

land, it were equally vain and foolish to offer such an excuse. Indeed, we are fully persuaded from what we have seen, that the fact cannot be accounted for on any other supposition than that the individuals referred to are totally destitute of all religious principles—that they feel neither interest or anxiety about their souls. If they really believed that there is a God whose honor and glory they are bound to promote, and that He will shortly be their Judge, before whose tribunal they shall be compelled to stand, and there to account for the use of their time, talents and privileges, would it be possible for them to live in the open neglect of such an obvious and important duty? Judging from their actions, we are reluctantly compelled to acknowledge that it is our conviction that unbelief in the first principles of our religion, lies at the foundation of this total neglect of Sabbath assemblies. But, in stating this, we do not mean to affirm that all who forsake the public worship of God, on such occasions, are capable of making an open and deliberate profession of atheism, or that they are in every case conscious of the principles which regulate their conduct. A thousand pretexts will easily suggest themselves as so many reasons to justify or excuse them, without their confessing or even suspecting the truth. Still, however, the simple fact of their habitual neglect of public ordinances, is demonstrative evidence that they have no realizing belief of God before their eyes—there is a secret and often unsuspected atheism, as well as an atheism that is open and avowed; and the one is just as dangerous as the other, in so far as the practical effects are concerned. If men verily believed in a future state of existence, and that they are destined at death to enter either into a state of happiness or misery, and there to continue forever, would they refuse to avail themselves of the precious opportunity afforded of waiting publicly on their God, every returning Sabbath? We do not assert that they are prepared to deny these solemn and important doctrines referred to, but we have no hesitation in affirming that they have no practical belief in them. If the truth with all its realities were engraven upon the souls of these individuals, doubtless its influence would be exhibited in their conduct, and that, so far from regularly absenting themselves, they would regard it as an invaluable privilege the opportunity presented, Sabbath after Sabbath, of meeting the people of God, to take sweet counsel together, to hear what God would say to them.

Various other excuses are alleged by these individuals to account for such a criminal neglect of one of the most important duties of the Christian religion, and as a sufficient justification of their conduct, which space does not permit us now to review.

Meeting of the Synod of Nova Scotia.

(Concluded.)

FIFTH SESSURUNT.

The Synod met on Monday morning, according to adjournment of Saturday, and, after devotional exercises, conducted by the Rev. A. W. Herdman, was constituted. Sederunt as before, with the exception of Messrs. McDougal, McDonald, McKenzie, Fraser and Matheson, who were absent.

A draft of Address to His Excellency, the Lieut. Governor, was produced by Mr. Martin, convener of the committee, and, after emendations, sustained and ordered to be signed by the Moderator, and members residing within the bounds of the Presbytery of Halifax were ordered to take charge of it and present it to His Excellency, as soon as convenient.

Leave was asked and granted to the Rev. John Martin, Superintendent of Missions, to introduce to the notice of the Synod the following engagement for the support of visiting Missionaries, which has already met with the approbation of private friends, and received their assistance and support:

HOME MISSIONARY EFFORT.

We the Subscribers, Members and Friends of the Church of Scotland, residing in Nova Scotia, sincerely lamenting the extensive religious destitution among the Presbyterians in the Province, and being desirous to contribute according to our ability, for the propagation of the Gospel among our fellow Colonists and fellow Christians, promise and bind ourselves to pay annually and each year for three years, the sums opposite our names respectively, to form a Home Mission Fund, for the support of six visiting Missionaries, under the direction of the Synod of Nova Scotia; one for the Presbytery of Halifax, two for the Presbytery of Pictou, two for the Presbytery of P. B. Island, and one for Cape Breton; to enable these Presbyteries to allow each of their Missionaries £50 a year for three years, in aid of their salaries, it being understood that a sum of not less than £300 shall be subscribed to carry this Scheme into full operation, and that the Synod render an annual account to the Subscribers of the amount of funds which has been expended, and the mode of their appropriation.

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After reading this missionary engagement, Mr. Martin stated that such an effort was both desirable and practicable; that the large number of Missionaries sent out during the past year, and the liberal assistance given to these Missionaries during that period, demanded such exertions as now proposed, and he also intimated that upwards of £160 had been already subscribed for this object, and that more than £100 had been collected and placed to the account of the Scheme in the bank.

It was then moved by Mr. McLean and seconded by Mr. Mair:

“That the Synod finding that Mr. Martin's Scheme, though a very laudable one, is a Scheme entered upon without the sanction of the Synod, and is, moreover, fettered with conditions rendering it, at present, unworkable, resolve not to interfere in carrying it out, but give their undivided attention to the Home Mission Scheme, already established by the Synod.”

It was moved in amendment by Mr. Pollock, and seconded by Mr. Lochhead:

“That the Synod having heard the statements of Mr. Martin, bringing before them a Scheme for raising money, in order to relieve the funds of the Colonial Committee for monies expended in the support of Missionaries sent to labor in Nova Scotia, tender its thanks to Mr. Martin for his past exertions in this matter, approve of the objects contemplated by this Scheme, engage upon members of this Court to co-operate with Mr. Martin in his endeavors to obtain subscribers, order a General Treasurer to be appointed to take in charge monies received, instruct the Clerk to make this Scheme known to the Colonial Committee, and resolve to make redoubled exertions, together with Mr. Martin, to raise the £300 required, in order that the Scheme may go into operation as soon as possible.”

The vote being taken, the amendment encouraging the subscription, was carried by a large majority.

Statements relating to the Young Men's Scheme, from James Fraser, Esq., and Mr. William Gordon, were read, by which appeared that the sum in hand amounted to £215 4s. 11d. It was resolved:

That the Synod, having received statements from these gentlemen, approve of the same, and order them to be kept in retentis. Also: finding that several congregations have not made contributions to this Scheme during the past year, express their hope that such neglect shall not occur in future; engage that the funds already collected for the Young Men's Scheme, be invested in the manner first intended, but deem it desirable that, for the future, all monies collected in aid of this Scheme be applied to the formation of bursaries, to assist in educating young men at Queen's College, Canada, and that a Finance Committee, to be afterwards appointed, take the details of this Scheme into their consideration, and report at next meeting of Synod.

The Report of the Committee for the Synod Fund was read, by which it appeared that the whole sum in hand amounted to £24 1s. 6½d., and all claims amounted to £5 1s. 9d. The Report was ordered to be kept, and claims to be paid as far as the funds would admit.

The Committee for the Home Mission Scheme, reported that the whole sum collected amounted to £120 6s. 8d. The Report was ordered to be kept in retentis.

In connection with these statements, it was unanimously resolved: