

not accepted, but he was granted one year's leave of absence for the benefit of his health, and to enable him to prosecute the interests of the French Evangelization Board in Britain. A petition from St. John's Church, Cornwall, praying the Presbytery for its consent to the sale of church property in Cornwall, and to an application for the necessary legislation, was granted. The Home Mission Report stated that an earnest effort would have to be made to maintain the Augmentation Fund in efficient working order. The amount apportioned to this Presbytery for the Augmentation Fund for the current year was \$750. The report also referred to French Mission work within the bounds, and the Presbytery agreed to apply for a French missionary to labour under the supervision of the Home Mission Committee. Rev. R. H. Warden was heard on the Home Mission Report, and made an urgent appeal on behalf of the Augmentation Fund, and warmly advocated the French Mission work. Mr. John Ferguson was placed on the Home Mission Committee, and Mr. John Matheson appointed convener of Committee on Sabbath Schools. The first part of the evening sederunt was devoted to hearing an address from Rev. J. Fraser Campbell, of Mhow. The brother made an urgent appeal on behalf of the Foreign Mission Fund and work, and was listened to with great interest. A call from Lunenburg and Avonmore, in favour of Rev. A. Matheson, of the Presbytery of Winnipeg, was presented. After due consideration the call was sustained, and the Clerk was instructed to transmit it and all relative papers to the Clerk of the Presbytery of Winnipeg. Mr. MacGillivray received a letter of recommendation from the Presbytery for the term of leave of absence. The sections of the remit on Aged and Infirm Ministers' Fund were approved. Arrangements were made for visiting the aid-receiving congregations before next regular meeting. A motion was made and carried for the reconsideration of the Kenyon bell case, and interested parties were cited to appear at a future meeting. The Presbytery met, pursuant to adjournment, at Alexandria on December 31st, 1884. Rev. J. L. Murray being present was invited to sit as a corresponding member. The Presbytery took up the Kenyon bell case. Parties were heard, and the matter fully discussed, after which the Presbytery unanimously adopted the following resolution: "That while the Presbytery regrets the manner in which a part of the funds was collected, it knows no reasonable objection to the ringing of a bell for public worship on the Sabbath, and understanding that a majority is in favour of the ringing of the bell, orders it to be rung accordingly." The call to Rev. F. A. MacLennan was now considered. Parties were heard, and the Presbytery, having looked at all the circumstances, and the strong desire of the congregation to retain the services of Mr. MacLennan, resolved not to translate. The Presbytery has before it for consideration at its next regular meeting a scheme for supporting a missionary in India. This scheme was introduced by a member of Vankleek Hill Session, and is the outcome of Mr. Fraser Campbell's addresses. The Presbytery then adjourned.—W. A. LANG, Pres. Clerk.

OBITUARIES.

MR. JAMES LANG.

At Chateauguay Basin, Dec. 19th, 1884, died one who may be among the oldest elders of Canada. Mr. James Lang, whose ripe years were nearly ninety, was an elder of the West Kirk, Greenock, for many years before coming to America, and held that office for over fifty years in the village where he lived and died. Of that staunch and upright old stock that is only too quickly disappearing from our midst, he was a genuine type; ever faithful in the performance of duty, living a pure and godly life, with serene faith and trust in an Almighty Father's love and care. His place is not one that can be easily filled, for he was a worthy example for the followers of Christ.

"Servant of God, well done."

EBENEZER TODD.

The following resolution was passed unanimously by the Presbyterians of Churchill, at a late meeting of the congregation:—

That this congregational meeting of the Second Innisfil Congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Canada wishes to, at this the first opportunity, and hereby does, express and record the deep sorrow and loss which we as a congregation experience in the death of Mr. Ebenezer Todd, an elder and father in this Church and congregation.

That while we sadly mourn the absence and removal of our dear brother from amongst us, we rejoice that we sorrow not as those who have no hope."

Kind and loving in his every conversation; exemplary for his truth, honesty and uprightness in all his dealings in every walk of life; diligent in his work for the Master while labouring in the vineyard;—our dear brother has left unimpaired foot-prints on the road he was travelling. We know he has gone to reap his reward, and that his works shall follow him.

That we sympathize and sorrow with the widowed wife in this her great trial; but we desire with her to look at the large, happy and Christian family by which she is surrounded; and may we with them accept this earthly bereavement as a blessing from the Sovereign Lord of all.

QUERIES ON THE STATE OF RELIGION.

The following eight queries are issued by the Committee on the State of Religion for the Presbytery of Toronto:

1. How many Prayer Meetings in connection with the congregation?
2. How is the Prayer Meeting conducted?
3. Do the elders and members manifest due sympathy with the Prayer Meeting?
4. To what extent is the Sabbath School instrumental in bringing the young into full communion with the Church?
5. Is there any method adopted to impart systematic Bible instruction to the congregation as a whole?
6. Have you had any indications of special religious interest during the year?
7. Have you any special hindrances to contend with?
8. Is there any other matter not referred to that would help to throw light on the state of religious life within the bounds of the congregation?

It has uniformly been objected to the very exhaustive set of queries issued by the Assembly's Committee in past years, that they were unanswerable, which is in a measure true of every radical question relating to the life of another. The Presbytery's Committee endeavoured to avoid that objection by preparing questions that chiefly relate to methods and results, and can be approximately answered; and from such answers it is hoped the nearest possible estimate of the state of religious life can be made.

The first question refers to Sabbath Morning Prayer Meetings, teachers' Prayer Meetings, mothers' Prayer Meetings, etc., one or more of which are held in different congregations.

It is hoped the second question will elicit some interesting information on a subject that is more and more engaging the Church's attention: how to make the Prayer Meeting a success.

That it is possible even to ask the third question is the Church's misfortune and shame. It is well known that many elders and members do not visit the Prayer Meetings once in the year, and many who do will not render any assistance in conducting it. Some numerical or other information would be acceptable on that point.

The fourth question, it is believed, will give encouraging information from some quarters as to the numbers who at an early age are making public profession of Christ. Both numbers and ages would be appropriate.

The intention of the fifth question is to discover whether by expository preaching, or courses of reading or lecturing in the pulpit or otherwise, results are reached that will be helpful and encouraging to others to adopt similar methods.

These explanations may by some be considered unnecessary, but they are offered in the hope that no session will fail, on account of any excuse, to give some definite information to the Committee this year, in order that a distinct statement may be reported to the Presbytery.

It is the desire of the Committee that, in each congregation visited by a deputation, the session meet with the deputies before the meetings, in order that by the discussion of these questions beforehand, they may be able more appropriately to address the people on the different phases of duty.

If earnestness of purpose will be exercised by all interested in the effort, the Committee feels assured of good results.

R. P. MACKAY, Convener.

Sabbath School Teacher.

INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

Feb. 1,
1885.

PAUL AT JERUSALEM.

{ Acts xxi.
15-26.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"And when they heard it they glorified the Lord."—Acts xxi. 20.

TIME.—May of 58, A.D.

INCIDENTAL TOPICS.—*Pentecost*: Also called "Feast of Weeks," i. e., a week of weeks, reckoned from the second day of the Passover when the firstfruits of the wheat and barley harvest were offered. This feast was the completion of the harvest, and two loaves were offered—thus beginning and ending the harvest with religious services. At first it was only for one day but afterwards extended to seven days, because the poor were to be invited and made glad. It was on the evening of the day on which Paul arrived in Jerusalem that the feast began.

Vows: Vows were intended as an expression of religious sentiment, and usually took the form of free-will offerings as acknowledgments of benefits received, or in anticipation of some blessing looked for—and as religious feeling is in danger of subsiding, and an excuse found for not carrying out the engagement, we find warnings against not performing vows. Better not vow than vow and not perform. Of many kinds the most important was the Nazirite vow, which was for a certain number of days, thirty, sixty, or an hundred, when they were called "Nazirites of Days," or for life when they were called "Nazirites in perpetuity."

A Nazirite, during the period of his vow, was to avoid three things: the use of wine, cutting his hair, and contact with the dead. If a Nazirite should break the vow and be defiled, he was to cut off his hair on the seventh day after the defilement, offer certain sacrifices and begin again. At

the conclusion of the days, he was to offer certain sacrifices, and having cut off his hair at the door of the tabernacle, put it in the fire on the altar. It was also expected that besides the prescribed offerings, some free-will offering should be made,—"that that his hand shall get,"—and such sacrifices were often provided by the wealthy and were regarded as an act of great merit. That is what Paul did for these Nazirites referred to, in this lesson. Num. ii. 21.

James: called the *Just*; brother of our Lord, Bishop of Jerusalem. Wrote the Epistle. In 69, A. D., suffered martyrdom. Two others of that name, James son of Alphaeus, slain by Herod; and James son of Zebedee, called James the *Less*.

EXPLANATORY.

1. From Caesarea to Jerusalem.

1. There was a great deal of tenderness and sadness as they were packing their baggage (carriages) that morning ready to start. They had so many intimations of bonds awaiting Paul that none could doubt. Every trembling heart was clinging to the Throne of Mercy. How many tears have been shed and prayers offered in connection with that painful operation "packing to go away." "There'll be no packing there."

Mnason: an old disciple of Cyprus, who had a house in Jerusalem, was in Caesarea and invited them to his house, nothing more is known of him. But it was a wise precaution against danger, that he should not lodge with a Jew, and also at a time when accommodation was scarce on account of the numbers visiting Jerusalem.

11. Reception at Jerusalem.

1. *Private*: "The brethren received us gladly." that is on the evening of his arrival. Many were always glad to welcome Paul, admiring his devoted character, and especially for his work's sake. There were many callers that evening at the house of Mnason.

2. *Public*: next morning James called the elders together, and they received Paul in a more formal manner. Paul took his companions with him, and after the "kiss of peace," the exchange of salutations, his companions would present their collections, a testimony of the love of the Gentile to the Jewish Church. Afterwards Paul gave an account of his mission. Can we not imagine his countenance glow, now, with loving enthusiasm, as he speaks of his beloved converts at Ephesus, Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, Corinth, etc., and now with indignation as he thought of the hindrances thrown in the way of the Gospel. A wonderful exhibition of tact in avoiding unnecessary irritation, burning love for souls, and devout acknowledgment of the hand of God in it all. "What things God hath wrought."

Reply: After Paul was done they all glorified the Lord. Even those elders who were opposed to Paul, for doubtless there were such, were so carried away that with one voice they acknowledged that God was with him.

Caution: But whilst they are satisfied themselves there are myriads of believers that are not satisfied. They had been misinformed as to Paul's teaching concerning the law and customs of the Jewish religion. His traducers said that he taught the Jews as well as the Gentiles that they ought not to be circumcised nor attend to the other ceremonies. They are enraged by such reports, and as soon as they hear that Paul is in the city, will come together (v. 22) and something must be done to pacify them.

Policy: They recommend Paul to perform a ceremonial act himself in the temple, and thus at once convince the people that he is not an enemy to their customs. The opportunity is at hand. There are four men under a Nazirite vow, let him join them, purify himself with them, by observing the prohibitions of the vow for the remainder of the time, go and offer sacrifices when the time has expired, and to make the case more emphatic "be at charges" for the others, i. e., pay for their sacrifices, and thus prove his interest in them. They urge that this is not inconsistent with their former deliverances (Ch. xv.) which only referred to the Gentiles.

Paul assents: He next day went to the Temple, intimating to the Priests his intention and his purpose, at the close of the days of purification of offering the necessary sacrifices. In the next lesson it will be seen how the policy succeeded.

Was the policy morally right? Paul and the council have been charged with duplicity in this case.

(a). In reply it is sufficient to say that it is quite consistent with the principles upon which he always acted, and taught in his Epistles, "Unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews," etc., 1 Cor. ix. 20-23. If it were in any way a "thing Christ aside," then the apostle was unflinching, but w. en it was simply tolerating prejudices that were not yet overcome he was most indulgent, and tender toward the weak. He circumcised Timothy to soothe these prejudices, and yet he went from Antioch to Jerusalem (Ch. xv.) to consult the council, in resistance of the imposition of circumcision upon the Gentiles as necessary to salvation.

(b) Let it also be noted that the observance of these rites that were helpful before Christ came, as pointing to Him, might still be helpful and quickening to their faith. If so before He came, why not after? It was not the Divine plan that at once the change should be made. In a few years the Temple will be destroyed and all this ritual shall cease. Now, let it go on as usual—of course with a right understanding of its import.

Suggestions.—1. The true man will always have admirers. v. 17.

2. The true hearted will rejoice in the Lord's work by whomsoever done. v. 20.

3. The rapid growth of the Gospel—"many myriads." v. 20.

4. Misrepresentations: "salvation by faith," called antinomian; "election," called fatalism. v. 21.

5. The freedom of the Gospel can rise above ritualism, sacramentarianism, "anti-organism," etc., and yet indulge those who cannot. v. 24.

6. What pains we ought to take to remove every stumbling-block out of the way of the Gospel. "Jesus only."