

REPORT ON SYSTEMATIC GIVING.

The Committee on systematic beneficence beg leave to report, that within the bounds of this Synod, the principle of systematic and proportionate giving, for religious objects, is gaining ground steadily and surely, though not so rapidly as your committee would desire, in view of the scripturalness of its character, its unfailing efficiency when honestly and perseveringly reduced to practice, and the urgent call for the adoption of some means to meet the financial difficulties that press upon our church as a whole.

Small congregations of very limited resources, who are acting on this principle, and who have adopted a modification of the method proposed by your committee, and sanctioned by the Synod on a former occasion, are known to your committee to be doing more for the schemes of the church than congregations of much larger size and of far greater wealth. In some instances, a small and poor congregation, acting on this principle, gives more for the support of the schemes of the church, than two and in some cases three congregations of superior resources where this principle is disregarded, and where no attempt is made to adopt any modifications of the methods recommended by your committee, and sanctioned by the Synod.

Single individuals, of limited means, are known to your committee, who have conscientiously adopted this principle, carry it forthwith into practice, and give more annually to the schemes of the church than whole congregations give, who disregard this principle. The same men are invariably the most liberal givers for the maintenance of their own pastors. But while these individual instances of congregations and members can be referred to as showing the gradual advance of this principle, and the adoption, to some extent, of the divinely-appointed method of supporting and extending the kingdom of Christ in this world, as far as human effort and human means are required; still, your committee cannot contemplate, without deep concern, the general disregard of both the scriptural principle and method of giving for the support and extension of gospel ordinance at home and abroad. Their conviction is strong and abiding that the church will be embarrassed in all her departments of labour, as long as she continues to disregard a divine principle and method, plainly set before her in the Word, and which is acted upon from year to year by a goodly number of faithful and humble ones, within her own bounds.

The committee would once more recommend that the Synod enjoin Presbyteries to urge this subject on the attention of the Sessions under their inspection, and that

Sessions be instructed to take such measures as may most effectually bring the whole subject fully before the congregation over which they are set; that every minister be enjoined to preach or lecture, at least once a year, on the subject; that the committee be authorized to prepare small circulars, stating from scripture the principle and motives of systematic and proportionate giving, to which subscription lists may be attached, and forward them to clerks of Sessions, for the use of collectors.

WILLIAM MURRAY.

REPORT ON SABBATH OBSERVANCE.

To the Moderator and other members of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of the Lower Provinces:—

In presenting their annual report, your committee on Sabbath observance direct your attention to what they believe to be two principal objects of their appointment. These are, keeping a watchful and observant eye on the manner in which the Lord's day is sanctified within your bounds, and reporting the progress that is made in this direction from year to year. This is a somewhat difficult duty, as those performing it are expected not only to report their own proceedings, but also, as far as possible, to call attention to any practice of Sabbath desecration which may prevail in any part of your extensive jurisdiction. Inverting the order above stated, your committee notice, first, the progress made during the year now closing.

The report of last year, contained a suggestion that the Presbytery of Halifax take up the question of sabbath observance in the city, with special reference to the fish market, then open on the morning of the Lord's day. This suggestion was early adopted. Your committee have now the gratification of reporting that the offensive practice referred to, has been discontinued. They cannot, however, definitely state whether this gratifying result has been partly obtained in consequence of the efforts of the Presbytery, or been produced by other causes. Progress in other places and in reference to other forms of desecration, is not so tangible. But you may believe that, under the influence of the numerous Sabbath loving pastors actively employed, real advancement has been made both in outward practice and inward spiritual obedience.

In reference to existing desecrating practices on the Lord's day, your committee feel it their duty specially to notice *pleasure-seeking*. The Almighty has allotted one day in seven for a very different purpose. Our duty, as well as our interest requires