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APPENDIX I; REPORT ON SABBATH SCHOOLS.

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APPENDIX I.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON SABBATH SCHOOLS.

The Synod's Committee on Sabbath Schools beg leave to report: that in the beginning of February last, in conformity with the usual practice, they addressed circulars to the several ministers on the Synod Roll; also to the ordained missionaries, and to the ruling elders (in the case of vacant congregations) within the Synod's bounds. To these circulars answers, embodying much useful information, have been received by them from eighty-six schools.

In seeking to present this information in a condensed form they would refer:—

1. To the number of teachers and scholars. This is, over all the reported schools, of teachers, six hundred and sixty-one; of scholars, six thousand one hundred and thirty-seven; and at each of the schools, of the former on an approximate average eight, and of the latter seventy.

2. To the amount collected for missionary purposes. The *apparent* amount, as shewn by the returns, is only four hundred and twenty-two dollars, sixty-three cents; but as in the case of twelve schools, the destination of the sums contributed is only indicated, it will appear that this is far short of the *actual* amount.

3. To the modes of teaching. As the modes followed are very diversified—they not being in any two cases exactly alike—the Committee have deemed it advisable, instead of pursuing the tedious course of making observations upon them separately, merely to call the attention of the Synod to them, as they stand explained by the different superintendents in the extracts which accompany this report.

In answer to the question as to whether a uniform scheme of lessons for the whole church were likely to be of advantage, the reply was in almost every case in the affirmative. Your Committee then would recommend that a suitable scheme be drawn up. They consider it should be so framed as that, on the first part of the page, there should be placed lessons suitable for junior classes, and on the second part of the page, after an intersecting line, additional exercises for senior classes. They also recommend that the scheme be so arranged as that the last Sabbath of the quarter be left vacant for the revision of the quarter's lessons, or for a missionary meeting; also that New Testament and Old Testament history be taken up on alternate Sabbaths; and that the scheme be complete in three years. Your Committee have carefully examined the schemes commonly in use, but none of them, in their estimation, is adapted to the wants of Sabbath-schools as existing in this country. The advantage of using a scheme of lessons, and of otherwise having recourse to systematic arrangement, has been forcibly brought under the notice of your Committee—the returns which they have received showing that only those Sabbath-schools which avail themselves of these pre-requisites to efficient teaching contribute to the support of missions; the others, which at present use no scheme, and which disapprove of a uniform scheme, not in a single case having contributed anything.

The last question which, in their circular, your Committee asked was, "Is there anything peculiar about the mode of conducting your school which it would be of advantage for the Synod to know?" The answers to this question shew that in connection with five schools, instruction is given in a week-day class to prepare the scholars for harmoniously joining in the singing of the "Hymns" on Sabbath. In seventeen schools absent scholars are looked after by visitors appointed for the purpose;