

was cordial and unanimous. It was sustained as a regular Gospel call, and Mr. Cameron by letter signified his acceptance of the same. The induction was appointed to take place on Thursday, the 4th day of February, at eleven a.m.; Mr. Aitken to preside and induct, Mr. Waits to preach, Mr. McKay to address the minister, and Mr. Hamilton the people. Rev. Messrs. A. Russell, A. Ogilvie Brown and the Clerk were appointed a committee on Statistics; and Messrs. E. Wallace Waits, Neil McKay and A. Russell a committee to draft questions on the State of Religion to be sent down to the kirk sessions of the Presbytery. The Rev. Neil McKay, Convener of the Augmentation Committee, reported progress, and those congregations which have not contributed to the Scheme were urged to do so as soon as possible. Mr. Waits was appointed Moderator of the Douglstown Session in place of Mr. Aitken. Rev. James Murray reported that he had declared the congregation of Charlo vacant according to appointment. A letter from Mr. E. H. Burgess was read, and the Moderator and Clerk were instructed to reply, urging him to pursue his studies. A commission from the Session of Black River, in favour of Captain Cameron, was sustained, and his name was added to the roll of Presbytery. A letter from Escuminac, Quebec, asking the services of Mr. J. F. Smith for next summer, was read, and the request forwarded to the Home Mission Board. The Clerk was instructed to write Rev. J. Annand, returned missionary from the New Hebrides, to ascertain what time he could visit the Miramichi Presbytery, and how much time he could spend in holding missionary meetings within the bounds. The next ordinary meeting of this Presbytery will be held in the hall of St. John's Church, Chatham, on the third Tuesday of March, being the 16th day of the month, at eleven a.m., of which public intimation was made, and this sermon was closed with the benediction. —E WALLACE WAITS, Pres. Clerk.

#### WOMAN'S FOREIGN MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

In order to remove any misapprehension that may have been caused by letters which have recently appeared in the columns of THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN, respecting the formation of Woman's Home Missionary Societies, the Board of Management of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society request the publication of the following statement:—

At the ordinary meeting of the Board, held on Tuesday, February 2, 1886, it was resolved: That this Board do not disapprove of the action of the General Assembly, in sanctioning the formation of Woman's Home Missionary Societies, as the following minute will show:—

"At the annual meeting of the Board, held at Ottawa last April, a discussion took place about the propriety of recognizing, in some way, associations which contributed to the funds of the society, but are not auxiliary to it. In the course of the discussion, the importance of Home Mission work was presented, and the propriety of attempting the unification of Home and Foreign work was discussed, after which it was decided: That no change be made in the basis of our work, but, while fully sympathizing with the Home work, in the future as in the past, the efforts of this society be directed to the evangelization of women and children in heathen lands, including the Indians of our own North-West."

From this resolution it will be seen that what the Board disapproved of was not the formation of Woman's Missionary Societies to promote the interests of Home Missions. They did not feel themselves called on to express any opinion on this question. What they objected to was the combination of Foreign and Home work under one society. They will, nevertheless, as a Board, rejoice in the success of their sisters, who may feel called upon to organize themselves into Home Missionary Societies, thus promoting an important department of the Church's work.

#### OBITUARY.

MR. ALEXANDER McCLELLAND.

It is our sad duty to-day to chronicle the death of Mr. Alexander McClelland, of this city. He died at his residence, 209 Sherbourne Street, on the night of January 31, of chronic bronchitis, produced by severe and protracted cold. His death was sudden and unexpected, sinking very rapidly toward the last. He came of Scotch-Irish extraction, having been born in that nursery of genuine Presbyterianism—the North of Ireland. His native place was Cookstown, County Tyrone. He emigrated to this country about forty-five years ago, and lived nearly all that time in and about Toronto. He was a very successful school teacher for many years, and eventually engaged in business. He was always warmly attached to the principles of the Presbyterian faith, being a member of Cooke's Church from its inception until within the last three years, and one of its first trustees. His liberality toward the support of ordinances, the Schemes of the Church and general charity was always of the most large-hearted kind.

As a Christian, Mr. McClelland was marked by strong convictions, intense earnestness and devoted piety. He never missed the means of grace, either in private or in public, unless prevented by illness, or some other unavoidable cause. He brought with him across the Atlantic waves strong religious convictions, and from these he was never known to swerve during his whole life. He was conscientious and faithful in all his business dealings. In private life he was a kind husband and an affectionate father. In manners, he was very modest and unassuming. He died, as he had lived, in the faith of the Gospel, and in full hope of a glorious resurrection. He leaves behind him, to mourn his loss, a wife and four children, two sons and two daughters. His two sons are both in the ministry of the Presbyterian Church in Canada; the eldest one in Shelburne, and the youngest in Ashburn.

In one district of St. George's-in-the-East, in London, the number of attendants on public worship is only thirty-nine persons out of 4,225.

## Sabbath School Teacher.

### INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

BY REV. R. P. MACKAY, D.D.

Feb. 21,  
1886.

#### THE SECOND TEMPLE.

Ezra i. 1-4.  
3. 8. 13.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"They praised the Lord because the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid."—Ezra iii. 11.

#### INTRODUCTORY.

Ezra.—Although he wrote the whole book, the record of his own life only begins with the seventh chapter, between which and the sixth chapter there is a gap of nearly sixty years. He was descended from the high priests, and was also a scribe, having devoted himself to writing out copies of the law for general use. Jewish tradition says that he was of great service to the Church in all departments of sacred literature. He enjoyed the favour of King Artaxerxes and received a commission, in the seventh year of his reign, to go to Jerusalem and complete the work of restoration and social organization, giving him full powers even to the infliction of the death penalty. How money was got, the pious considerations that regulated their conduct, and the great reformation effected, when in Jerusalem he found that the remnant again broke the law and exposed themselves to the Lord's displeasure by entering into forbidden marriages, are briefly stated in the last chapters of the book.

Book.—The whole book embraces a period of about eighty years. We have first the decree of Cyrus, by which the captivity is brought to an end. Then, in chapters ii. and iii., an account of the manner in which the Jews responded; next, how difficulties were thrown in the way by the hatred of their neighbours, who did all they could to stimulate the jealousy of the Persian Government. But their enemy was turned to advantage by Him who maketh the wrath of man to praise Him. When at their request search was made and the original decree by Cyrus was discovered, Darius immediately confirmed it, and the temple was completed.

Then comes an account of Ezra's commission and work already referred to.

#### EXPLANATORY.

During the seventy years of captivity little is known of their treatment. It is certain that some of them, as Daniel and his friends, rose to positions of prominence, but there are other indications, such as Ps. cxxxvii., of severity. The effects of the captivity are apparent, especially this one, that ever after idolatry had no charm for the Jews. How far their affliction was sanctified, and they were used as a leaven amongst their captors, is unknown; but, no doubt, in some degree, that was the case.

I. The Proclamation of Cyrus.—It would be more strictly correct to call this the Lord's proclamation. When Jonah was in the whale's belly, he said: "Salvation is of the Lord," as it certainly was in his case. But the whale had as much to do with the deliverance of Jonah as Cyrus had with the deliverance of the Jews. They were both instruments in the hands of Him who doeth as He pleaseth.

(1) Prediction.—Jeremiah, in chapters xxi. 12 and xxix. 10, foretold that after seventy years they would return, and the Lord is not slack concerning His promise. In Exodus xii. 41, it is said that on the very day appointed they went forth from Egypt. God is never an hour late in His purposes.

(2) Inspiration.—The Lord stirred the spirit of Cyrus to do this thing. "It is God that worketh in us to will and to do of His good pleasure." (Phil. ii. 13.) Hence the need to pray that the Spirit of God might create within us clean hearts, and renew right spirits, in order that we might be of use in the world (Ps. li. 10, 13); also, that when we do anything we should remember that the glory belongs to Him—we are unprofitable servants.

How the spirit of Cyrus was instructed is not known. It may have been by dream or vision, or it may be that his attention was drawn by Daniel or some one else to the prophecy concerning himself in Isa. xlv. 4. No doubt, as the time approached, the Jews were full of expectation, and the matter would be constantly brought under public notice.

(3) Qualification.—The Lord gave to Cyrus the kingdoms of the earth in order that he might be able to carry out this decree. When He gives men work to do, He gives them strength to do it. (Acts i. 8.)

(4) Permission.—The decree was put in writing. That the Lord guided even as to the writing is seen in the importance of that fact, when, years after, it was called in question. (Chap. vi. 2.)

After acknowledging his obligations to the Lord God of Heaven, he gives permission to all the Jews in the realm to return to their own land and rebuild the house of the Lord in Jerusalem. There is no compulsion, and many did not avail themselves of the opportunity. How much like the conduct of men in their treatment of salvation? They are invited, not compelled, but many prefer to remain in captivity.

(5) Contribution. (Ver. 4.)—He asks the people to give assistance to such amongst them as may be unable to go without. The free will offering may refer to the contribution of Cyrus himself. He gave an example. This was only a matter of justice, for the people served as captives, a long time without wages. So when they left Egypt they got from the Egyptians much gold that was afterward of use to them. Cyrus is regarded as a type of Christ, who came to preach deliverance to the captives. (Is. lxi. 1.)

II. Coming Home.—The Lord stirred up the people to accept deliverance, and many of the Persians responded to the invitation of Cyrus to give help. Cyrus himself gave up the sacred vessels that Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of Jerusalem.

Number.—In chapter ii. we have a record of all that returned with their possessions—about 50,000 in all (ii. 64-67).

They had camels, horses and beasts of burden to carry the women and children and vessels and treasures. The amount of gold and silver must have been very great.

In order to appreciate the feelings of these returning ones read Ps. cxxvi.: "Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing; then said they among the heathen, The Lord hath done great things for them."

III. At Home.—The state of Jerusalem and the whole country was depressing in the extreme; but they at once go to work.

(1) Worship.—The altar set up (iii. 1-4). That is the true starting point from which to reclaim the past. "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin." As well as the sin offering, they offered the other sacrifices, and observed the feasts, according to the Law of Moses.

(2) Liberality.—They gave of their substance toward the building of the temple. The amount of private wealth must have been considerable, for upon their arrival a very large amount was given. (Chap. ii. 68, 69.) This money was put into circulation in order to secure material from Lebanon. (Ver. 7.)

(3) Organisation.—In order to work successfully we must work systematically.

Zerubbabel.—He was the chief of the house of David at the return from captivity. He occupied the position of governor and was known by the name *Sheshbazzar*, by which name he is chiefly known in the book of Ezra. He is called by (Haggai i. 1, 14) the governor of Judah. He gave up his position in Babylon to head the return of his people.

Joshua was High Priest and co-operated with Zerubbabel.

Levites.—To them belonged the care of the temple (Num. i. 47-54), and they were therefore appointed overseers of the work, all of them who were twenty years old and upwards.

(4) Praise.—Whilst the work was progressing singers were singing praises to God according to the ordinances of David. (1 Chron. xv. 16-21.) That is always an appropriate accompaniment to labour, especially when it is the laying of the foundations of the spiritual temple. No wonder that on that occasion they should sing, as they remembered the past. How suitable it is that we should ever have songs on our lips now as we hope to have in the upper sanctuary, when the temple is complete. They who sing most get on best. Let us have faith in the future, and it will lighten and gladden the present.

(5) Weeping.—This is a very touching episode. The old men—they must have been very old—who remembered the former temple and its glory and all that transpired since its destruction, could not control their feelings; but wept aloud, and there was a strange mingling of the voices of joy and sorrow which was heard afar off. It is good to have our joys subdued by humble remembrance of what has been.

#### PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

1. God's resources are unlimited.
2. His mercy never fails, although our sins come between it and us.
3. Every prophecy will be fulfilled to the letter.
4. When God works he wants us to work with Him. The decree was of no use to them who remained in Babylon.
5. Will heaven's joy have a subnote of sorrow?

#### LIFE INSURANCE.

The Annual Report of the Mutual Reserve Fund Life Association will be found in our columns, and to its Canadian members will be found to contain a number of interesting facts.

The new business for the past year is reported to have reached the enormous sum of fifty-one millions of dollars, and the amount paid for death losses during the year to nearly one million of dollars.

The system of the Mutual Reserve differs from that of the old line companies in the fact that instead of charging a high rate or level premium for insurance, they collect from their members the actual cost of mortality, together with a sum for a Reserve Fund, and it is claimed that the total cost under this system will be less than half that charged by their rivals. Judging from the immense business done, the system of the Mutual Reserve is rapidly growing in the estimation of the public.

The Canadian Manager, Mr. J. D. Wells, it appears, carried off one of the prizes competed for, showing the appreciation of our people of this class of insurance. Mr. Sheppard Homans, probably the most celebrated actuary on this Continent, and the author of the "American Experience Mortality" tables, was present at the meeting, and in his remarks spoke in flattering terms of the Association and approved of the system. His opinion will go a long way in strengthening the Association in the confidence of the public.

UPWARDS of \$525 have been collected during the year by the English Presbyterian Students' Missionary Society. It is to be apportioned between the theological colleges of the missions in China and home mission work.

THE Lanarkshire and Ayrshire Railway are asked to pay \$30,320 for the compulsory acquisition of the manse and glebe at Kilwinning. Mr. Ker, in the Presbytery, said this amount "would satisfy the heritors, the Presbytery and even the minister!"

THE "Fragment Schools" in South London were founded by a retired soldier, Thomas Cranfield by name, in the dawn of the century. These five schools are doing a grand work to-day, greatly helped and strengthened by the Ragged School Union, of which they were forerunners.

As one of the results of Dr. Somerville's visit to Constantinople, an evangelistic hall is about to be erected in the most central part of Pera at a cost of \$35,000. The local committee include representatives of all the Evangelical churches in and around Constantinople and of the American as well as of the English Missionary Societies.