

submitted to the Presbytery for its approval. Mr. Currie gave notice of the following motion: "That the deliverances of Presbytery to the several congregations forming a pastoral charge be drawn up by one committee, and that all deliverances be henceforth more elaborate, and be submitted for the approval of the Presbytery at the first regular meeting after the visitation, before being read to the congregations." Mr. Dewar's motion was held over. The Assembly's Committee's questions on Temperance were considered. It was then moved by Mr. Somerville, seconded by Mr. Rodgers, "That Messrs. Cameron, Mordy and Scott be a committee on temperance, and that the questions from the Assembly's Committee be relegated to them to get information and tabulate returns, and report at the regular meeting."—Agreed. A circular letter from Peterborough Presbytery was read anent receiving a minister from the United States Methodist Church. Instructions were given to Mr. Rodgers, the Convener of the Committee on the State of Religion, to have his report submitted at the March meeting, and all ministers within the bounds are requested to note this instruction and send their returns to the Convener in time. The Presbytery nominated Dr. Black, of Kildonan, as Moderator of the next General Assembly. Mr. Currie was instructed to receive suggestions from members of Presbytery anent the visitation questions and report at March meeting. — JOHN SOMERVILLE, M.A., *Pres. Clerk*.

PRESBYTERY OF PETERBORO'.—This Presbytery met at Peterboro' on the 31st January. Eleven ministers and nine elders were present. Mr. R. J. Beattie was chosen Moderator. Mr. Bennett gave notice of motion for next ordinary meeting: "That the temporary absence of a brother be not allowed to exclude him from the Moderator's chair when he would be appointed thereto if he were present." The station at Oakhills asked for reunion with Perrytown and Knoxville. Messrs. Cameron and Ewing, ministers, and J. Kerr, elder, were appointed a committee to confer with all the parties interested and to report at next meeting. The congregation of Perrytown was authorized to sell the old church building and apply the proceeds to the liquidation of the debt on the new church. Mr. McFarlane tendered the resignation of his charge at Bobcaygeon and Dunsford, on the ground of ill health. The usual steps were taken in the case. The churches at Bethesda and Alnwick were reported as having been declared vacant. Upon motion of Mr. Bell, a list of questions was adopted to be used in Presbyterial visitation, the list to be printed for distribution among the congregations. The report of the Presbytery's Home Mission Committee was considered at great length. By order of Presbytery each of the members had been furnished with a printed copy of the report. Mr. Fleming, the missionary in the Harvey and Chandos fields, being present was invited to address the Court. The address shewed great diligence on the part of the missionary, and great interest on the part of the people in the mission work. Mr. Renwick, from the Harvey field, was present to ask for aid in the erection of a church. The case was recommended to the consideration of the more wealthy congregations within the bounds. The following minute was adopted in reference to Mr. McWilliam, lately removed from the bounds: "In connection with the translation of Mr. McWilliam, the Presbytery desires to express its deep sense of the loss which it has sustained by the removal of a member who has proved himself so wise in counsel, so diligent in pastoral work, so able and eloquent in preaching, and so distinguished in scholarship. The Presbytery follows him with cordial regards and sincere prayers to his new field of labour, trusting that an abundant entrance will be given him to the homes and hearts of the people of his charge. The Presbytery would also record its sympathy with the congregation of Bethesda and Alnwick thus deprived of a minister who has endeared himself to them by seventeen years' of faithful and loving service, and unites in asking the Chief Shepherd to send them speedily another pastor who shall comfort their hearts and establish the work of the hands of his servant among them." Mr. F. R. Beattie was authorized to Moderate in a call at Bethesda and Alnwick when requested. Mr. Beattie presented the overture, of which he had given notice at last meeting, anent the examination of students between the period of graduation and induction. The overture was adopted and ordered to be transmitted to the Assembly. Upon motion of Mr. R. J. Beattie it was agreed to hold the ordinary meetings of

Presbytery on the Monday evenings at half-past seven o'clock instead of Tuesday evenings as hitherto. Mr. White laid on the table the resignation of his charge of Warsaw and Dummer on the ground of the inability of the people to meet their pecuniary engagements. Mr. White had notified the people of his purpose. Delegates from the congregations were heard. The Presbytery, under the circumstances, agreed to sustain Mr. White's conduct in citing the people, and to accept of the resignation. Mr. Torrance was appointed Moderator of session. Presbytery adjourned to meet again in same place on the 31st January. The meeting was held according to adjournment. There were seventeen ministers and eight elders present. The resignation of Mr. McFarlane was considered. Delegates were heard, Mr. McFarlane was also heard on his own behalf. Presbytery agreed that the resignation lie on the table until next meeting of Presbytery; that Mr. McFarlane be granted leave of absence for a time, and that members of Presbytery be requested to give partial supply to the stations at Bobcaygeon and Dunsford until the matter be finally disposed of. Presbytery agreed unanimously to approve of the general principle of a sustentation fund as sent down by the Assembly. Arrangement was made for the holding of a Conference on the State of Religion as requested by the General Assembly. A committee was appointed to draw up a report on the State of Religion within the bounds for presentation at next meeting. The remit on the subject of Temperance was deferred until next ordinary meeting. Mr. Stevenson, the ordained missionary at Minden, gave a report of his work and asked for help to pay off a debt on the Minden manse. A collection in the congregation was recommended for the purpose. Mr. F. R. Beattie gave notice of motion at next meeting to overture the Assembly on the question of evangelistic work. The Home Mission Committee were empowered to employ Mr. R. B. Arthur, a student, if they see fit. — W. BENNETT, *Pres. Clerk*.

SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHER.

INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

LESSON IX.

Feb. 27. } CHRIST HEALING THE SICK. } Luke v. 11-26.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"The power of the Lord was present to heal them."

HOME READINGS.

M. Luke iv. 33-44. Miracles of Healing.
Tu. Luke v. 1-11. The Draught of Fishes.
W. Luke v. 12-17. The Leper Healed.
Th. Lev. xiv. 1-32. The Law of the Leper.
F. Luke v. 18-26. The Paralytic Healed.
S. Mark ii. 1-13. Power to Forgive Sins.
Sab. Ps. ciii. 1-22. "Who Healeth all thy Diseases."

HELPS TO STUDY.

In our last lesson we found Jesus proclaiming the Gospel to the people among whom He had been brought up, at Nazareth. There especially, although not there alone, it is true of Him that "He came unto His own and His own received Him not." Instead of doing so "they thrust Him out of the city, and led Him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast Him down headlong." He struggled not, He smote them not with judgment; with the ease and calmness of divine power He passed "through the midst of them" and "went His way." After this it appears that He lived for some time at Capernaum where He wrought many miracles, including the healing of Peter's mother-in-law. The people of this place seem to have regarded Him somewhat more favourably than did the people of Nazareth, for, when He was leaving, they followed Him and expressed their desire that He should not depart from them; but He told them that He "must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also," and entered on a tour through the villages and towns of Galilee, preaching and working miracles. It was while on this tour that the miracle of healing the leper, referred to in the beginning of our present lesson, was performed. The cure of the paralytic appears to have happened after the Saviour's return to Capernaum.

As is generally the case, the Golden Text strikes the keynote of the teachings of the lesson, it being kept in view that the "power" spoken of extends to the moral and spiritual as well as to the physical, and that the leper and the paralytic are aptly typical of the sinner—the one of his pollution and loathsomeness, the other of his helplessness.

The following division will probably be found convenient: (1) *Power to Cleanse*, (2) *Power to Heal*, (3) *Power to Forgive*.

I. POWER TO CLEANSE.—VERS. 12-24. The student of the Old Testament is aware of the prevalence among the Jews of the loathsome and ordinarily incurable disease called leprosy, as well as of the fear and abhorrence with which they regarded it. Dr. Isaac H. Hall, in treating of the "orientalism" of the lesson, describes the character of this disease, and draws attention to a meaning which he

finds in the Saviour's manner of effecting its cure in the case before us. He says: "A man 'full of leprosy' is as revolting a sight as one can see. Leprosy, among the ancient Jews, was considered as the supreme penalty of sin, 'a vile tongue, or of overweening pride, or of setting up one's self above his superiors.' Its touch was like that of a serpent, or of certain worms, of which it was said that if one had such a worm in his hand he could not be clean though he washed and remained in the water all day. Its touch not only contracted uncleanness, but it was touching one under the plague, or stroke, of God. All the old writers not Jewish, though they might be full of Jewish lore, dwell upon the perfect type in all its aspects which leprosy presents of sin. Thus the fact that Jesus 'put forth his hand, and touched' the leper, has a typical significance which far exceeds any apprehension which the disciples or other spectators could at that time have been able to possess. His touch was that which cleanseth from sin, and from defilement of body, and which removed the stroke of God—even that inflicted for blasphemy. If the minuteness of the Evangelist in recording this particular was unwitting, or no more than keeping alive the remembrance of the wonderful daring and condescension of our Lord, it is yet plain that the Holy Spirit meant much more."

"If Thou wilt Thou canst make me clean." This poor leper seems to have been convinced of Christ's power to cleanse, but to have doubted His willingness to do so; and, in the case of bodily disease it is quite right to submit it to God whether He is willing or not to deliver us from it; but the sinner need be under no apprehension as to God's willingness to cleanse him from sin, for He hates sin and loves the sinner."

"I will, be thou clean." Mark says He was "moved with compassion;" and will He not also pity the sinner who comes to Him to be cleansed from a still more loathsome pollution than that of leprosy? Even in the case before us, how pleasant it would be to think that the Saviour's "be thou clean" reached not only to the leper's body but to his soul—perhaps it did. To show that God is able and willing to cleanse and save, see Gen. xviii. 14; Matt. viii. 8; Heb. vii. 25; Psalm i. 15; Act. i. 15; Ezek. xxxvi. 25.

Shew thyself to the priest. See Lev. xiii. 2; Luke xvii. 14; Lev. xiv. 4-7.

II. POWER TO HEAL.—VERS. 15-17. In most kinds of bodily ailment there are two things that require to be done, (1) the disease must be driven away—this may be regarded as a cleansing process; (2) the patient must be healed—that is, restored to health and strength. There is something analogous to this in the moral and spiritual condition of the sinner. But the comparison falls short; and although the two diseases specified in the text were combined in one individual, it would still fall short; for the sinner is more polluted than the leper and more helpless than the paralytic. In the Gospel there is provision not only for cleansing but for the imparting and fostering of spiritual life, strength and activity. From verse 17, it would appear that Luke regarded the Pharisees and doctors of the law as being in need of healing quite as much as paralytics and lepers were, for it is to them that he applies the words of our Golden Text: The power of the Lord was present to heal them. "To heal whom?" asks the "S. S. Times," and then it answers: "Why, all the Pharisees and doctors of the law, from every part of Galilee, Judea and Jerusalem. What a gathering! What an opportunity! Were they healed? Not at all; and for the best of reasons—they did not come to be healed. They were there, Jesus was there, and the power of God was there, and there to heal them; but they came not to be healed, but to criticize, to find fault, and to condemn; and this unbelief built a wall between them and the Lord. But one was healed. Behold him!"

III. POWER TO FORGIVE.—VERS. 18-26. The faith of the sick man's friends in the power and willingness of Christ to heal him, and their perseverance in the effort to bring him in spite of all obstacles, are alike exemplary. Professor Hall supplies the following explanation regarding the construction of eastern houses: "To understand how the sick man could be brought up on the house-top and let down through the tiling is easy for one to understand who has seen Eastern houses. Inside, the house is composed of one large covered court, with rooms opening off from it on three sides. The court is the place where a large company assembles. The roof is usually made of mud and mortar, rarely tiles, and then mostly in foreigners' houses, supported by beams. Such a roof has to be kept water-tight during the rainy season by rolling it with a heavy stone roller when the rain comes. The roof is accessible by stairs from the outside; and, in some cases, when the house is built on a slope, it can be stepped upon from the ground with little or no climbing. Once on the roof, it is easy to break up the mud and mortar; nor would the damage be a very serious one to the house. The couch on which the man would be let down would hardly be called more than an extra-thick quilt in this country. It can easily be rolled up and carried under the arm."

Man, thy sins are forgiven thee. The confidence and diligence of the paralytic's friends were well rewarded. Probably the blessing bestowed in these words included or implied the healing of his bodily disease. Whether it did or not is a comparatively small matter. The pardon of sin is much more valuable than deliverance from any temporal evil. But the Jews regarded disease as a punishment for some special sin. And the words of the Saviour may be regarded as an assertion of His divine nature, and a challenge to the Pharisees and doctors of the law to witness His works in proof of that assertion.

Who is this which speaketh blasphemies? Some one spoke blasphemy. Here was one and the same Person asserting that He could forgive sin, and that He could instantly bestow health and strength on a man afflicted with palsy; and proving the latter assertion by actually performing the miracle. Had Christ not been God it would have been blasphemy on His part to claim the power of forgiving sin, for it is quite true that God only can forgive sin; but seeing that He was God, then the blasphemy was on the part of those who denied His divinity.