

for the many wants of a rising family? Is he to endure the perpetual pain of seeing his wife bowed down prematurely by labours and anxieties from which a little more of this world's goods would effectually relieve her and his children growing up without the educational advantages enjoyed by the poorest city mechanic? Or, is he in self-defence, or rather in defence of those *dearer* to him than *self*, to be forced at last to turn aside part of his energies into secular channels, and endeavour by some other means to eke out his insufficient resources? And could you blame him for this, ye who expend your *whole* lives and energies in care for yourselves and "those of your own houses?" Men and women of our town and city congregations, the decision rests mainly in *your* hands. Your imaginations can call up such painful pictures as have been described; your memories can supply facts to prove them no fanciful improbabilities, and can you who live in comfort and ease, you whose competency is fast increasing to wealth, who can look with satisfaction around your comfortable or your luxurious abodes, and upon your groups of merry, free-hearted children; can you think calmly of the toil-worn country Minister, weighed down before his time by pecuniary embarrassments; of the family, the children, as dearly loved as yours, made, even in their childhood, to feel the blighting pressure of veritable *poverty*? Surely, if your heart has *once* been touched with one spark of the love of Him who gave *Himself* freely for us, you will eagerly interpose to prevent such a result.

But some may say,—“if the congregation be niggardly, why not leave them; they deserve it? Ah, my friends, is this the spirit of Him who wept over Jerusalem, whose dying breath ascended in prayer for his persecutors? Did *we* deserve the love that, unrepelled by *our* coldness and waywardness, sought us out, lost sheep as we were, and brought us tenderly back to the fold? And shall we not “also have compassion on our fellow-servants, even as” pity has been shown to us? A niggardly, cold, insensible, congregation is assuredly a Missionary field, and they who nobly devote themselves to it should surely be treated as Missionaries. Then will you, who, it may be, give liberally, as surely you ought, to *foreign* Missionary enterprise, not devote some of your substance to secure to the Missionary labourer at your own doors a provision as ample and secure as that which is always guaranteed to those who go to the *distant* dark places? Surely it is unfair, unjust, *cruel*, that the Minister, whose education has been expensive, whose labor is hard, unceasing, and taxing all the energies of mind and body, and whose social position ought to be a high one, should be the only professional man whose services are insufficiently appreciated, inadequately remunerated; and this when

these services are rendered, not to men's bodies or property, but to the highest and indestructible part of their existence! And this is notoriously the case in Canada. Surely in our *own* Church at least it will not be suffered to be so. If it is, the effects will soon become manifest in a rapidly deteriorating Ministry. The most devoted, most spiritually minded Minister is *human*; and, if borne down and harrassed by temporal cares, how is it possible that his mind and faculties can be applied with sufficient force and concentration to reading and study, preparation of sermons, and the many arduous duties of his sacred calling. If he is to minister to others in spiritual things, care should assuredly be taken that *he* shall be ministered to in temporal things.

There are many ways of raising such a fund as shall provide the means of such assistance to country congregations as shall insure to their ministers a comfortable and adequate support. Subscription, donation, collection, are all open to such benevolent spirits as are disposed to give according to their means. Will not some rich man head the list with a munificent donation, and thereby secure to himself more happiness than the most successful of speculations could have given him?

We might not be the worse either of taking a hint from the Free Church of Scotland. They have long wanted an Assembly Hall, but the funds, of course, had first to be provided. This has been undertaken by the Ladies of the Church throughout the whole country, and the new Assembly Hall is to be their present to the Church! Might not their example be advantageously followed by their Canadian sisters, and might not they present to the Synod a liberal nucleus for a sustentation fund? Sure we are that their purses in the end would not suffer, and that their male friends would cheerfully and substantially answer to their appeals, and swell their contributions. Woman surely could scarcely be enlisted in a better cause, and we trust that many of them will be sufficiently public-spirited and energetic to take it up. We merely throw out the suggestion: it is with them to act upon it. But in some way or other, if our Church wishes to sustain herself in Canadian ground, a fund must soon be provided.

“Largely Thou givest, Gracious Lord,
Largely Thy gifts should be restored,
He only, who forgets to hoard,
Has learned to live;
Freely Thou givest, and Thy word
Is—“Freely give.” ONOMA.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON SABBATH SCHOOLS.

The Synod's Committee on Sabbath Schools beg leave to report that, in January last, they entered upon the discharge of their duties by sending to each Kirk Session a Circular, of which the following is a copy:—

HAMILTON, JANUARY, 1858.

To the Kirk session of—

The Synod's Committee on Sabbath Schools earnestly request your attention to the accompanying Schedule, and anxiously look for such returns as it may be in your power to give.

They are deeply impressed with the importance of the efficient working of our Sabbath Schools to the well-being of the Church, and desire to urge upon Kirk Sessions and Superintendents the recommendations of the Synod, in their recent deliverance on overtures, to promote the extension and efficiency of Sabbath Schools.

The primary object in view is to obtain statistical information for the use of the Synod—to afford the Committee an opportunity of reporting their diligence in this matter, and of preparing a digest to be laid before the Synod at its next annual meeting. The ulterior object is comprehensive in its character.

It is contemplated to forward the organization of Sabbath School Societies in individual congregations for the mutual benefit of the Teachers, and for the establishment of district Schools; to bring Superintendents into correspondence on local and general interests; to devise some general scheme of lessons; to render the working of our Sabbath Schools more systematic than they have hitherto been; to further the missionary effort which has already been made with so much success in the Orphanage Scheme; to unite our Sabbath Schools in a movement for the employing of a missionary to establish Schools in destitute localities, and to give an impetus to the general circulation of *The Juvenile Presbyterian*.

The results contemplated can only be accomplished by strenuous and united action. Each in his sphere must perform his allotted duty. The Synod confidently anticipates the cordial co-operation of all the members of our Church in this laudable enterprise; the Committee humbly trust that the Almighty will own and bless this beginning of systematic effort on the part of the Church “to care for the lambs of the flock,” and to “train them up in the way in which they should go.”

The Committee request that you will forward the statistics before the 1st of March, that the report may be prepared in time for the meeting of Synod.

Gravely your prayers on behalf of an object in itself so deeply important, and involving consequences of highest interest to the Church,—trusting that it will receive your countenance and aid,—in name and by appointment of the Committee,

I remain,

Yours truly,

ROBERT BURNET,

Convener.

To this Circular the Committee have only received thirty-three replies, while from so large a number as seventy-two places to which Circulars were sent no replies have been received.

It is much to be regretted that the Circular issued by your Committee has not generally been responded to, as one great object to be attained by this movement, namely, the obtaining of correct statistical information of the state of the Sabbath Schools of our Church, has thereby been defeated. It shows also a want of interest in the work of improving and rendering our Sabbath Schools more efficient; a work which your Committee believe to be of vital importance to the future well-being of our Church in this country.

The accompanying digest has been prepared by your Committee, in accordance with the deliverance of the Synod at its last meeting, from the answers to the circulars issued by the Committee.