

In consequence of the limited number of answers received, and the fact apparent from many of those answers, namely, that a correct register of the attendance of scholars and teachers has not been generally kept in schools, your Committee cannot with any degree of certainty report the numbers of scholars and teachers, or the average attendance of either.

Of those schools from which returns have been received, six were established in 1857; one—that of Point St. Charles—so late as December of that year. Of the remainder, where schools have been established for a longer period, twelve report that they are in a prosperous condition—in all, except one, showing an increase; two report as light decrease; and four are reported as stationary.

Of the twelve suffering from any cause, several are from bad roads, and the distance of the children from school, which prevents regularity of attendance in country localities. One suffers from "want of female teachers and more life"; two others from lack of teachers; one from "want of ministerial visitation"; one from the fluctuating nature of the population; and one in consequence of the non-attendance of the children of the wealthier families.

Nearly all the schools have libraries, selected chiefly from the publications of the London Tract Society and the American Sabbath School Union.

Many of the schools distribute *The Juvenile Presbyterian*, and some the Child's and Children's Papers; five schools report that they distribute no serials—one of these, because the children are Germans and do not understand the English language sufficiently. Two schools distribute occasionally; and some answer in the affirmative, without stating what serials are distributed.

There is a great want of uniformity in the exercises. In all the schools, however, besides prayer on opening and closing, and singing psalms or hymns, portions of Scripture are read and explained, or the children questioned thereon. The Shorter Catechism, some verses of a metre-psalm, paraphrase or hymn, and generally a few verses from the Bible, are committed to memory. Published Schemes of lessons are used in five schools; of these three, viz., St. Andrew's Church (Hamilton), Portsmouth (Kingston), and Point St. Charles (Montreal), use the scheme of lessons prepared by the Edinburgh Sabbath School Union; one, St. Andrew's Church, Montreal, uses a printed scheme, prepared by the superintendent partly from the Edinburgh scheme; and one, that of St. Andrew's Church, L'Original, the scheme of lessons lately published in *The Juvenile Presbyterian*.

Two schools have quarterly and two have monthly examinations of the children in the lessons gone over during the preceding period. Two report that they hold weekly examinations; but it is presumed that these are merely examinations by the Superintendent on the lessons of the day, not the periodical examinations on past lessons intended to be ascertained by your Committee.

It is gratifying to observe that nearly all the schools do something for Missions; many support orphans in India, or contribute to their support; and several also contribute to the Canadian School at Calcutta. Six report that they do nothing for Missions; and one or two do not report at all.

Ten schools report that teachers' meetings are held—three of them occasionally; one, three or four times a year; five hold monthly meetings for conference on the affairs of the school and for prayer; and two hold weekly meetings for devotional exercises and preparation of lessons for the Sabbath.

Four congregations have Mission Schools in addition to the Congregational Schools, namely: St. Andrew's Church at Hamilton; St. Andrew's and St. Paul's Churches, Montreal, at Point St. Charles; and St. Andrew's Church, Kingston, at Portsmouth.

There is evidently a want of systematic effort on the part of our Church in the working of our Sabbath Schools, which, in the opinion of your Committee, seriously impairs their usefulness. In order to remedy this defect and to render our Sabbath Schools more efficient, so as to be productive of greater good to the "lambs of the flock," your Committee have, after much earnest and prayerful consideration, determined to make the following recommendations to the Synod:—

They recommend, in the first place, that Superintendents and Teachers of Sabbath Schools be enjoined to keep proper statistics of their schools and classes—having in each school a roll of scholars and teachers—and carefully noting the attendance on each Sabbath both of teachers and scholars, so that the average attendance could be ascertained.

They would also recommend that the teachers, whenever practicable, be organized into a Society, and hold regular periodical meetings for conference on the affairs of the school and devotional exercises, and also for the purpose of going over the lessons together. These meetings, wherever they are held, have been found to be productive of much good by increasing the zeal and activity of the teachers, and thereby inducing better preparation for their own duties on the Sabbath; more regular visitation of the children and their families; and, as a consequence, a better attendance and increased interest on the part of the scholars. Where weekly meetings for the preparation of the lessons can be held, the Committee suggest that the teachers be formed into a Bible Class under the care and superintendence of the Minister of the congregation.

And, in order to introduce a uniform system in all the schools, the Committee recommend that a scheme of lessons be prepared and published by a committee under the authority of the Synod, and that all Superintendents and Teachers of schools be enjoined to make use of the scheme so prepared. Such a scheme should, in the opinion of your Committee, contain two classes of lessons—one for the senior and the other for the junior classes; and, until the publication of such a scheme of lessons, the Committee recommend the use of the scheme published by the Edinburgh Sabbath School Union.

The Committee further recommend that great care be taken in the selection of libraries for Sabbath Schools, and that the classified libraries published by the American Sabbath School Union be not taken without careful selection, as they consider many of the publications found in Sabbath School libraries highly objectionable.

They also recommend the distribution in all schools of *The Juvenile Presbyterian*.

And, lastly, your Committee recommend that a Pastoral Letter or Address from the Synod be read in all the Churches in this Province, as soon as may be after the issuing of the same, in which members of the Church, and particularly those whom God has blessed with Scriptural knowledge and the gift of communicating the same, be enjoined to make use of the talents God has given to them, so that they be neither barren nor unprofitable servants, but on the contrary may be enabled to render their account with joy; and urging upon parents the duty and importance of sending their children to the Sabbath School, as a means of bringing them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

The number of scholars attending those schools from which reports have been received

is 2215; and the average attendance is being per cent of the whole.

St. Andrew's Church Sabbath School, Kingston, has the largest number of scholars on the Roll, the number being 230. St. Andrew's Church, Hamilton, and St. Andrew's Church, Ottawa, rank next, the numbers being 146 in each; and, next to these, St. Andrew's Church Mission School, Hamilton, has the greatest number 140 being on the roll. The smallest school is that of Cumberland, the number being 24. The school at Chatham, C. E., reports the largest attendance, all on the roll being regular in their attendance. Of the others the average attendance is—in Dundee, 94 per cent; St. Andrew's, Montreal, 80 per cent.; St. Andrew's, Kingston, 78 per cent.; Hamilton St. Andrew's, 73; Hamilton Mission School, 70; Martintown, 69; St. Paul's, Montreal, 68; Brockville, 81; Cornwall, 84; Galt, 83; St. John's, Hamilton, 85; Portsmouth, 73; Lochiel, 70; Point St. Charles, 65; Perth, 61; Woodstock, 67; Fergus, 59; Buckingham, 57; Clifton, 54; Cumberland, 60; Scott, 75; Three Rivers, 77.

SCHOOLS.	AVERAGE PER CENT.
Chatham,.....	100
Dundee,.....	94
St. John's, Hamilton,.....	85
St. Andrew's, Cornwall,.....	84
Galt,.....	83
Brockville,.....	81
St. Andrew's, Montreal,.....	80
St. Andrew's, Kingston,.....	78
Three Rivers,.....	77
Scott,.....	75
Portsmouth, Kingston,.....	73
St. Andrew's, Hamilton,.....	73
Hamilton Mission,.....	70
Lochiel,.....	70
Martintown,.....	69
St. Paul's, Montreal,.....	68
Woodstock,.....	67
Point St. Charles,.....	65
Perth,.....	61
Cumberland,.....	60
Fergus,.....	59
Buckingham,.....	57
Clifton,.....	54

Implicit reliance, however, cannot be placed on these statistics of attendance, for many of the returns give the average attendance as about the number stated; while in other schools, where the roll is carefully kept, the attendance, though apparently less, may in reality be larger than where no roll is kept and the average attendance guessed at. The small average attendance at the school at Clifton is accounted for by the statement that a number of the scholars are taken off the streets, and their attendance is irregular—the attendance of the congregational children being very much better. Two schools give the average attendance without giving the numbers on the roll, and two schools give only the total number without giving the average attendance; these schools cannot, therefore, be classified with the others.

The average attendance of teachers cannot be given with any degree of certainty. Very few of the schools seem to note their attendance, the answers generally being that they attend regularly. Ten schools thus report.

All which is respectively submitted.

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## SELECTION.

### DIVINE INSPIRATION OF THE SCRIPTURES.

It might be supposed that, though the Holy Scriptures have been given us by Divine inspiration, they may, from the vacillating and im-