work and school work, class instruction and school instruction, class influence and school influence. All this cannot be secured unless the leaders of the separate groups are brought together in order to secure a common understanding of their work and a fulness of mutual sympathy and purpose in its prosecution; and for this a teachers'-meeting is necessary.

A Necessity in Every School

Without a teachers'-meeting there is no agreement possible in the teachings of the various teachers in a Sunday-school; nor is there any prospect of bringing up the poorer teachers in that school to the standard of those best qualified. If the teachers of a Sunday-school are not brought together to compare the results of their separate study, and to quicken one another's minds by mutual suggestions and corrections, they are not likely, on the one hand, to be in accord in their understanding or their teaching of the lesson they are to teach; or, on the other hand, to be severally as well prepared for their teaching as if each one of them were possessed of the best thoughts and the wisest preparations of all.

It is more than twenty-six centuries since the inspired prophet Amos asked: "Can two walk together except they be agreed?" and in all this time his question has never been answered affirmatively. An equally important question, especially for the teachers in the same Sunday-

school, is this: "Can two be sure they are agreed unless they come together before they begin their common walk?" In fact, without a teachers'-meeting a Sunday-school at its best is not so much one school as it is an aggregation of schools; each class being a little school by itself, without the gain which might come from the shared labors and attainments of its immediate neighbors.

It matters not, so far, whether the superintendent be of average or of superior ability. The best superintendent in the world would be unable, without the aid of a teachers'-meeting, to have such a Sunday-school as he could have with the aid of a teachers'-meeting; for the teachers'-meeting is the chief agency of systematic and controlling organization in a Sunday-school.

Men wise as "children of this world," or as "children of light," have been quick to recognize the value of councils in order to secure union of effort and unity of thought in organized