

be convinced of this fact. It is all nonsense to say or think that the people are represented in our Church courts through the elders. While in many of our congregations there are clever and capable men chosen as elders, yet in many others it is a deplorable fact that the elders are much below the average for intelligence, capacity and business tact. It is an undoubted fact that in many quarters and especially amongst the less intelligent members of the Church a sort of morbid sentimentality prevails which inclines them to mistake stupidity for piety. This notion, often fostered and encouraged by the minister, who wishes to surround himself with a session easily managed, can be and is frequently so manipulated as to lead to the appointment of elders entirely unfit for office. Of course these men answer the purpose for which they were intended by their appointer, but that they in any sense represent the people is absurd. When such men happen to sit in any of the Church courts they simply vote with their minister or as he instructs them, and that is often their highest ambition. Do we ever find such men reporting the true state of affairs existing in their own congregation to Presbytery unless thereby they could flatter the minister? But if a truthful report would seem at all to reflect on the efficiency of the "chief pastor," they are judiciously silent. This, we are persuaded, accounts for the fact that Presbytery knows nothing of how a congregation is doing until some eruption takes place. Were our Church government more in the hands of the people and less in the hands of the clergy, we have reason to believe that a different state of affairs would ensue.

Further, we generally find that in any controversy between a minister and his congregation, the Presbytery generally sides with the minister, right or wrong. This shows that our Church government is a pure ecclesiastical oligarchy—a close clerical corporation, jealous of its privileges and bound to lord it over the people. The writer is of opinion that an agitation to popularize our Church courts, and bring them more into harmony with this democratic age, would greatly strengthen Presbyterianism in the Dominion, and therefore ask you kindly to insert this as a feeler.

—OBSERVER.

#### CONVENTION OF CHRISTIAN WORKERS.

MR. EDITOR,—The Committee of the International Convention of Christian Workers have decided to hold their next convention in the city of Detroit from November 16 to 20, inclusive, and it is hoped that a general interest in the convention will be secured amongst the Christian workers throughout the Dominion. The convention is undenominational in the widest sense, and includes Christian workers, clerical and lay, and of both sexes, who are interested in the non-church-going classes; and, as the papers read and the discussions that take place are on the most practical subjects, the benefits of attending the convention are very large and important. The committee would desire to have the gathering thoroughly international and representative. I hope that any of your readers interested in this kind of work who may see this communication will endeavour to make arrangements to be present themselves, and besides stir up others to come. Arrangements will be made for reduced railway fares and hotel accommodation, of which due notice will be given later on. My object in addressing you thus early on the subject is in the hope that Christian workers in the different cities and towns in Canada will start at once to possess themselves of any needed information in reference to these conventions, and the work done at them, so that they may be in a position to answer enquiries and make the interest more general.

The last convention, which was held in New York City in September of last year, was most successful in every way. A verbatim report of the proceedings, papers read, discussions, etc., has been printed by the convention. This is the best class-book that could be put into the hands of any Christian worker. Copies may be had by addressing the secretary, the Rev. John C. Collins, English Hall, New Haven, Connecticut. The charge for a single copy is 60 cents, or two copies for \$1. I would be pleased to afford all necessary information to any that may desire it. Communications addressed to me at 28 Scott Street will receive prompt attention. I may add that Mr. W. H. Howland is the member of the Executive Committee of the Convention representing Canada.

Yours truly,  
Toronto, 30th April, 1888.

A. SAMPSON.

## Pastor and People.

### SYNOD OF TORONTO AND KINGSTON.

The Synod of Toronto and Kingston met on Tuesday evening last in Knox Church, Owen Sound. The Rev. John Somerville, retiring Moderator, preached an able and appropriate discourse on Song of Solomon vi. 1, 2. The Rev. D. D. McLeod, of Barrie, was elected Moderator for the current year.

On Wednesday leave was granted to the respective Presbyteries to take on trial for license the following gentlemen who had completed their theological course. Toronto—D. McKenzie, B.A.; A. B. Barron, B.A.; H. Fraser, B.A.; J. E. Shaver, J. J. Elliott, B.A.; J. C. Tolmie, B.A.; A. J. McLeod, B.A.; Kingston—Malcolm McKinnon, B.A.; J. N. H. Milne, B.A.; John McNeil, E. Belang, B.A.; Donald Munroe, William J. Fowler, M.A., and William J. Drummond, B.A.; Orangeville—W. E. Wallace.

Mr. J. K. Macdonald, of Toronto, Convener of the Assembly Committee on the Aged and Infirm Ministers' Fund, presented the claims of this Scheme to the Synod in a forcible and exhaustive manner. He showed that the total receipts from the Annuity Fund the capital fund and all other sources of revenue, were not sufficient to maintain the slender annuities paid to retired clergymen. For the past year the receipts would total at the most sanguine estimate but \$10,510.66, while the amount to be paid out reached \$11,759.55, leaving a deficit of \$1,248.89. This deprived each incapacitated clergyman of about \$20, which is no light matter to these men. Mr. Macdonald read the amounts contributed by various Presbyteries. Rev. Dr. McLaren, of Knox College, emphasized the points of Mr. Macdonald's address in a powerful speech, when Rev. E. D. McLaren, of Brampton, premising that this scheme could be better pushed by the young men of the ministry like himself, presented a resolution expressing the thanks of the Synod to Mr. Macdonald, expressing its sense of the great importance of the fund, and pledging its members to persistent endeavours to increase the contributions, and appointing the following committee to look after the interests of the fund in the Presbyteries to which they respectively belong. Rev. P. Straith, in the Presbytery of Saugeen; Rev. R. J. Beattie, Guelph; Rev. J. A. Grant, Toronto; Rev. J. R. S. Burnett, Barrie; Rev. J. B. Fraser, M.D., Owen Sound; Rev. S. J. McClelland, Orangeville; Rev. E. Cockburn, Lindsay; Rev. D. L. McRae, Peterborough; Rev. R. M. Craig, Whitby; Rev. A. Young, Kingston. This was seconded by Rev. J. B. Mullan, of Fergus, and called forth a hearty commendatory speech from Rev. Dr. Parsons, of Toronto, when it was endorsed by the Synod.

At the afternoon sederunt the report of the Committee on Sabbath Observance was read by the Convener, Rev. T. S. Chambers, of Kingston. The report, after summarizing the returns received from the various Presbyteries, recommended as follows: That more care be taken in the way of setting a good example; that the young should be carefully instructed in the principles of the Sabbath; that wholesome Sabbath literature be supplied to counteract the evil of mere secular reading; that the Sabbath law, both in its divine and human enactments and penalties, be printed in tract form and extensively circulated; that the various branches of the Christian Church unite to utter a vigorous protest against the encroachment upon the Sabbath made by corporations; that the Presbyteries be enjoined to appoint Committees on Sabbath Observance and to report annually through their committees to the Synod's Committee on this subject; that due prominence be given to this question in the ministrations of the pulpit; that parties in influential positions be incited to enforce the Sabbath provisions on our statute books. Three further recommendations were rejected by the Synod. Memorials on the subject were read from the Anglican Synod of Toronto and the Presbytery of Owen Sound, which were referred to special committees.

The clerk, Rev. Dr. Gray, read the report of the Board of the Brantford Ladies' College, in which the statistics of a most successful year were given. Principal T. M. McIntyre, LL.D., attributed the unsurpassed success of the past year to the increased interest felt and manifested by their people, and made a moderate but eloquent plea for the higher education of young women. He thanked the Synod for their aid in the

past and asked that it be continued throughout the next year. On motion of Rev. J. A. R. Dickson the report was accepted, pleasure was expressed at the success of the college, and Rev. Dr. Parsons was appointed visitor for the ensuing year. Flattering encomiums upon the institution were made in spirited addresses by Revs. D. J. Macdonnell and Dr. Parsons, one of the visitors of last year, and the Moderator.

In answer to the reference read from the Assembly's Committee on the Distribution of Probationers, it was agreed to enjoin all Presbyteries within the bounds of the Synod to acquaint themselves accurately with the terms of the Assembly's Scheme of Distribution, to be faithful in carrying out the Scheme, and especially in reporting all vacancies, to serve the order to obtain either full or partial supply through the committee in every case, and to see that probationers assigned to the Presbytery receive employment either in vacancies or elsewhere.

The next meeting of the Synod was appointed to be held in St. Paul's Church, Bowmanville, commencing at half past seven p.m. on the second Tuesday in May, 1889.

Rev. A. Young, of Napanee, presented the report of the committee on restoring the Memorial Church at Fredericksburg, the first Presbyterian congregation in Ontario. The report was received, the committee continued and the Synod urged to assist in the undertaking.

The Rev. J. A. R. Dickson presented the report of the committee on the State of Religion, which closed with the following recommendations: 1. That elders have districts assigned to them in all our congregations, of which they shall have oversight, for their furtherance in the divine life. 2. That it be an instruction to Sessions to take greater pains to ascertain what proportion of families within their bounds observe family worship. 3. That inasmuch as it is evident that the memorizing of Scripture by the young in our homes and in our Sabbath schools is not as general as could be desired, Sessions be asked to bring the subject to the attention of parents, superintendents and teachers. 4. That Presbyteries be recommended to prepare a scheme of evangelistic services, adapted to reach all congregations, ministers, elders and members to assist in conducting them. 5. That Sessions be asked to consider whether more might not be done to inculcate Temperance principles on the young by a more general instituting of Bands of Hope and the circulation of temperance pledges. 6. That special care be taken by members and Sessions to instruct the young people of the congregation in the Standards of the Church.

Rev. Dr. Parsons reviewed the report in an incisive address, when it was adopted.

The Sabbath School report, read by Rev. Dr. McTavish, of Lindsay, contained, among other statistics, the following: Total scholars, 33,730; average attendance, 22,896; communicants added to the Church, \$1,011; total collections, \$17,076. All these are in advance of last year. The committee recommended: 1. That the registers recommended by the General Assembly be adopted in all schools at once and that blank forms for statistics from schools and Presbyteries be upon and in harmony with the information recorded in the registers. 2. That the blank forms be issued as early as possible, so as to give Presbytery Conveners abundant time to collect statistics, and that the names of Presbytery conveners be sent to the Convener of the Sabbath School Committee for the Synod as soon as they are appointed. 3. That we urge upon pastors and Sabbath school teachers the necessity of giving those under their care systematic instruction in regard to the mission Schemes of our Church, and that all schools devote at least a part of their contributions to at least one or more of these schemes. 4. That all Presbyteries adopt some systematic mode of supervising and encouraging Sabbath school work, and of establishing schools in neglected districts. 5. That the twofold work of bringing souls to Christ and of building men up in Christ be ever kept before the teachers as the great aim of Sabbath school instruction. The report was adopted on motion of Rev. A. Young, seconded by Rev. Dr. Kellogg, both gentlemen making excellent addresses on Sabbath school work. On motion of Rev. R. D. Fraser, the following recommendation was added to the report: "That the Synod strongly emphasize the advisability of a regular weekly meeting of teachers for study of the lesson