

W. Sell

THE TENTH REPORT

OF THE

KINGSTON SABBATH REFORMATION SOCIETY,

PRESENTED AT THE ANNUAL MEETING, JAN. 19, 1860,

WITH THE

CONSTITUTION OF THE SOCIETY

AS ESTABLISHED APRIL 25, 1850.

KINGSTON :
1860.

BV107.K5 No. 10.

ANNIVERSARY MEETING

HELD in the City Hall on Thursday evening the 19th January, 1860—the Rev. P. Gray, President, in the Chair.

The meeting was opened with prayer by the Rev. Professor Mowat, and addressed by the Chairman.

The Report was read by the Secretary, Dr. Mair.

Resolution 1.—Moved by the Rev. R. V. Rogers, seconded by Mr. Cowan—

Resolved—That the Report now read be adopted, printed and circulated, under the direction of the Committee; and that the following gentlemen be the Office-Bearers and Committee for the ensuing year:—*President*, Rev. P. Gray; *Vice-President*, Thomas Askew, Esq.; *Treasurer*, Wm. Ferguson, Esq.; *Secretary*, Dr. Mair. *Committee*—Ministers of the Gospel, resident in Kingston, who qualify; Rev. John Edwards, Major Moffatt, Major Grange, Captain Wilson, Dr. Clark, Messrs. D. McEwen, Wm. Jones, George Gilmour, R. Hendry, G. Davidson, D. Gibson, A. Drummond, J. Paton, J. Shaw, A. Chown, J. Clark, J. Stewart, R. Matthews, T. Kirkpatrick, James Linton, H. Dougan—with power to add to their number.

The Hymn “Thine Earthly Sabbaths, Lord, we love”, was sung by the audience.

The Rev. T. Henderson addressed the meeting on the topic—

“The hallowed restraints of the Sabbath blessings to mankind, morally and spiritually.”

Dr Lavell handled the topic—

“The hallowed restraints of the Sabbath blessings to mankind, physically and mentally.”

And the Rev. H. Gordon considered the final topic—

“The heavenly rest.”

The meeting was closed with the benediction.

CONSTITUTION
OF THE
Kingston Sabbath Reformation Society,

ESTABLISHED AT A PUBLIC MEETING HELD IN THE CITY HALL,
THURSDAY EVENING, THE 25TH APRIL, 1850—HIS WORSHIP THE
MAYOR IN THE CHAIR.

I.—The name of this Association shall be "The Kingston Sabbath Reformation Society."

II.—The object shall be to employ every legitimate instrumentality for promoting the sanctification of the Sabbath.

III.—The Society shall be composed of individuals belonging to all religious denominations who desire the accomplishment of this important object, and who cast into the treasury a sum of 2s. 6d. annually.

IV.—The oversight of the affairs of this Association shall be intrusted to a Board consisting of President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary, with a Committee, with power to add to their number.

V.—That all Ministers of the Gospel who are duly qualified members of the Society, be *ex-officio* members of the Committee.

VI.—That the Board of Management shall meet once a quarter for the transaction of business, and oftener if it be deemed advisable, on official requisition signed by the President, Vice-President, or three Members of Committee.

VII.—That an Annual Meeting shall be held in January, when a Report of the Proceedings of the Society shall be submitted to a new Board of Management.

VIII.—That the following be a general outline of the duties of the said Board:—

1. To collect information as to the different ways in which the Sabbath is desecrated and the means which have been successfully made use of in other places for securing its better observance.

2. Respectfully to solicit Ministers of all evangelical denominations to bring the important subject directly under the notice of those committed to their spiritual oversight, and likewise Superintendents of Sabbath Schools amongst those over whom their influence extends.

3. Either through the channel of Tract Societies, already in existence, or otherwise, to promote the circulation of some of the best Tracts, or small publications bearing on the subject.

4. To endeavor to secure the services of Clergymen or other qualified Lecturers to visit as many localities in the vicinity as possible, with the view of directing public attention to the subject and getting kindred Societies formed.

5. To correspond with similar institutions elsewhere.

6. To endeavor, as soon as possible, to get a Canada Sabbath Alliance instituted, which shall consist of delegates from the individual local Societies throughout the Province.

7. To keep a watchful eye on the proceedings of the public authorities on this important question, and to superintend the framing of memorials in favor of the abolition of Sabbath labor in the various departments of the public service.

8. To employ any other means for the promotion of Sabbath observance which circumstances or experience may suggest, provided that such means be strictly moral and not compulsory.

REPORT.

During the past year your Committee have not failed, through their President and Secretary, to remind the Government of the Province of their duty to pass a law for bringing to an end all Sabbath desecration in the Post Office Department, the Railways, Lakes, Harbors and Canals. As heretofore, however, they, with other earnest memorialists, have not succeeded in stirring up the Legislature to the accomplishment of these most desirable objects.

But although the persevering efforts of successive Committees since 1850, the year in which the Society was established, have not been crowned with full success, we congratulate our friends upon a certain measure of reform in connexion with the Post Office on the Lord's Day. We allude to the facts that previous to the institution of this Society, and for some time after, the stairs of the old Post Office in this city used to be crowded with persons anxiously waiting the opening of its portals, so that they might be put in possession of letters, newspapers, &c., after church service in the afternoon of "the pearl of days," and that those who loved its sacred hours were grieved by seeing numbers of individuals intent in devouring the contents of these documents as they strolled along the streets to their homes. *Then*, and until the mails were transmitted by railway, the greater part of the Sabbath was occupied by Post Office labor. Now the state of things is less objectionable, as may be seen by the following information, the accuracy of which may be depended upon :

KINGSTON.—In this city the mails arrive before 4 o'clock on Sunday morning from the East and West, and the clerks must be at the Post Office from 7 to 9½ A. M. The attendance of one clerk is required in the evening to make up the mails for the East and West.

TORONTO.—The mails arrive at 11 P. M., on Saturday; the clerks attend at the Post Office from 6½ to 9 or 10 A. M. on the Sabbath, and in the afternoon from 1 to 2½.

A tolerably accurate notion may be formed of the amount of Post Office work in other cities upon the Lord's Day from the above statement.

NO SUNDAY MAILS TRAVEL.—This reduction of labor has, we apprehend, arisen from the fact that Railway managers found it necessary to set apart one day out of seven to repair damage done to their engines, cars, &c., by six days' "tear and wear," and Sunday presented itself as most convenient for such purposes—so that we owe nothing to the Government for that which has been forced upon them by the necessity of the case.

We give it as our decided opinion that the Post Offices might *now* (when intelligence can be so rapidly transmitted not only by rail, but also by electric telegraph,) be closed on the Lord's Day, without inconvenience to the public, even if public convenience could be pleaded as a valid argument to justify the breach of God's law, a doctrine which we indignantly reject as unscriptural and anti-christian.

Reverence for God and His institutions will never go unrewarded, and we believe that voluntary cessation from labor in the Post Office on the Lord's Day, from right principle, would be the means of averting deserved judgments, and bringing down undeserved blessings upon the land.

Your Committee, as ever, solemnly protest against the lawfulness of transacting any business in this or any other public department on the Lord's Day, and are unshaken in their desire and purpose to use whatever influence this Society may possess, towards doing away with the running of railway trains, the sailing of vessels upon the canals, &c., on the Sabbath.

The streets of this city, during previous years, were made very uncomfortable by clubs of boys sauntering about the corners of them, impeding the progress of the passers by. These boys frequently assailed the peaceable inhabitants with insulting remarks, and it was no uncommon thing for them to play foot-ball or some other game in public resorts. We rejoice to say that these evils have been in a great measure remedied by the interposition of the police force, lately augmented, under the control of His Worship the Mayor (in conjunction with the Recorder and Police Magistrate), who has cordially responded to an appeal made to him upon the subject by your Committee, in an address presented to him by a deputation consisting of the President, Secretary, and sundry members of the Committee, last summer.

The same address embodied remarks upon the excellent law, for which the Province is so largely indebted to our respected Representative in the Legislative Council, the Hon. A. Campbell (by which the sale of intoxicating liquors is prohibited from 7 o'clock on Saturday evening till 8 o'clock on Monday

morning), calling upon the Chief Magistrate to have it enforced.

Upon the whole, perhaps our city has an appearance as respectable and orderly upon the Lord's Day as any other in the Province, and for this we ought to be thankful; but we regret that one exception must be pointed out. We refer to ball playing in the area of ground immediately behind the Roman Catholic College in the summer season. We trust the heads of this establishment only require to have this nuisance pointed out to ensure its permanent removal.

By a resolution of the Committee, a circular letter was addressed to the resident owners of steam vessels, signed by the President and Secretary, expressing a wish that their vessels might not prosecute their voyages on the Lord's Day. No response was returned, and we believe no change was effected. May we hope that upon due consideration these gentlemen may yet be induced to comply with our request?

AS REGARDS THE SABBATH IN OTHER COUNTRIES.—Good men are fighting for it in England, the United States, and other lands, and bad men against it. May God give the victory to truth and right everywhere.

A serious loss has been sustained by "The Lord's Day Observance Society," of London, in the recent death of the Rev. Mr Baylee, their indefatigable Secretary, whose unceasing labors, it is believed, tended to shorten his earthly career of usefulness. He has gone to "the rest which remaineth to the people of God" and to his reward. He has left a widow and a numerous family of little children to deplore his premature death, dependent, under God, upon the sympathy and benevolence of the christian public. May "God who is a father of the fatherless and a judge of the widows" be "their help and their shield."

By the zealous efforts of a determined Chief Magistrate in New York, we believe a salutary reform has been effected in closing many public houses on the Lord's Day in that city.

The revivals of religion in Ireland, Wales, &c., have been accompanied, as when genuine they will ever be, with improved Sabbath observance.

The marked amelioration in the habits of the people in the North of Ireland during the recent times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, particularly in respect to their relinquishment of strong drink, and the abandonment of the traffic by many who before gloried in it, with a corresponding decrease in the revenue arising from duty on spirits, is well worthy of the attentive study of the politician, philanthropist and christian philosopher.

AS TO THE CONTINENT OF EUROPE.—We hail with joy the glad tidings of the successful religious movement in Sweden, no doubt attended with due regard to the Sabbath.

The disturbed state of most of the Continental Nations—thirsting after change, longing for liberty, and ripe for contest—makes them forgetful of almost everything but vengeance upon their oppressors—and no marvel. Times of retribution are fast coming, when the blood of the Saints of the *Most High*, so mercilessly shed on the shrines of infidelity and false religion, must be atoned for: “How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth.”—Rev. vi., 10.

AS TO THE ANTIPODES.—A letter from a lady now in Australia, dated Geelong, October, 1859, gives the following interesting information regarding the Sabbath, &c.: “We have revival prayer meetings here (Geelong) which are held weekly in the large hall of the Mechanics’ Institute, in which all denominations of christians, not excepting the Roman Catholics (many of whom attend), take a deep interest. The spacious hall is generally filled. These meetings originated with the Society known as ‘The Sabbath Observance Society,’ which has been quietly but effectually exerting its beneficial influence for some years past. They first succeeded in stopping the steamers which were in the habit of plying between Melbourne and Geelong on Sundays, not without much opposition on the part of the houses of entertainment proprietors. When the railway was completed, and trains commenced to be run on the Sabbath, the Society made a vigorous effort, and succeeded in having them likewise stopped, despite the opposition of a portion of the public press.

“A course of lectures was then commenced by Clergymen of different sects, and at the termination of each lecture a union prayer meeting was held. The lectures were so numerous attended, that the press was awed into silence. The first prayer meeting was a sight so sublime that I know not how to describe it. Between 1,600 and 1,700 persons, assembled together of an ordinary week evening for singing and prayer in this distant part of the world, was quite enough to gladden one’s heart. The meeting was composed of all classes—high and low, rich and poor. Some of the most abandoned and immoral characters in the town were present, and I thought I never heard anything so profoundly grandly solemn as was the fine Old Hundredth as it echoed from the multitude of voices through the lofty hall.

“The second meeting was held on last Wednesday evening,

and was equally well attended. Already a devout and sincere feeling manifests itself in the conduct of many who would some weeks ago have made a mockery of everything savoring of religion."

We conclude with the following admonitions, well worthy of being deeply pondered by us all, and carried into practice, extracted from an admirable tract entitled "Short Arguments on the Sabbath", by the Rev. Joseph Parker, subjoining also a question to, and the answer of a christian, fifteen hundred years ago, as recorded by Eusebius :

"I. Never affect to set light by the day.

"II. You will prove yourselves the best friends of the working classes by defending their most ancient privilege, a seventh day rest.

"III. If you would spend your week comfortably, you must spend the Sabbath profitably.

"IV. Train your children to keep holy the Sabbath.

"Love the Sabbath, 1. Because it is the day of Christ's triumph. 2. It is a pause-time to the claims of business. 3. It is a foretaste of heaven.

"Working men! be not deluded into rebellion against the Sabbath. Cling to this God-given right! If you once forego your claim, you will be drawn into physical bondage and into spiritual death."

The question for us all, after the fashion of the olden time is, "Do you observe the Lord's Day?" and the appropriate answer, "I am a christian, I cannot neglect it."

P. S.—Since this Report was read, the highly gratifying intelligence has reached us that the Postmaster General has issued an official notification to the effect that Postmasters are relieved from the obligation of opening Post Offices in future on the Lord's Day. We cordially rejoice at this noble act of the Postmaster General, and tender to him our warmest thanks, not that we entertain, or ever did, the smallest doubt as to the indefeasible right of all the servants of the State to the enjoyment of an uninterrupted Sabbath (rest) on the first day of the week—but that we see in this act the pleasing indication of a becoming respect for the Lord's Day, and submission to the authority of God, which we hope will be participated in by all in power, and lead ere long to the enactment of a law for the abolition of every kind of labor in the Post Office and every other public department on the Sabbath, (lest peradventure any Postmaster, devoid of principle and impelled by an ungodly

portion of the community, should persist in keeping open his Post Office on the Lord's Day, upon the pretext of his having received no command to close it)—that God may be glorified by obedience to the 4th Commandment—and that future generations may know that years before the eventful crisis of 1867, (about which time, according to the views of eminent expounders of prophecy, it is expected by not a few that, "the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trump of God")—every vestige of a law countenancing the least violation of His Sacred Day had been erased from the Statute Book of Canada.

It may be proper to add that the words of the preceding Report are not, in every instance, precisely the same as of the original read in the City Hall at the Annual Meeting (the manuscript having been mislaid), a little fresh matter having also been added, but the spirit pervading the whole is one, and *that* we trust not inconsistent with the spirit of our holy religion.

Kingston, March 22, 1860.