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## ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF BAPTIST SUNDAY SCHOOL WORK IN MISSOURI

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THE first Baptist Sunday-school in what is now Missouri was organized by a woman. It was probably the first Sunday-school of any kind anywhere in this country west of the Mississippi river. The school was organized in 1807, ninety-nine years ago, in Southeast Missouri, in Saint Francois county, just south of what is now the town of Farmington.

It is said that the school was a model school for the times, and that it continued in successful operation for many years. The organizer was Mrs. Sarah Murphy, the widow of Rev. William Murphy, a native of Ireland who had come from East Tennessee with two others nine years before to locate claims, and who had died on the way back home as he was returning for his family. Six years later, the widow came to Missouri with two sons and a grandson and settled on the claim which had been located by her husband. When this faithful, consecrated Sunday-school superintendent began her good work, there were only three Baptist churches in what is now known as Missouri. These were Tywappity in Scott county, Bethel in Cape Girardeau county, and Fee Fee in Saint Louis county. The log house of the Bethel church, the first non-Catholic church building west of the Mississippi, had been built less than a year. It had been eleven years since Baptists had first settled in Cape Girardeau county, and ten years since they had settled in Saint Louis county. Missouri was then the Territory of Missouri, with statehood fourteen years in the future. It had belonged to the United States only four years, as a part of the great "Louisiana Purchase." The entire population of what is now Missouri was not so great as the present Baptist population of Saint Louis and Kansas City. The entire Baptist population was probably not so great as that of the average country church of to-day.

### BEGINNING OF GENERAL WORK.

The first general Sunday-school worker in Missouri was Rev. Thomas Parrish Green. It was in 1817, ten years after Mrs. Murphy organized her Sunday-school, that this good man began his Sunday-school activity. He had gone with his parents from North Carolina, where he was born, to Tennessee when he was seventeen years of age, and he was converted and baptized in Tennessee when he was twenty-two years of age. He came, when he was twenty-seven years of age, to Cape Girardeau county, where he lived most of the time until his death.

This newcomer became at once an ardent and efficient Sunday-school and mission worker. The year before his coming, the seven Baptist churches in Southeast Missouri had been formed into the Bethel Association, with a membership of 230. Four years later, the association numbered fourteen churches with 417 members. In this association young Green labored assiduously and heroically. He met with bitter opposition on the part of some who did not believe in Sunday-schools or missions.

Fourteen years after beginning his work, he enlarged the field of his labors, becoming agent for the American Sunday School Union for Southeast Missouri. This was in 1831. In this work, he traveled extensively, establishing Sunday-schools and furnishing libraries in the counties of New Madrid, Scott, Cape Girardeau, Perry, Madison, Saint Francois, Wayne and Stoddard.

Green did a great work. He was an extraordinary man. Reared without school advantages, he made himself a scholar. "The labors of this faithful man were most signally blessed." He organized many Sunday-schools, encouraged and instructed the workers and brought many hundreds to Christ.

#### OTHER PIONEER WORKERS.

Two of the earlier Sunday-school workers were John Mason Peck and James E. Welch. These two remarkable men came to Saint Louis county in 1817, the same year in which Thomas Parrish Green came to Cape Girardeau county. These two were born in the same year, the year in which George Washington became President of the United States, one of them in Kentucky and the other in Connecticut. They studied theology together in Philadelphia, and, in that city, they were set apart for frontier mission work, by the Triennial Convention.

When these missionaries reached Saint Louis, the Missouri Association, now the Saint Louis Association, had just been organized, with six churches and 142 members. The year before, the Bethel Association had been formed, and the year after, in Middle Missouri, the Mount Pleasant Association was organized, with five churches, and 161 members. Five years later, the Mount Pleasant Association had nearly a thousand members. Other associations were formed from these three. The truth was spreading and the disciples were being multiplied through the labors of the heroic preachers of the time.

Peck and Welch labored most assiduously and effectively for a period of three years in Saint Louis and round about, in Central Missouri north of the Missouri river and in Southeast Missouri. They went about preaching the gospel, organizing churches and Sunday-schools, visiting and organizing associations, organizing mite societies and collecting mission funds. While these two men were general missionaries, it is evident that they believed in Sunday-schools and that they organized Sunday-schools wherever it seemed advisable. One of Peck's biographers says of him: "In 1824, he began organizing Sunday-schools in Illinois and Missouri." This was while he was living in Rock Springs, Illinois, where he had founded a college and started a newspaper. It is not at all probable that a man with such Sunday-school zeal had neglected his Sunday-school opportunities during his first three years of missionary activity in Missouri. That Welch was a Sunday-school enthusiast is evidenced by the fact that he labored under the American Sunday-School Union for twenty years. An example of the earlier Sunday-school zeal of both Peck and Welch was the organization of a negro mission Sunday-school in March, 1818, the first year after they entered upon their work in Missouri. A revival ensued, and the school grew into the First Negro Baptist Church of Saint Louis.

#### MORE HELP FROM WITHOUT.

For a period of more than sixty years, from the organization of the first Sunday-school, and for more than fifty years after the beginning of the labors of Green and Peck and Welch, the Baptists in Missouri did not do any general organized Sunday-school work that was under distinctively Baptist auspices. The aggressive Sunday-school work of both Green and Welch was made possible by an interdenominational organization, the American Sunday School Union, with headquarters in Philadelphia and with a bible, tract and Sunday-school depository in Saint Louis. In 1845, eleven

years after its organization, "the General Association so far recognized the American Sunday School Union as to become practically an auxiliary to that organization." Five years later, in 1850, the Sunday-school report of the General Association concludes with the following resolution: "That we have entire confidence in the books and co-operation of the American Sunday School Union and recommend to our churches to secure for their Sunday-schools a suitable and ample library from the depository of that society and the American Baptist Publication Society."

During the next fifteen years, until 1865, the reports indicate a discouraging Sunday-school condition, with less co-operation with the American Sunday School Union and a growing feeling as to the need for some kind of organized Baptist Sunday-school effort. In the report of 1866, the following significant resolution was adopted: "That, wherever practicable, we will make our schools thoroughly denominational." In the report of 1867, is found this discouraging note: "The importance of Sunday-schools is realized by so few of our pastors and churches that your committee despairs of awakening a proper interest in a brief report." This report presented arguments for the Sunday-school, urged that all church members attend Sunday-school, insisted that Baptist literature be used in the Sunday-school, and recommended "that the moderator appoint a committee of six live Sunday-school members to organize and locate a Sunday-school board, whose duty it shall be to advance the Sunday-school cause in Missouri, and report at this meeting." The committee on board reported and the board was organized. This was the beginning of organized Baptist Sunday-school work in Missouri.

#### A GREAT LEADER.

The man to whom must be given the credit of having led Missouri Baptists in their first general organized Sunday-school work, was Rev. S. W. Marston, D. D. He began his work thirty-eight years ago, in 1868. During five epochal years he labored with marked ability and marvelous success. One is amazed at the amount and character and results of the work of this remarkable man. During the period of his Sunday-school activity, the number of Baptist Sunday-schools in the state increased from seventy-four to eight hundred sixteen. It is hardly credible that, in 1867, the forty-five thousand Baptists in the state had only seventy-four Sunday-schools, but such seems to have been the case. Doubtless the Baptists had many more than seventy-four Sunday-schools previous to that time, before the beginning of the period of Sunday-school decline. At any rate, in 1873, at the close of Marston's labors, there were more than eight hundred Baptist Sunday-schools in the state. About two-thirds of the thirteen hundred Baptist churches had Sunday-schools. Dr. Marston organized an auxiliary Sunday-school convention in each of the sixty district associations in the state. His was a work of organization as well as of instruction and inspiration. He was a prodigious worker and a tireless traveler. During each of the five years he was in this work, he traveled more than 20,000 miles, delivered more than 300 sermons and addresses, attended more than eighty conventions and other meetings, and wrote more than 1,500 letters.

In 1873, Brother Marston became superintendent of state missions for the General Association, doing most effective service for three years. He resigned this work to accept an important position under the Government. Later he held important denominational positions. He had come from the East to Missouri, in 1865, to take charge of the Boonville Institute, and had left the schoolroom for the Sunday-school work three years later.

#### BEGINNING OF ORGANIZATION.

The beginning of Dr. Marston's work marked the beginning of effective organization. At the meeting of the General Association at Paris, at a Sunday-school massmeeting held on Sunday afternoon of the ninth of August, 1868, was organized the Missouri Baptist Sunday School Convention. A constitution was adopted and officers were elected, consisting of a president, nine vice-presidents, a corresponding secretary, a treasurer, and an executive board of seven members. The Sunday-school board created by the association the year before had failed to accomplish the work for which it was designed, and it was dissolved at this meeting. The motto of the new

organization was, "A Sunday-school in every Baptist church in Missouri."

The first annual meeting of this convention was held in 1869, in Columbia, August 6 to 8, immediately following the meeting of the General Association at the same place. This convention gave formal expression to the following sentiment: "While the convention encourages Sunday-schools in every church and desires to see all interested, still it has been observed that Baptist schools, when established and known as such, have been more successful than union schools, and it is recommended that every church as far as possible maintain a Baptist Sunday-school." The next annual meeting of the convention was held at the same time and place with that of the General Association, in Saint Louis, October 13 to 16, 1870. There seems to have been only one session, on Saturday evening, the fifteenth of October. There were reports of the work done, an address by the mayor of the city, and a number of brief addresses by others.

So the work was continued from year to year with most gratifying results. Every year, the reports of the officers, and especially that of Missionary Secretary S. W. Marston, were cause for gratitude to God for his blessing upon the work. The work done by the convention through the secretary was foundational and permanent. The plan of organizing a Sunday-school convention in each district association, with president, secretary and treasurer and with each superintendent a vice-president, accomplished the following results: (1) Systematized the work; (2) placed responsibility upon individuals; (3) developed efficient local workers; (4) secured complete and accurate statistics. Each year a full statistical showing of the Sunday-school condition in all the district associations was printed in connection with a complete report of the proceedings of the annual state convention. Through the district conventions, Sunday-school zeal was developed, workers were encouraged and instructed, and both church and mission Sunday-schools were organized.

The great work of the Missouri Baptist Sunday School Convention cost about twenty-five hundred dollars a year, the money being procured through personal contributions, life memberships of twenty dollars each, annual memberships of five dollars each, collections on the field, and gifts from the American Baptist Publication Society. The first officers of this convention were the following: President, E. D. Jones, Saint Louis; corresponding secretary, D. L. Shouse, Kansas City; recording secretary, E. H. E. Jameson, Saint Louis; treasurer, L. B. Ely, Carrollton. Among others most prominent in the work during this period, were J. R. Yates, A. C. Avery, W. D. Sheppard, J. H. Luther, D. T. Morrill, R. S. Duncan, K. M. Givan, A. R. Levering, F. M. Ferguson, N. J. Smith, William M. McPherson, George Kline, E. S. Dulin, W. R. Rothwell, and William M. Bell.

The work of the convention was continued with more or less success for five years after the resignation of Dr. Marston. This period as a whole was one of decline. After an interval of several months, the convention secured as missionary secretary Rev. D. C. Bolton, who did good service during the remainder of the year. Brother Bolton was succeeded by Rev. John H. Phillips, of Illinois, who held the position two years, when he resigned and accepted a pastorate. In the report of the committee on Sunday-schools in the meeting of the General Association at Lexington, in 1877, are found these words: "We are encouraged to believe that our people are arousing from the apathy that has characterized them during the past few years and the future is more hopeful." The report also urged that the general missionaries give more attention to Sunday-school work. At this time, the Sunday School Convention appointed Rev. M. L. Laws as corresponding secretary, on a salary of twelve hundred dollars, with the understanding that the whole amount was to be raised on the field. For more than a year, the convention had had no missionary in the field. Brother Laws did good work, and he made a good report at the meeting of the convention the following year, 1878. It seems, however, that he was not able to raise an adequate salary on the field and that assistance was obtained from the publication society, for he begins his report for 1880 with the heading, "Thirteenth Annual Report of the Corresponding Secretary of the Sunday School Board of the Missouri Baptist General Association and General Missionary of the American Baptist Publication Society Co-operating Therewith."

#### CHANGE IN STATE ORGANIZATION.

At the meeting of 1878, by concerted action of the General Association and the Sunday School Convention, the latter ceased to be, and the Sunday-school interests were committed to a Sunday-school board of the General Association. Thus closed the ten years of the official life of the Baptist Sunday School Convention. Thus began the ten years of the official life of the Sunday School Board, with headquarters at Mexico. Brother Laws was continued as corresponding secretary, in which position he served for nearly three years, making about four years of service for him altogether. During these four years, there was an increase of about fifty in the number of Sunday-schools, there being at the close of the period about five hundred schools with an enrollment of about 45,000. One of his biographers has this to say of M. L. Laws: "In this work he won the hearts of Missouri Baptists, and, in September, 1881, he resigned his position as corresponding secretary, to accept the pastorate at Decatur, Illinois." In his Sunday-school work, it is said of him that "he evinced great mental acumen, executive ability and spiritual-mindedness." It is further said of him: "He had as clear and comprehensive a conception of the mission of God's Word as any man in the state."

After the resignation of Brother Laws, in 1881, this Sunday School Board continued its work for eight years, with varying degrees of success. The report of 1882 shows that the Sunday School Board had put a man into the field independently of any outside help, on a salary of one thousand dollars, half of which was to be collected on the field. This corresponding secretary found that it consumed nearly all his time to raise his half of the salary, and, after six and a half months, he resigned, on account of ill health in his family. The man was Rev. M. P. Matheny. He was succeeded by Rev. T. W. Barrett, who did not resign his pastorate, however, but did the work mostly by correspondence. The field work was done mainly by assistant Sunday-school missionaries, Rev. I. R. M. Beeson working in Northeast Missouri and Rev. J. E. Norvell working south of the Missouri river. Brother Laws had had five assistants during his last year of service and three during the year before. Brother Barrett continued in the work less than a year, resigning in July, 1883, and he was succeeded by Rev. J. T. Williams, who did two months' work. For one year, the board did not have any one in the field. In October, 1884, Brother N. J. Smith, an active layman, was chosen as general Sunday-school missionary. "He promptly entered upon the duties of the position to which he was called, carrying to it his comprehensive understanding of the work and his devotion to it." The American Baptist Publication Society co-operated in paying the salary of the missionary. After two years of faithful, effective service, Brother Smith resigned, and Brother W. L. Boyer, another consecrated layman, was chosen to succeed him. In the report of the board of this year it is said: "The Sunday-school work has been prosecuted with gratifying success. The State Sunday-school missionary, Brother W. L. Boyer, has labored a great deal of the time in the most destitute portions of the state, and yet his collections of means to prosecute the work are gratifying in every respect. The convention has reason to thank God for the raising up of this man, 'called of God', as we believe, to his peculiar work."

Brother Boyer continued in the Sunday-school work for more than two years longer, under a somewhat different arrangement, making for him four years of service altogether. In the fall of 1888, the plan of Sunday-school missionary operations was changed from one general missionary to four, one in each of the four quarters of the state. Under this plan the workers for the first year were W. L. Boyer in Northeast Missouri, Rev. J. S. Buckner in Southwest Missouri, Rev. J. E. Denham in Northwest Missouri, and Rev. Joshua Hickman in Southeast Missouri. During the second year under this plan, the workers were the same except that Rev. W. A. Jones was the worker in Southeast Missouri. During the period of Brother Boyer's service, there was carried on, in connection with the Sunday-school work, an important colportage work, material aid being rendered by the American Baptist Publication Society, both in the Sunday-school and colportage work. For nearly five years, from April in 1891 to April in 1896, no Sunday-school workers were in the field, and no general Sunday-school work was done except that done by the general missionaries. In 1889, the Sunday-

school board had been abolished and its work given to the board of state missions, from that time until the present called "Board of State Missions and Sunday Schools." In October of 1895, this board recommended the appointment of two "strong, godly, consecrated men as Sunday-school missionaries, one to labor chiefly on the north side and the other on the south side of the river." These men were to raise all the money they could on the field. This recommendation was not carried out for the south side of the river, but, for the north side, Rev. M. L. Bibb was engaged. "Brother Bibb labored zealously and ably." For two years, during 1897-98, there was no worker in the field.

#### PERIOD OF GREAT PROSPERITY.

The year 1899 marked the beginning of another period of great Sunday-school prosperity. At the beginning of this year, Brother Charles Rhoads, an experienced layman, became Sunday-school missionary, and he labored most effectively for more than four years. He brought to the position many years of successful experience as a Sunday-school expert in the State of Ohio. "He toiled with remarkable energy and a zeal worthy of all praise, holding institutes, organizing district conventions and gathering Sunday-school statistics, until 1903, when failing health compelled him to retire from active service." In the report of the Board of State Missions and Sunday Schools for 1899 is found the following: "About the beginning of the year, the board perfected an agreement with the American Baptist Publication Society by which they secured the efficient services of Brother Charles Rhoads, who, since the last of January, has been working in Missouri as Sunday-school missionary under the direction of our state board." In the report of 1900, are these words: "We think the Sunday-school has been comparatively neglected by us for a number of years, but we are glad to report that, under the efficient leadership of Brother Charles Rhoads, who is laboring under the direction of our State Mission Board, new interest and life is being manifested in all its departments. He reports that, during the year, he has held thirty-seven institutes, organized fourteen associational Sunday-school conventions, and made 203 addresses. The plan of Brother Rhoads is to get other people to work, and right well is he succeeding. During the year, 251 new schools were organized." The report of 1901 says: "During the year our efficient Sunday-school missionary, Brother Charles Rhoads, has labored very effectively in this most important department, and we are happy to say that we believe our Sunday-school work is in better condition now than it has been for many years." The report of 1902 expressed gratification at the progress made, and showed that during the three years of Brother Rhoads' labors, there had been a net increase of 620 schools with sixty thousand pupils. The report of 1903 says: "During the year, we suffered a great loss in our Sunday-school work by the serious illness of Brother Charles Rhoads, who was compelled to give up the work of Sunday-school missionary and return to his home in Granville, Ohio. During the years in which he labored with us, he showed himself to be a master workman and greatly endeared himself to us all."

After an interval of nearly a year, this work was continued under the direction of H. E. Tralle, who resigned the pastorate of the Immanuel church, Louisville, Kentucky, to accept the position as state superintendent, entering the work the first of January, 1904. Here is an extract from the report of the Board of State Missions and Sunday Schools for the year 1904, as read by Secretary T. L. West at the meeting of the General Association at Chillicothe: "In this work, we are fortunate in having the co-operation of the American Baptist Publication Society and the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. The publication society, since they learned that Brother Charles Rhoads would not, on account of failing health, be able to continue his work among us, began to look for a man to succeed him. They were happy in securing for this place Brother H. E. Tralle, who, with great zeal and wisdom, is carrying on this work. The society pays the salary and expenses of Brother Tralle, so that he is giving his whole time to the work in our state, without cost to our board. The Sunday School Board is also generous to us. They pay the salary and expenses of Brother R. M. Inlow and allow him to give a good part of his time to work in Missouri without cost to our board. Both of these are working under the direction of our Board of State Missions and Sunday Schools, according to a plan adopted by the board in regular session in Saint Louis at the beginning of the year. This plan

includes, not only the making of Sunday-school addresses, but also the holding of conventions and institutes, the organization of Sunday-school conventions, and the gathering of Sunday-school statistics. We earnestly ask the co-operation of all our churches in this most important work."

The report of 1905 has the following: "It is for the making of more Sunday-schools and the improvement of those we already have that your board is laboring. In this labor we gratefully acknowledge the aid we are receiving from the American Baptist Publication Society in giving us free of cost to our board the services of Brother H. E. Tralle, who is laboring with tremendous energy and wisdom, giving all of his time to the Sunday-school work in this state. Brother Tralle reports during the past year, 365 days of labor; 27,531 miles traveled; 101 institutes and conventions assisted; 527 sermons and addresses delivered, and 658 professions of conversion under his preaching. We also express our gratitude for the aid we are receiving from the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention in the Sunday-school services of Brother R. M. Inlow, who gives a part of his time to work in our state. He reports 294 days of labor in Missouri; 158 institutes and conventions held; 91 sermons preached and 158 addresses, and 40 professions of conversion. We are happy to report that we believe our Sunday-school work to be in better condition than we have had it for a great number of years. Statistics show that we have more Sunday-schools than ever before, and we believe that they are doing better and more intelligent work. We recommend a continuance of the plan of co-operation in this work with out National Sunday School Boards."

#### ESTIMATES AND SUMMARIES.

The first of May, 1906, H. E. Tralle resigned as state Sunday-school worker, to become one of the editors of the Central Baptist. At that time there were 1,300 Baptist Sunday-schools in Missouri with an enrollment of 100,000. In a biographical sketch of Brother Tralle in the columns of the Central Baptist, May 3, 1906, Dr. J. C. Armstrong gave the following summary: "As state superintendent of Baptist Sunday-school work in Missouri for two years and four months, he traveled 55,000 miles, delivered 1,300 sermons and addresses in 300 institutes and conventions, wrote 300 articles for papers and 5,000 personal letters. Eight hundred conversions were reported in connection with the meetings. A permanent work of organization embracing associational conventions has been fostered and many local workers developed and stimulated. In connection with this he has been diligent in gathering statistics, covering the whole Sunday-school field. The institute idea has been developed and worked out in theory and practice as no one has ever done it before." In the same issue of the same paper were the following words relative to Brother Inlow, field secretary of the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention: "The field secretary for Missouri, Oklahoma, Indian Territory and other states, is Rev. R. M. Inlow, with headquarters at Kansas City, Missouri. Bro. Inlow has been with the board more than three years, and he is accounted one of the strongest men. He is an attractive speaker and he makes friends for the board wherever he goes. A large proportion of his time is devoted to the work in Missouri."

Let us now gather up into a few sentences the essential facts of these one hundred years of history. For sixty years, from 1807 to 1867, there was in Missouri no organized Baptist Sunday-school work. During this time Baptist Sunday-school work was done by the individual local church, in many of which there were Baptist schools, by the general missionaries, some of whom gave considerable attention to Sunday-school work, and by Baptist workers under interdenominational auspices.

For one year, from 1867 to 1868, there was a Baptist Sunday School Board of the General Association. This board accomplished practically nothing except possibly to lead to something better. For ten years, from 1868 to 1878, there was an organization that was technically independent of the General Association, namely the Missouri Baptist Sunday School Convention. This organization accomplished a notable work, with Dr. S. W. Marston as leader for five years, and with Rev. D. C. Bolton, Rev. John H. Phillips and Rev. M. L. Laws as the workers during the second five years.

For another ten years, from 1878 to 1888, there was what was known as the Sunday School Board

of the General Association. Thus the work was made a constituent part of the work of the General Association, this Sunday School Board being co-ordinate with the State Board. The workers during this period were the following: Rev. M. L. Laws and five assistants, three years; Rev. M. P. Matheny, one-half year; Rev. T. W. Barrett, assisted by Rev. I. R. M. Beeson and Rev. J. E. Norvell, one year; Rev. J. T. Williams, two months; Mr. E. J. Smith, two years; Mr. W. L. Boyer, two years. During a part of this decade the board had no worker in the field.

For about seventeen years, from 1889 to 1906, the work has been done by the Board of State Missions and Sunday Schools, the Sunday School Board having been merged into the State Board. For about two years under this plan the work was done by Mr. W. L. Boyer and three others. For nearly five years there was no worker in the field. Rev. M. L. Bibb was the worker for one year. For two years there was no worker again. More than seven years ago, in 1899, began a second great period of Sunday-school revival under Mr. Charles Rhoads, who labored most effectively for four years. He was succeeded in the work by Rev. H. E. Tralle, who held the position for two years and four months. For about four years Rev. R. M. Inlow has been also in the field, devoting part of his time to the work in Missouri.

A few words in general as to the financial support of the work. Experience seems to show that it is a difficult matter to raise a sufficient amount of money on the field to meet the expenses of the work, at least this has been true in the past, whatever may be done in the future. The great Sunday-school work that has been accomplished would hardly have been possible had it not been for the generous help of outside organizations. In the earlier history of the work substantial aid was given for many years by an interdenominational organization, the American Sunday School Union. During the past twenty years, or more, help has been received from the American Baptist Publication Society, to the extent of many thousands of dollars. During the past few years substantial aid also has been given by the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.

#### THE PLAN OF WORK.

No account of Baptist Sunday-school work in Missouri would be complete without some specific word as to the convention idea. One could hardly overestimate the influence for good of the district associational organizations known as conventions. In each district association there is a Sunday School Convention, with a president, secretary and treasurer, each Sunday-school superintendent being a vice-president. This convention is a constituent part of the work of the district association, being organized in the first instance by the association itself, and its officers being elected usually by the association from year to year. This associational convention holds institutes within the bounds of the association and collects the Sunday-school statistics from the individual schools. The state worker organizes and encourages and works through these district organizations.

The plan is conducive to solidity and permanency and effectiveness. It magnifies the work and develops local workers. It has been endorsed repeatedly both by the State Board and the General Association. It was inaugurated and perfected by Dr. S. W. Marston, and it has been in successful operation for nearly twenty-five years. It has been followed and fostered by all the state workers from the days of Marston until the present time, more particularly by M. L. Laws, Charles Rhoads and H. E. Tralle. There were two of these district conventions before Dr. Marston began his work, and before there was a state Sunday-school organization. One of these was in North Grand River Association and the other was in the Missouri Valley Association. Under the direction and encouragement of Dr. Marston, one of these conventions was perfected in every district association of the state, and the same was practically true under each of the other three workers above mentioned.

A study of this one hundred years of Sunday-school work in Missouri leads us to certain inevitable conclusions: (1) We must do *Baptist* Sunday-school work. It is ours to establish and maintain Baptist Sunday-schools, in which the Word of God shall be taught as it is understood by Baptists, We cannot leave this work to others. (2) We must do *distinctive* Sunday-school work. No considerable Sunday-

school progress is possible where the work is left altogether to the general missionaries and the local workers. (3) We must do *organized* Sunday-school work. There is needed a state organization of some kind, whether it be an independent Sunday School Convention, a Sunday School Board of the General Association, or the Board of State Missions and Sunday Schools, with auxiliary district organizations for the holding of institutes, the collection of statistics and the development of the workers. (4) We must do *general* Sunday-school work. The whole field needs to be covered. The work should be under the general direction of a state superintendent, with or without assistants, who shall report directly to the state organization and not through any secretary or other representative. (5) We must do *up-to-date* Sunday-school work. The state superintendent should be a man with the best gifts and the most thorough training. He should have exceptional executive and teaching ability. He should have practical experience in actual Sunday-school work and should be versed in principles and methods as exemplified in the best Sunday-schools of the time.