

convenient. Dr. Smellie having taken the chair, Dr. Wardrope then delivered an address on "Difficulties in Connection with the Ministerial Work." Mr. Angus MacKay followed on the same subject. Others took part in the discussion, maintaining throughout the interest awakened by the first speakers. Mr. Samuel Hodskin introduced the topic, "The Eldership: Its Work and Difficulties." His address was pointed and suggestive. Mr. William Davidson, of Salem, followed in the same line, as did Mr. William Watson, of Guelph. These being ruling elders, their remarks were all the more valuable. In the evening the Conference was upon Temperance, the main feature of the meeting being an address by the Rev. Mr. Black on the working of the Scott Act in the county of Wellington, after which addresses were made by Messrs. McMullen and Davidson and Mr. McDonald, Scott Act Inspector. At the conclusion of Mr. Black's address a resolution expressing thanks to Mr. Black for his address, and satisfaction that the Temperance Act is productive of such excellent results moved by Dr. Torrance, seconded by Dr. Wardrope, was unanimously adopted. On Wednesday morning the Presbytery sat in Conference on Sabbath Schools. Dr. Middlemiss read a paper on "The Shorter Catechism in the Sabbath School," after which Rev. R. J. Beattie and Dr. Torrance dealt with the subject assigned them, "Our Duty as a Church in Reference to undue Roman Catholic Interference in our Educational Institutions." Resolutions were proposed and adopted on each of the topics discussed. It was laid at the proper time before the Presbytery for its action. Before closing the Conference agreed to express its regret that so many members had been absent from its proceedings, and especially that so many of those who had been appointed to introduce subjects were not present to fulfil the duty assigned them, nor had sent any reason for their not doing so.

PRESBYTERY OF TORONTO.—An ordinary meeting of this court was held on the 1st inst., Rev. P. Nicol, Moderator. Agreeably to an application made by the Board of Trustees of Cooke's Church, transmitted by the Session of said Church, and supported by Messrs. J. Allison and P. C. Close, commissioners from the congregation, leave was given to said Board to mortgage the church property for an amount not to exceed \$15,000, with a view to carry out plans submitted by Mr. Gregg, architect, for building a schoolhouse and remodelling the church, as also to put in a new organ, etc. It appeared that the deputation appointed to visit the congregations of Norval and Union Church had found it inexpedient to make the visit. The pastor, however, Rev. J. Alexander, was afforded opportunity to express himself, when he stated in substance that he favoured a continuance of the union of the two congregations, and asked the Presbytery to loose him without delay from the charge of the same. It was then moved by Rev. Dr. Reid, seconded by Rev. P. Macleod, and unanimously agreed to, That in view of the fact that at last meeting, and pursuant to citation duly made, the congregations of Norval and Union Church were heard for their interests through commissioners appointed by them, the Presbytery deem it unnecessary to cite them to appear anew; that, although with very great reluctance, yet, looking at the force of the main ground stated by him, the Presbytery accept of Mr. Alexander's resignation, to take effect after the 6th of next month; and further, that a committee be appointed to prepare a minute expressive of the mind of the court in regard to one who has so long and faithfully and successfully laboured among the people of his charge. Rev. W. G. Wallace was appointed to preach to the congregations aforesaid on the 13th of next month, and declare the charge vacant, as also to act as Moderator of the Session during the vacancy, and Revs. Dr. Gregg, Dr. Reid, J. Frazer and Mr. Gemmill were appointed as the committee to draft a minute as aforesaid, and submit the same at next meeting. Rev. A. Gilray, as convener of a committee appointed to visit the congregations of Weston and Woodbridge, reported that said congregations had resolved to add \$150 to their pastor's salary, with the hope of adding \$50 more. The Presbytery were gratified with this report, and instructed the Clerk to write to the congregations to that effect. Answers to the reasons received from Rev. W. Inglis for his protest and appeal were submitted and read from the committee appointed to prepare the same. The answers were adopted; and Rev. H. M. Parsons and D. J. Macdonnell were appointed to act as the Presbytery's representatives in support of said answers before the Synod. Rev. W. G. Wallace was appointed to receive returns on Temperance from Sessions within the bounds, and to prepare a report thereon for next meeting, said report, together with reports on the State of Religion and Sabbath Schools, to be taken up at the second diet of said meeting. The remit on Ecclesiastical Co-operation was taken up and discussed at some length. A motion to consider the resolutions in the remit *seriatim* was carried over an amendment to consider the remit as a whole. On the first resolution being read, it was moved to approve of the same. An amendment was proposed for a modification thereof. The motion carried. The second, third, fourth and fifth resolutions were successively rejected. It was afterward moved by Rev. D. J. Macdonnell, seconded by Rev. A. Gilray, that in lieu of these resolutions the following be substituted: In the judgment of the Presbytery this object may be accomplished by leaving the matter in the hands of local courts. Presbyteries and Synods may confer with such courts of the Methodist Church as have supervision of the territory under their respective jurisdiction. In amendment it was moved by Rev. Dr. Reid, seconded by Rev. G. M. Milligan, That this Presbytery, having considered the report of the committee sent down by the General Assembly, and the resolutions embodied therein, agree as follows: While rejoicing at the growing desire for union and co-operation manifested by the different Protestant Churches, and willing to promote any movement in such direction, yet the Presbytery believes that the object will be best accomplished by leaving the matter in the hands of the local Church courts, and by the cultivation of a spirit of Christian fellowship and love among the members of our Churches, especially in such localities as are referred to in the resolutions sent down

by the General Assembly. On a vote being taken, the motion carried over the amendment by a majority of one. The sixth resolution was then approved of without a vote. On motion of Rev. G. M. Milligan, seconded by Rev. Dr. MacLaren, it was agreed to nominate Rev. Dr. Burns, of Halifax, as Moderator of next General Assembly. Notice was given by Rev. J. Mutch of two motions for next meeting, one anent a change of plan for appointing ministers as commissioners; another for a change of plan in appointing elders to the General Assembly. Next meeting of Presbytery is to be held on the first Tuesday of March at ten o'clock a.m.; and at three o'clock p.m. of that day commissioners will be appointed to next Assembly. Several matters of little possible interest are, on purpose, omitted by the undersigned in this report; and indeed in all his reports he labours hard to be brief.—R. MONTEATH, Pres. Clerk.

MONTREAL NOTES.

The annual report of the Board of Management of Knox Church (Rev. J. Fleck, pastor) is most encouraging, the condition and prospects of the congregation never being brighter or more hopeful. The receipts from envelopes were \$4,576, plate collection, \$521; special contributions, \$130, a total of \$5,227. The amount allotted to missionary and benevolent objects is \$1,326. Separate envelopes are hereafter to be used for congregational and missionary purposes. In March last the congregation decided to procure a new organ, and liberal subscriptions were secured. It is being built by Messrs. S. R. Warren & Son, of Toronto, and is expected to be ready by May. The various organizations connected with the Church are well maintained, and there is a gratifying increase in the attendance at the Sabbath services.

For the year 1886 the missionary contributions of the Juvenile Missionary Society of Erskine Church amounted to \$700, which was appropriated by the Sabbath school last Friday evening to the several Schemes of the Church, including \$100 for the maintenance of a children's cot in the Montreal General Hospital. This sum of \$700 is in addition to the amount raised by the Congregational Missionary Society. The Woman's Working Society of this congregation raised upward of \$700 last year for various religious and benevolent objects.

The Rev. R. V. McKibbin, B.A., has accepted the call to West Farnham, and his induction has been fixed for Friday evening, the 18th inst., the Rev. J. Fleck to preside, Rev. F. M. Dewey to preach, Rev. A. McFarlane to address the minister, and Rev. W. R. Cruikshank the people. This is the first settlement in this congregation.

On Sabbath week the Rev. James Barclay, of St. Paul, is to preach in St. Stephen's and St. David's Churches, St. John, N. B. He is also to lecture there on two week-evenings. In his absence his pulpit here will be supplied by the Rev. J. Mackie, of Kingston.

A series of three lectures, under the auspices of the Students' Missionary Society of the Presbyterian College, is to be delivered in the David Morrice Hall as follows: Feb. 25, "Christian Churches and Missions in the East," by Sir William Dawson; March 3, "Canterbury Cathedral," by Rev. G. H. Wells, illustrated with stereopticon views by Mr. A. C. Hutchison; March 10, "The Planting of the Church in Canada," by Rev. J. Barclay. A public meeting of the society was held on Thursday evening, Professor Scrimger in the chair. Short addresses were given by Messrs. M. McKenzie and J. McDougall, on Foreign Missions; Messrs. McWilliam and Cayer, on French Missions; Mr. Martin, on City Missions, and Mr. Rochester, on the Lumbermen's Mission.

The missionary contributions in Chalmers Church are raised solely by means of a juvenile missionary society. These have been on the increase from year to year. For 1886, however, they are much in excess of any preceding year, having raised the handsome sum of \$700, which is divided among the several Schemes of the Church.

As the time for the appointment of commissioners to the General Assembly approaches, the question of expense looms up. The single fare from Montreal to Winnipeg is \$42.70, and return \$60. It is understood that the Canadian Pacific Railway have agreed to grant return tickets from Toronto by rail both ways for \$30, and by rail one way and steamer the other \$35. The cost of the ticket does not by any means represent the expense of the trip. The sleeping car cost \$8 each way, and meals about \$5 each way. At this figure the average outlay of each commissioner from Ontario and Quebec would be in the neighbourhood of \$60. Would it not be possible to charter a train or a certain number of sleeping cars at so much per car for the trip; these cars to be attached to the trains leaving Toronto and Montreal on the Monday preceding the opening of the Assembly? Each car holds so many. The cost of the car could be divided by this number, and commissioners could secure their places by sending the necessary amount ten days or a fortnight in advance. The total expenses might thus be considerably lessened, and some special arrangement might be made with the company as to meals. Including the Maritime Provinces, the outlay of Commissioners at this Assembly will probably exceed \$18,000.

The monthly meeting of the Presbyterian Woman's Missionary Society was held last Friday afternoon, and was well attended. The new president, Mrs. Archibald Campbell, occupied the chair. The usual monthly reports from both the French and English Bible women were considered, after which the Rev. R. P. Duclos delivered an address on French Evangelization.

The students of the Presbyterian College here conduct an evangelistic service at eight o'clock every Sabbath evening in the old St. Gabriel Church building.

Among the appropriations made by Erskine Church Missionary Society was the sum of \$900, for the Augmentation Fund. Knox Church contributes \$400 for this fund. It is hoped that the few large and wealthy congregations in the Presbytery, will contribute their fair share to this Scheme, so that the amount asked from the Presbytery may be realized.

Sabbath School Teacher.

INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

Feb. 20, } ABRAHAM PLEADING FOR SODOM. { Gen. 18:
1887. } 23-33.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"In wrath remember mercy."—Hab. iii. 2.

SHORTER CATECHISM.

Question 10.—The Bible states plainly that God created man. Out of the dust of the ground man's body was formed. His spiritual nature was God's own workmanship. God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. The woman was formed from the body of Adam. Man was created after God's image; i.e., his spirit was like to God. In his essential nature man is a personal, spiritual being, endowed with reason and the freedom of will. In his state of innocence man was like God in that he had the capacity of knowing; his righteousness was like God's righteousness, and he resembled his Creator in holiness. Man being the crowning work of creation, he was invested with sovereignty over nature. How different sin has made man. In his fallen nature he has been likened to a temple in ruins. The second Adam, the Lord from heaven, has made possible man's restoration to a higher state than that from which he fell.

INTRODUCTORY.

Fifteen years after God had solemnly ratified His covenant with Abram, three angel visitants, one of them the Angel of the Lord, appeared to him. The Angel of the Lord, understood to be the Son of God, intimated to Abraham the coming destruction of Sodom and the other cities of the plain. This leads to

I. **Abraham's Intercession.**—Abraham does not here pray for himself. Throughout this remarkable prayer he intercedes for others. The prayer is a strong proof of Abraham's growth in grace. He is able to rise above all selfishness. In his prayer he doubtless remembered Lot and his family, and was conscious of the danger to which they were exposed. The height of spiritual attainment to which Abraham had reached is also seen when those for whom he intercedes are considered. It was not only for the righteous, but also for the wicked. No good man can ever exult over the punishment of the wicked. John Newton, on seeing a murderer led to execution, said: "There goes John Newton, but for the grace of God." There is not too much prayer for any class; there certainly is not enough for the wicked. If Abraham could in his day pray so fervently for the people of Sodom, now that we see God's mercy in Christ, should we not be more earnest in prayer for the conversion of the wicked? It seems more natural to us to feel indignant with those who do wickedly than to plead with God for His mercy to them.

II. **The Prayer.**—Abraham drew near not in place merely, but in spirit. His strong faith enabled him to plead face to face with God. The prayer showed that Abraham had a high conception of God's justice. He could not realize that God would involve the righteous and the wicked alike in indiscriminate ruin. He is jealous for God's glory. What troubles his conscience he brings before God. Even if there should be fifty righteous, he pleads that for their sake the place might be spared. The overthrow of the righteous with the wicked would, in man's judgment, obliterate moral distinctions. So he says boldly, but reverently, "that be far from Thee to do after this manner." Having a profound conviction in the divine righteousness, he asks: "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" To this, the opening petition of Abraham's prayer, God answers graciously that if the fifty righteous are found, the whole place will be spared for their sakes. In this answer we get an insight into the principles of the divine government. The righteous, wherever they live, are the salt of the earth. For their sakes wicked cities are spared. How much do evil-doers owe to their neighbours who endeavour to live righteously, soberly and godly in this present evil world. How many owe their preservation to the prayers of the righteous which avail much? Abraham prays importunately. If the fifty cannot be found, forty-five may. He also prays reverently. In the true sense of the words he fears God. He thinks of the infinite distance between the Eternal God and himself, "which am but dust and ashes." The answer comes that if that number be found, the cities will be spared. The gracious answer encourages Abraham to continue his intercession. Once and again he uses the expression, "Oh, let not the Lord be angry," and he ends with the plea that peradventure ten shall be found. God's mercy is shown to be commensurate with man's importunity. It is worth noting that the Revised Version gives the answer in these words: "I will not destroy it for the ten's sake." This remarkable prayer, like many of the prayers of God's people, is answered, but in His own way. The cities were overwhelmed in swift destruction because they had no saving element. What a condition theirs must have been when even ten righteous persons could not be found among their multitudes! The answer to that prayer of Abraham would strengthen Abraham's faith in God's righteousness and mercy, and the striking narrative has been placed on record for our instruction. It also conveys to us an impressive warning. A righteous God could no longer tolerate the wickedness of Sodom. When mercy is abused retribution surely follows.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

Judgment for sin may be delayed, but it is sure to come. God spares the wicked for the sake of the righteous. The Judge of all the earth will always do right. It is our duty to pray for mercy to the wicked. We all need the intercession of the one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus.

PROFESSOR EDWARD OLNEY, of the University of Michigan, the author of a complete series of text-books, and one of the best-known educators in the West, was found dead at his home in Ann Arbor, January 16.