

"Mayor's decision. Conveying travellers by land or by water is an exception in what is known as the Lord's Day Act. There is nothing in the law as it stands to prevent the railway companies from running passenger trains on the Sabbath the same as on any other day of the week."

With this doubt on the subject—a doubt favouring the right of railway companies to run trains—it seems impossible that the Christian public can remain inactive.

The "Catholic Presbyterian" for August contains an article on Sabbath laws in the United States, by the Rev. Dr. Stuart Robinson, in which it is stated that the matter of Sabbath observance is regulated by the several States and that "every one of the thirty-eight States, except Louisiana, has made provision for the protection of the Christian rest day against desecration by servile labour or by noisy dissipation." And "in most if not in all the States, it is provided that no civil process shall be executed on Sunday, and the courts have held that no contract made on Sunday is binding." Notwithstanding "it is a sad fact . . . that Sabbath desecration is increasing to an alarming extent. The popular tendency is to set the law at defiance." This unhappy state of things is attributed firstly to the Federal Government having "set aside all State laws for the observance of the Sabbath, so far as relates to the transmission and delivery of the mails," and secondly to "the vast increase of railway travel and transportation. The railway corporations have become strong enough to set the Sabbath laws of the States at defiance. Thousands upon thousands of honest labouring men . . . groan under the tyranny of their soulless corporations, which compel them to desecrate the Sabbath by servile labour, and besides this, furnishing cheap and rapid accommodation to Sunday pleasure-seekers in the cities and large towns, they (railways) have become the most potent of all agencies for the desecration of the Sabbath and the demoralization of the people." In North Carolina on 20th March, 1879, an Act to prevent the desecration of the Sabbath day by railway travelling was passed, but it remains to be seen whether it will be carried into effect or remain a dead letter. Surely with such warning before us the Christian public ought to manifest an earnest zeal to prevent the increase of Sabbath railway traffic. Why is no one moving?

NOTES FROM MONTREAL.

SUMMER VACATION.

There are few cities or towns in the Dominion where so large a proportion of the inhabitants spend the summer months from home as Montreal. This is accounted for to some extent by the necessity felt for a change in the sultry weather of July and August, but chiefly because of the fact that in the immediate vicinity of the city there are a large number of summer resorts on river and lake easily accessible by boat or rail, where, without any very great increase in household expenditure, families can enjoy change of scene and abundance of fresh air.

During the two hottest months of the year the attendance at most of the city churches thins out considerably and it is a matter worthy of consideration whether it would not be advantageous for two or more of these to unite services during this period. The congregations of Erskine and Emmanuel (Independ-

ent) churches have met together in July and August for the last two years and it might have a good effect were other churches, either of the same or different denominations, to combine their services in a similar manner. In this way the bond of Christian brotherhood in sister congregations would be strengthened and all the ministers enjoy in turn a month's vacation without expense to themselves or to their congregations for pulpit supply.

THE HARD TIMES.

The last few years have been very trying ones in Montreal, which has suffered more than most places from the long-continued commercial depression. The churches have all more or less felt the hard times. Some congregations have already ceased to exist and it is questionable if some others will be able long to hold together.

The Protestant population has not increased—if it has held its own—and the incomes of very many living have been impaired it has been found impossible in several congregations to meet the necessary running expenses and to keep up large payments for interest on heavy building debts. This is true of nearly all the denominations represented in the city.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES.

It is a noteworthy fact that at present there is no vacant Presbyterian congregation in the city—except that of Canning street, which is about being filled—and scarcely any in the whole Province of Quebec. There has never been a time when there were more Presbyterian ministers labouring in the Province than now.

AGGRESSIVE WORK NEEDED.

While this is true there are many English-speaking districts in the Province which have, there is reason to fear, been neglected by our church and which, now that our vacancies are so well filled up, should be attended to. In the counties of Missisquoi, Shefford, Brome, Stanstead and Compton, where the people are largely English speaking, there are only three Presbyterian congregations or stations and, if I am not mistaken, not a single settled Presbyterian minister. It may perhaps be said by some that there are not many Presbyterians in these districts. This remains to be seen. Some two or three years ago the Montreal College Students' Missionary Society opened service at Coaticook and Massawippi, two of the three stations above referred to. The field was in many respects most uninviting, and evangelical religion at a very low ebb. The Society, however, was not disheartened, and there are now two fairly prosperous congregations of our church in these districts, from one of which a promising young man is now studying in the Presbyterian College of this city.

It is hoped that the Presbyteries of Montreal and Quebec will without delay have the counties above named thoroughly explored so that, if possible, Mission Stations may be planted here and there and occupied by student missionaries next summer.

Though the Assembly's Home Mission Fund may not be able to bear the strain of new mission fields, I am convinced that even in these hard times money can be obtained from a few of our wealthy people in Quebec and Montreal to meet the expense of working new districts in the Eastern Townships.

RENEWING ACQUAINTANCE WITH OLD FRIENDS.

There are several places in the Province of Quebec where formerly Presbyterian service was held, but in which the blue banner has long since ceased to wave. Among such places is Rawdon, in the County of Montcalm, where there is a Presbyterian church building the pulpit of which has been silent for well nigh thirty years. At a meeting of the Montreal Presbytery last week, letters were received from Rawdon asking the Presbytery to send a missionary into the field, and a deputation was appointed to visit the district with a view to resuming operations there.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Since the induction of the Rev. W. R. Cruickshank to St. Matthew's Church, St. Paul's has been without an assistant, the whole burden of the work of this large congregation falling upon its venerable pastor—Rev. Dr. Jenkins. An assistant has now been obtained in the person of Rev. Mr. Macle of Dumfries, Scotland, who is expected to arrive by the next steamer.

The Canning street French Presbyterian Church has given a unanimous call to the Rev. A. B. Cruchet of New Glasgow, Que., who is likely to accept and will probably be inducted this month.

The Rev. J. S. Black on Sabbath last preached a sermon reviewing the life and work of Erskine Church during the five years of his pastorate there. Notwithstanding the secession of the Stanley street congregation a little over five years ago, the membership of Erskine Church is at present nearly as large as at any former period of its history.

The Rev. J. A. Spurgeon, brother of Rev. C. H. Spurgeon of the Metropolitan Tabernacle, London, England, occupied the pulpits of the two Baptist churches here on Sabbath last, and Principal Grant of Kingston those of St. Paul's and St. Matthew's churches. X.

Montreal, October 6th, 1879.

OPENING OF KNOX COLLEGE.

The thirty-fifth annual opening of Knox College took place on Wednesday of last week at twelve o'clock. A large number of students, and of friends of the College, both ladies and gentlemen, assembled in Convocation Hall to listen to the proceedings.

Rev. Principal Caven presided, and there were on the platform besides him Rev. James A. Spurgeon, co-pastor Metropolitan Tabernacle, London, Eng.; Rev. Profs. Gregg and McLaren, Rev. Drs. Castle, Reid, and Proudfoot. Among those present in the body of the hall were Hon. Alex. Mackenzie, Dr. Clarke, of the Toronto Asylum, and a large number of clergymen.

Rev. Dr. Reid led in prayer, after which all present joined in singing the 132nd Psalm.

Rev. Principal Caven then in a short address congratulated those present upon again coming together to take part in the opening of the College. He referred with regret to the death of Rev. Dr. Willis, who had gone to his reward after years of earnest labour in the Christian cause, and gave a short account of that gentleman's life and work. He had much pleasure in noticing the presence with them of one who in his own person, and for the name he bore, claimed their deepest respect Rev. James A. Spurgeon. His arrival was a matter of congratulation, not merely to the Baptists, with which denomination he was more immediately connected, but among all those who valued the spread of the Christian religion. He then called upon Rev. Wm. Gregg, D.D., Professor of Apologetics, who delivered a lecture appropriate to the occasion, on "Justin Martyr." The proceedings closed with the benediction.

Immediately thereafter, many of the visitors repaired, with the students, to the spacious dining hall, where ample justice was done to the good things provided.

Rev. James A. Spurgeon, of London, Eng., who was present, on invitation of Principal Caven, addressed the students. His brief, pithy remarks were full of earnest, practical thought, so spiced with humour that it was not only profitable, but entertaining, and was thoroughly enjoyed by those who were privileged to listen to it.

In the afternoon a meeting of the students and graduates was held for the purpose of taking leave of Rev. John Wilkie, M.A., prior to his departure for the Foreign Mission field in India, and also to present him with a copy of "Alford's Greek Testament" as a slight token of the goodwill of his fellow-students.

The presentation was made Rev. John Johnston (one of the recipient's classmates) in a suitable address expressive of the very high esteem in which Mr. Wilkie was held by all his fellow-students. Mr. Wilkie made an appropriate and feeling reply.

A similar token of remembrance and esteem had been provided for Rev. Jas. Smith, M.A., also a graduate of Knox College, who is about to be sent to Bombay, India, by the "American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions," none of the Foreign Mission Committees to which he had applied in the Presbyterian Church of Canada and the Mother Land being able to send him for want of funds. It was a matter of general regret that owing to the hurried nature of preparation for the meeting, Mr. Smith was unable to be present.

We feel that honour is conferred upon the College by the selection of two of its graduates of successive years for the responsible work of foreign missions, and we feel sure that the best wishes and earnest prayers of their fellow-students and of the Church will follow them and their partners in life, to the field of labour to which we believe God has called them.