

how best we may prevent the growing deterioration, and promote the better observance of a Day, which is the source of our rising nation's true glory, and the safeguard of all her most valued interests. In the neighbouring republic such conventions have proved eminently successful.

During the first three years of the eminent Dr. Justin Edwards' connection, as Secretary and chief Agent, with the American and Foreign Sabbath Union, organized in Boston in 1813, he attended fifteen general Sabbath Conventions, of which seven were State Conventions, at each of which from one hundred to five hundred delegates were present.

A Grand National Sabbath Convention was held in the city of Baltimore on the 27th Nov., 1814. It was presided over by the venerable John Quincy Adams, Ex-President of the United States, and attended by not fewer than seventeen hundred delegates, from eleven different States. To these efforts is mainly traceable the fact, that in a very short time numerous canals and railroads were closed on Sabbath, and mail routes to the extent of eighty thousand miles.

For several years past, agitation has been carried on in our Province on this great question. Sermons have been delivered; meetings have been convened; resolutions passed and petitions to the Legislature framed and forwarded.

These efforts, however, have been, at best, partial and temporary. They have been too spasmodic;—they have not been sufficiently simultaneous and sustained. Undoubtedly not a little good has been effected. Much valuable information has been communicated. Warm-hearted sympathy has been expressed. The tone of public sentiment has been rendered more healthy.

There has been, however, a lack of that thorough co-operation which is essential to success. Union is strength. This general union has been wanting;—not from any want of heart among the friends of the Sabbath, or unwillingness to labour in its advocacy, but from want of that system which is essential to combined action. We need to concentrate more thoroughly our energies and efforts. How best this might be effected would form a fit subject for the consideration of such a Provincial gathering. There are many other practical points connected with the general subject, on which, it is of the utmost consequence, there should be united deliberation. What seems specially required at present is, the organization of a "Sabbath Alliance," with its headquarters at a central point, and branches widely ramified through the Province. Thus would intercourse among the friends of the cause be promoted; information be more easily gathered and diffused; the practical expression of public opinion, when occasion required, be more expeditiously and effectually elicited, and that unity and system be imparted to the entire movement, which have been hitherto desiderated.

We would respectfully suggest to our esteem-

ed friends of the Kingston Sabbath Society, who have hitherto taken the lead in the matter, to correspond with the sister societies in Montreal, Quebec, and Toronto. Toronto, being the Seat of Government at present, would be the most suitable place of meeting,—and a Local Committee could easily be formed, by whom the details could be arranged.

R. F. B.

PUBLIC WORSHIP—ABUSE—NEGLECTS—SUGGESTIONS.

Under these heads we would call attention to some things which have long appeared to us important, in connection with the question of religious revival, or, the efficiency of christian ordinances. It has been matter of concern both to pious ministers and intelligent hearers of the Gospel, that the services of the sanctuary are not more productive of benefit,—at any rate, that the good results are not so palpable to the observation of either, nor experienced on so large a scale as might seem reasonable to be expected, from the number of our religious appliances and observances. While we would gratefully acknowledge hopeful appearances, and tokens for good, in not a few quarters, even at the present time, it must, we fear, be owned, that the arm of the Lord has not been very remarkably revealed among us of late, and it concerns us earnestly to inquire into the causes of the Spirit being comparatively withheld from Zion's assemblies; and to consider whether means be not within our reach—speaking humanly—of infusing a spirit of deeper earnestness into the devotions of the Church, and realizing more extensive benefit from the ministrations of the pulpit.

We do not count much on new and extraordinary methods of excitement, although we are not sticklers for use and wont. But our reliance is, under God's blessing, on our ordinary means and privileges. The existing machinery, we believe, needs only to be worked with greater power; or, speaking as Presbyterians, our Directory for worship needs only to be faithfully observed, in its spirit, not merely its letter, to secure all the effects which some have sought for, by copying the artificial modes of those called technically revivalists, or expected from some very decided change of hands, or fashions, whether in the preacher's, or precentor's department.

We are convinced that a deep responsibility lies both on the ministers and hearers of the word, for the present state of things, and we would, while lamenting our own as well as others' unprofitableness, propose some inquiries, at least pointing to a remedy.

We are never to forget that the primary cause, of whatever deadness or sickliness is seen to affect the spiritual body, lies deep in the alienation from God of our fallen nature. We must reckon on the power of the evil heart of unbelief in retarding the spiritual progress of the pious; and we are not left ignorant that the craft of the devil, and the entanglements of the world, are in constant combination with the indisposition of the flesh,

to choke the word, and render it unfruitful.

We think the following faults, common in some respects to all churches, may be remarked among Presbyterians; indeed being, in good measure, abuses of privileges they justly value:—

First, valuing the right of private judgment, "the member" takes too aptly the position of judge or critic, instead of earnest listener, and docile disciple, when he enters his pew.

Second, being a part of "the interest," he is satisfied to take account of the state of the congregation outwardly; or how the concern prospers: instead of solicitously asking, 'how is it with my own, and others' souls.'

Thirdly, happily relieved from the restraints of an imposed, exclusive, liturgy, he too easily contents himself to be present at the prayer, instead of really, mentally, praying, as he stands,—how often with vacant gaze,—to wait on the expressions, which the preacher meanwhile indites and enunciates—sometimes well weighed embodiments of devout thought and desire, sometimes less appropriate and less calculated to edify, and, it may be, tempting the too willing, wandering mind, to exchange at the footstool of the throne itself, the position of suppliant for critic.

We do not seek here to discuss the question, how far it is an advantage, or otherwise, for worshippers to pray with book in hand. We heartily approve of our existing plan, and, omitting all other considerations, believe that peculiar advantage belongs to our mode, especially in adaptation to the various changes of Providence, as well as the varying states of Christians. The advocates of a liturgy may not be without some show of argument in the benefit which they attribute to known and familiar forms of words, in comparison with the less premeditated expressions of the moment. But there are dangers on all sides; and some Episcopalians candidly own the disadvantage of being restricted to a stereotyped phraseology. Our business is, however, rather with our own temptations and dangers; and the Presbyterian who boasts the Bible—not the prayer-book—might well exalt prayer more, and love Bible and Sermon no less, in his estimate of the ends of Church-going. Would that not in phrase only, but in all its serious import, "I go to pray before the Lord" described the aim and purpose of him who sometimes interrogates his brother merely thus: "Whom do you go to hear?" or, "Where heard you to-day?"

Fourthly, as might be expected of him who waits on word or sacrament, without 'diligence, preparation, and prayer,' the work once done is rested in—the impression is evanescent as the cloud!

It is not Romanists alone who rely on the *opus operatum*—the act—the form—the charm. Less grossly, indeed, many Protestants in name imitate the error.

The 'member' has done his part. He has been with his people—heard the minister of his