

could be conducted with less difficulty and expense than in any part of Southern Asia.

2. The obtaining of missionaries. It appears essential to the success of this movement, as a Canadian movement, that at least one missionary be obtained, known in this country and in this Church, and possessing general confidence.—Prayer should be offered up continually that the Lord would provide a man after His heart, and incline him to the work.

Your Committee are of opinion that, if it be possible, two missionaries should be employed from the outset. It is suggested that, since it is difficult for a Colonial Church to spare even one efficient preacher or minister, an effort might be made to procure one missionary in the mother country willing to go forth to the Lord's work, under the direction of this Synod; and that the presence of some of the ministers of this Church in the mother country, during this summer, might be turned to advantage in making inquiry, and perhaps carrying this suggestion into effect. The Synod will bear in mind, that the Presbyterian Church in England has conducted its interesting mission in China almost entirely by means of labourers procured from Scotland. It may please God to raise up in Scotland or England a husbandman who would, on a proper application, accept a mission from this Church, and whom this Church would find it a pleasure and a privilege to employ.

3. The supply of funds for their support. The Church cannot expect to maintain two missionaries abroad and defray current expenses for a less sum than £750 or £1000 per annum. Your Committee, however, submit, that this is but a small sum for the Synod to raise—since it is not extravagant to expect that the congregations of the Church may have their sense of duty quickened, and their interest heightened, to such a degree as to double their present contributions—when, instead of the comparatively vague term "Foreign and Jewish Missions of the Free Church of Scotland," a distinct and definite object is placed before their minds, and brought to their consciences and hearts.

In regard to the support of a Foreign Mission, it is also suggested that the Synods of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick might be invited to co-operate—a co-operation which, if once entered upon, might lead, by the blessing of God, to future ecclesiastical intercourse between other Synods and this, with mutual pleasure and benefit.

In what mannersoever these detailed suggestions may present themselves to the mind of the Synod, your Committee do, in conclusion, respectfully express the hope that no narrow hearted apprehensions may be allowed to hinder the advancement of an object so glorious as this; and that this Church, thinking not so much of difficulty as of duty to the Saviour and his truth and the souls of men, may go forward, devising liberal things, and by liberal things she shall stand.

D. FRASER, *Convenor*.

REPORT OF SYNOD'S COMMITTEE ON THE SABBATH.

Your Committee have little to report this year. For a variety of reasons there has been a temporary suspension of action on those departments of the general question which have hitherto occupied our special attention.

The Sabbath Labour Bill, we regret to say, has been postponed till next Session. By a new rule, introduced this Session, such Bills could only be taken up on the Monday night, after seven o'clock; and as there were over 200 general bills in the hands of private members, and as many of them took up a whole night with a single measure, the progress down the list was very slow. When the Sabbath Bill was at last reached, the Prohibitory Liquor Law was anxiously looked for, and it was certain that if it was not brought up that night, it must go over for the Session;

and as there was strong hope of its passing, and some doubt as to the other, Mr. Brown yielded to the urgent entreaties of the Liquor Law friends, and gave place, by which the Sabbath Bill was sent back to the bottom of the list. Subsequently it came up again, but as only twenty of the Upper Canadian members were present at Quebec, Mr. Brown, after consulting with friends, resolved not to take a division, which might damage us next session. By that time Parliament will have removed to Toronto. And honorable members, released from the adverse influences which gag and fetter them at the headquarters of Popery in our Province, will speak and act more freely; and the whole question, by postponement, will stand a better chance. The memorials agreed on at last Synod were duly forwarded and presented. There is reason to believe that the *third Sabbath* in January—the time appointed by the Synod for simultaneous preaching on the subject—was pretty generally observed. Your Committee would suggest that this appointment be continued; and that, for variety's sake, it might be well for brethren residing near one another, to exchange on the above day, that the subject may get the advantage of fresh forms of illustration. While, in renewing the legislative movement in Toronto, advantage can be taken of the old petitions, still it would greatly increase the moral influence of the movement to pour in a flood of new ones. It is therefore strictly urged on Presbyteries, Sessions, and Congregations to repeat their memorials in cases where they have been already sent, and to adopt measures for immediately forwarding such memorials, where the duty has, as yet, been entirely neglected.

It is earnestly and affectionately pressed on the sessions to do what in them lies in the way of preventing visiting, travelling, and other popular forms of Sabbath desecration among members of the Church.

In the event of any effort being made by any of the railway companies, during the year, to run trains on the Sabbath, it is urgently recommended that, in every competent way, a fair and faithful protest be lifted against such a course.

The most encouraging feature of the past year has been the signal defeat sustained by the enemies of the Sabbath, in the British Parliament, in connexion with the motion to throw open certain places of public resort. It is encouraging also to notice the marked success that has attended the efforts made in the parent country, and the neighbouring Republic, to suppress on the Sabbath the sale of intoxicating liquors. The success of the experiment of suppression, made on the one day, will furnish a powerful practical argument in favour of its being tried on all the rest.

In spite of these encouraging facts and features, which the past year supplies, there is not a little to excite apprehension. But if the friends of this blessed institution be only faithful and true, they will eventually, in the exercise of fortitude and faith, remove mountains, put to flight the armies of the aliens, and cause their weapons—not carnal—to prove mighty in the pulling down of Satan's strongholds.

ROBERT F. BURNS, *Convenor*.

REPORT ON THE STATE OF RELIGION.

It is impossible to overstate the importance of the matter on which this Committee is appointed to watch. This lies at the heart of all our Church movement, even of our Church life. It avails nothing, that the Church presents evidence of outward activity and extension, unless this be accompanied by corresponding inward vitality.

The matter being of such moment, your Committee recommend it to the grave consideration of the assembled administrators of doctrine and discipline, in order that all may examine their own position in reference to this subject, and humble themselves before God. It is an opinion frequently expressed, and perhaps too well

founded, that the time of the Church Courts is occupied too much in the discussion of questions that are paltry in character, and lead to unprofitable disputation, and far too little in consultation on the condition of the Lord's work, and the best means of promoting the Lord's glory.

Your Committee have brought the subject on the State of Religion under the consideration of all the pastors, by a circular and series of queries issued by the Conveners. The object in view was to induce every minister to define to his own mind, certain defects and desiderata in the religious condition of the flock, and to obtain for the Synod, detailed information from all parts of the wide field cultivated by this Church. It is matter of regret that, the returns are imperfect, since the 100 circulars issued have received no more than 44 replies. These, however, have come from all parts of the country—the various Presbyteries being represented as follows—

London	7
Hamilton	4
Toronto	8
Cobourg	5
Kingston	2
Brockville	1
Perth	4
Montreal	13

—44.

A considerable number of these returns are drawn up with thought and care, and with an evident interest in the great subject of which they treat. The chief points touched upon are these—the signs of progress of religion—the hindrance to such progress—the cultivation of the grace and gift of prayer—the state of family religion—and the promise of piety among the young. Your Committee beg to present in brief, the information received on these points.

1. The signs of progress. In a great many cases, the returns fear that there are no very visible signs—no marked symptoms of progress. This is a state of things which weighs heavily on the faithful pastor's heart, and which, when common, ought surely to awaken the anxiety of the Church at large. In the more favourable returns on this point, notice is taken of the enlargement of the congregation—earnest attention to the preaching of the word—and increased liberality in the promotion of religious objects. Some make mention of particular cases of conversion. On the other hand, a considerable number state with grief that, so far as known, there are no instances during the year of decided conversion to God. The candor with which this acknowledgment is made, is entitled to sympathy and respect. Your Committee would not be understood as desirous to have arithmetical returns of converts—would not irreverently present the results of the systems of nations of sovereign grace, as a matter of ordinary statistics, yet the fact being so reported, the committee must beg to suggest it as a question for serious scrutiny, what it is that hinders the decided conversion of souls—whether the fault lie in a stolid uninteresting mode of preaching the word, in the neglect of private and public application of the truth to human conscience, or in the restraint of prayer for the presence and power of the holy spirit, or in all these causes combined?

When saving blessings have been received, they are said (with very few exceptions) to have attended the ordinary means of grace, often in connection with affliction sent in the providence of God.

Attendance on public worship in the sanctuary is generally reported in favorable terms. It is noticed, however, by ministers in some rural districts, that even when the Church is well filled on the Lord's day, the congregation consists almost entirely of the recognized Presbyterian families, but a considerable proportion of the young people born in Canada, nominal Protestants, attend no Church, or all Churches indiscriminately, and are sadly ignorant of the first principles of divine truth. This suggests the remark, that a Church,