

surveillance, or when volunteers are in camp and consequently away from the regular churches. I see good reason for their going to church or churches in proper order and under proper discipline, but in neither of these cases do I see the reason for the presence of the trumpet and the drum. It is said by eminent military critics that men cannot keep time in marching unless music accompanies. That may be so, and it may be all very pretty and very nice to see men keeping their right legs all waving at one and the same time; but I have yet to get some good reasons that this is a necessary preliminary to devotion to God, or that a body of men who walk to church and are not in step cannot have their prayers heard or their praises listened to just as readily as if they had observed the most mathematical preciseness in their locomotion. But what is to be said in favour of our volunteers turning out in uniform with music, marching to the Queen's Park and to church on a Sabbath afternoon? If they can worship any better in this way by all means let it be done every Sabbath day morning, afternoon and evening, and we will do our best to discipline and control our Sabbath school children by special efforts. But why must the city volunteer who has his own church to go to morning and evening in ordinary attire, why must he have the privilege of attracting public attention by putting on his uniform and marching with fife and drum accompaniment on a Sabbath afternoon, and thus disturb the labour of hundreds who need to be encouraged rather than have the slightest stone of stumbling cast in their way? Can a man pray more fervently with a leather belt around him, or can he listen more attentively to and draw deeper soul draughts of the divine teachings if he has a red stripe on his clothes or an ornament in his hat? If he can, then let us all get the belt, the stripes and the hat. If he cannot, let him stay at home or go to church like an ordinary citizen. But, again, why is this extraordinary outburst of military piety at this particular time? The Queen's birthday was approaching and no doubt a parade on the preceding Sabbath was exceedingly useful in getting up the proper military form, tone, and (you know)—the week days being necessarily devoted to business and making money and the week nights are not so suitable for a march out. Altogether a very ingenious and happy device! Honouring the Queen is a duty and a privilege to all our citizens and there cannot be any diversity of opinion as to that. But there seems a diversity of opinion as to this. Must we honour the Queen first and God next, or God first and the Queen next? I am satisfied the Queen can be abundantly honoured without dishonouring God or causing others so to do, and I believe our Sovereign Lady would feel dishonoured by anything intended for her honour, the preparation for which would break the Sabbath and disturb the consciences and convictions of a multitude of her loyal subjects. But some will say that I and those who sympathize with me in this matter, have no military spirit. Well, we confess we have it not in that peculiar sense. It is now, and long may it be so, the piping time of peace, and military splendour is cheap, "but when the blast of war blows in our ears," I venture to say that those to whom military "dudes" doubtless apply the elegant epithets of "mawks," "muffs," "blue Sabbatarians," etc., would not be found very far from the front ranks. Offences must, in the present constitution of things exist, but "Woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!" and when God burls "Woe!" at a man the responsibility is a very serious one.

JOHN A. PATERSON.

Toronto May 21st, 1883.

COMMITTEES OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

MR. EDITOR,—The most important work of the Assembly is necessarily done in Committees. Hence it should be as generally distributed among members as possible. If this is not done, a few have too much work and influence, while many have very little of either. All may, indeed, take part in the deliberations of the Assembly; but there is an increasing tendency to send matters at once to committees; and the members of these committees have in every respect the advantage and precedences when their reports are brought up for discussion, or rather to be voted upon.

I shall at the most important committees as they were constituted at last Assembly:

There is the Committee on Business, composed of clerks of Assembly, together with those of Synods and

Presbyteries, who may be commissioners. This committee, together with such members as may be appointed by the Assembly constitutes the Committee on Bills and Overtures, and also acts as a Committee on Business. Now there is a considerable number of the members of the Committee on Business who are always members of Assembly; and it has become common for the Committee on Business to nominate the others elected by the Assembly. It is easy to see what facilities are thus afforded for packing this committee. No one need to be told of the powers exercised by this committee. In fact, the Assembly is simply at the mercy of a committee which arranges business, or may hopelessly defer any matter, or break it up into fragments. If the Assembly is to have full control of its own business, this committee should be differently constituted, or the Assembly should determine the order of business at the outset, and finish one case before another is taken up. It is reasonable that the members of this committee should not be on any other.

Another important committee is that on the Reception of Ministers from other Churches. This committee has to meet frequently, hence the members may well be excused from serving on any other. At last Assembly this committee also was nominated by the Committee on Bills and Overtures. The Judicial Committee is one of the most important of all. It was nominated by the Committee on Bills and Overtures. Then there were the Committees to Nominate the Standing Committees of the Church, on Manitoba College, on College Sessions, and on Marriage with a Married Wife's Sister. These seven were the important committees of last Assembly. On these committees—not to mention ruling elders there were about forty-one ministers out of one hundred and forty-six actually present. Of these, twenty-four sat on one Committee; eleven sat on two Committees; three sat on three Committees, two sat on four Committees; and one sat on six Committees. Thus the great work of the Assembly was mainly done by between eight and seventeen ministers. This is an alarming state of matters; to think of one of our ministers sitting on six of these committees, and one hundred and five ministers not sitting on even one of them!

Let members of next Assembly be on their guard, and not permit a recurrence of this state of things. There is no reasonable doubt that the Committee on Bills and Overtures is the root of this gigantic size. If this Committee is to be continued in existence, let the Assembly determine its own order of business and nominate and appoint its Committees. PRESBYTER.

THE SABBATH SCHOOL.

MR. EDITOR,—As the question has been asked in your columns:

1. "What ought to be the object and aim of the Sabbath school?"

2. "Is it to hold a permanent place in the Church?"

Perhaps you will allow me to offer an answer in the absence of any legislation by the Church to quote on subject.

If the school be understood "to be the Church at work by the congregation assembled on the Lord's day, to study, teach and learn the Word of God for the purpose of leading souls to Christ, and of building up believers in the grace and knowledge of their Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, and to help each other to know more of the great salvation so freely offered in the Gospel," then its object and aim is high enough to engage the prayerful assistance of every member of the Church.

2. As a school of Christian culture in Scripture knowledge and the way of salvation, it should certainly hold a permanent place in the Church of Christ, and should not in the least interfere with parental instruction at home. Indeed, if more parents attended the Sabbath schools often enough to become interested in these excellent uniform lessons, a wonderful impetus would be given to a better preparation of the Sunday school lessons at home.

WALTER N. HOSSIE.

Brantford, May 26th, 1883.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.—Rev. Dr. Reid has received the following sums for schemes of the Church, viz.: A member of Newtonville congregation, \$100, \$20 of which is for tracts for missionaries in North-West Territory; Anonymous, part of the Lord's tenth, for Home Mission, \$1, also for Foreign Mission, \$1.

THE MISSION FIELD.

MR. POLLOCK, Missionary of American Presbyterian Church, says: "Three probationers were examined, one of whom the Presbytery could not recommend for the grade. The other two passed splendid examinations, showing a better knowledge of the Bible than many of us did in the seminary at home. One of the candidates was from Furrukhabad, the other from Etah."

MR. WILLIAMSON, of the American Presbyterian Church, reports nine new communicants received by the churches of Yancion agency and vicinity. Dr. Happer speaks of five as added to the First Church, Canton, and Mr. Henry of twenty-two as added to the Second Church. Mr. Lucas mentions two new communicants admitted by the church of Mynpurie. Mr. Do Jesi reports one new convert at Jerez.

SIR BARTIE FRERE has observed that he had rarely seen or heard of a missionary institution in South Africa which did not by its measure of success fully justify the means employed to carry it on; and that the worst-managed and least efficient missionary institutions he had seen, appeared to him far superior as civilizing agencies to anything which could be devised by the unassisted secular power of the Government.

IN Burmah and Ceylon the missionaries have special difficulties in the Buddhism which prevails in those countries. It is a system of religion which, perhaps more than any other, deadens the religious sensibilities of the people, and renders them very slow to appreciate the blessings of the Gospel. On the other hand, the Karens and the non-Buddhistic tribes in Burmah have been amongst the most ready to welcome the message of salvation.

THE population of India is fully 250,000,000—seven times as large as that of the United Kingdom, and five times as large as that of the United States. Of this number nearly 190,000,000 may be considered as Hindoos in religion, worshipping lords many and gods many—deities who, in many cases, are incarnations of lust and wickedness. Hindooism has its philosophy for the thoughtful, and its popular religion for the masses; it is cemented by the system of caste into a compact whole, and it thus presents a most formidable obstacle to the spread of the Gospel.

THE death of the Rev. Charles D. MacLaren, in Bangkok, Siam, March 14th, is reported. He had visited an English engineer of a steamer the day before, who was very ill and who died in the same night. Then came a request for Mr. MacLaren to conduct the funeral services, but he was himself attacked by the same illness, and died after a few days. Mr. MacLaren was a native of Nova Scotia, a graduate of the Union Theological Seminary, and a member of the Presbytery of New York. He had but lately arrived with his wife in Siam in the enjoyment of health and vigour, and prepared for work. His death is a loss of no common degree to the mission.

JAPAN is certainly ripe for vigorous evangelism. The people are ready to listen to the glad tidings of great joy, and there is much activity also among the priestly opponents of the "Jesus religion." The progress of Christianity is exciting not only attention but opposition. Within several months past a number of anti-Christian tracts have been issued, one of which opens with the exaggerated statement that "Christianity is spreading like fire on a grassy plain, so that in capital and country there is no place where it is not preached." These tracts are circulated widely in some places, and priests are sent out to meet and counteract the efforts of Christian missionaries.

ABOUT 50,000,000 of the people of India are Mohammedans—a far larger number than own the sway of the Sultan or any other Mohammedan potentate. In all lands the Mohammedans are amongst the most bigoted religionists with whom we have to deal, and in India the converts from Islam have been fewer than from other religions. Yet there have been many Moslem's who have felt the converting power of God's grace, and in a country like India, under Christian rule, missionaries have special advantages which are not enjoyed in Mohammedan countries. The Mohammedans, having so many points in common with Christians, appear to have a special claim on us, and yet but few missionaries in India prepare themselves specially for labouring among them. It is very desirable that more men should be sent out for this special work.