

The following recommendations of the Committee were accepted :

1. That the Synod recommends Presbyteries at their first meetings in 1872 to hold a Conference on the state of religion in their congregations, and forward the results at once to the Convener, in order that they be embodied in the Annual Report of the Committee.

2. That in connection with the Report for next year one or more brief, pointed and practical addresses be delivered on subjects bearing definitely on church work and the promotion of spiritual life.

A Deputy to Sister Churches.

The Clerk moved that a Deputy be appointed to wait upon the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of the United States, on the General Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America, and on the General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church to convey to these Bodies the fraternal greetings of this Synod. The motion having passed, the Rev. Dr. McLeod was appointed.

Reports to be Printed in Advance.

The following motion, after notice given, was moved by Mr. Robert Murray and seconded by Rev. J. Forrest, That the Synod instruct the Board of Home Missions, Foreign Missions, and Superintendence of Theological Hall, and Committees on Acadia Mission, Temperance, Sabbath Schools, Sabbath Observance, and Colportage, to have their reports ready by the last of May, that such Reports may be printed in a copy of the *Record*, to be placed in the hands of members of Synod one week before the next meeting of Synod.

Moved in amendment by Rev. T. Sedgwick and seconded by Rev. G. Patterson, That the consideration of this motion be deferred till next meeting of Synod, when the original motion passed, and it was decided accordingly.

SABBATH OBSERVANCE.

Rev. R. Laird read the Report on this subject, as follows :

Report on Sabbath Observance.

The holy Sabbath can rightly be regarded as one of God's best gifts to man. Though bestowed unasked, man's use of the gift is closely watched by the all-wise

benefactor. In this respect the holy day resembles the talents which the Lord of all bestows on man, as it is, in effect, accompanied with the injunction, Occupy till I come. The Lord's day is a gift of inestimable value, and as such, and for the reason just stated, it ought to be highly esteemed, and sacredly observed. Hence, those who occupy the position of overseers the Lord's people, should jealously guard the Lord's portion of time both from a regard to the will of the Giver, and the benefit of the receiver.

Your Committee, appointed to be your watchmen on this subject, again appear before you with such notices of progress, and references to existing Sabbath desecration as they deem proper to submit.— Though little of a very marked character can be reported, yet progress has been made. This is most apparent in some of the western parts of Nova Scotia, and in the city of St. John. In the city of Halifax, evangelistic efforts on the Lord's day, consisting in part of tract distribution, and open air services and addresses, are upheld as formerly. Public sentiment on the subject appears also to be comparatively healthy in the city, and is ready to be called forth by any glaring act of desecration. A member of Committee residing in St. John, reports that he has, to some extent, succeeded in reducing the amount of driving and visiting on the Sabbath. He also reports that the Branch of the Evangelical Alliance in the city, succeeded during the last session of the Legislature, in securing the passing of an Act relating to the Sunday Liquor traffic. The happiest results are expected from the operation of this Act, and are already, in some degree, manifest. At Presbyterial visitations the fact has been ascertained that pastors do much to promote the proper observance of the Sabbath, and in many cases with no little success. Information of this definite and pleasing character has not been obtained from other Presbyteries; but the Synod may rest assured that pastors generally endeavor faithfully to discharge their duty relating to the Lord's day.

In advertent to existing forms of Sabbath desecration, those noticed in previous reports undeniably prevail with nearly all their force. In Halifax, laxity is prevalent. Drinking shanties and shops are open on the Lord's day. A number of shops are also open on the afternoon of the Sabbath for the sale of groceries and such articles. These are painful indications of indifference to the Lord's day on the part of the authorities of the city. Your Committee suggest that a respectful application be made to the City Council by the members of Halifax Presbytery residing in the city, to check these open acts of Sabbath desecration. In St. John, one of the most glaring profana-