

The Presbyterian Review.

NOTICES

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THURSDAY, JULY 8TH, 1886.

PUBLIC NOTICE.

In order to meet the requirements of their rapidly growing business, the Presbyterian News Co. Toronto, have changed their offices from 31 York Chambers, Toronto St., to 26 and 28 FRONT STREET WEST.

In consequence of this change it is particularly requested that in future all communications relating to the business of the Presbyterian News Co. and the "Presbyterian Review," be addressed to "Presbyterian News Co. Toronto."

All communications for the Editorial, Literary, News and Miscellaneous columns of this journal should be addressed to the Editor of the "Presbyterian Review."

GEO. H. ROBINSON, Manager.

THE SABBATH SCHOOL COMMITTEE AND ITS REPORT.

DR. JARDINE and his committee have evidently used all diligence to secure a full and complete report of the Sabbath school work of the Church, and the tabulated returns presented are of a gratifying character. They contain information, accurate and reliable, upon most of the points of interest. But it is disheartening to find that in various presbyteries there are many non-reporting schools, and that three presbyteries—Newfoundland, Wallace, and Owen Sound with an estimated aggregate of 73 schools—are represented only by dotted lines. Indeed the "Report on Statistics" is, as far as it goes, more satisfactory in regard to the schools than the Sabbath School Report itself, returning 1,761 more workers, and 12,937 more scholars than the latter.

This state of things is really too bad, and if it is to continue, the Sabbath School Committee should be relieved of the duty of collecting statistics altogether. This would be extremely unfortunate, for the "Report on Statistics" must, of necessity, limit the items in regard to Sabbath school work to two or three, whilst there are a dozen points, at least, on which information is to be desired. The committee suggest an effective remedy for defective returns. "The Sabbath schools should be supplied with the means of recording such facts as the Church would like to know; and there should be established a simple and systematic process of reporting these facts to the presbytery, synod, and Assembly." In other words, uniformity in recording and system in reporting. The series of record books prepared by the committee, and issued by The Presbyterian News Company, Toronto, under their direction, meets the case. It has received the approval of many presbyteries, of three synods, and won the distinct endorsement of the General Assembly. It is having a pretty wide trial during this year, and we shall be disappointed if the good effects thereof are not evidenced in more satisfactory returns to next Assembly. Given, in every presbytery an enthusiastic convener, one who will not merely serve up for the synod the returns sent in, but insist that every school shall be heard from, and there is no reason why our Sabbath schools should not show as complete reporting as the assessment rolls. It is hoped that presbyteries' committees will press more vigorously than ever for full and accurate returns from all the schools.

It is pleasing to observe that there is a steady out-flow of liberality to missionary objects—last year nearly \$20,000, from about 100,000 scholars. But, after all, what is this? Not half a cent per Sabbath for each scholar. Some schools, of course, are far in advance of this paltry sum. A few give even munificently, but the want of heart in many, and the want of system in many more, and the entire neglect of the duty in no small number, bring down the average woefully. In some by no means back-bush presbyteries less than one third of the schools do anything for the mission cause. Presbyteries and sessions should give this matter their immediate and most earnest attention.

The year has proved a fruitful one in additions to the communion roll from among the scholars, no less than 2,735 having been so added, as against 1,777 in the preceding year. There is reason to believe that the great body of our teachers are faithful to their high calling and to the souls under their guidance, and will therefore give diligent heed to the recommendation adopted by the Assembly:—"That all superintendents and teachers be exhorted to seek, first, to bring the children of the Church into living union with Christ and the communion of the

Church, and not to forget the training of the young to assist in the work and support of the Church."

We are quite in sympathy with the further recommendation—"That all presbyteries take some suitable means to exercise closer oversight of the Sabbath schools, either by the formation of Sabbath school associations, the holding of special conferences, or in such other way as may seem to them best." We would reckon on great benefit from presbyterial conferences such as are held in some places, in which all Sabbath school workers are invited to take part with the members of presbytery. If these are brought into use generally, there will be little need of separate associations. The main ends to be sought are the recognition, encouragement, and instruction of those engaged in the work, the drawing out of more sympathy towards the schools on the part of the people, and the promoting of a more general interest in Bible study. That the presbytery, as a presbytery, concerns itself in the least with such matters, many, possibly the majority of Sabbath school scholars and teachers, never dream.

Perhaps the experience of former committees has discouraged that of last year from direct effort in the matter of teacher-training; but there is no point which is of more urgency. It is quite possible to have equipments and organization, and discipline, well nigh perfect, and withal the utmost incapacity in the imparting of instruction. This should not be left to hap hazard. A congregation is not more likely to take tone from the pulpit, than is the school from the teachers' chairs. Measures should be adopted in every congregation for the promotion of efficiency in teaching. It is not enough that "Helps" shall be put into the hands of the staff. These are largely undigested and sometimes undigestible material; in cases that might be mentioned, indigestible, because so extremely watery. Probably on the same lines as those followed in the preparation of the public school teachers ought our Sabbath school workers be trained. They should be taught to untie the two hard knots of how to master a lesson and how to know others how to master it. We are not without hope that a Training Institute for each presbytery, to meet for some weeks during the slacker season of the year, in some central place, may yet become the rule. We certainly believe that a judicious normal course, under the general direction of the Assembly's committee, would be of great benefit, and we trust that there may be some feasible plan forthcoming on this point by another year. We would welcome, as a first instalment, "correspondence" training classes, like those of Dr. Worden in the American Presbyterian Church. The teachers' meeting, an indispensable aid to lesson study, should also be encouraged, and should find a place in future reports.

We can see no good cause why the column for attendance on the adult Bible classes, which has appeared in former reports, should have been dropped this year. There is every reason for its being replaced. How to retain especially the big boys in the schools, is, as yet, an unsolved question. Our strong impression is that masterful teaching, on the one side, and the general attendance of men who are no longer boys, on the other side, will so hem in the growing lads that there will be no decent exit for them. It is of importance that every school which has been able to keep its elder scholars, and every school which has gathered the adult element into its classes, should receive due credit in a separate item of the statistical return.

The newly appointed committee, which is, we see, to be marshalled under the old convener, will doubtless be enabled to present a much fuller report of statistics and of work done to the Winnipeg Assembly than that of the past year. They have a right to look to the conveners of presbyteries' committees for the most hearty assistance in the matter. Next to the home and the ministry, the Sabbath school has the largest part in the answering of the question, "What shall the Church of the coming generation be?" It is worth while to strive earnestly that it shall be all that a thoroughly taught and trained army of Sabbath-school scholars can, under the blessing of God, make it.

ECHOES FROM THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

THERE is no difference of opinion in the Church as to the conduct of the business of the last Assembly by the worthy Moderator and the other officials upon whom the burden principally fell. Perhaps some of those who were absent may have noticed defects in the management of the Assembly, but all who were present are agreed that they never attended a more pleasant or profitable meeting. Of course this is due partly to the fact that there were no burning questions to discuss and no judicial work to do, but doubtless very much is due to the Moderator and to the brotherly spirit which was manifested by all the members.

Before the memory of the Assembly passes away we desire to point out some improvements which may yet be made in the interest of the Church at large and those who may be members of future Assemblies.

Much valuable time was lost through no docket of business being printed and distributed and no fixed order preserved in the bringing up of the items of business. Conveners, it was noticed, found a place for their reports only by dint of much importunity and marvellous patience. If an order of business were agreed upon on the first day of meeting, and as far as possible each item disposed of before going on to another, members could tell at any stage how far the business had proceeded, and when the subject in which they were specially interested was

likely to come up; and if this general order of proceedings were supplemented by a daily programme placed in the pews each morning, the business would be further facilitated.

There was some little discussion with regard to the possibility of having all the printed reports stitched together and a copy put into the hands of each member. Some thought this impracticable, a view with which we do not agree. At any rate, we think it a sad pity that there should be such waste as takes place always through the promiscuous scattering of reports in the pews. At St. Paul's Church the Assembly left behind it as many reports as will serve to light the fires for some winters to come. We trust that whoever is chairman of the local committee at Winnipeg next year, he will signalize our visit by getting from the various conveners their reports a day or two before the Assembly meets, having them stitched together and a copy sent to the lodging of each member in time for him 'thoroughly to acquaint himself with the Assembly's business before it begins.

But we come now to a more important matter about which we have already had something to say and about which we expect to have a good deal more to say—the method of appointing the standing committees of the Church. A proposal on this subject, it will be remembered, was sent down to presbyteries three years ago; but although a large majority of the presbyteries were in favour of the proposed changes, the matter was quietly allowed to drop. The time, however, has now come when these reforms must be instituted and an end be put to the unseemly discussions which arise every year through the changes made being unsatisfactory to those who are best able to judge. The simple remedy for all the heart-burning and difficulty which has done so much injury in the past, is to elect the members of these committees for three years only, one-third retiring each year. By this means the work of these committees would be more fairly distributed, all the members would know the reason for their names being dropped and all would have the opportunity of becoming thoroughly acquainted with the work of the Church. The Church is not aware how many ministers and elders have been hurt by being put on a committee for a single year and then dropped without having any idea why they have been so treated. We trust that overtures from all the presbyteries on this subject will be sent up to the next Assembly, and that our Church will fall into line with other Presbyterian Churches all over the world in the method of appointing standing committees. In this connection we notice that the standing committees of the American Presbyterian Church are composed of an equal number of ministers and elders. Surely that is only right, seeing that all our courts are made up of an equal number of each class. But on other grounds this change is desirable. This system would give the Church the benefit of the business skill of many who now can take but little active interest in her work, and it would also lead to a knowledge of the work which would tend towards the development of largely increased liberality.

One more suggestion we would respectfully offer for the consideration of the Church. The devotional exercises of the Assembly were much enjoyed, and we trust that such prayer meetings as were occasionally held for an hour before the opening of the Assembly, may come to be an established rule. But would it not be very profitable to open the meetings by partaking together of the Lord's Supper? Brethren meet brethren there from whom they are severed by thousands of miles throughout the year and it would doubtless draw them closer to each other and prepare them to enter on their work in a right spirit if they began by remembering Our Lord at His table.

We shall be glad to hear the views of our readers on these matters, and in the meantime we will unitedly give thanks to the King and Head of the Church for His manifest presence in the Assembly.

A WORD TO OUR FRIENDS.

FROM the announcement in these columns last week, and repeated to-day, it will be seen that we have taken another and a long step forward. We have entered larger and more convenient premises, and have added greatly to our facilities for producing the REVIEW, and for the prompt and satisfactory dispatch of all kinds of printing and publishing. The facilities now at our immediate command are not surpassed by those of any other printing and publishing house in the Dominion.

No good work can be entered upon in this world without some opposition, and our readers need not be surprised to learn that we have had our share of this stimulating experience. We, too, have been fighting the beasts at Ephesus, metaphorically speaking. However, we are very glad to say, all the petty annoyances and contemptible tricks which were meant to do us injury have only tended to strengthen our position and to increase our circulation. Now as we are widening our sphere of usefulness we wish again to reiterate our determination to do what service we can to the Church, and to render the REVIEW more and more useful to her life and growth. We believe that the REVIEW has done the Church some service in the short time it has been in existence, and we trust by God's blessing to increase and extend that influence in the coming years. We hope to maintain our entire independence of all political or ecclesiastical partyism, but at the same time to be careful of giving unnecessary wounds or rousing unnecessary animosities. We wish to show that we are seeking the spiritual good of our people, and

desire to be animated in our utterances by the spirit of Christ.

We would take the opportunity of calling the attention of all our readers and ministers, especially, to the fact that we have now secured unsurpassed facilities for carrying on our publishing and printing departments, and that they will consult their own interests by communicating with us when they have any printing or publishing to do. The Church also has a large amount of printing to be done for it annually, and now that we are in a position to undertake all such work we would be glad to have an opportunity of making tenders on equal terms with other establishments. Hitherto, in a number of instances, this opportunity has not been afforded us, but we trust in the future the Church will see to it that the good business rule of calling for tenders will be observed, and that her interests will be duly protected wherever the spending of money is involved. All we ask is a fair field and no favour.

In entering upon our new premises we would again thank in this public way all those who have taken an interest in our welfare, and who have contributed to our success. We trust they will still continue their good offices and further assist in increasing the circulation of the REVIEW and the general expansion of our business. In turn we hope to be able to show ourselves more and more worthy of their confidence and support. Meantime we shall be glad to see our friends at 26 and 28 Front St. West.

TICKETS FOR HEAVEN.

A GENTLEMAN in Halifax, Nova Scotia, recently received a letter from Rev. L. G. Auclair, priest, St. Cœur de Marie, Quebec, enclosing "ten tickets for Heaven." Kindly help us. The Holy Virgin will recompense you. During six years we shall say holy mass for our benefactors. Assembled in the chapel every evening we shall pray for them. Have courage; there is a good chance for you. I have heard a favorable report of you. That is why I hope you will not refuse us.

This letter was written a fortnight ago. We have a sample of the ticket for Heaven. The following is the inscription on the first side (translated):—

Ticket for Heaven. Twenty five cents. The Catholic Church is the way to Heaven. Without the Church no salvation.

For the next six years a mass will be said at the Cour de Marie every month for those who buy these tickets. Imprimatur, E. A. TASCHEREAU, Archbishop of Quebec.

On the other side of the ticket there are given DIRECTIONS

For voyageurs who are travelling towards Paradise:— DEPART:—At all hours. ARRIVE:—When God pleases.

PRICE OF PLACE: 1st class. Innocence and willing sacrifice. 2nd class. Penitence and confidence in God. 3rd class. Repentance and resignation.

NOTICE. 1st. There are no return tickets. 2nd. There are no pleasure trains. 3rd. Children who have not arrived at the years of understanding, pay nothing, provided they are held on the lap of their mother, the Church. 4th. It is requested that no other baggage than that of good works be carried if one does not wish to lose the train, nor experience any delay at the station before the last. 5th. Passengers are taken on all along the line.

And this, be it noted, is the way these things are done in the Province of Quebec, with the direct imprimatur of that distinguished personage Archbishop (now Cardinal) Taschereau. We think the foregoing is a pretty urgent plea for French evangelization. This way of getting people to Heaven would be startling enough to Peter and his brother apostles.—Halifax Presbyterian Witness.

And this is the man whom the Pope of Rome delights to honor. This is the man who is now the leader of the Roman Catholics of Quebec. Truly the claim of the Church that she never changes is well sustained! We agree with our esteemed contemporary that "the foregoing is a pretty urgent plea for French Evangelization."

HIS WORSHIP MAYOR HOWLAND is earning the gratitude of all good citizens by an active crusade against public vice and immorality. Thanks to his vigorous administrations of the law, haunts of infamy are being broken up, the unlicensed sale of liquor greatly restricted, and generally, everything offensive to good morals banished the city. By his efforts the notorious Police Gazette and corrupting publications of kindred nature are to be shut out of the Dominion. Indecent photographs and posters are to be prohibited under penalty of a severe fine. All this is very satisfactory, Mr. Howland is nobly redeeming his promises to the electors, Soon this city will have good right to be considered materially and morally clean.

We would ask the attention of our city readers especially to the letter of "Fidus" in another column. Our correspondent has had unusual facilities for becoming acquainted with the spirit that obtains in arranging for the religious training of the young in our charitable institutions, and the revelations he makes are not calculated to set us altogether at ease. The matter deserves looking into, and we promise our correspondent that we shall not lose sight of it.

In view of the recent action of the Assembly with regard to Jewish Missions, the paper of Rev. A. Ben Oziel, Missionary in Rome of the British Society for the Propagation of the Gospel among the Jews, will be read with much interest. We shall be glad to give a portion of our space for the discussion of the proposition to organize a Hebrew-Christian Church.

We have received from Dr. Cochrane, too late for insertion in this week's issue, a letter from Rev. T. G. Thompson, the Presbyterian minister in Vancouver City, lately desolated by fire, making a touching appeal for aid.