

aspect. Dr. Andrew Thomson, of Edinburgh, began his dissertation on the Sabbath with something like an admission that the changes in matters pertaining to the sanctity of the Sabbath had, on the whole, been slowly to the worse in Scotland. A large amount of the blame for this retrogression, he attributed to the Railway system which had spread itself over the civilized world during the last forty years—the more to be deplored, because of the many material blessings it had conferred on the nations. It would startle many, he said, to be informed that between eighty and a hundred thousand men were required in the United Kingdom to turn out for work on that day respecting which it had been commanded, “Thou shalt do no work.”

Dr. Sloane, of Alleghany, read a paper on “Intemperance in the United States.” The picture he drew was painted in very dark colours. He estimated the number of habitual drunkards in the United States at 500,000, ten per cent. of whom, he believed, annually went down to the drunkard’s grave, and the drunkard’s doom. The Presbyterian Churches, however, were doing their best to combat the evil, and he felt safe in saying, that nine tenths of the ministers were total abstainers. Dr. Lang, of the Barony, Glasgow, stated that the one thing which stood in the way of all their work in Scotland, was that dreadful thing—drunkenness. The drinking bill of the United Kingdom, last year, was represented by £148,000,000 Sterling! Intemperance was superseding the Gospel. The public-house was beating the Churches: the publican was beating the ministers. The President, Rev. J. H. Campbell, Geelong, said the Council would be glad to hear that in Victoria a measure had been passed that no new licenses would be granted during the next three years, and that at the end of that time there would come into operation a modified Permissive Bill.

Saturday was a *dies non*, so far as the Council was concerned; but it was not an idle day. In the morning, a Christian Conference was held in the Free Assembly

Hall, which was filled by an audience of whom a large proportion were ladies. Dr. Donald Fraser, of London, presided. Principal Caven, Toronto, in the course of his remarks said, that he would be extremely disappointed if the Council, though it did not propose to itself any immediate steps in the way of union, did not give a great and true impulse to the cause of Christian Union amongst all Presbyterian Churches. And so say we all. At noon, the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper was dispensed in Dr. Moody Stuart’s Church, Free St. Luke’s. The occasion was one of deep solemnity. The afternoon was given up to excursion parties. Sabbath was a field-day in the City Churches. The pulpits were all occupied by Delegates to the Council. In the evening, a number of Evangelistic meetings were held. Sabbath schools also came in for a share of attention. The feeling, however, seemed to be that the Sabbath school in Scotland, as compared with the United States and Canada, occupies a subordinate position. It is largely restricted to the poorer classes. Perhaps on this very account its appliances are defective, and its general efficiency somewhat under the mark. A petition signed by fifteen Superintendents, representing nearly all the denominations in the city, was presented to the Council praying that it would give its imprimatur to the International Series of Lessons by appointing delegates to the General Committee that will meet for the purpose of preparing the next course of Lessons. But, as I did not hear any more of it, I suspect it was among the things to be kept in *retentis*. I heard an excellent discourse by Dr. Nicholls, of St. Louis, Mo., in Free High Church in the morning, and in the afternoon listened to Dr. John Hall, of New York in the Free St. George’s. This is, I suppose, the largest and most influential Free Church in Edinburgh, if not in Scotland. About two thousand persons were present. The congregational singing was very fine. There was no instrumental music: and certainly there was no need of any. I was told that none of the Free Churches in Scotland use organs.