

REPORT OF THE SYNOD'S COMMITTEE ON SABBATH OBSERVANCE.

When the Sabbath is profaned, when the ordinances of religion are neglected, religion itself cannot possibly be in a prosperous condition. Residing at one of the extremities of the bounds of Synod, your Committee endeavored to obtain information on Sabbath observance from various parts of this Province, by writing to several members of Synod located in Nova Scotia and Cape Breton. Though this duty was attended to in the month of March, yet up to the time of leaving to attend the meeting of Synod, no answers were received with but one solitary exception. Consequently your Committee were reluctantly compelled to delay the preparation of their report till they arrived in Halifax, endeavoring then and there to obtain such information as might assist them in the discharge of their acknowledged duty. They trust that the circumstances in which they have thus been placed, will sufficiently account for the meagerness of the report which they have now the honor to submit.

Your Committee would first call the attention of your Reverend Court to the state of Sabbath observance, and afterwards offer some suggestions and recommendations on the subject. Commencing with Halifax, the capital of the Province, your Committee are sorry to observe that the holy Sabbath is not even externally observed in a proper and christian manner by large numbers residing in the city. Parties frequently spend a large portion of consecrated time in the vicinity of the city, engaged in various amusements—such as fishing and shooting. During winter, skating is also much practised on the Lord's-day. Horses and carriages kept at livery stables appear to be more in requisition on the Sabbath than on any other day of the week. Such a fact furnishes lamentable evidence that many prefer seeking their own pleasure to doing the will of the Lord on his holy day. The facts noticed in reference to Halifax, indicate a painful state of matters, and call loudly for serious consideration and decided action on the part of those who are the guardians of the truth, the conservators of public morals, and the witnesses for God in the land.

In other parts of the Province, especially in those in which the Presbyterian population predominates, your Committee cannot direct attention to any very flagrant or open violations of the sabbatical command. The services of the sanctuary are generally well attended, and the external propriety of conduct exhibited on the day of sacred rest, originates, your Committee trust, from a sincere and conscientious regard to the will and authority of Him whose right it is to reign. In some of the western parts of the Province, the Sabbath is by no means well observed. Visiting on that day, various amusements, and even fishing, are of frequent occurrence. In those parts of the Province, principally in the east, in which the Roman Catholics are numerous, they exert a very prejudicial influence on the due observance of the Sabbath. Your Committee have much pleasure in stating, that from information received the Lord's-day is religiously observed by the Protestant population in Cape Breton.

In Prince Edward Island, your Committee cannot report any decided improvement in Sabbath observance. In Charlottetown, the capital of the Colony, the weekly rest is somewhat well observed externally. At least one keeper of a livery stable absolutely refuses to hire horses to be employed on the Lord's-day, while others do little or no business on that day. Sabbath amusements are by no means common, with the exception of some walking abroad. One evil, however, exists to which your Committee would respectfully solicit attention. The principal market in Charlottetown, is held on Saturday, and is attended by large numbers, who in many cases reside at considerable distances from the city. Some of these, principally Roman Catholics, delay their return till Sabbath morning, and are frequently seen, with purchased wares or loaded carts, wending their way home on the dawning of the day of sacred rest, in some cases even during the observance of public worship. This gives much annoyance to the Protestant settlements through which they pass. A respected brother, Rev. Mr. Morrison, has been calling public attention to this subject, as he and his people are more immediately exposed to the annoyance referred to. Application has already been made by pe-