

have presented themselves to the number of 46 out of 11 villages, asking for instruction. They say that large bodies of this sect are ready to embrace Christianity. There are 6 missionaries in the Chota Nagpore field, who are Germans from the Seminary of Pastor Gossner at Berlin. We see it stated that in Lucknow and the surrounding villages 89 natives have been baptized since the rebellion of 1857.

## NOTICE OF BOOK.

### SABBATH SCHOOLS OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

We are in receipt of the Report of the Committee of the General Assembly on Sabbath Schools, given in and read by Rev. William Leitch, D. D., Convener, 28th May, 1860. It forms a pamphlet of 86 pages, and contains a lucid and singularly intelligible account of the Sabbath Schools of the Church of Scotland. The Mother Church is taking a deep interest in the work of the Sabbath School, and is meeting with large success. The total number of Schools in connection with the Church of Scotland, which were reported, was 1608, showing an increase of 88 over the previous year. The number of scholars on the Roll was the great army of 125,196, showing an increase of 13,981 over the previous year, being 1 in 23 of the whole population of Scotland. These scholars are taught by a company of 11,259 teachers—the population of a good-sized town. The Report is accompanied by an appendix, summarizing the information by Parishes, Presbyteries and Synods, and the whole Church. It also includes remarks from the Reports to Synods, from which a large amount of interesting information is to be gained. An interesting feature of the pamphlet is the special Report of the work of individual schools and associations. We are glad to observe that Young Men's Christian Associations exist in so many congregations. A constitution for a Bible Association and Young Men's Association is given, which we may hereafter reproduce.

The Report contains an excerpt from the Report of the Sabbath School Committee of our Synod. The Report bears a willing tribute to the value of such auxiliary agencies as Bible classes on week-days, Teachers' Preparation Classes, Teachers' Prayer Meetings and Young Men's Christian Associations.

We have seldom perused a more interesting Report, or one in which the information conveyed is more interestingly and systematically conveyed.

We extract the concluding portion of the Report as a specimen of its style and as a resumé of the views of the Parent Church with regard to Sabbath Schools, together with the finding of the General Assembly on the Report.

The Synod of Canada has adopted the plan of the Mother Church by appointing a Sabbath School Committee for the purpose of collecting statistics and affording encouragement to all

engaged in the work. The first Report, that of last year, though somewhat defective in the returns, gives a very encouraging view of the work, and holds out a hope that, as in other parts of America, the Sabbath School will prove an efficient missionary instrument in preparing the way for a full provision for the spiritual wants of the advancing tide of population.

The returns show that the Sabbath Schools of the Church have received a great impulse from the unusual religious interest manifested in the course of the past year; and one great advantage of our Sabbath Schools is, that they present a vast organisation throughout our land, admirably calculated to fix and render permanent in their effects the impressions of such special seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. The religious interest in our larger towns especially was sustained by the prayer-meetings and preparatory classes connected with the Sabbath School work. The result of this quickened feeling on the part of the teachers was a more earnest dealing with the children in their classes, and a more extended and regular visiting of the children at their homes. This in a great measure explains the unprecedented increase of 14,000 scholars in one year. With such a fact before us, we cannot reasonably make the complaint, often made, that seasons of religious excitement soon pass away, and that the crest of the wave is succeeded by a corresponding depression, so that nothing is gained by the visitation. The mere excitement of the occasion may pass away, but the solid results remain; and the past year, both in point of increase of numbers and new organisations, will mark an important era in our Sabbath School history.

It is due to the Conveners of Synods and Presbyteries to state that, with one or two exceptions, the returns are admirably drawn up, and as complete as could reasonably be expected. The complaints of tardy returns from parishes are also much less numerous, so that every guarantee is given for the reliability of the statistics. The completeness of the returns is, this year, owing much to the simplification of the queries by the Acting Committee. As it was understood that in a large proportion of schools rolls were not regularly kept, it was resolved that no query should be put which could not be answered without the use of registers. Various other queries of much interest, and necessary to make the statistics complete, might be put; but it is more satisfactory to confine them to a few points, so that they may be answered accurately, than to extend them to others for which only vague estimates can be given; and, until registers be more generally kept, no object can be gained by extending the statistics of scholars. The Committee strongly recommend the more general use of rolls and registers. Those published by the Messrs Murray have been expressly drawn up to correspond to the queries put by the Committee, and to form part of the system of schedules required for the collection of the statistics. The return in regard to which there is the greatest incompleteness is that in reference to the number of scholars above 14. In the total number estimates for defective returns are included, but the number of blanks is not so great as to entail an error of more than one-fiftieth part of the whole number. This year there is no return of the entire number of children enrolled throughout the year, but, taking the proportion of last year, the number would be 142,723, and this would give for the whole Church the proportion of 1 scholar to every 20 of the population, whereas the proportion last year was 1 in 23. This, however, would be a fallacious mode of ascertaining the amount of Sabbath School educa-

tion, as, from the changes from one school to another, a considerable number must have been enumerated more than once. The number on the roll taken at the same time throughout the Church is the proper test.

In conclusion, we have reason to rejoice that an institution of such recent date has, under the Divine blessing, taken so deep a root in our land, and extended its branches far and wide. The first Sabbath School is only of recent date, and the institution may be regarded as still in its infancy; yet how widely has it already extended! This progress consists not merely in numbers but in the development of its functions and capabilities. At first the Sabbath School in England partook little of a religious institution; it was more of the character of the modern reformatory school. It has now become the grand instrument in the hands of the Church for proclaiming Christ to the rising generation. It is felt to be almost an essential part of the machinery of every Christian congregation. It has opened a field for the active Christian energies of our people, and realised, in a most practical manner, the influence assigned to the laity in the constitution of our Church. Prayer meetings, preparation classes, Christian associations, festive anniversaries, missionary associations, libraries, clothing societies, have grouped themselves round the central institution, and given to Christian society a completeness of organisation which it did not before possess, and which needed to draw out its energies. One of the most recent and important adaptations is its employment as a missionary agent. In many parts of the World where our race predominates, and where the advance of population in the wilderness outstrips the provision of a regular Gospel ministry, the Sabbath School is pushed forward as an advanced post. It forms the nucleus of a Church, and soon it merges into a completely equipped Christian congregation.

It is satisfactory to know that the Church of Scotland is taking a leading part in extending and developing an institution which is evidently destined to exercise a much wider influence in extending the Redeemer's kingdom. The returns of this year, so far from manifesting an abated interest, exhibit a rate of progress that has never been surpassed, and that augurs well for the future of our Church. While there is so much to commend in the present state and progress of our Sabbath School system, it is right that notice should be taken of a peculiar feature of Scottish Sabbath Schools. In no other country is the Sabbath School of such partial application in regard to the various grades of society. It is almost exclusively confined to the poorer classes. The bulk of the scholars belong to the poorer members of the Church, who are either not skilled in communicating instruction at home, or who find that their home instruction is aided by the lessons of the Sabbath School. There is also a small proportion drawn from the degraded classes who have sunk into irreligion or indifference. But the Sabbath School is made to bear little, if at all, upon the rich, whether members of the Christian Church, or such as have renounced all profession of religion. This neglect of the wealthier classes, who often need the influence of the Sabbath School as much as the poor, though found in most Churches, still does not anywhere exist to such an extent as in Scotland. There are no doubt great social difficulties, but the experience of some of the most rigorous branches of the Christian Church in other lands shows that this institution may be made equally applicable to rich and poor. May we not hope that in Scotland also the Sabbath School may yet embrace all classes, and bestow its bless-