

anent the vacancies and probationers of the Church, Dr. Reid reported that said committee are now of opinion that, in consequence of relative action recently taken by several Synods, the contemplated overture may be held in abeyance. The report was received, and the Presbytery decided in terms thereof. The committee appointed to meet with Rev. A. B. Dobson and his people anent his resignation reported unfavourably, and recommended the appointment of a larger committee to confer with Mr. Dolson and representatives who were present. The Presbytery took action accordingly. But eventually, on Mr. Dolson adhering to his resignation, the Presbytery, while recognizing his personal worth and official fidelity, agreed to loose him from his charge, said decision to take effect after the 23rd of the month, and appointed Rev. J. Alexander to declare the pulpits vacant, Rev. A. McFaul to be interim Moderator of the Session. A letter was read from Rev. J. S. Mackay, resigning his pastoral charge of New Westminster, B. C., on the ground of continued ill health. A paper was read from his congregation, stating that they had learned from him that he intended to take such action, but sending also a resolution passed by them, in which they declared their deep sympathy with him, and asked the Presbytery, instead of accepting his resignation, to extend his leave of absence to the 1st of August at least. On motion made by Dr. Caven, the Presbytery agreed in substance to express sincere sympathy with Mr. Mackay, and to give effect to the wishes of the congregation, instructing the clerk to inform him accordingly. (It is very noticeable that he died on the very day the Presbytery were in session, and that consequently he never saw the communication sent by the Clerk, which was written and mailed with due speed.) The remittance of the unification of Foreign Mission work was read, when the following motion was adopted thereanent: So far as the provisions of the Scheme look towards the unification of the mission work of the Church they meet with the approval of this Presbytery; at the same time the Presbytery would prefer a Scheme which shall more completely provide for the unification of work which is essentially one, and a part of which cannot be intelligibly carried on without reference to the whole. Messrs. Wm. Patterson, George Ballantyne and S. S. Craig, theological students, were taken on public probationary trials; the two former were licensed on the day above mentioned, and the latter at an adjourned meeting held on the 25th of the month. On motion made by Rev. J. Smith, seconded by Rev. J. R. Gilchrist, it was agreed that as the Rev. Wm. Burns is engaged by special appointment of the Board of Knox College in important work connected with said college, the Presbytery shall apply to the General Assembly for leave to put his name on the roll of the Presbytery. The induction of Rev. Dr. Kellogg was proceeded with, as reported already in THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN, and nothing additional is required from the undersigned. The next ordinary meeting of Presbytery was appointed to be held in the usual place, on the 6th day of July, at ten o'clock a.m.—R. MONTEATH, Pres. Clerk.

PRESBYTERY OF GUELPH.—This Presbytery held its regular meeting in Chalmers Church, Guelph, on Tuesday, 18th May, at ten o'clock in the forenoon. Dr. Wardrope was appointed Moderator *pro tem.* in absence of the stated Moderator, who has been confined to his bed for some weeks through serious illness. There was a very large attendance of members. The following are some of the chief items of business transacted. A committee was appointed to consider and devise some proper way of celebrating the jubilee of John Duff, who, if spared to the 10th August, will have reached the fiftieth year since he was ordained to the work of the ministry. The Committee on Church Property in Puslinch gave in their report to the effect that they had reached a basis of settlement satisfactory to the parties concerned, and recommending that the personal estate be at once divided, and that the committee be continued some time longer, that they may be able to wind up the real estate. The report was received and the recommendations adopted. A resolution was presented, adopted by the congregation of Chalmers Church, Guelph, asking that the managers be authorized to dispose of the manse property for the sum of \$3,000. Messrs. Melvin and Sturton were heard in support of the request, from whose statements it appeared that the proceeds of the sale were to be applied toward the payment of a debt on the property, both church and manse, and that it was the intention of the congregation to give henceforth \$200 a year for house rent, exclusive of the pastor's salary, in lieu of a manse. After full and careful deliberation the leave asked was granted. A motion of sympathy with Mr. J. C. Smith in his present severe bodily affliction was passed. Permission was granted to the Second Church, Garafaxa, and the Station on the Sixth Line to proceed with the erection of places of worship. Mr. J. K. Smith, who was appointed for the purpose by the Synod of Toronto and Kingston, brought before the Presbytery a proposal that has been made to repair the building at Fredericksburg, in which Mr. Robert McDowall, one of the very early pioneers of Presbyterianism in Ontario, preached for several years before his death, and to make it a memorial church, erecting in it a suitable memorial tablet with his name. It was stated that the estimated cost, according to plans that had been prepared, would be \$1,200. It was agreed to approve of the proposal, and co-operate in carrying it into effect, and every minister within the bounds was instructed to lay the matter before his congregation, asking for a contribution of not less than five cents per family for this purpose, and to remit the same within six weeks to the Rev. James Cumberland, M.A., Stella P. O., Ont., and to report to next Presbytery. An extract minute was read from the Clerk of Synod to the effect that the Synod had decided on the erection of the new Presbytery of Orangeville, and that it would take in the pastoral charges of Burns Church, Erin and Osprange, and Hillsburgh and Pines Corners. On motion of Dr. Torrance, seconded by Mr. J. K. Smith, it was resolved that the Presbytery express its regret at being called on to part with the two brethren labouring in these two pastoral charges, with whom they have often taken sweet counsel and held pleasant intercourse at its

meetings—its appreciation of the services they have rendered when appointed to act upon committees and other occasions when special duties were imposed upon them, and its prayer that they may be blessed and prospered in the new relations upon which they enter, and that their congregations may flourish under their ministry in the new Presbyterian oversight under which they are placed. A great part of the afternoon was spent discussing a resolution proposed some time ago by Mr. Charles Davidson as to the introduction of the Bible as a whole in our schools. After lengthened deliberation, it was moved by Dr. Torrance, seconded by Mr. C. Davidson, that this Presbytery, while recognizing the difficulty with which the use of the whole Word of God in the public schools of the land is beset in consequence of the diversity of religious sentiment that exists, and appreciating the concern that has been shown, and the effort that has been made, by the Honourable the Minister of Education to meet this difficulty by the preparation and authorization of selections from the sacred Scriptures, would yet record its opinion that these selections do not satisfy the religious wants and desires of the community, and would, therefore, overture the Venerable the General Assembly at its first meeting to take such steps as in its judgment may appear most conducive to having the Word of God as a whole re-introduced into our public schools for use therein. It was moved in amendment by Mr. J. K. Smith, seconded by Mr. J. Davidson, that this Presbytery, while expressing the hope that the valuable selections from the Scriptures now in use may serve a good purpose, yet earnestly trusts that the Bible as a whole may be speedily introduced in our schools, and thus be placed in the position which it ought to occupy. On being put to the vote the motion was declared carried over the amendment, and the Presbytery agreed to overture the Assembly in terms thereof. Drs. Middlemiss and Torrance and Mr. C. Davidson were appointed to support the overture on the floor of the Assembly. The Clerk was instructed to furnish Mr. Rose, of Knox Church, Elora, with a certified extract of a minute recorded some years ago on the statement made by the then pastor of that church, that the debt on it had been paid, and the mortgage which the Presbytery had granted the congregation leave to assume had been removed. Next meeting was appointed to be held in Chalmers Church, Guelph, on the third Tuesday of July, at ten o'clock forenoon. The roll was then called, and the names of those present were taken down, after which the proceedings were closed with the benediction.

Sabbath School Teacher.

INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

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

June 23, 1886.

JESUS THE CHRIST.

John 7: 37-52.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."—Matt. xvi. 16.

INTRODUCTORY.

The Jews murmured (vi. 41) at His claim to be the bread of life, come down from heaven, because they knew Him, His parents and whence He came.

He corrects their complaint by saying that such natural information is not sufficient—they must be taught of God—through believing in Him—in order to comprehend the fact that he was the bread of life—superior to the manna, after eating of which their fathers died.

He was the living bread. He was to give His life, and by feeding upon that sacrificed life—the body broken and blood shed—they would have life and in no other way.

This was so disappointing that many left Him, and, with a touch of tenderness, He asked the disciples if they too were going away. Peter answered that they could find the eternal life they sought nowhere else—for they were sure He was the Christ. He replied that they needed to be watchful of themselves in their confidence, for one of them was a devil.

It was six months after this that the Feast of Tabernacles was at hand. He had not gone to the Passover (vi. 4), and His brethren urged Him to go now to Jerusalem, to come out publicly and claim the position to which He made pretence, for they did not believe in Him. He did not go with them, but went afterward, and taught in the court of the temple and all were amazed at His wisdom. They wondered where He learned, for He was never at the schools. He said: There is another teacher—God whose words I speak. If you loved Him you would appreciate and believe my words. I seek not My own glory, but His—am entirely unselfish—and am therefore absolutely true.

In proof of your disobedience you desire to kill me because of my merciful act in healing the man at Bethesda (v. 5) on the Sabbath, and yet you yourselves break the Sabbath by circumcising a man if the Sabbath should happen to be on the eighth day. Some, who did not know the purpose of the Pharisees, said, "Who seeks to kill you?" (ver. 20) but others *knew*, and wondered the Pharisees did not now seize Him (ver. 26). When it was known that some of the people began to favour him, the Pharisees sent officers to arrest him. He then spoke to them such words as awed them about the short time that yet remained, and the fact that the time would come when they would seek Him, but not find Him. This was about the middle of the Feast. He was after that apparently undisturbed until the last day.

EXPLANATORY.

I. The Great Day of the Feast.—This feast was observed on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, i.e., October, by the Jewish calendar. It was the national harvest-home—a thanksgiving festival on account of the year's produce, vintage, as well as harvest.

Time.—It lasted eight days. The first and last being a Sabbath day.

Tabernacles.—It was so called because the people during these days dwelt in booths—made of branches of palm,

willow, pine, olive, etc., in commemoration of the wilderness life out of which they came into the promised land and settled habitations. We should not forget in prosperity the former days.

Ceremony.—Early in the morning the people left their tents to join in the service. Each carried a palm-branch in his right hand—or rather a palm-branch round with myrtle and willow—and in his left a citrén. In procession they followed a priest, who carried a golden pitcher, to the pool of Siloam, where it was filled, carried back and poured upon the altar with great rejoicing, whilst they sang "With joy shall we draw water out of the wells of salvation" (Isa. xii. 3.)

This was both a thank offering and a prayer. They rejoiced in the past, and prayed for the richer blessing, the outpouring of the Spirit, that was expected when the Messiah came.

II. The Great Invitation.—Jesus saw through all this show of religion, and knew that it was not sincere. He also saw through all this exultant joy, and knew that at the bottom of it lay much concealed misery. How true it is that human joys have a dark background, often visible to the human eye, but always to the All-Seeing!

Come unto Me, and drink.—Probably it was just when they were engaged pouring out the water, and praying for the blessing, that He lifted His voice above the noise, and cried that their prayer would be then and there answered if they would come to Him. He was the promised Messiah, in whom this well of salvation was opened, of which Isaiah spoke.

To come and drink the living water that He supplied would satisfy thirst, as he told the woman of Samaria, and that men would believe this! Every need, pardon, sanctification, wisdom, strength, guidance, love—every need is supplied in Him—the all in all.

Jesus cried—Spoke so loud that all could hear. He has proclaimed that invitation to the ends of the earth, so that we have all heard Him in His word crying, "If any man thirst," etc. He is eager to save.

Holy Spirit. (Ver. 39.)—This is John's explanation of what He meant. After His ascension He sent forth the Holy Ghost—the Comforter—on them that believed. And they in turn became the means of blessing others.

What we get from Christ, when the heart is changed, into His likeness, we rejoice to dispense to others.

Out of his belly, i.e., out of the heart—the inmost part of our being. Some have supposed that a reference is made to the golden pitcher the priest held in his hand. It was *enlarged in the middle*, and out of it the water was poured upon the altar. Christ says that within all who believe in Him there will be a supply that will bless mankind.

Not yet glorified.—This outpouring of the Spirit is a difference in degree. Not until His work was complete, and He was prepared to manifest His glory did the Holy Spirit, whose work it is to make Christ known, come in greatness or without measure. The Spirit was, however, in the Church before this.

III. Conflict of Opinion. (Verses 40-43.)—Their confusion arose chiefly from their ignorance. Some said, "This is the Prophet" (Deut. xviii. 15), and others, "This is the Christ," not knowing that they meant the same person.

Others objected that the Christ was to come out of Bethlehem, the city of David—not knowing that Jesus was born there.

There is a similar division of sentiment indicated in verses 12, 13, 25, 26, as well as in preceding chapters. It is so still. Ignorance is the chief cause of disputation. It is lamentable to see the utterly ignorant arguing and settling so far as they are concerned—as if they knew all—matters upon which spiritual life and even salvation itself depends.

We should not dogmatize unless we are satisfied that we know all. Keep the mind open for more light.

Taken Him. (Ver. 44.)—The strife was so keen that some would arrest Him, but dared not, because of others who were friendly, but principally because of that majesty they dared not approach.

IV. Nicodemus a Growing Christian. (Verses 45-53.)—The officers returned without Him, and gave as their reason, "No man ever spake as this man." They were bound by His moral power. That is testimony from his enemies as to the influence He wielded over His hearers.

To this answer the Pharisees gave two answers:

(1) No ruler believed in Him. He is followed only by the weak and ignorant, not by any in position or of influence.

(2) They know not the law—are not able to interpret the Scriptures—or they would know that this is not the Messiah. But in their ignorance they are bringing a curse upon themselves by departing from the truth.

Nicodemus answers these two objections. The first is answered by the fact that he himself, a ruler, is a believer in Him. He does not directly state that, but His defence shows it, as well as what he foresaw in chapter iii. The second objection he answers by showing that they themselves are breaking the law by judging a man without a fair hearing. That is worse than the conduct of the people.

Galilee.—They try to overthrow Him by ridicule. Are you yourself a Galilean—else how are you ignorant of the fact that no prophet cometh from Galilee? They are again wrong. Out of Galilee came Jonah, Hosea and Nahum, prophets of their own Scriptures. Nicodemus is not very brave yet, but he is getting on. Now in open day he speaks.

Home.—Every man went to his home—Jesus had none, nowhere to lay His head, but as given to Him by friends.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

1. There are rivers of water. Do we drink copiously?
2. By faith we can get and give freely.
3. Jesus has ascended, the gift is now ready to be bestowed.
4. Do we allow ignorance to decide matters upon which life and death depend?
5. Human courage wilts in the presence of the divine.
6. Have the courage of convictions.