

Report of the Committee on Sabbath Observance.

SUBMITTED TO THE SYNOD OF HAMILTON, IN 1876, MAY 5TH.

Your Committee are gratified to be able to report that the passenger traffic on Sabbath on some of the railways within our bounds have been considerably lessened. Five leading lines of railway pass through the bounds of this Synod. On two of these lines no regular passenger trains run on Sabbath; on each of two others there are two passenger trains, one running each way; and on the fifth there is one passenger train. On some of these lines freight trains run on Sabbath in large, if not increasing numbers, to the great annoyance of many of our people. Your Committee note with pleasure the efforts that have been made by the Grand Trunk authorities not only to reduce Sabbath labour on their line, but also to establish Temperance societies among their employees and in other ways promote their moral and material interests.

Your Committee also report with pleasure that Sabbath labour has been entirely abolished on the Welland Canal, under the management of the present Superintendent.

Your Committee, however, must report that though Sabbath labour on some of our leading thoroughfares has decreased, other forms of Sabbath desecration, equally heinous, and perhaps more annoying, prevail to a very considerable extent within our bounds. The attention of the Synod is specially directed to the fact that in our towns and villages young men gather in groups on the streets to the great annoyance of persons passing to and from public worship, or work in the Sabbath School. During the spring and summer months chiefly, such persons congregate at the street corners, under verandas and around church doors, and annoy, and in many cases insult persons who, in the discharge of religious duty, are compelled to pass by them. In some communities this odious state of things exists to an extent that has become positively intolerable, and it not infrequently happens that the sons of members and office-bearers in our churches are found forming a part of these Sabbath-breaking groups. It seems to your Committee disgraceful in the highest degree that respectable citizens who pay their full share of taxes for the maintenance of law and order in the community, cannot pass on Sabbath to their respective places of worship without being annoyed in the manner described.

Your Committee also call the attention of the Synod to the amount of Sabbath desecration which takes place within our bounds in connection with Livery Stables. It is a fact well known to those who have given the matter any attention that the Sabbath is the harvest-time in such places, more business being done on that day than on any other. Employees in Livery Stables instead of resting on the Lord's day, usually work harder and far longer hours than on other days of the week.

Your Committee also direct the special attention of the Synod to the matter of Sabbath funerals. It is greatly to be feared that many from whom better things might be expected have no disposition to bury on the Lord's day; while it is well known that a goodly number prefer Sabbath funerals because they are usually attended by a larger number of people, and a display is more easily made than on other days of the week. Ministers are often placed in a most perplexing and painful position when asked by members or adherents of their congregations to bury on the Sabbath. At such a time it is not easy to refuse a bereaved family, and not infrequently happens that if the request is refused, another will be found who will perform the service, and thus a family may be lost to the congregation, and the Minister who refuses is laid open to the charge of treating his people with harshness and want of respect.

Your Committee with regret, call the attention of the Synod to the fact that notwithstanding the existence of a stringent law, Sabbath tipping prevails in our towns and villages, to a greater or less extent. In many of the respectable hotels the law is not at least, openly violated, but nearly every community is cursed with one or more small, disreputable places where the law is systematically and persistently violated and public opinion defied.

Your Committee cannot close this report without calling the attention of the Synod to the fact that during the summer of 1874, a Ferry boat made regular Sabbath pleasure trips from the city, from which this court takes its name, to Burlington Beach. An effort was made by the Hamilton Branch of the Evangelical Alliance to stop this Sabbath desecration, but the effort failed. The attention is also directed to the fact that in the same city the street cars run at certain hours on Sabbath, ostensibly for the convenience of church-going people.—Presbyterians among the number. The Sabbath observance society of Hamilton made an attempt to stop this traffic but failed.

Your Committee beg leave to submit the following recommendations:—

- 1.—That the Synod express its unqualified disapprobation of Sabbath funerals, except in cases of pressing necessity.
- 2.—That the Synod recommend to the Ministers, office-bearers and friends of the Sabbath within our bounds, that they use every legitimate means in their power for the better enforcement of the existing laws against Sabbath desecration in all its forms.

All of which is respectfully submitted.
—R. N. GRANT, Convener.

Hospital for Incurables.

FIRST ANNUAL MEETING.

The first annual meeting of the friends of the Home for Incurables, was held on Tuesday afternoon of the 11th inst., in Shaftesbury Hall, the Rev. Dr. Topp in the chair. Among those present were Messrs Topp, Cumberland, A. Morrison, McFarrell, Manning, D. J. Macdonell, Clements, Winnett, E. Baldwin, George Duggan, Kay, Robert Gilmer, J. Kerr, J. Campbell, Mulholland, Richardson, Watson, McGraw,

Stevenson, Preston, J. Dick, Pringle, Harrison, Carty, Galbraith, Mulock, Campbell, Greig, Strachan, Laird; the Misses Riddell, McCord, Dick, Topp, Carty, Gilmore, Muttelbury, Gordon, Ewing, Bacon, the Revs. D. J. Macdonell, John King, A. J. Broughall; Messrs A. T. McCord, J. Michie, T. M. Thompson, C. S. Ross, Hon. J. McMurich, Dr. Agnew, Dr. C. B. Hall, and Prof. Wilson.

Mr. Ross read the annual report, of which the following is an abstract:—The manse started with the sum of \$3,140, collected by a number of energetic ladies. Then followed special donations, and subsequently great help was got from a bazaar, managed by Miss Dick, realizing in all \$1,000. Mrs. John Beverly Robinson has also placed at the disposal of the Board a sum of \$800, which had been deposited in the hands of the City Corporation about twelve years ago. This sum, together with the interest upon it, the Board hope soon to receive from the City Council. The receipts of money from all sources at 27th February amounted to \$4,922. Many donations of meat, clothing, articles of furniture, and other necessities, were sent in by kind friends from time to time. These donations have contributed largely to the comfort of the inmates, and they have materially lessened the expenditure of money in maintaining the Home. The expenditure of money is shown by the Treasurer's report, but it has been found impossible to put a correct money value upon these numerous donations of food, &c., and thus the Managers are, as yet, unable to give the actual annual cost of maintaining the Home, or the average cost of each inmate—a point of importance which they wish to know as soon as practicable. There have been fifteen patients admitted into the Home. Of these one died, and two left. Of the remaining eleven, (five men and six women), five are suffering from paralysis, two from chronic rheumatism, one from softening of the brain, one from consumption, one from heart disease, one from disease of the hip joint. Visitors are admitted on Thursday afternoon, between the hours of three and five o'clock, p.m. The leading requirements for admission are:—1st. That the person is suffering from incurable disease (which is testified by report of two of the medical staff). 2nd. That the person has no relatives or friends able to give the means of support (ascertained, so far as practicable, by a Committee of Enquiry). 3rd. That the person is a resident of Toronto (for it was found necessary to restrict admissions to residents of Toronto, because subscriptions were generally given on that understanding). From the beginning it was decided to make the home a purely charitable institution, and therefore no payment is demanded from inmates of their friends. In considering applications for admission, neither nationality or creed are taken into account.

The report was adopted.

The following are the officers for the institution for the year:—

Chairman—Rev. Alexander Topp, D.D.

Directresses—Miss Dick, Mrs E. Baldwin, Mrs. A. Morrison.

Secretary—Mrs. Cumberland.

Assistant Secretary—Miss Gilmore.

Treasurer—Miss Ross.

Visiting Physicians—Drs. Richardson, U. Ogden, Agnew, Tomple, Bethune, Small, Fulton, McFarlane.

Committee of Management—Messrs A. Cameron, J. Campbell, W. M. Clark, Clements, Dredge, J. Dick, Grassett, J. Gillespie, D. Galbraith, W. Higginbotham, M. Harrison, J. K. Kerr, J. Kerr, J. Kay, J. Leys, J. Mulholland, A. Manning, D. J. Macdonell, Grant Macdonald, J. McMurich, J. McNab, T. McGraw, W. W. Ogden, W. H. Poole, R. Preston, T. M. Pringle, J. H. Richardson, C. S. Ross, A. M. Smith, J. G. Scott, J. H. Stevenson, A. Topp, R. Wallace, Misses Browne, Carty, Gordon, Michie, Munroe, Muttelbury, Riddell, Topp, Canon Baldwin; Revs. A. J. Broughall, W. H. Poole; Messrs. J. Browne, J. Gillespie, D. Galbraith, J. Michie, A. Manning, A. T. McCord, C. S. Ross, T. M. Thompson.

Honorary Member—Mrs. J. Beverly Robinson.

Ministers and Churches.

THE quarterly communion service was observed on Sunday, 16th inst., in Zion Presbyterian Church, Brantford. In the morning the pastor, Rev. Wm. Coolbrane, preached from Nehemiah viii. 10, on the nature and effects of Christian joy. A very large attendance of members was present, and a deep feeling of solemnity pervaded the entire congregation. In the evening Mr. Coolbrane preached his thirteenth anniversary sermon, taking for his text the words found in 2nd Corinthians, 12 and 14, "I seek not yours, but you." The apostle did not seek their wealth, nor applause, nor approval; but he sought their advancement in divine knowledge, the salvation of their souls and their growth in grace. Each of these points was dwelt upon and illustrated at length. At the close, the pastor reviewed his thirteen years ministry, referring to the many marked changes that had taken place in the town and congregation during that period. The membership of the church it was stated in 1862 (the year of Mr. Coolbrane's induction) was under 150; at the present date it was 510. 156 have united with the church since last May. During these thirteen years, 347 have either died or been dismissed to other congregations in different parts of Canada, while very few of these who signed the call to Mr. Coolbrane now remain in Brantford. A large proportion of them have gone to the better church above. The changes indicate the exceedingly fluctuating character of our population, which as Mr. Coolbrane remarked, makes our churches so many nurseries for the larger cities, whither our young men go in great numbers so soon

as they are beginning to be useful here. No church in town has done more for outside objects than Zion Church. They have maintained for twelve years a mission school in the King's Ward, now attended by over eighty scholars and fourteen teachers. For seven years they supported a mission school in the East Ward until the organization of St. Jude's, when they withdrew. This, of course, is in addition to the congregational Sabbath school. The staff of teachers at present date numbers nearly forty-five—a most devoted band of men and women. We are sure that all denominations of Christians in town rejoice in the large measure of prosperity that has attended this prominent congregation and its pastor. During these thirteen years Mr. Coolbrane has not been without calls to other spheres of labour. New York, Boston (repeatedly), Chicago, Detroit, Newburyport, Mass., and Toronto have all in turn claimed his services, but to one and all he has said No. The assertion that monetary considerations determine a minister's reception or rejection of calls, has certainly in this case been falsified.—*Brantford Exporter*.

At a meeting of the Missionary Association, in connection with the Presbyterian Congregation of Percy, on the 6th inst., Mr. J. Clazie, who for the past few years has faithfully and gratuitously discharged the duties of Precursor to the congregation, was agreeably surprised by the presentation of a sum of \$17, as a small token of the appreciation in which his services are held. Mr. Clazie replied in suitable terms.

Rev. Dr. Bruce, pastor of Fort Massey Church, has been presented with a handsome pulpit gown by the ladies of his congregation.

Presbytery of Bruce.

This Presbytery held an adjourned meeting at North Bruce, on the 28th ult., for the induction of the Rev. Jno. Scott, late of St. Andrew's Church, London, and for the transaction of ordinary business. There were eight ministers and three elders in attendance. Rev. D. Fraser, of Saugeen being present, was asked to sit and correspond. Mr. Tolmie presided, Mr. Straith preached, Mr. Fraser addressed the minister, and Mr. Anderson the people. The induction service over, the members of Presbytery and the strangers were invited into the manse, where they sat down to a well spread table. The members of the congregation were supplied with refreshments in the church. After all had done ample justice to themselves, the Presbytery resumed business in the manse. A unanimous and hearty call from Tara, Allanford, addressed to the Rev. James Cameron, preacher, was sustained, and ordered to be transmitted. The salary promised is \$700 with manse, or its equivalent, should the manse not be required. A circular letter was read from the Presbytery of Guelph, stating their intention to ask the General Assembly at its next meeting, for leave to receive as a minister of this church, the Rev. D. Smyth, a minister of the late New Connection Methodist Church. The Presbytery would recommend caution. Business over, the members of court repaired to the church, where a meeting of welcome to Mr. Scott was held. Mr. Tolmie presided. Mr. Scott was presented with an elegantly bound Bible and Psalm Book by the congregation, with a short address of welcome and good will. Short addresses were then delivered by Messrs. Goulay, Anderson, Stewart, Fraser, (Saugeen), Straith, Fraser, (Kincardine), etc. At the close the promise of the congregation was implemented by the Treasurer paying Mr. Scott his salary six months in advance. Mr. Scott enters on his labors in this interesting field under very cheerful circumstances.—*A.G.F.*

Presbytery of Montreal.

This Presbytery met at Ottawa on 5th May, 1876, and sustained a call from Chalmers' Church, Montreal, to the Rev. Wm. Mitchell, of Millbrook, Ont.; also another call to Rev. Adam McKay, of Cape Breton Island, from Gordon Church, Indian Lands. The Presbytery at the same time, received the Rev. H. Sinclair's resignation of the pastorate of the congregation of Lingwick, and took steps for organizing a new congregation at Arendel and De Salaberry, in the county of Argenteuil. On Friday evening after, the Presbytery met in Montreal, and inducted the Rev. C. Baxter into the pastoral charge of Presbyterian Church, Stanley Street.—*JAMES WATSON, Pres. Clerk*.

Mr. MOORE said in one of his London addresses, "we should have the faith of the little boy who, after asking God to grant a certain request, added, 'You will, Lord; I know You will!'"

MR. GEORGE MULLEN, the founder of the Ashbydown Orphanages, has been preaching at Brighton, and the numbers attending are so large that the Dome, which accommodates 8,000 persons, is to be secured.

THE Presbytery of Edinburgh has petitioned the magistrates of the city to grant no new licenses, and to refuse renewals in all cases where the existence of public houses has proved morally injurious to the locality.

MEN are asking, "Where is there any resting-place amidst this deluge of unbelief and false doctrine with which the whole earth is overpread? But why such a question? Is not the ark of God's Word floating high above it, offering a secure, a permanent resting-place to every weary and heavy-laden soul that seeks a refuge in it? Is not the ark of God's testimony spread open before you? Keep close to God's own Word. Let no man call himself what he will, move you from the foundation. And amidst all the sacred interpretations of that Word, keep to that which a prayerful, earnest, and diligent perusal of it carries home to your conscience."

Sabbaths Abroad—The United Presbyterian Church.

FIRST PAPER.

Leaving Edinburgh, we passed through the East Lothian by the North British Railway. The beautiful landscape of the district possesses that peculiar charm which only tradition and history can impart. On every side are old battlefields and the ruins of palaces and castles where kings and conquerors transacted successive chapters of the old national history. We caught a glimpse in passing of spots familiar to us in former years, and dear for their historical associations, the battle-field of Pinkie (1547); Carberry Hill, where Queen Mary surrounded in 1569; Prentonpans, where Sir John Cope was defeated by Prince Charles Edward; Bankton House, the residence of Colonel Gardiner, the Christian soldier, who gallantly fell in a vain effort to retrieve the fortunes of that day; the old castle of Dirolton, which Cromwell took in 1650; but space fails us to write of Tantallon Castle and the Bass Rock, with their memories of the Old Covenanters, of Dunbar and Inverwick and Cocksburns-path, with their heroic associations.

We were whirled through the romantic ravine of Pensdown, skirting the Lammermoors, and then through a portion of the Merse, to the town of Berwick upon Tweed, so famous in the wars between England and Scotland. Here we found our old friend, the Rev. Dr. John Cairns, preparing to leave for Edinburgh to take charge of his class in the Theological Seminary of the United Presbyterian Church. Dr. Cairns is well known on this side of the Atlantic, as well as in France and Germany, as one of the foremost of the Scottish scholars and theologians. He is a man of superior talents, of the highest scholarship, and of the most devoted piety. Nowhere did we see more evidences of the work of the Holy Spirit than in connection with Dr. Cairns' labours in Berwick and its vicinity. We had not the pleasure of hearing him preach, but from Berwick, as the centre of a district where the United Presbyterian Church has taken a powerful hold, and as the home of its foremost preacher and theologian, we purpose directing the direction of our readers to the state of this important branch of the Scottish Church.

The Church formerly known as "the Secession" took its rise in 1783. The Rev. Ebenezer Erskine, of Stirling, was one of the leaders of the popular party of the Church of Scotland at that time. From various causes not necessary to be here detailed, the chief among them relating to the enforcement of the Act of Patronage, and to the toleration of unsound doctrine, he was driven to renounce the authority of the Church of Scotland, and, with three other ministers, to set up a distinct church, under the name of "the Secession." The number of Seceders rapidly increased, and their early ministers were learned, earnest, and devoted men, whose pulpits were the watch-towers of sound and Scriptural teaching in a time when the Scottish Establishment was sunk in prevailing error and indifference. In fifteen years after the origin of "the Secession," there was a division in this church growing out of the question as to the lawfulness of taking an oath, introduced by the government of that day, known as the "burgess oath," but under its two rival forms, the movement continued to make rapid progress, and while in these churches there was not a little that savored of narrowness and intolerance, there was also a fearless courage and a robust piety that has left its broad mark upon the Presbyterian history and literature both of Scotland and of this country. It is interesting, also, to note that one of the Secession founders, and the first of her theological professors, Mr. Fisher, had studied in Holland, and hence the theology of the Secession was largely influenced by the old federal theology of the Dutch Church. In 1820, the two Synods were united and the Church was afterward known as the United Secession Church.

A second secession had taken place in 1752, growing out of Mr. Gillespie's opposition to a very arbitrary enforcement of the Patronage Law. Mr. Gillespie was deposed by the General Assembly, and he and his friends founded a church which they called "the Relief," mainly on the ground of the freedom of the Church from State control. This Church continued to increase in numbers and in influence till the 18th of May, 1847, when the two churches ("Secession" and "Relief") adopted a Basis of Union, and formed the United Presbyterian Church.

Twenty years ago the United Presbyterian Church numbered among its ministers many men eminent both as scholars and as preachers. Among its old ministers were Dr. Hugh Hough of Glasgow, Dr. Robert Balmer of Berwick, and especially Dr. John Brown, whose attainments as a scholar and divine were equally eminent with his powers as a preacher, and who is familiar to our readers not only by his valuable contributions to Exegetical Theology, but also by the delightful sketch of his character and appearance from the pen of his gifted son and namesake, the author of "Rab and His Friends."

These have all passed away. The only men of the younger generation who are known among us as having added to the sterling authorship of the Scottish Church, are Dr. Endieard and Dr. John Cairns; but there are many old men in that Church, whose names are household words in Scotland, such as Dr. Robertson of Newington Church, Edinburgh, and the Rev. Henry Renton of Kelso. We had the opportunity of hearing some six or seven of the younger ministers of this Church, and we venture with some hesitation to notice that in their modes of presenting truth, and in their power as preachers, they differ greatly from the older generation of Scottish ministers. It is almost the universal custom among the younger ministers of this Church to read their sermons, and the worst of it is, that they read them very badly. There is in their reading a drawl that sounds like an affectation of the peculiar tone in which many English ministers read, accompanied by a very broad Scottish accent, which produces an effect that is anything but pleasant. Then the sermons themselves are often slovenly in the style, and loose and pointless in the thinking. It is a possible thing to compose extemporaneously, that

is, to write with such a fatal facility that the sermon so written cannot properly be said to be studied; whereas, on the other hand, as recently explained by our own Dr. Storrs, and eminently exemplified in his own sermons, a discourse may be preached without even a note in writing, and yet the full bent of the mind may be thrown into the preparation, and in this way the sermon may be made to convey the most important Scriptural truths in the most exquisite language, and illustrated by the most classic imagery. Of course we only heard a few of the younger ministers of the United Presbyterian Church, and one opinion formed on this comparatively limited field of observation must be taken with allowance; but so far as that observation went, we found that in the churches of the Establishment, with ministers who gave themselves to the preaching of the Word, and whose sermons were preached without notes, the seats were all filled on the Sabbath, while in many of the churches of the United Presbyterian Church the congregations were small and listless, and that for this very good reason, that the sermons were not interesting enough to gain and keep the attention of the people. There can be no doubt that the pulpits of this country and of Britain not and react upon each other—but reading sermons in the United States and in Scotland are two very different things—first, because the genius of Scottish preaching, its history and traditions, are all against reading sermons; and secondly, because the Scottish ministers, as a rule, are not good readers. Even here we cannot but believe that were the example of Dr. Storrs and others—we mention Dr. Storrs in particular because he has recently called special attention to the subject in his lecture to the students of the Union Theological Seminary—were their example followed, there would be a decided advance in the popular power of the American pulpit. Such preaching can no longer be confounded with the extemporaneous harangues of men who boast that it is an easy thing to get up a sermon; it stands associated with solid learning, elegant accomplishments, and prayerful, painstaking preparation.—*Rev. David Ing., L.L.D., in N. Y. Christian Intelligencer.*

Congregational Singing.

I. A congregation needs to be led, directed, just as much as an orchestra, or an army, or any other body of people who try to do anything together. To lead congregational singing, a single voice, if distinct and firm, will answer well, though several voices are better, and a good choir is best. Yet such a choir, when the singing is congregational, must be content to lead the congregation, and its manner of singing must be adapted to this end. Whether the lead be by one or more voices, the object is to furnish a musical guide to the people. The singing should therefore be plain, omitting anything like artistic embellishments. As there is a very general tendency on the part of congregations to drag behind in singing, the leader will commonly find it necessary to struggle against this fault, and by striking each tone promptly and firmly, to urge them onward.

II. It is absolutely necessary to success that proper tunes should be used. They must be (1) such as congregations can sing. All who can sing at all—and this includes almost everybody—must have an opportunity to unite in the people's song. This is the charm of congregational singing—that all the people, not a part of them, are singers. It is obvious that the tunes must be very easy, simple, and natural in melody and rhythm. No matter how good a tune may be, how excellent and attractive, if it be not easy, so that the people can sing it, it will not do, and will prevent success in congregational singing. (2) The tunes must also be such as the people will sing; such as they will delight in. They must be popular, pleasing, good; such as will interest at first, and continue to interest, not wearing out with a few times using. It is useless to attempt to get a congregation to sing flat, dull tunes with the heart and the understanding, even if they be induced to lift up the voice.

III. There must be proper adaptation of tunes to the words. The importance of this is scarcely appreciated at all. Words are often sung to tunes with scarcely any consideration, as they happen to "hit or miss." If the metre is right, it matters not for anything else. Now, often successful singing depends greatly upon its being sung to the right music. We know how much there is in elocution; how the same poetry may sound tame and senseless from the lips of one reader, and full of fire and beauty when more eloquently read. There is the same difference between words sung to appropriate music. It must be very evident to all that we are theoretically right, though practically we believe there is little attention paid to the matter. The tune often spoils the words, and the words spoil the tune. Few realize the importance of this proper adaptation of music to words. Some of our most popular tunes owe much of their popularity, we are confident, to a union at first with appropriate words, of which they were mutually the peculiarly appropriate expressions.

IV. The tunes must be properly sung. Especially the time must be right. We have heard some of the choicest tunes sung so much too slow, and so listlessly, that their whole spirit and beauty were lost. This singing too slow is generally a fault, though it is quite possible to err in the other extreme.

V. It is a very great help to congregational singing if a book is used which presents the tune as well as the words, and both on the same page. There is scarcely a congregation in which there are not a considerable number who can read music a little. By having the notes before them they are enabled to sing with confidence, and, scattered through the congregation as they are, they serve as very important aids to those who can sing only by ear.—*London Weekly Review.*

THE Free Presbytery of Edinburgh has adopted a report denouncing theatrical amusements as most injurious, and has resolved to issue an address to the congregations, warning them against the evils of theatres.