

## APPENDIX E.

**Report on Sabbath Schools.**

This Church has always evinced a religious care in the Godly up-bringing of youth, and made the children objects of her solicitude from their earliest years. To her anxiety on this head is to be ascribed her charge to parents to educate their children in the principles of the Christian religion, and her invitation to the young to dedicate themselves to the Lord in the days of their youth. Hence she employs the Sabbath-school Institution, and seeks to render it serviceable in the cause of youthful instruction and piety. And it is cheering to record that now-a-days Sabbath-schools are in general use, and that there is no congregation within our bounds without its school or schools. If the statistics your Committee collected last year be studied, it will be found that some congregations have no fewer than 8 Sabbath-schools, and that certain Sabbath-schools are in a high state of efficiency. This year there have been no questions issued to ministers on Sabbath-school work, for the reason that it has been considered that last year's returns, which were rather extensive, yet remain to be published, and that to exact answers from ministers who had more than once already filled up the columns, while not giving publicity to their answers, was imposing an unnecessary burden both upon them and upon your Committee. The Circulars have not, therefore, this year been issued; however, the results of the Presbyterian examinations, so far as these are known, serve to show that the Sabbath-school system permeates the Church, and that the institution flourishes in some Presbyteries in increasing efficiency—that the number of pupils that attend bear a large proportion to the youth of the congregation, one to every communicant, and that teachers to the number of 475 continue willingly, zealously and laboriously to serve in the good cause. *Country congregations* labour under the disadvantage of promiscuous schools, where no one system of lessons can be introduced, and where our Church cannot exercise the entire control; nevertheless it is refreshing to find that harmony and fellowship subsist, and that teacher and taught, though of different denominations, feel one in that good work. In *town schools* it sometimes happens that there is a temptation to turn the Sabbath-school into a day-school, by communicating instruction in reading; but your Committee would impress the idea that no such use is to be made of the Sabbath-school, and that even such pupils as cannot read may yet be taught profitably the essential truths of the Christian religion by familiar illustration and pictorial representation. In some counties infant classes are taught with success, and also advanced classes for students are to be found. This is commendable; and those youths who think themselves too old to attend as pupils, should either assist in instructing junior classes, or in giving out from the library, and thus not suspend their connection with the work. Bible-classes and Young Men's Christian Associations form a link between Sabbath Schools and the Church, and it is to be hoped that through that influence our young people will learn to confess Christ at an early age, and thus the good seed of Sabbath-school institutions not perish. In not a few of our schools there are regular collections made for mission purposes, and an annual one for libraries. Some have contributed towards the "Dayspring" since last Synod, and others have sent to the Foreign Mission a handsome sum. This is wise. It both calls forth the liberality of the young, and aids the schemes of the Church. Were our young people trained to habitual giving, there would be more liberality when an appeal has to be made to their benevolence; therefore we must commend such benevolent calls. As to the help employed, the Scottish Hymnal has been introduced into some schools since last year; the Halifax Scheme of Lessons is still that really in use, and the excellent Shorter Catechism is committed to memory. There are various opinions as to the propriety of rewards being distributed to the pupils: some averring that they have a beneficial effect, and employ them; others the