

The usual constitutional questions were then put to Mr. Blain, who having returned appropriate and satisfactory answers, was then set apart to the high office of the Ministry, by solemn prayer by the Moderator and the imposition of the hands of the Presbytery. The Rev. Wm. J. Mackenzie, of Baltimore, then addressed the young pastor, with that appropriateness of subject, and correctness of diction so characteristic of that gentleman. Rev. J. M. Roger, of Peterboro', who for twenty years had faithfully broken to them the bread of life, then addressed the people, on their relative duties. It was a happy arrangement to appoint Mr. Roger to address the people, none else could have done it so appropriately and so well. Knowing them as he did from his long intimate and faithful intercourse with them, he was able to speak with a point and power which reached the conscience, and affected the heart, and more than once during his address did we observe "a tear unbidden tremble" in eyes unused to weep. Rev. J. M. Smith, of Grafton, engaged in prayer, invoking the blessing of Jehovah on the union thus consummated, when, after "praising God for his goodness," once more the congregation was dismissed with the apostolic benediction. On retiring the people had an opportunity of congratulating their young minister, which they did, giving him a hearty welcome.

Mr. Blain's is a most satisfactory and cordial settlement, nor can we doubt, associated with Mr. Roger as he is, aided by his wise and faithful counsel, as he will be, that his position will be a pleasant and profitable one. We humbly hope and pray that the great King and Head of the Church will abundantly sanction and bless both pastors and people, that the union so auspiciously formed may be lasting and productive of good to all concerned.—*Com.*

Norwood, July 10th, 1854.

REPORT ON SABBATH OBSERVANCE

The subject of the Sabbath appropriately succeeds that of Revivals, to which the attention of this Court has already been prominently called. There is a natural and necessary connexion. The Sabbath supplies a thermometer by which the religious temperature in individuals and communities may be tested. Just in proportion as it is observed or neglected will religion flourish or decline. The soul and the society by which the Sabbath is counted the holy of the Lord, honorable, cannot fail to prosper and to be in health. Where this blessed institution is trampled underfoot, the symptoms of a moral consumption cannot fail to appear. It has been already observed that in those Presbyterian Reports on the State of Religion, in which its decline is mentioned and mourned over, Sabbath desecration is almost universally specified as at once a symptom and source. In those instances, on the other hand, in which the little cloud has appeared and drops from heaven have fallen, the time of refreshing has evinced its reality in a growing love for ordinances, and a growing desire to remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.

Your Committee regret that (so far as they have been enabled to learn) they are not justified in reporting any marked improvement in the mode in which the Sabbath is observed throughout our country and church generally. The increased spirit of worldliness consequent on the impetus that has been imparted to every department of business, and the present and prospective development of our latent resources, has excited in this respect an injurious influence. This influence has been aggravated by the example of some in high official station, who have openly refused to rest the Sabbath day according to the commandment. When the leaders of the people cause them to err it is a melancholy omen. In the construction of some of our railways, Sabbath

labour is by no means uncommon. We have heard of places along the line where very little distinction, if any, is made between the Sabbath and the other days in the week. It has also been stated on good authority that there is a strong desire, if not a positive design, to have certain lines open for systematic traffic on the Lord's day. The friends of the Sabbath would do well to have their eyes open and their armour on, in case by some *coup d'etat* such a disastrous measure be consummated.

The reports from districts bordering on the St. Lawrence Canal are very unfavourable. In consequence of the progress our country is making, the number of vessels is constantly on the increase. The bustle and excitement increase proportionately. The final passage of the Reciprocity bill will cause a still further increase. Cornwall and neighborhood sensibly feel the blighting effects, and will do so yet more if a strenuous effort be not made to effect a stoppage. The present is a favorable juncture for making such an effort. With prudence, perseverance and prayer, there is reason to hope the St. Lawrence Canal may eventually be placed on the same footing with the Welland, where, for years, the locks have been closed, and no difficulty experienced.

Sabbath visiting still prevails. Many of our domestic circles are still strangers to those hallowed exercises, which formed the glory of our Zion in her purest days. Nor does there seem to be any perceptible change in the matter of Sabbath travelling, in which Christian professors too often act a part, of which the men of the world are only too ready to take the advantage.

While not losing sight of these forms of Sabbath desecration, in regard to which moral suasion and ecclesiastical discipline behave to be employed, your Committee have had their attention as formerly directed to those public abuses for which legislative interference is required. From Parliament not having met, however, since our last Synodical assembly, we have not been able to do much. And now that the Houses are again sitting, it has been deemed inexpedient to take any definite action, as it is generally understood the present session will be a very short one, and that a general election will succeed the dissolution.

Your Committee have reason to believe that the subject of the Sabbath has in one form or other found a place in the pulpit ministrations of the brethren of our church, during the year. The period for simultaneous preaching (15th of January last) authorized by last Synod, was duly advertised in the *Record*, and we trust, was pretty generally observed. We would take this opportunity for recommending that the present Synod renew this appointment. They would also recommend to Sessions to exercise a stricter oversight of members in the matter of the Sabbath, and to deal closely, though tenderly, with them, when guilty of its violation. Special notice should be taken of irregular visiting, journeying, and irregular attendance on ordinances. Were office-bearers to give themselves more to reproving, rebuking, and exhorting with all long suffering, the standard of Sabbath observance throughout our church might be greatly elevated.

We would also recommend to those residing in the neighborhood of Railways or Canals, or in localities where some of the more gross and glaring cases of Sabbath desecration occur, to take special notice of them through the medium of the public journals, or otherwise, to send such information as they may see fit to your committee, and wherever it is practicable, by apprising the public authorities, to secure the intervention of the arm of the law.

Your committee would further recommend that the synod again memorialize government regarding the abolition of Sabbath labor in the public departments, whenever a favorable opportunity occurs, and that Presbyteries and Sessions

receive a similar instruction. In view of the coming struggle to which the general election may be expected to give rise, your Committee would suggest the propriety of a more thorough organization amongst the friends of the Sabbath. *Worldly politics* now feel the importance of this. Why should the children of this world be wiser in their generation than the professed children of light? It is cause of gratitude that associations have been formed in different parts of the province. Let there be a regular understanding among them, that they may act in concert. With a general alliance binding into one the single and separate societies,—with a common centre-point, whence a common influence may be simultaneously communicated, the action taken on this great question will be much more efficient, the agitation will be much more likely to be crowned with success.

ROBT. F. BURNS, Contener

FOURTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE BUXTON MISSION, 14th JUNE, 1854.

In presenting the Annual Report of the Buxton Mission to the Synod, we have reason to acknowledge with special thankfulness, our indebtedness to the author of all good, for the measure of success which has attended our labors during the past year.

There were many difficulties arising from the peculiar nature of the work, and the limited means at our command for carrying it on. These have been in a great measure overcome, the debt under which we labored has, by the liberality of the people during the past year, been liquidated. Relieved from this burthen, we have been enabled to make encouraging progress. We have good reason to hope, that with the blessing of God, we will be enabled to accomplish much more during the present year.

The object of this Mission has been fully presented in previous reports. It would not be necessary to advert to it here; were it not that in my visit to some of the Presbyteries last summer, I found that it was imperfectly understood, and in many places confounded with an Association that is of a secular nature, and with which the Synod has nothing to do. The object of the Mission is purely spiritual; upwards of thirty thousand colored persons are living within the bounds of our church, most of them in the degraded state in which slavery has kept them. The Mission has been established, to provide the adult population with the means of grace and their children with a Christian education. To a certain extent it has been doing that work. On the other hand the Elgin Association provides a home, superintends the social improvements, and manages all the secularities of the settlement, but does not interfere with the spiritual improvement.

The functions of the Elgin Association and the Mission are separate and distinct. The one is secular, and managed by Directors over whom this church has no control, the other is spiritual, and under the supervision of the Synod. Although the Synod has nothing to do with the social improvement of the settlement, yet it will be gratifying to those who have taken an interest in the secular department there has been made decided advancement during the past year. The lands originally purchased by the Association have nearly all been taken up and settled on, several thousand acres have also been purchased in the neighbourhood by coloured families with their own means, who were anxious to get near our school to educate their children.

There are at present about one hundred and fifty families in the settlement, these extend over a tract of country six miles long and three wide. The children are now become so numerous, and so much scattered, that they cannot be conveniently collected into one school; during several months in the year, the state of the roads are