

The above abstract is made up from the Treasurer's Return, presented to the Synod on the 2nd of July last.

JAMES CHRISTIE, *Synod Clerk.*

REPORT OF SECRETARY OF LAY ASSOCIATION
FOR THE YEAR ENDING 30TH
JUNE, 1860.

PICTOU, 2nd July, 1860.

SIR,—I beg to submit the following Report of the Lay Association since the meeting of the Synod in June, 1859. I transmit herewith the Report of the Treasurer to the 30th of June last. From this Report it appears that the sum of £75 8s. 0 1-2d. has been collected by the various branches of the Association, and paid into the Treasurer since my last Report, and after the payment of all demands due to this date, the balance in the Treasurer's hands amounts to the sum of £122 16s. 4 1-2d. Although there is a manifest improvement in the affairs of the Association, as compared with last year, still a glance at the amounts paid by each of the congregations in which the Association is in operation, reveals an indifference and want of energy very much to be regretted. One or two congregations have done very well indeed, but the majority of them have not in my opinion at all approached to what might fairly be expected from them. New Glasgow, as usual, stands at the head of the list, while next to it, taking the ability of the people into consideration, comes the West Branch of River John. The highest praise is due to the latter congregation for the large sum they have collected, as compared with wealthier and more favored congregations, and it would be well if the same spirit manifested itself in other congregations from whom more is expected.

Meetings have been held in nearly all the branches by a committee of clergymen and laymen, and the more energetic support of the Association strongly urged upon the people. It was hoped that these meetings would result in largely increased collections; but in this we have been disappointed, as is manifest from the return of the Treasurer.

It is more necessary than ever that the Association should be sustained in its efforts, as it will this year, besides the obligations already incurred, be obliged to make very considerable provision for aid to the *Monthly Record*, should the funds at all warrant such an expenditure.

I am, Dear Sir,

Yours very truly,

(Signed) JAMES McDONALD,
Sec'y Lay Association.

John McKay, Esq.,

President of the Lay Ass'n.

PICTOU LAY ASSOCIATION.

We take the liberty of directing the attention of our readers to the Annual Report of the above body, published in another portion of the *Record*. Such associations have become a necessity in every well organized Church, and their absence is a strong indication of want of life and earnestness among the laity. We are glad to observe that the formation of such a society has been strongly urged upon our brethren in New Brunswick at the last Synod, and we hope that all members of the various Churches will zealously co-operate with their ministers in carrying out the various arrangements necessary for putting them in good working order. All that is required is method and rigid regularity in collecting. Generally speaking, if the object is set clearly before the people, and the collectors call at stated intervals, they will pay with the utmost cheerfulness. We would therefore recommend above all things, to collect regularly—in small sums, and if possible from all. Large sums are no doubt desirable, but it is much better as a general rule to get a little from all, than a comparatively large sum from a few. In the first place the interest of the whole church is enlisted by the one plan—while by the other, we can scarcely expect to keep up the funds easily to a given point. A gentleman gives £5 or £6, and understands that he has done once for all a handsome thing, and does not expect to have a collecting book thrust under his nose next quarter or next year; it is the first and the final subscription, and thus the society after a grand start perhaps runs a considerable risk of dying of inanition. Our motto therefore, is small sums and many of them.

We are glad to observe some indications of improvement upon last year in the financial affairs of the Pictou Lay Association, but we regret to say that as a whole it is by no means what it should be. £75 pounds is a small sum to be realised in a twelvemonth from eleven congregations, but it is only fair to say that several sums were actually collected and in hand, due to the credit of the past year, which were not forwarded in time to the Treasurer, so that the present does not in reality present the real state of the funds of the Lay Association, for which deficiency, however, the country collectors have themselves to blame. Great credit is due to New Glasgow for the amount it shows for the present as well as former years, and the result is owing not to any greater amount of ability or innate liberality, but simply, we believe to the fidelity and method with which the operations of the society are carried out, by the division of the parish into districts, and regular collectors. According to the statistical returns in last years *Record*, the adherents of New Glasgow Church numbered 1100—those of the congregations in Pictou Presbytery 9100—so that any child could tell us by the