

SABBATH SCHOOL REPORT.

The Report of the Committee on Sabbath Schools was given in and read, and with it an overture from the Synod of Hamilton, recommending to Presbyteries the holding of conferences on the subject of Sabbath Schools under direct Presbyterial supervision, and another from the Presbytery of Stratford, transmitted by the Synod of London, recommending the preparation of a catalogue of suitable books for Sabbath School libraries. The recommendations of the Report and overture were remitted to a Committee. The following resolutions, submitted by the Committee, were adopted by the Assembly :

1. That Presbyteries be recommended to hold annual Conferences on Sabbath School work within their bounds, and to invite the presence of superintendents, teachers, and others interested.
2. That ministers be recommended to preach occasionally for the special benefit of children, and to adopt means for the instruction of the young in the principles of our Church.
3. That a committee be appointed to make a selection of three or four hundred books for Sabbath School libraries, and to publish a list of them for the guidance and aid of those concerned.

The Convener, Rev. Mr. Cochrane, of Brantford, stated, in reference to the statistics, that many congregations had not reported, which accounted for the apparent small increase during the year.

According to the report previously submitted, the number of scholars for 1871 is 30,292, being an increase of 132 over that of last year. The number in Bible classes is 8,317, previous year 8,95; Sabbath School teachers 3,499, previous year 3,272; volumes in libraries 79,658 against 79,445 in 1870; the total collection for this year is \$2,878 against \$2,989 in 1870, showing a decrease of \$111 this year.

REPORT ON THE STATE OF RELIGION.

The Rev. John McTavish, of Woodville, read the report on the State of Religion.

The Committee had no means of ascertaining correctly the numbers of Sessions who had reported, as several Presbyteries did not state how many returns they had received. It appears, however, that only about one hundred, out of upwards of three hundred, had done so; 13 Presbyteries had sent in reports. The greater number of these bear evidence of careful consideration. The Committee regretted to be constrained to call attention, year after year, to the comparative scantiness of the material furnished them. They are satisfied that enough occurred each year to furnish matter for a good report, and they suggested that the inferior courts be strongly urged to give further attention to this matter.

No very marked religious movement was reported, but religious life seems on the increase, and the members of the Church are said to have some sense of their obligation to honour Christ by holy living.

The main obstacles to a higher religious life seem to be too much devotedness to the pursuit of worldly gain; the social amusements of the day; the prevalent drinking customs, which it is feared are gaining ground among the wealthy portion of the community; the air of worldliness which too often characterises the social meetings of professing Christians; the absence of religious exercises on such occasions; the neglect of personal effort to save souls—often the result of a cowardly fear of giving offence, a desire to avoid trouble, and often of thoughtlessness arising from a want of a proper sense of the love of God and of their unutterable value.

It appears that a considerable and growing interest is being taken by office-bearers and members in the entire work of the Church in the varied spheres of labour which it presents. The Report was adopted, and the thanks of the Assembly given to the Convener and Committee.