

fact that the collections taken in the schools for missions last year amounted to \$463, contributions from other special sources swelled this sum to a little over a thousand dollars. This is well on towards the total cost of this work to the Foreign Mission Committee.

#### THE MERRITON CARBIDE CASE.

**T**HE victory of the Lord's Day Alliance in the Merriton Case has been followed by an action taken on behalf of the Metropolitan Railway, attacking the constitutionality of Provincial Legislation, taking the cue from the decision of the Maritime Province Court. While the suit is in progress, and the result doubtful, some comfort can be rightly taken from the Merriton decision. Here the point at issue was whether or not under the Lord's Day Act the Carbide Company could operate its works continuously—during Sundays as well as on week-days. Magistrate Hall decided that the work cannot be carried on on Sundays.

The defence claimed the work to be one of necessity, that a cessation on Sundays would involve loss of material and practically render the manufacture of carbide commercially unprofitable. The evidence in support of this contention, the Magistrate found to be "weak and trivial, and unworthy of serious notice." On all points he found against the defenders, holding that no case of necessity had been made out, and that the operation of the works on Sunday would be a clear violation of the Lord's Day Act. The decision, then, has been a vindication of the course taken by the Alliance whose agent, Mr. O'Meara, deserves the thanks as well as the congratulations of all interested in the observance of the Sabbath. It is to be hoped an equally satisfactory decision will issue from the Metropolitan Railway Suit.

From the west comes the news that steps are being taken to impress upon the Manitoba Legislature the necessity of enacting laws for Sabbath observance. The other day numerous signed petitions were presented, to that effect, and efforts are being made to have the views of the petitioners embodied in the statutes.

#### RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

**T**HE discussion of this question by the Ministerial Association of Toronto and the conclusion practically reached by that body, has attracted much attention throughout the country. This is not to be wondered at, for the Toronto ministers have led in this question for many years, at least since the days of the Ross Bible controversy. The opinion expressed with practical unanimity by the Association is that it would be extremely difficult, if not altogether impossible to arrange a religious programme of study which would satisfy the religious bodies concerned and which would be accepted by them. This view has been held by many thoughtful educationists who know the strong bias in some quarters for sectarian teaching, but on the other hand the opinion has been very general, and very influentially supported, that an unsectarian syllabus would not be impossible, and in fact that such a syllabus ought to be provisionally tried. In discussions in the church courts some time ago, it will be remembered that this view was sanguinely supported and on the whole thought feasible. In the separate school campaign this view was insisted upon, as providing a *via media* between separate, sectarian schools, on the one hand, and "Godless" or secular schools on the other. And the

arguments in its favor to-day are strengthened by the facts of experience. Dr. Wilbur Crafts, the sociologist and publicist cites the case of the Pennsylvania Reform school at Morganza, as an apt instance. He says:

The school question is, Can the common Christianity be taught in the common schools in an unsectarian manner as the necessary basis of common Christian morals?

And the answer is:

It can be, for it has been.

In the case cited, that of Morganza, Dr. Crafts shows that a hand book for religious teaching was compiled by Rev. Father Canevan, of Pittsburg, a Roman Catholic priest; that the bishop of the diocese approved of the text-book, that it was submitted to Protestant authorities and approved of by them, and then adopted as the text-book for the school, where to the satisfaction of all concerned it has been used by Protestant teachers, in conjunction with the International Sabbath School Lessons as expounded in the American Sunday School Lessons (undenominational). Of course this case affords no proof that what works in Pennsylvania would work in Ontario where denominational feeling is very strong. Yet the signs of the times seem to point to a drawing closer in spirit of the Protestant bodies in Canada, and to an increasing charity in the relations between Roman Catholics and Protestants. If it is possible, as has been shown, to devise lessons acceptable to Protestants and Roman Catholics in one State of the Union, hope should not be abandoned that in a public school system such can be possible in Canada. That the question is one beset with difficulties there can be no doubt. That is obvious to all. But thoughtful, patriotic minds have solved greater difficulties in the past, and the church should not be unprepared with a reasonable solution in the future should an occasion for it arise.

#### CLOSE OF THE FISCAL YEAR.

**T**HE fiscal year closing to-day leaves some of the most important funds of the Church in debt, or with deficits. The Augmentation Committee which met on Tuesday, as also the Foreign Mission and the Aged and Infirm Ministers' Committees are in this regrettable condition, from which it is to be sincerely hoped belated contributions will still relieve them. It should be needless to urge on congregations and on well-to-do individuals the great urgency of the work with which these Committees have been entrusted. Our columns have ever been open to statements describing that work and to appeals for adequate support. We have some time had to regret that ministers do not bring the Schemes of the Church more prominently than many of them do, before their people, and when we receive appeals from the conveners of committees, or reflect on the worry entailed on committees in trying to make ends meet, we feel that with energetic pulpit co-operation the worry and difficulties would almost all disappear. It is not yet too late for ministers to make a determined effort to aid the needy funds, and on them more than on any other agency of the Church lies the responsibility for famished exchequers.

Among those selected for the honor of "D.D." by the Montreal College are Revs. Wm. Gillies, M.A., Kingston, Jamaica; J. L. Murray, M.A., Kincardine, Ont.; who has long held a prominent position in Western Ontario, and who will adorn the honor so deservedly conferred upon him; and Peter Wright, B.D., Portage La Prairie, a tried minister whose services to the church have been varied and valuable. We congratulate Montreal College on its selection and the new D.D.'s on the distinction for which they have been chosen. Convocation will be held on April 6th.