

who clamour for such a system may probably be calculating upon the unhappy differences by which the Presbyterian Churches of Scotland are at present divided. It is true we are divided on many points; but, if any attempt is made to put a sacrilegious finger upon the Bible, and the whole Bible, as a book to be read and explained in schools, they shall find that we are all then as the bundle of rods, or the Scotch thistle with its motto, "*Nemo me impune lacessit.*" We have various parties in the political world, differing in many respects the one from the other, but let a foreign foe invade our land, and attempt to touch the Crown of our beloved Sovereign, then shall the whole population of Britain rally to a man in defence of our noble constitution, and all the contending parties of politicians will be found to be Conservatives; so now, in the religious world, with all our differences as to Church discipline, the propriety or impropriety of imposing tests on the teachers of the supplementary schools, on the general arrangements that may be found necessary, we are all at one as to Bible education—as to religious instruction. (Cheers.) And, should the attempt be made to give us any other system, such an alliance of protection for Bible education will stand forth as no Government can oppose or resist. (Cheers.) But again, I say that I do not believe any such intention is entertained, for there is not a body of Presbyterians in Scotland having any sympathy for that false liberalism which calls for education without a creed, or morality without its Heavenly motives. After apologizing for the length of his address the Rev Dr. sat down amidst much cheering.

#### EDINBURGH SABBATH SCHOOL ASSOCIATION.

THE Edinburgh Sabbath School Teachers' Association in connexion with the Church of Scotland was instituted in the month of July, 1848, for the purpose of encouraging a friendly intercourse and co-operation among those who are engaged in the work of instruction in the various Sabbath schools in Edinburgh and Leith in connexion with the Church of Scotland, and with the view of promoting the cause of Sabbath schools in general. It was felt that such an association was desirable, as the means of bringing together those members of the Church who are engaged in Sabbath school teaching, for the purpose of conference, mutual assistance, and prayer; and that by thus stimulating their zeal, animating their exertions, and suggesting improved methods of teaching, they might advance the cause of Sabbath schools, and impart increased efficiency to those already established.

Another important object of the Association is to aid in the formation of schools in those parishes where, from want of local agency or other causes, such schools are not in existence, or where the provision already made is inadequate to the wants of the locality. That many localities were in one or other of these predicaments was evident, when, from the statistics of the city, it appeared that there were thousands of children without Sabbath school instruction.

The object, then, of the Association may be stated as threefold. *First*, To maintain and improve the efficiency of the teachers. *Second*, To maintain the efficiency of the schools existing; and *Third*, To increase the number of schools. Seeking such high and important ends, we feel confident every Christian must rejoice in the statement made by the Committee in their first Annual Report, laid before their meeting in December last, that, though only a short period in operation, they have made some progress, and that already some good results have flowed from their operations. Parochial Sabbath schools have been opened in *three* parishes or districts around chapels of ease, where at the commencement of the Association none existed, and these are attended by many children who had not previously been at any Sabbath school.

To promote the objects of the Association, the Committee, every quarter, request from all the

Sabbath schools in connexion with the Church a report of the average attendance, during the quarter, of teachers and scholars; and request to be furnished with any information of interest connected with the school; such as the method of instruction pursued, or any other information which may be considered useful to be communicated for the benefit of others in conducting the school, or in carrying out of plans to help on the great object sought to be gained. The information thus received is submitted to the members of the Association, and their attention called to any points of importance that are communicated to the Committee.

From the Report for the quarter ending 31st March, 1850, laid before the Members of the Association at the meeting in April last, we find that 25 schools returned their schedules to the Committee, reporting an *average actual attendance* at these schools of 272 teachers, and upwards of 2500 scholars; the numbers on the roll being of course considerably greater.

Stated meetings of the Association are also held monthly for mutual conference and prayer; and that these opportunities of uniting together in devotional exercises, and supplicating a blessing on their labours, are highly prized, is evidenced by the increasing attendance. At these meetings, in addition to suitable devotional exercises, an essay or short paper on some practical topic connected with the teacher's duties, is read by one of the members, and all present are invited to state anything that has occurred in their experience which may tend to encourage and animate his fellow-labourers, or any point of discouragement, trial, doubt, or difficulty, on which he is desirous to obtain advice, co-operation, or sympathy. In this way, instead of going single-handed to their arduous undertaking, each teacher is animated and encouraged by knowing that there are others who take an interest in his progress, and who will join with him in his rejoicing, or mingle their tears with his, over any lost or irreclaimable wanderer from the fold of the Good Shepherd.

Such, then, is the important task which the Association endeavours to accomplish, and we feel assured that every Christian will most heartily bid them God speed. Let the prayers, therefore, of Christians ascend to the throne of God on high, that His blessing may be abundantly vouchsafed to all who labour for the salvation of the souls of the young, and that every measure taken by them may be directed by Him who cannot err, and may serve to bring about the happy time when all the children of our land shall be taught of God.

### The Presbyterian.

#### THE GREAT CONTROVERSY BETWEEN THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD.

When the inundation of barbarous tribes, by which the Roman Empire was overturned and its institutions swept away, rushed over the civilized world, it came in contact with the Christian Church and its teachers. Every thing else gave way before them; but, founded on the Rock of ages, still the Church of Christ continued to lift its head above the waters of this deluge, and amidst its wild commotions the ensign, unfurled for the gathering of the Nations, still floated on high. To this, according to their own word of prophecy, they began gradually to gather, and pitch their tents around it. It is interesting to mark in these troublesome times of lawless war and universal plunder and strife, as each roving band of devastating savages began to think of a settlement in their newly conquered territories, how, while

yet busy in marking out the bounds of their habitations, the sword still in their hands, and surrounded with the ravages of their brutal fury, the missionaries of the Gospel of peace everywhere make their appearance among them, inviting them to seek a better country, even a Heavenly, and calling those ruthless bands of rovers, whose mission seemed to be to take rest from the earth, to enter into the rest of the people of God. Our plan does not lead us to inquire how far many of their teachers themselves needed to be taught what be some of the very first principles of the oracles of God? They were ignorant of much which God had made known in His Word; but something also they knew, which it much behoved the world to know; and the love of the Truth, and a desire to communicate its saving influence to the whole family of man, was deep and strong in the hearts of many of these ignorant and superstitious, but single-minded missionaries, who counted not their lives dear unto them, so that they might preach among the nations what they knew of the unsearchable riches of the mercy of God in Christ Jesus our Lord, their Lord and ours.

During this period also, the contest between the Church and the World continued to be the same as from the beginning, a contest about receiving the Word of God, and submitting the whole man to its guidance. The champions of this principle did now indeed very generally join another object with it, that of establishing the power of the Church. This gave necessarily therefore a certain colour to their whole proceedings, and made the contest often appear very different from what it really was. As the cause of Christianity was in these times in the minds of Christians themselves confounded with the interests and passions of a visible Church and a hierarchy, it is not to be wondered at that those, who desire to put Christianity itself to shame, should seek to confound it with the sins and errors of those by whom it has been professed and propagated.

It is necessary however in our present inquiry to keep these things very distinct. What we wish to trace is the history of the religious element of our nature, attaching itself to the only living and true God through faith in the written records of those Revelations of His will, which at sundry times and in divers manners He spoke in times past unto the Fathers by the Prophets, and in these latter days by His Son from Heaven with His chosen messengers, the Evangelists and Apostles of the New Testament Dispensation. It is the history of this spiritual revolution in the world, and the spiritual influences, amid which it was carried on to which our attention is more especially directed.

The Word of God was the sure foundation on which rested the faith of all who in these ages were right-hearted men. The claim, which was addressed to the barba-