

proceedings were brought to a close by singing "God Save the Queen." The crowd then proceeded to the Music Hall, and enjoyed the tea provided by the ladies of the congregation. While the tea was in progress the bazaar or sale of fancy articles took place, from which the ladies realized a very handsome figure. About eight o'clock, a lecture and magic lantern entertainment were given by Mr. Campbell, of Toronto. About \$170 were realized altogether, and the ladies are to be congratulated on the great success attending their efforts.

LAST week the foundation stone of the new Presbyterian Church, corner of Smith Avenue and Boston Street, Hamilton, was laid with impressive ceremonies. Rev. Mungo Fraser, Moderator of the Session, presided, and delivered the opening address. Mr. Fraser then in a few words presented Mr. McLagan with a silver trowel, upon which was the following inscription: "Presented to Mr. Alex. McLagan, on the occasion of laying the corner stone of Westworth Presbyterian Church, Hamilton, June 23, 1887." Mr. McLagan, being a practical builder, laid the stone in a workmanlike fashion, and declared it well and truly laid. On the stone was the legend, "June 23, 1887." Under the stone was placed a gem jar which contained copies of the latest issues of the *Hamilton Times* and *Spectator*, and THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN, also a copy of the Presbytery's deliverance on the application of the congregation for supply and for organization as a church. It also contained the names of the Moderator of the Church Session, Rev. Mungo Fraser; the first minister, Rev. A. K. Caswell; and the present minister, Rev. Thomas McGuire, along with the names of the elders, managers, trustees, building committee, officers of Sunday school, leaders of singing and organist. Rev. Dr. Laing, of Dundas, followed briefly, congratulating the people on the prospect of having a church to worship in, and trusting they would be able to dedicate it to God free of debt. He had laid two foundation stones of churches some years ago, and the debt on them was not all paid yet. He hoped they would not have to keep their minister's salary low so as to pay off their debt. They were to remember it was a work for the glory of God. The Presbyterian Church had a work to do which no other church could accomplish, and they had their share of that work to do. He entreated them not to be high minded, but to follow the example of Christ, who was lowly of mind, and God would bless them. Mr. McGuire then took charge of the meeting, and an address was delivered by Rev. W. H. Rees, Moderator of the Presbytery of Hamilton. Mr. William Lecky and Mr. R. Somerville, in moving and seconding votes of thanks, made brief remarks. After the congregation had sung the doxology, Dr. Laing pronounced the benediction. The building is of Gothic architecture, of brick with stone foundation. It has five buttresses and four arched windows on each side, with porch in front and cellar in rear for furnace. It is forty feet by sixty, with twenty feet walls, and will have half pitched roof, and with the back gallery it will have a seating capacity of 500.

MONTREAL NOTES.

The Rev. Thomas Bennett, of Taylor Church, is to spend his vacation in Britain. He sailed on Monday last by the *Lake Nepigon*, of the Beaver Line, and expects to be absent for two months. His pulpits to be supplied by Mr. J. A. Macfarlane, of the Presbyterian College, Montreal. On Sabbath last the ordinance of the Lord's supper was dispensed in Taylor Church, when the attendance of communicants was the largest in the history of the congregation. Twenty-two new members were received, eleven by certificate, and eleven on profession of faith.

The first communion in Melville Church, Cote St. Antoine, since the induction of the Rev. John McGillivray, was held on June 26. Fourteen new members were added to the communion roll. Mr. McGillivray has already gained a warm place in the affections of his people, and his ministry gives promise of great success. The congregation is at present electing elders, the Session heretofore being an interim one.

Ten days ago the Rev. Alexander McKay, of Summers-town, in the Presbytery of Glengarry, came to Montreal to have an operation performed. This was apparently successfully accomplished. On Tuesday, however, inflammation set in, and he rapidly sank, dying next day shortly after noon. On the preceding Saturday Mrs. McKay met with an accident resulting in the fracture of a limb, so that she was unable to be with her husband in his last hours. One of his sons, however, with him, and removed the body home on Wednesday evening. Mr. McKay was a native of Nova Scotia. He studied in Scotland, and was settled in several congregations in Canada. For the past seven or eight years he has been a great sufferer. Part of this time he spent in Manitoba, and part in retirement in Collingwood. Only recently he felt sufficiently strong to resume regular work, and was inducted into the charge of the Summers-town congregation a few months ago. He was a good type of a Christian gentleman, endearing himself to all who had the privilege of his acquaintance by his urbanity and kindness, and thorough unselfishness. He leaves a widow, three sons and three daughters. Two of the sons have been studying with a view to the ministry of the Church, and at present one of these is in California on account of his health. Mrs. McKay and her family have the warm sympathy of many friends in their sore bereavement.

The hot season is on us in reality, and every one is escaping from the city who can possibly get away. The attendance at most of the churches is reduced to less than one-half the average winter attendance, notwithstanding the large number of strangers visiting the city from the United States, etc. At nearly all the up-town churches the Sabbath schools are closed for July and August, and in many cases the Wednesday evening prayer meeting is discontinued for these months. While many Montreal families go to the Portland Coast and to watering places on the Lower St. Lawrence, an increasingly large number spend the summer months at places contiguous to the city, which can be

reached by rail in from twenty to forty or fifty minutes. The shore of Lake St. Louis, from Lachine to St. Anne, is studded with villas occupied by Montrealers for three or four months in the summer; and the same is true of Black River and other places easily accessible, from which the head of the house or sons in business can reach the city in the morning and return in the evening. The giving of religious ordinances to these people is a matter of very great importance, which our Presbyterian Church cannot afford to lose sight of. At very few of these points is there Presbyterian service, and at some of them no Protestant service is conducted from one year's end to another. On the Lake St. Louis shore at Lachine we have a church with regular service, but there is no Presbyterian Church, or service conducted by a Presbyterian minister at Dorval, Valois, Pointe Claire, Beaconsfield, Ste. Anne or Vaudeuil, although the majority of families at some of these places are Presbyterian, and many of them office-bearers of Montreal Presbyterian Churches. The Church cannot afford to leave these places unsupplied, the more so that with the increased facilities afforded by the opening next month of the Canadian Pacific Railway from Montreal to Smith's Falls, and other projected lines skirting the lake shore, there will be a large increase in the number of families residing at these points, some of them, probably, for the whole year round instead of, as now, for only the hot months in summer. For instance, at one of the above-named places, there are at present upward of twenty Presbyterian families in good circumstances, besides a number of Congregationalist, Baptist and Methodist families. There is a small Episcopal Church building, only available for Episcopal service. Should there be no Episcopal minister there on any Sabbath, an Episcopal layman may read the service, but no Presbyterian or Baptist or Congregational or Methodist minister can enter that pulpit, although half a dozen of these might happen to be there over Sabbath. And yet we hear from time to time of overtures for union from Episcopal Synods, and of sermons and pamphlets in the interests of union from Episcopal ministers. And the superior courts of other Churches reciprocate, and Presbyterian and other papers comment favourably on these sermons and brochures; while all the time the Episcopal Church does not take the first practical step toward union by allowing its ministers to exchange pulpits with those of other denominations or by throwing open its pulpits to other ministers. One of its own laymen may read the service in church but an insult is openly thrown in the face of every other Protestant Church by the refusal to allow the duly ordained ministers of these to conduct the service. Till a change is effected in this particular it seems but a hollow mockery to play longer with so-called overtures for union emanating from such a source. Presbyterian ministers are, to put it very modestly, at least the equals of ministers of the Episcopal Church in education, in intelligence, in culture, in manliness, and in everything that constitutes the true minister of Jesus Christ, and Presbyterian people the equal of any other in intelligence, liberality, Christian zeal and sanctified common sense. It is hoped that the Presbytery of Montreal may take the matter up, and adopt some systematic plan for the supply of ordinances at these points. The railway companies are giving special attention to these suburban places, and so likewise should the Church.

Sabbath School Teacher.

INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

July 17,
1887.

JOHN THE BAPTIST.

{Matt. 3:
1-12.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance.—Matt. iii. 8.

SHORTER CATECHISM.

Question 29.—The redemption purchased by Christ is a precious doctrine, but its value to us lies in its personal application. The answer to this question sets forth the important truth that its effectual application to the receptive soul is the work of the Holy Spirit. God gives His Holy Spirit to them that ask Him.

Question 30.—The soul that is saved by Christ's redemption must be united to Christ. Faith is the only living bond of union. Faith is the direct result of the Spirit's action on the soul. He works faith in us.

INTRODUCTORY.

The mother of Jesus and the mother of John the Baptist were cousins. The Baptist's father was Zacharias, a priest, and his mother's name was Elizabeth. The Scriptures say little of the boyhood of Jesus or of His forerunner. We get a glimpse of Jesus in His twelfth year, when he visited the Temple with Joseph and Mary. We are told that He was subject to His parents, and that He grew in wisdom and stature, and in favour both with God and man. John was no doubt carefully trained, and he took on him the Nazarene's vow, which required that he was neither to drink wine nor strong drink, and to leave his hair uncut. His early training and dedication to God, and, above all, the power of the Holy Spirit, were the special preparation for the public ministry, on which he entered when he was thirty years of age.

I. The Harbinger of the Messiah.—When the fit time had come, when the Saviour was about to appear as the Great Teacher, John the Baptist, whose coming and mission had been foretold by the prophet Isaiah, makes his appearance in the wilderness of Judea. This was the region near the mouth of the Jordan. Though his ministry was not confined to that immediate locality, he did not visit the towns and cities, but in keeping with the stern character of his preaching, he remained in the Judean wilderness, or followed the banks of the Jordan, going as far as Bethabara. In appearance he had the simple majesty and bearing of an ancient prophet. His dress was simple in the extreme, and his mode of life was austere. His clothing was made of the coarse hair of the camel, girt about with a leathern girdle, and his food was locusts,

winged insects, not unlike the grasshopper, with which we are familiar, and wild honey, which in Palestine was and is still plentiful. Arabs may be seen in these days dressed as was John the Baptist, and who subsist on similar food. His very appearance was a protest against the luxurious living common among the Jews of his time. The best of all preparation for his preaching that John possessed was that from a child he was filled with the Holy Ghost.

II. John's Hearers.—John's preaching did not consist in saying smooth things. He did not flatter his hearers. He spoke telling truths in a very telling way, and yet vast crowds flocked to hear him. In this sense it was a most attractive ministry. Large numbers from Jerusalem and all Judea and the region round about Jordan crowded to his ministry. They were drawn by the singular earnestness and sincerity of the preacher, and were anxious to hear his message. It was a time of spiritual expectancy as well as of unrest. The people were restive under the Roman yoke. Judaism was becoming old, and ready to vanish away. There were numerous indications that the coming of the Messiah was expected. The common people were ready to listen to the message of the preacher in the wilderness, who, like one of the old prophets, had made his appearance among them. The leaders of the people likewise go forth to hear him. The Pharisees and Sadducees were among his auditors. The term Pharisee means separatist. Those so termed made hypocritical pretences to superior holiness and purity of life, expecting to merit the favour of God because of their assumed goodness; while the Sadducees, named after a Jewish teacher who had lived two centuries earlier, denied the existence of angels and of a future life. They were the infidels or agnostics of their day.

III. The Subject of John's Preaching.—Its keynote was repentance and the nearness of the kingdom of heaven. Repentance means a change of mind, not a change of mind from bad to worse, but from bad to better. No one can truly serve God without repentance. It includes two things: sorrow for sin, and the forsaking of it. One may feel sorry for the consequences that follow sin, and yet not give up the sin, but that is not repentance. True repentance includes both. The kingdom of heaven is at hand, the kingdom of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. The great work of Christ was to be accomplished, which was to open the kingdom of heaven to all believers. The preaching of John was eminently practical. He announced God's truth, and also plainly showed its practical application not merely to classes but to his individual hearers. To Pharisee and Sadducee he addressed words of stern and stinging rebuke. Ye offspring of vipers. Not the language of the courtly preacher, but the startling words of faithful rebuke. They thought they were holy living and liberal minded persons. He knew that morally and spiritually they were like venomous reptiles, and he plainly tells them so, and asks who had warned them to flee from the coming wrath that overtakes the finally impenitent. He tells them what they were, and also what they must become to escape the awful doom. Bring forth fruits meet for repentance. Mere formality will not do. Trust in a delusion would be unavailing. It would not do for them to fancy that because they could claim Abraham for their ancestor that therefore all would be well with them. Pointing probably to the stones lying around, he told them that of these God was able to raise up children to Abraham. In vivid terms he warns them of the coming judgment. The axe is laid to the root of the tree; every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire. The branches are not pruned and trimmed; it is cut down by the root and destroyed. Here the Baptist brings in another reason for repentance. Like a true preacher, he had no thought of magnifying himself. He properly understood the nature of his office. He speaks of himself as the voice of one crying in the wilderness, but he tells of the coming of One that is mightier than he, for whom he was unworthy to perform the humblest office. He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire. He tells them of the Saviour who could deliver them from the pollution, punishment and power of sin, and who could by His Spirit make them pure and holy. He then reverts to the words of most solemn and impressive warning. The Gospel of Jesus is like the fan with which the grain on the threshing floor was winnowed. Among the Jews the grain was trodden by oxen. Then the husbandman took his fan, a large wooden fork, and tossed what lay on the floor, the wind blowing away the chaff, which was afterward burned, so that it might not again be mixed with the wheat by the shifting winds. Then the pure grain was placed in the garner. So the Gospel of Jesus Christ is the fan that separates the chaff from the wheat, which is preserved in God's garner—but the chaff He will burn up with unquenchable fire.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

God prepares His servants for their special work.

We must enter God's kingdom through the gateway of repentance.

Real repentance means sorrow for sin, confession and forsaking of it.

Pious parents, precious opportunities, great professions, will save no one. There must be a personal application to a personal Saviour.

THE Dean of Lincoln does not deny that Presbyterians are Christians; he says they might be members of the Church of Christ in the same sense that the rebellious subjects of the Queen are still her subjects.

THE congregation of Chalmers Territorial Church, West Port, Edinburgh, have cordially and unanimously decided to request the Free Presbytery of Edinburgh to moderate in a call to Rev. J. S. Bowie, B.D., Dunblane.

IN connection with Sir W. Hunter's retirement from the Indian service, the *Calcutta Spectator* says it will not be disappointed if in the Doctor's career in England that of Macaulay is repeated. Sir William took his M.D. degree at Glasgow.