

time that would suit the convenience of the footballers.

Mr. Brown could not let the matter rest there, and made a representation to the Commander-in-chief, who gave his very careful consideration, and in his reply stated that while he does not approve of matches on Sunday, he is not prepared to prohibit them altogether, yet these amusements will be entirely prohibited when they are liable to disturb congregations during the hours of public worship."

THE CREED OF THE STUNDISTS.

The Stundists, who since 1870 have been the special object of persecution by the orthodox Church of Russia, are an evangelical and Protestant Church with reformed tendencies. In the Lord's Supper they see only a memorial feast, and most of them reject infant baptism. In fact, not a few of them will have nothing to do with the Sacraments at all. Their all-in-all is the Bible, which they read and study most diligently, both at home and in their meetings. Since 1864 they have published the New Testament in a pocket edition, and this is to be found in everybody's possession.

They are not skilled theologians, and as a consequence indulge in some religious peculiarities. They refuse to take part in war, and regard the taking of interest as sin.

They are also not satisfied with the existing agrarian property laws, and undoubtedly their ideas in this regard furnish the authorities with the basis for considering the Stundists in the light of a communistic or even an archistic sect.

And yet the Czar has no subjects so industrious, so moral, so order-loving and peaceful as are the Stundists. They are noted for their cleanliness, honesty and temperance. From the very outset they have banished that curse of the Russian peasant—intoxicating liquors.

The Stundists have no common Confession of Faith. They acknowledge only the Bible, in the interpretation of which, however, they do not entirely agree. They also have a fixed organization. In accordance with the Biblical precedent, they have presbyters and elders at the head of their congregations, for which offices they select older and experienced men. These take the lead in public services and officiate at marriages and funerals.

Although not theologically educated, they are expected to be thoroughly at home in the Scriptures. These officers, too, are enjoined to visit the congregation and further the unity of the Spirit. Subordinate to them are the deacons, usually active young men, who occasionally take the place of the elders in the conduct of public worship. They also keep the records of the congregations, and look to the needs of the young and of the sick. Naturally, these elders and deacons do not constitute a clerical order, but they labor with their hands, and serve in the congregation without any remuneration.

This organization has been seriously disturbed by the persecutions of recent years as the Russian State and Church authorities aimed their blows first and foremost at the leaders of the Stundists.

The public services of the Stundists are unique. They have no regular churches, but worship in some hall or generally in the largest room of some private house. At one end there is a table and a chair for the elder.

When the members enter they salute each other with the kiss of fraternal love. Women and men sit apart. Then a hymn is sung, and it is claimed by those who have attended that the singing of the Stundists is especially good. Some of the hymns have been translated into English. After the hymn, the elder reads a chapter out of the Bible and explains it, and each one present is privileged to make remarks.

The women, in compliance with St. Paul's injunction, are required to be silent auditors. They, however, are allowed to pray in public, which is always done in a kneeling posture. The services are closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Very significant is the Stundist order of marriage. The parents of the bride and bridegroom present the couple to the elder. The bride is first asked if she wishes to enter the estate of holy matrimony with this young man, and if she loves him, and if she is taking this step of her own free will and under no compulsion, not even that of her parents. When the bridegroom has answered similar questions, a hymn is sung and a prayer is spoken. Then the elder tells the couple to embrace each other and to grasp the right hands. This ends the ceremony. Of course this ceremony is not recognized by the law of Russia, as only the Russian Church can legally perform the marriage ceremony.—*Prof. G. Godet.*