

a conventional, theological form, which was perhaps the most common and pernicious of all, because it required the least possible expenditure of earnest thought, and in course of time became little better than a mechanical process. What was said might indeed be all perfectly true; there might be solid heads and sound particulars, just remarks and appropriate exhortations, and yet the whole thing might be as drowsy as the grinding of a piece of machinery. For this conventional method, adopting some approved system of theology, jammed every text of Scripture into that system, and forced it to speak always the same round of doctrine whether it would or would not. No matter what portion of the Word was used, it was always made to come round to the doctrine of original sin, imputed guilt, satisfaction to Divine justice, and justification by faith alone. Thus a rigid system came between the soul and the fresh life of God's Word, and all the varied and beautiful instruction of the Bible was run into one cold unchanging mould, evangelical in form, but the living power of it gone. Alas! for the prophets who prophesied thus every one after his neighbours, taking a theological receipt for compounding sermons, and making all of the same ingredients and all after the same pattern. He spoke these things not as criticising his brethren in the ministry. God forbid; but because he would say them to his own conscience, seeing that through the shortcomings of himself and brethren in the ministry, the Gospel of Christ was held in little esteem. While lamenting that many were falling away from Sabbath sanctities, and right relations to the Church, he was compelled to ask himself whether, along with others, he was not partly to blame for their preference of the flowers and the sunshine to such perfunctory speech of divine things as was sometimes addressed to them.

ST. PAUL'S CHURCH—MISSIONARY MEETING.—On Monday, in common with the other churches connected with the Established and United Presbyterian Churches in Perth, Monday forenoon service after the Communion was discontinued in St. Paul's. In the evening, however, a most interesting and encouraging meeting was held in the church, to give the congregation information upon the subject of missions, and the exact state and future prospects of the various schemes of the Church. The attendance was numerous, the area being entirely full, and even the galleries being partially occupied. The Rev. A. Fleming, minister of the church, presided. The proceedings having been open by an impressive prayer by the Rev. John Wilson of Dunning, most interesting and appropriate addresses were delivered by the Rev. Messrs. Kirkwood of Dunbarney, Pagan of Forganlenny, Smith of Dundee, Wright of Auch-

tergaven, and Wotherspoon of Kilspindle. Among the subjects treated of by the speakers were—The importance of a systematic support of missions—the necessity of members procuring missionary information through the medium of the *Missionary Record*, and other missionary periodicals—the desirability of Sabbath-school teachers, and laymen and ladies, in their domiciliary visits, diffusing missionary intelligence—and the strong call for liberality on the part of all towards the various schemes of the Church of Scotland. Though the meetings lasted two hours and a-half, there were no signs of impatience on the part of the audience; and throughout there was the deepest interest evinced in the various statements made by the speakers from the platform. We have little doubt that the effects of the meeting will be most beneficial, and tend to awaken and excite a missionary spirit in the congregation of St. Paul's. We regard the Monday evening after the Communion as a most auspicious period for such a meeting, and are glad to learn that the example thus given by the congregation of St. Paul's is to be followed in various parishes within the bounds of the Synod.

#### Report of Mission to Cape Breton.

THOUGH Mr. McGregor's Report of his Mission to Cape Breton, reached us too late to occupy its proper place in the *Record*, we insert it now, rather than delay it another month, as we are aware that very many of our readers are anxious to know, as much as possible, as to the real condition and prospects of our Church in that Island.

#### REPORT.

In accordance with the instructions received from Presbytery, I left for Cape Breton on Tuesday, 3rd September, and arrived at the Strait about noon on Wednesday. Here I joined the other members of the deputation—Messrs. Pollok & McKay, who had gone thither on Tuesday, direct from Lochaber. In order to overtake the greatest possible amount of work during our short visit to the Island, we had intended to take advantage of the natural division formed by the Bras D'Or Lake, and thus while two members of the deputation proceeded by Rivers Inhabitants and Dennis, to Whycomagh, Middle River and Baddeck, the other joining our missionary—Mr. Gunn, should proceed by St. Peter's and Loch Lomond, and afterwards to Sydney and Cow Bay, where by crossing the Bras D'Or Lake, we might meet again in Boulardarie or Baddeck, and so preach at the various stations among our people scattered throughout that portion of the Island. Circumstances, however, forced us in a measure to abandon