

their ease—elderly women whose years and experience in divine things might be expected to give a higher tone to the school—remaining at home and perhaps not knowing very well what to make of themselves, and if the sick be unvisited and the poor neglected, and the Missions of the Church languish, it may be to some extent from the want of will and the want of means, but the Committee are persuaded that far more is it from the want of organization. Let proper efforts be put forth in the direction indicated and no Church will be more prosperous and no people more happy. God will abundantly bless her provision, and satisfy her poor with bread. He will also clothe her priests with salvation and her saints shall shout aloud for joy. But let there be nothing done in this direction—no teaching—no training—no organization—let the Minister stand by in idle expectation, looking for workers ready made to his hand—elders, sabbath school teachers, choiristers, district visitors, all thoroughly furnished for their work and only waiting the intivation, and what wonder that he should have to look in vain? What wonder that complaints year by year come up from Congregations that there is a great lack of willing and intelligent people to take part with the pastor in the ministry? The recommendation, therefore, of the Committee is, that in such cases where there is a lack of suitable persons the Ministers lay themselves out to teach and train such as are likely to be useful in the Church.

*Question VI.* [see Q.]—The moral condition of the people is represented as on the whole fair, perhaps as fair as any other section of the Church. Only thirteen cases of discipline are reported, although there were cases which called for private remonstrance or admonition besides those thirteen. Worldliness, intemperance, irreverence, Sabbath profanation—the same sins in short which the Committee noted last year in the returns brought before them are mentioned again this year, as marring the Church and preying upon its life. Special efforts have been put forth during the past year by seventeen Ministers to stay the evils of intemperance, and a revived interest seems to have been awakened in the subject by a large section of the Church. Those efforts have not been fruitless, in more than one instance they have been followed up with marked success, and the Committee have reason to believe that if the Church would wake up to her duty in this regard and lift up her voice against this sin—in no hesitating half-hearted way, as if some undertone of apology were needed, but boldly and strongly—a great deal would be done to stay its indulgence. And at the present time when all the Churches are moving to some extent in this matter, and the evil in question is overshadowing the whole land and becoming more desperate and defiant in its attitude, the Committee feel that they would be wanting in their duty if they should close their work at this time without offering some suggestion of a practical kind, and the only one that they can think of is to recommend that the Church ask the Moderator to issue on an early day a pastoral letter on the subject.

*Question VII.* [see Q.]—With regard to this question the Committee have to state that in consequence of the *data* furnished being so scanty and imperfect they can offer no report that would be of any value. They have also to apologise for the little time given to Ministers and Kirk-Sessions to make up their returns and the hurried way in which they themselves had to make up their report. In consequence of the absence of the Convener from the country and other circumstances, they were not able to enter upon their work until the 20th April. This left them only about forty days for the distribution of their papers, the gathering in of the returns, and the compiling of the report. Still they are gratified with the comparatively large number sent in—51