

had better have no class to teach, but keep going around among all the classes of his department. The temptation of falling into speculative theories is already making its appearance more or less among pupils and teachers in this department, and must be guarded against with much watchfulness on the part of the head teacher.

The subject of Dr. Maeser's lecture last evening was "The Theological Department," and the speaker said:

I trust, my brethren and sisters, that as on the former occasions, so I will tonight have the benefit of your faith and prayers, for your sake as well as my own, that what is spoken may meet the approbation of our Heavenly Father, and that what is received may be strengthened by the Spirit of the living God.

The subject for this coming evening is the Theological Department. This department generally comprises two classes: one for members of the Priesthood and one for ladies; it is in reality normal classes for religious workers in Sunday schools and the various orders of the Gospel. I wish to forcibly impress upon the minds of my hearers the fact that the theological classes are intended to be normal classes, for religious instruction in the various features of the Gospel: Sunday schools, primaries, mutual improvement associations, religious classes, missionaries at home and abroad in all branches of the ministry. This broad conception has not been understood by many of our theological classes which have been engaged thus far in more theoretical dissertations, expoundings and discussion of principles, doctrines, and scripture.

A normal course implies not only theoretical but also practical training. The former, as already stated, has received a partial recognition, but the latter has scarcely been thought of. Many of our lady theological classes have never looked upon their classes as a normal theological class, but rather as an advanced class of the intermediate department, while the truth is the ladies should fix their minds upon this point as well as the brethren, in order to prepare themselves for their portion of the ministry. Are not these sisters expected to labor in the Primary, Y. L. M. I. A., as teachers in the Sunday schools, as instructors in our religion classes? Of course; and all this work requires preparation in a certain amount of normal training until this whole people become a people of teachers and trainers, which will be but the beginning of making us what we ought to be—the wisest, the best, the purest people on the face of the earth. We have but commenced. It makes no difference how high the mountain top we have to climb—no difference how close to the foot of that mountain we may now be; we have got to climb to that mountain top step by step, rising altitude after altitude, until this people come up to the summit, where they may all commune with Jehovah as Moses did. There was a time when Moses mournfully exclaimed, "Would to God that all Israel were prophets;" but that same Israel remained at the foot of the mountain and were stricken with fear and fled when God's majesty revealed itself to Moses. But the day has now

come when we have got to rise upon the mountain height to commune with our Father in Heaven, and we have to teach these things to our young.

The "Guide" furnishes us a suggestive outline of some theoretical work before a theological class, to which I may be permitted to add some additional suggestions, as follows:

After about half an hour has been spent in the course suggested in the "Guide," each of the two named classes of this department should take up the consideration of the work of some of the above named branches of the latter day work and have some one previously appointed for the purpose make some opening remarks on the subject, followed by questions and additional remarks by members of the class. Person should be appointed from the class to speak on a given subject for the following Sunday. After he has finished speaking, bringing to bear all references from Church and historical data, and fully explaining the meaning and bearing of each quotation on the subject, then questions should be asked, as some perhaps may have different ideas and suggestions to offer. These questions and remarks should come under "additional remarks" heading. But we have here to be very careful, extremely careful, that there should be no debating; because God's Holy Spirit is never in such proceedings.

It should be understood by every one entering the class as a member that he is expected to respond willingly to any call made upon him by the superintendent of the Sunday school to act as a substitute for an absent teacher. I wish to illustrate this by an incident. In my visits to a certain Sunday school I found six teachers absent and the classes left to take care of themselves. I asked the superintendent if there was a theological class. "Oh, yes, we have a beautiful class—they are doing fine, they are doing a fine work." "Why don't you call on some of the members of that class as teachers? The children are playing and some are doing nothing. One of the most dangerous things a child can do is 'nothing.' This must be guarded against." "Well, Brother Maeser," said the superintendent, "they won't leave their theological class—they are so interested they won't come for me, for love or money." Said I, "Would you give me permission to go and speak my mind to them?" "Oh, certainly, that is what we expect of you." I went, listened to the very interesting exercise—questions and answers and points upon the "Sermon on the Mount." The teacher was well informed and handled the subject in an excellent manner. The class numbered about fifty young men and women. After he got through the exercise the teacher asked me to speak upon the subject in hand. "Thank you," I said, "but you will pardon me—I would like to say something else." So I said: "My brethren and sisters of the theological class—I have listened with interest to the exercise this morning. But I come here to show you some principles which you seem to be neglecting. Thus far you have fulfilled not yet one-half of the object you came here for. Here you are sitting Sunday after Sunday, being

instructed—what for? Preparing yourselves for active work in the Kingdom of God—for any calling made upon you? But your superintendent tells me that you will not respond to his request to teach the children who are without teachers. "I don't care," I said, "how much of the Gospel you learn, if you fail to respond to the call of your teacher your learning is a failure. As long as you are unwilling to respond to those in authority, I care not how much learning you may have on the theory of the Kingdom of God, it will not weigh much before the Lord. You have not learned the first letter of the alphabet of the Kingdom of God—obedience to the call of the servants of God. Let us be faithful in small things first and we may be worthy to respond to greater things. If the superintendent needs a teacher, you should consider yourselves honored with the privilege of responding. Always manifest your willingness to respond. You will be the gainers by so doing. You will gain the confidence of the children and be strengthened in the Gospel.

This will illustrate the mission of the Theological Class.

If new comers come into the class, let it be understood that they are willing to respond to any call made upon them by the superintendent. This is what they are there for. All should enter that class with the spirit to do good—to labor when they may be wanted. If this were the case, we would not hear of so many sad cases, so many branches and associations dying out; we would see more young men in Sunday school. Members of this class should take turns in visiting the different classes in school, also other schools, to become acquainted with the workings of the same, and if called upon they will then be efficient to respond. Each member should make it a point to take a practical interest in all the various theological organizations of our Church and obtain a thorough knowledge of their operations, in order to qualify himself to become a practical worker, which is one of the objects and aims of a theological class in our Sunday schools.

Our Sunday schools have been established by divine inspiration, by the word of God. It is a sacred, it is a holy work. It may be somewhat inefficient, and may be compared with the small ditch made to receive the water from the mountains, as it runs; it is distributed in the garden until it reaches every tree and shrub in the garden. But sometimes a heavy flood comes, and these ditches are too small to contain the water, and it comes rushing along, overflowing the ditches and destruction sweeps along with it. Therefore greater provisions have to be made to forestall such a calamity. This is coming upon us now. There was a time when our Sunday schools were sufficient, and they would be now if parents would have given their support to them, if teachers had been prompt and obedient, and at their posts. But today we are under different circumstances. There is a flood of infidelity, of evil influence, crowding upon us, bearing heavily upon the youth from every side. It is a mighty flood, and the Sunday schools alone