

to enlarge their contributions to that Board; and that it be recommended to our pastors and stated supplies to bring the facts presented in the Report of the Board fully before the people of their charge, and, if possible, to introduce among them some systematic form of maturing their contributions.

3. *Resolved*, That the duration of the Assembly in 1844 (Minutes pp. 274 and 275) be renewed; that a special collection be taken up in all the churches in aid of Church Extension, and that the Assembly rejoice in the success which has thus far attended this scheme, although the contributions have fallen far short of the importance and necessity of the scheme and our own obligations to sustain it.

4. *Resolved*, That the results of the domestic missionary work of the General Assembly for the last twenty-one years, viz: the increase of our missionaries from 101 to 500; the increase of our funds from \$12,000 to \$79,000; the organization of 913 new churches; the erection of 1424 houses of worship; the addition of over 40,000 souls to the missionary churches, on profession of their faith; the constitution of a number of new Presbyteries and Synods, and a great enlargement of our territorial boundaries, and also the results of the past year, by the report, being most favourable—all furnish to the Assembly an occasion for profound gratitude to the God of missions, and of encouragement to us to proceed vigorously with the work.

5. *Resolved*, That the Board of Missions be requested to keep in view the increasing number and religious wants of the German population in our country, and to do whatever may be practicable, to furnish them with the ministry and means of grace.

6. *Resolved*, That the General Assembly rejoice in the special interests which is manifested by so large a number of their Presbyteries in the work of Domestic Missions, and that it will be their duty to do all in their power that will become successful, and that it must result, under God, in incalculable blessings to our Church and country.

BOARD OF EDUCATION.

Dr. Van Renwelaar, Secretary of the Board, presented the Report. He stated that God had blessed the Board of Education with the usual prosperity during the year. There was reason for encouragement. Forty-nine candidates had entered the ministry. The increase of candidates during the past year has been small, although the increase of population has been an million, and the increase of our church members ten thousand.

Our beloved youth shrink from the sacred office; some because of its fearful greatness; some because of inducements of gain and worldly distinctions, &c. The fact exists—we have not enough of workmen.—Fathers should be instructed that it is their duty to give up their sons to the Lord. Youth must be impressed with the solemn God has upon them. Church members must be instructed in their duty to furnish the means, and ministers are called upon to press this subject upon all these, and to urge their immediate action.

The Board is convinced that it is the duty of the Church to train her youth for the work of the ministry. There is not a sufficient number of candidates. It is the duty of the Presbytery to search out pious youth, to supervise and induct them into this office.

The Report was received and referred to a special committee on whose report the following resolutions were adopted:

1. *Resolved*, That in the judgment of this Assembly, the wants of the Church, and the general improvement of the age, demand increasing attention to the qualifications of candidates for the ministry; and that with the view, partly of keeping more prominent the idea of the necessity of literary attainments in our candidates, and partly with the view of other advantages, the Board of Education are allowed to give their appropriations the title of scholarships; and the Presbyteries are enjoined to use their best endeavours to raise the standard of qualifications for the ministry.

2. *Resolved*, That the practice of requiring a pledge from young men to enter the ministry, especially in the early stages of their preparatory studies, is not deemed conducive to the best interests, either of the candidates, or of the Church; and the Board of Education are hereby authorized to modify their rules accordingly.

3. *Resolved*, That this Assembly prefer that young men within their bounds, who are looking forward to the work of the ministry, should be officially recognized as candidates under the care of Presbyteries, only when they are prepared to enter upon their theological studies, and until that time they be regarded simply as students on probation, under the general watch and patronage of the Presbyteries.

4. *Resolved*, That whilst home nurture is according to the word of God and the covenant of his grace, a real reliance of the Church for the salvation of her children, Providence, also, testifies to the importance of public education, on Christian principles, in schools, academies, and colleges, and particularly to the intimate relation between Christian education and the power of the gospel as proclaimed in the sanctuary; and therefore the home, the school and the Church, should all be imbued with the spirit of consecration to the Lord Jesus Christ.

5. *Resolved*, That this General Assembly, entertaining a lively interest in colleges in view of the past history of the Presbyterian Church, its present prosperity, and its future hopes, learn with great satisfaction, the general progress attending the department of Christian education, and also the addition of Westminster College at Buffalo, to the list of those institutions; and it is recommended that churches and members, to assist, as far as possible, in the endowment of our colleges, and to co-operate

with the Board of Education, in sustaining them during the interval for which they may need aid.

6. *Resolved*, That this General Assembly has a deep sense of the importance of giving to its youth a Christian education in academies and colleges, on a more extensive scale than has been practiced within our bounds, and that for the purpose of contributing to some extent in promoting forward promising young men of suitable character, other than candidates for the ministry, the Board of Education are hereby authorized to apply to this subject whatever funds may be specifically appropriated by the donors.

BOARD OF PUBLICATION.

The Rev. Dr. Leyburn presented the annual report of the Board of Publication, whose increasing popularity and usefulness is giving it a strong hold on the interests and affections of the Church. From nearly the entire Calvinistic family, and from Christians of almost every name, the publications have received the strongest approbation. The mechanical execution of the books and tracts has been greatly improved. The receipts for the support of colportage and gratuitous distribution exceed by fifty per cent. those of the past year; the sales have increased in almost equal ratio. For the fiscal year ending April 1st, 1845, they were \$22,000; the year ending April 1st, 1846, they were \$42,000; and the year just closed, they have been \$60,000. Nineteen new books and seventeen new tracts have been added to the catalogue. Total number of books and tracts published during the year 430,000. Total receipts for the year, \$90,787 52. There have been granted to needy ministers, 1126 volumes; feeble churches 634 volumes; Sabbath Schools, 1201 volumes; hospitals, and other humane institutions, 174 volumes; literary and theological institutions, 245 volumes; ships and wharves, and military stations, 292 volumes; individuals for gratuitous distribution, 717 volumes; in addition to 250,000 pages of tracts. Donations have also been made through the Board of Foreign Missions, of books and tracts to the amount \$500, and by colporteurs of 5,325 volumes, and 228,151 pages of tracts.

One hundred and twenty-five colporteurs have been employed in twenty-four different States, the aggregate of whose labours are as follows:—Five spent, thirty days, four months and sixteen days; families visited, 40,800; covered or prayed, with, 22,151; families found destitute of the Bible, 1,893; Presbyterian families visited without the Confession of Faith, 2,237; volumes sold by colporteurs, 58,492; volumes granted by colporteur, 5,225; pages of tracts granted by colporteurs, 528,154.

The Sabbath School Visitor has had an almost unprecedented success, having secured 25,000 subscribers during the four months of its existence, and averaging one hundred new subscribers a day. The Assembly passed resolutions strongly approving the operations of the Board, and commending it to the increased favour and liberality of the churches.

DISMISSION OF MEMBERS TO OTHER CHURCHES.

Dr. Leland, from the Committee on Bills and Overtures, reported upon Overture No. 10, from the Presbytery of Baltimore, and submitting the following question: "Shall members of our churches, who may wish to join churches not in correspondence with the General Assembly, receive certificates in the same form as if they wished to join another church in our communion, or in correspondence with the Assembly; or has the church session done all that ought to be done, when in such cases the good and regular standing of the persons so applying is duly certified?"

On motion, the answer recommended by the Committee was laid on the table, and the following, after amendment, was adopted, viz: "This whole subject is one that ought to be left to the sound discretion of the various church sessions, according to the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church."

The subject involved in this Overture is one of the greatest practical importance. There is nothing on which our ministers and members are more sensitive, than on the question of Christian communion. There is no point on which the great body of them regard the teachings of the Word of God more explicit, and therefore as to no point are they more tenacious of their Christian liberty. We may here remark, that it is a great infelicity that overtures on such subjects should be so numerous. It is a common infirmity with many men to wish their opinions turned into laws. They think certain things right and expedient, and instead of being content to act on their own judgment, and allow others to act on theirs, they desire their view of the matter to be made obligatory on all their brethren. One good brother, because he thinks the use of organs in churches unauthorized and injurious, becomes very desirous that their use should be absolutely prohibited by authority. Another thinks that a regular dismission of a church member should be given only in certain cases, and he wishes his private judgment to be turned into a public law. In an extended Church like ours, there are few evils which ought to be more sedulously avoided, than excessive legislation. Leave as much liberty to all concerned as possible, if you wish to preserve peace and union.

As to this question of communion, it is well known that there are two very different views arising out of different theories of the nature and design of the Church. The one view is that of the great body of the Christian world, and is the clear doctrine of our standards. It assumes that the terms of Christian communion are unalterably fixed in the Word of God, and can be neither increased nor diminished by any human authority. This is one great principle. Another is, that nothing can justify the requirement of admission to Christian communion, which Christ has not made necessary to admission to heaven. In other words, that we are bound to