

Ministers and Churches.

OUR TORONTO LETTER.

The sensation of the past week has been the call from Bethany Church, Philadelphia, to Rev. Wm. Patterson of Cooke's Church. There have been so many rumors of calls, and incipient calls to Mr. Patterson, and these have either been quited by himself, or have been shown to be merely rumors, that a sense of security had come over the congregation and the citizens, for all have an interest in this man. When the announcement was made that a special meeting of the Presbytery had been called for the 29th instant, the statement was not credited at first, but when confirmed, it was at once felt that something more serious than usual was in the wind.

There are men who seem to court calls, merely for the sake of adding another trophy to the list of those who desire their services. The notoriety gained is dearly purchased, for each call thus allowed to go on, merely for the sake of publication, sinks the man another point in the estimation of his brethren and the good men of the church. Mr. Patterson stands at the other extreme. When a congregation wished to call him, if he could not entertain it, he quietly stopped it, and used every effort to prevent the fact that he had been approached becoming known. In this way many an incipient call has been hushed up.

The call from Bethany Collegiate Church has, from the first appealed to Mr. Patterson. Several things have conspired to lead him to look with favor upon it. He has been carrying two and at times three men's burdens in the Church to which he ministers. The demands upon him from those who are but adherents have been sufficient to tax one man's strength. The strain of preaching to more than two thousand souls every Sabbath, to a man with the temperament of Mr. Patterson, is tremendous. For he preaches, he does more than speak. The burden of souls is upon him, and an intensity of feeling vibrates in every tone of his voice and through every sentence. The pressure of his work never ceases, for the calls upon him are incessant.

Few men have such hold upon the hearts of the people as has Mr. Patterson. He is so simple and unaffected, so large-hearted and charitable that no one, however apparently insignificant, feels without the ken of the minister of Cooke's Church. Men who have had no use for a minister in years past are won back again to respect Mr. Patterson. The youth who affects to despise church matters, and who flippantly boasts to his boy companions that he has not been inside a church for two months, turns in to Cooke's Church, and comes back again the next Sabbath evening. And if once he feels the hearty hand-grasp of the minister, he will come back regularly.

Last Sabbath the Citation was read at both services, and a meeting of the congregation has been called for Monday evening, the 28th instant. The Presbytery will hold a special meeting on Tuesday following, the 29th instant, when the call will be considered and decided. A meeting of the adherents of the congregation and of citizens, will be held on Friday evening of this week to consider the situation, and to take what steps are possible to retain a man whom all love. At the close of the Ministerial Association on Monday morning last, an informal conference of the Presbyterian ministers was held, at which a committee was appointed to confer with the office-bearers of Cooke's Church, and to co-operate with them in any way possible, in an endeavor to retain Mr. Patterson. No stone will be left unturned to keep him.

Some have spoken of adding \$1,000 to his salary. That will not keep him. It is not at all a question of money with him. Some propose to secure sufficient pledges to give him an assistant. That is more to the point, but there are difficulties in the way of its accomplishment. Some have proposed, but with bated breath, uniting Knox Church and

Cooke's in a Collegiate charge, devoting the present endowment of Knox Church to the maintenance of three or more ministers to carry on the work of these downtown churches, and placing Mr. Patterson at the head of the work. That is very much more to the point. Let the combined debts of the two congregations be funded, unite their revenues, place such a man as Mr. Patterson at the head of the work these two churches should do, and which one of them, under a severe handicap has been trying to do, let these revenues be increased, if need be, by contributions from private sources, and Christian work in Toronto will take life.

The folly of appointing the meeting place of the Assembly at one or other extremity of the Dominion is apparent this year. Toronto is entitled to send thirty commissioners, but from present indications she will not have more than half that number present. One half of those appointed find it impossible to go, and, as Toronto Presbytery send nine-tenths by rotation, practically, though only two-thirds nominally, at least one-half of this year's commissioners will lose their opportunity to attend a General Assembly for another six years. And this Presbytery is by no means singular. Indeed there is grave doubt if, out of all the representatives appointed there will be more than 250 present. And it is safe to say that the majority of these will come from a radius not greater than 200 miles from Halifax.

We note that the Presbytery of Winnipeg is about to apply to the General Assembly for permission to receive, as a minister of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, Mr. J. C. Madill, who was well known while attending Knox College here and well known while minister of a Congregational Church in Samia, and quite as well known when ministers of a Congregational Church in Toronto. We wonder if Mr. Madill is equally well known to the brethren of the Winnipeg presbytery.

Bethany Church, to which Rev. W. Patterson is called, seats 3,000 persons, was recently remodelled at a cost of \$50,000, has a Sabbath School of 3,000, and a Bible class, conducted by Hon. John Wanamaker, of 2,600.

The session of Knox Church has unanimously decided to recommend to the congregation that Rev. Robert Johnston, D.D., of London, be called to fill the pastorate of the church made vacant by the retirement of Rev. Dr. Parsons.

At the last meeting of the Toronto Ministerial Association the paper of the day, "The Great Function, of the Church of Christ," was read by Rev. J. McP. Scott. The function, he claimed, is the evangelization of the world. He would not view foreign missions merely as a scheme of the church but as the great dominant spirit of the church. When the church returns to this, her apostolic commission, she will increase in spiritual life and rise to meet the need of the present.

OTTAWA.

In all the Ottawa Churches, last Sunday, reference was made to the relief of Mafeking; and on the Friday evening the happy event was generally celebrated by the citizens.

Arrangements are being made for a garden party in connection with St. Paul's church, at the home of Mr. Henry Watters, Theodore street. The collection will go to reducing the debt on the organ.

On June 2nd Ottawa presbytery will consider a call from the congregation of Billings Bridge to Rev. D. M. McLeod, of the Presbyterian College, Montreal. A call from Osgoode Church will also be considered.

A new site will probably be selected for Erskine Church. It is said that Rev. Dr. Campbell will go to Britain to raise funds for the erection of the new building. The work could not be placed in better hands.

Rev. E. C. Gallup of this city was on Tuesday

of this week inducted into the pastorate of the Presbyterian churches of Burford and Mount Pleasant. The settlement is a very happy one and the young minister enters upon his work with all indications of a successful pastorate.

In Knox Church Rev. D. M. Ramsay preached at both services. His sermon in the evening was on "Balaam," taking as his text Numbers 22 and 6. He emphasized the point that the lesson to be drawn from Balaam's experience was that the greatest gifts may be perverted by ambition or avarice to the utter ruin of their owner.

The recent entertainment in Bethany Church, Hintonburgh, in connection with the anniversary services of the church was a very successful affair. The features were the rendering of Gounod's anthem, "Send Out Thy Light," by a choir of 35 voices, together with an orchestra of 17 pieces. Rev. Mr. Eadie sang a solo, Mr. J. Pott gave selections on the gramophone and Rev. Messrs. Ross and Campbell delivered addresses.

Rev. Mr. Taylor of Montreal, secretary of the board of French Evangelization, was in the city on Monday conferring with the members of the French Presbyterian Church regarding rebuilding. No steps have been decided on, but this matter will be settled as soon as possible. Although deprived of a church, the congregation is quite hopeful and the members are standing together well. Meanwhile services are being held in the hall of the Y.M.C.A.

It was a large and intelligent audience that gathered in Knox Church last Wednesday evening on the 45th anniversary of the Ottawa auxiliary of the Foreign Bible Society. Mr. George Hay, President, occupied the chair. Rev. D. M. Ramsay conducted the opening services, after which the annual report was adopted. The total receipts were \$9,916.01; \$3,000 were voted the parent society; leaving a balance on hand of \$141.97. The colporteurs visited 8,042 families; and Bible women visited 8,577 homes in the city. The total issues of the auxiliary in 45 years are 331,494 copies. The addresses by Rev. James Thomas, London Metropolitan District Secretary, and Rev. Canon Edmonds, of Exeter Cathedral, were greatly appreciated and their stimulating words will bear fruit in days to come. Dr. Armstrong, in graceful and appropriate terms, moved a vote of thanks to the speaker from the Mother Land. Mr. Hay discharged the duties of the chair with his usual tact and ability; and the meeting, on the whole, was probably the best ever held in the history of the society.

EASTERN ONTARIO

Rev. J. W. C. Bennett, B.A., occupied the pulpit of St. John's church, Almonte, last Sunday evening and preached an excellent sermon.

Rev. Dr. Stewart of Prescott, filled the pulpit in Knox Church, Morrisburg, on Sunday, the Rev. Mr. Cameron occupying Dr. Stewart's pulpit in Prescott.

Rev. Dr. MacNish, pastor of St. John's church, Cornwall, and Rev. Hugh Cairns, pastor of the Methodist church, exchanged pulpits last Sunday morning.

Rev. Mr. Bayne is now at his home at Ashton and is able to move about with the aid of crutches. He hopes to be able to take his services a week from next Sunday.

At a meeting of the congregation of the Presbyterian church, Cobourg, it was unanimously decided to call Rev. Mr. Beatty of Toronto, a graduate of Knox College.

Mr. W. W. McLaren, M.A., student of Queen's University, has arrived to take charge of old St. Andrew's congregation in the town hall, Lanark, during the summer.

The anniversary services in connection with Knox church, Cornwall, will be held on the first Sunday of June. Rev. W. D. Reid, B.D., of Montreal will preach on the occasion. Mr. Reid who has travelled extensively in Europe, will deliver one of his popular lectures on Monday evening following.