

deputation was afterward appointed to visit the reserve, and effect satisfactory arrangements. A call from Birtle in favour of the Rev. Mr. Hodnett was submitted, and was laid on the table until a deputation should visit the field, with a view to increasing the subscription toward the minister's stipend. A call from Binscarth in favour of Rev. John L. Simpson was submitted, and it was sustained as a regular Gospel call, and placed in the hands of Mr. Simpson, who signified his acceptance of it. The induction was fixed to take place on May 22. Arrangements were made whereby the induction of Rev. John F. Dugan into Knox Church, Brandon, will take place on the evening of June 29. The report from the General Assembly anent the continuance of the Synodical Home Mission Committee was considered, and, after a lengthy discussion, the court declared itself in favour of the continuance of the committee. The action of the Assembly's Home Mission Committee in cutting down the grants to certain congregations on the Augmentation Fund was felt to be a very serious matter. In some cases it appeared a positive injustice to do so, and the Presbytery passed resolutions asking that the full grants be given. It was agreed that the next meeting of Presbytery should be held on July 22, in the First Presbyterian Church, Brandon.

OBITUARIES.

JAMES LAIDLAW.

James Laidlaw, who died in Georgetown, Ont., on July 22, 1886, at the ripe age of ninety years, was the son of James Laidlaw and Helen Scott, of the parish of Ettrick, Selkirkshire, Scotland, and great-grandson of William Laidlaw, "the far-famed Will o' Phaup," grandfather, by his daughter Margaret, to the poet Hogg, "the Ettrick Shepherd." He was also the great-grandson of Walter Biggar, whose daughter Margaret was mother of the late Rev. Professor Robert Balmer, D.D., of Berwick, and whose father, William Biggar, was one of the elders of the Ettrick Church during the ministry of the famous Scottish divine, the Rev. Thomas Boston, and is specially mentioned in Boston's Memoirs as having been very dear to the great preacher. Helen Scott, the mother of the subject of this sketch, was the sister of the late Rev. David Scott, of the parish of Castleton. Mr. Laidlaw emigrated from Scotland on June 3, 1817, his twenty-first birthday, and arrived at St. John, N. B., on August 21, after a voyage of eighty days. Shortly afterward he was engaged as a school teacher at Economy, N. S., where he remained till the autumn of 1820. On December 5, 1817, he wrote a letter, which is still in the possession of members of his family, to his father in Scotland, giving a minute description of this country, and advising the family to come out and settle somewhere in Western Canada. Accordingly, the following year, the father, two brothers and a sister, the late Mrs. Robert Murray, of Esquimaux, emigrated to America. After spending the winter in the State of New York, they came to Little York (Toronto), and in the year 1819 went out about forty miles to the westward, into what was then a dense, uninhabited forest, and settled in the centre of the region that has ever since been known as the Scotch Block of the township of Esquimaux. Here they were joined the following year by James, from Nova Scotia. In this rich agricultural district, after their father's death in 1829, the three brothers, Andrew, James and Walter, spent their lives as farmers, taking a deep interest in everything pertaining to the welfare of the community. The Presbyterian Church, known as Boston Church, Esquimaux, was built on the farm of the eldest of the three brothers, Andrew, who was known near and far as a model Presbyterian elder, and whose quiet home for half a century gave hospitable welcome to countless Presbyterian ministers. The youngest of the three brothers, Walter, was father of the late Dr. Laidlaw, of Milton, Ont., and of William Laidlaw, Esq., Q.C., barrister, Toronto, and grandfather of the Rev. Walter Laidlaw, of N. Y. The Rev. Robert J. Laidlaw, pastor of St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, Hamilton, is a son of James, the subject of this sketch. Like his father and brothers, two of whom never visited Canada, James Laidlaw was a man of rare integrity. He was also endowed with a mind and memory of remarkable clearness, which remained bright to the last, showing no sign of weakness or decay in any way, even when his physical strength was completely gone. His only daughter (Margaret), his only surviving son (the Rev. R. J. Laidlaw, of Hamilton), and other friends and acquaintances from near and far watched with him during his last days, which, owing to the vigour of his richly stored mind, the extraordinary retentiveness of his memory, and the strength and clearness of his faith, were days of unusual privilege. Throughout his long life the Bible had been his main text book and guide. His knowledge of its contents was remarkable, and his confidence in its promises unbounded. The aptness with which he called its most precious portions to his lips as he went down into the valley, and, indeed, until he reached the river's brink, was something truly inspiring.

To the last, Mr. Laidlaw was a lover of children, and by a beautiful coincidence he ended his life at ninety, as he began it at twenty-one as a teacher. Until after he had passed his ninetieth birthday, little Telfie McKay, the son of a near neighbour, came in day after day to be taught by the venerable man. And when the teacher grew too weak to teach, as death drew near, his little scholar came in to inquire for him, or to place a few fresh-plucked flowers in his trembling hand. The scene was one not soon to be forgotten. By another happy coincidence, after he had passed his ninetieth birthday, one of his long-cherished desires was singularly gratified. He wished to meet some friend from the scene of his early labours as a teacher, that he might inquire after his pupils of nine-and-sixty years ago, to whom, and to whose home and friends, he never ceased to be strongly attached. When the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada met in his son's church at Hamilton, in June last, it so happened that there was present from Economy, N. S., a venerable elder, Mr. James Hill, the son of one of Mr. Laidlaw's early friends. Mr. Hill gladly visited his father's friend, and to both the day

was one of much enjoyment. Mr. Laidlaw was already seized of his last illness, and was happy, knowing that the time of his departure was at hand, and on this account the meeting was all the more precious to him. Though feeble and suffering, so remarkable was his memory that he was able to enquire by name for those whom he had taught far more than three score years before; but what was his surprise to find that with scarcely an exception they were all gone, and that many of them had died of old age, while he, their teacher, still remained behind! It is interesting to note that while he came to America in advance of his companions, he was the last survivor of them all. One or two of the original settlers of the Scotch Block of Esquimaux still remain, but none who had reached the age of manhood at the time the settlement was formed.

Mr. Laidlaw led a quiet life, but he sowed seed which will yet produce a rich harvest. His wide and accurate information, which increased to the last through his life-long habit of reading and reflection; his pure and exemplary life, coupled with his kind, amiable and cheerful disposition, endeared him to all, old and young, who came within the circle of his acquaintance, and gave him an influence for good which only those who are possessed of his meek and quiet spirit, and are spared, as he was, to become fully ripe, are ever privileged to exert.

GEORGE DAVIDSON.

On Wednesday, May 4, George Davidson passed away at his residence on Ontario Street, Kingston. Ever since the demise of Mrs. Davidson, about two years ago, he had been declining in health. On April 21 he was confined to his room for the first time, and subsequently slowly sank until relieved by death. His end was calm and peaceful. His two daughters, Mrs. M. W. MacLean, of Belleville, and Mrs. W. G. Craig, of Kingston, their husbands and children, were with him, and his parting with them was affectionate and impressive. He remained conscious to the last, and, as his voice failed, his lips were seen to breathe a prayer, and a faint whisper told that those most dear to him on earth were the objects of his tender solicitude. He was seventy-seven years of age, and for over fifty-five years of this period was an estimable citizen of Kingston.

The deceased gentleman emigrated to Kingston from the south of Scotland about 1832. A few years later he brought his parents to Kingston, located them on his farm in Camden township, and thence years afterward they were laid to rest. In his early years he was a carpenter, and was employed by John Malcolm, a prominent contractor. Later he entered the business of a contractor himself, and one of his first enterprises, along with Hon. Alexander Mackenzie, was the erection of one of the Martello towers that guard the entrance to the city. Many of the prominent buildings in the city were also constructed by him. About 1850 he became the leading member of the firm controlling the Kingston foundry, and ever afterward had an interest in the company. He saw the business increase, until it was considered one of the best marine foundries in Ontario. In business Mr. Davidson was energetic, able and, above all, conscientious. It is only within the last six months that his familiar face has been missed from the office of the foundry.

Politically, he was a power. He was a thorough Conservative, though not narrow in his views, and up to the last fifteen years was a controlling factor in local elections. He was an able exponent of political questions, and a patriotic follower of Sir John Macdonald, whom he admired, and whom he was largely instrumental in putting into public life. He was a member of the City Council. In 1867 he was the choice of his colleagues at the board for the mayoralty, an office he filled with dignity and efficiency. In 1872 he retired from municipal life.

Much of the history of St. Andrew's Church dies with Mr. Davidson. He was one of the links that bound the past with the present. For half a century he was prominently connected with the Presbyterian cause. In 1837 he was ordained an elder, and the duties of that office he capably filled until his death. He was also one of the managers and trustees of the Church. For over forty years, too, he was identified with the Sabbath school, acting both as a teacher and as superintendent. For many years he conducted a young men's Bible class at his home, then on Queen Street, and here, among others, many of the ablest ministers of the Presbyterian Church were instructed in godly precepts, and their lives directed in a way that has ever endeared them to the deceased gentleman. In 1873 an address, accompanied with a valuable testimonial, was presented to him by the congregation of St. Andrew's Church.

Mr. Davidson was a prominent and valued member of the Synod of the late Church of Scotland. His wise counsel and administrative abilities were greatly appreciated by the clerical and lay members of that august body. He was also warmly attached to Queen's University, and was, with the late Hon. John Hamilton, one of its earliest supporters. In its darkest trials he proved a valuable friend. Both by means and indefatigable energy he sustained the institution, and it was with pride he watched its growth. He will be greatly missed at the university trustee board. He was one of the founders of the Mechanics' Institute, and in early years took a deep interest in a debating society, of which the Hon. Alexander Mackenzie and Hon. Oliver Mowat were members.

It was, however, as a man that the deceased gentleman was most appreciated. He was able, upright and fair, tenderly affectionate and truly Christian. In all the walks of life he was esteemed for his consistency and integrity. He was thoroughly real in everything, and his daily practice bore the fullest testimony to the belief he professed. Upon his coffin can be laid "the white flower of a blameless life."

George Davidson was married in 1842 to a sister of Mr. John Carruthers. Two children survive and these he loved. They in turn bestowed the wealth of affection upon him. The home life of Mr. Davidson was all that one could desire. The funeral services were conducted by Rev. John Mackie, M.A.

Sabbath School Teacher.

INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

June 5, 1887.

THE MANNA.

{ Ex 16
4-12

GOLDEN TEXT: "Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life." John vi. 35.

SHORTER CATECHISM.

Question 24. Moses foretold that when Christ came He would exercise the office of a prophet. A prophet foretells future events, and this Christ has done more fully than any former prophet ever did. The answer to this question rightly implies that the term prophet means more than this. A prophet is one who speaks for God. As Christ is the one all-availing High Priest, so He is high above all others in the prophetic office. He spoke as never man spake in His revelation of God's will to us. The instrument by which He now speaks to us is the Word of God, and the agent by whom its precious truths are savingly applied is the Holy Spirit.

INTRODUCTORY.

After the Israelites had experienced God's marvellous deliverance at the passage of the Red Sea, they passed southward through the wilderness of Shur, on the eastern shore of the Gulf of Suez. They suffered from scarcity of water before they reached Marah, where the bitter waters were sweetened by casting in certain trees. Then they proceeded to Elim, where there were twelve wells of water and seventy palm trees. Next they advanced into the wilderness of Sin, where they experienced great scarcity. The people began to fret and murmur. So distressing did their present condition seem that Egypt with its slavery seemed preferable, because there they had at least plenty. We are too often disposed to magnify present trials, and to forget greater ones from which we have been delivered. They complained to Moses, and upbraided him for leading them out of Egypt. They forgot God's purpose, and their recent deliverances. In all his perplexities Moses called upon God, who graciously answered His servants' prayers. He does so now.

I. Heavenly Supplies.—The way from bondage to blessedness is long and difficult—all the more difficult because of unbelief. It is as easy for the Almighty to work miracles in the desert as at the Red Sea. His kingdom ruleth over all. His promise is, "I will rain bread from heaven for you." The manna, which was to be the staple food during the wilderness wanderings, was clearly a miraculous bestowment. There is a substance, which exudes from shrubs still found in the Sinaitic peninsula, which is called manna, but it is different in kind, and too limited in quantity even to suggest a natural explanation of the food provided for the Israelites in the desert. It was given daily, and was to be gathered daily. It fell on the ground like hoar frost, was white in colour and sweet to the taste. It could be ground and baked. There was enough for all, but it had to be gathered each day, with the exception of the Sabbath. The supply of their daily food was hired to teach them important spiritual truths. It was daily bread and God given. It taught the lesson of dependence on God. It taught them also to be frugal and industrious. On the sixth day they were instructed to gather a double portion. Sabbath was not first instituted at Sinai, but in Eden, and here, before the giving of the Ten Commandments, they were taught to keep that day in holy rest. This divine bounty was also to serve as a test of their faith and obedience, as all our mercies are. Prosperity is sometimes a severer trial of faith than adversity. It has generally been explained that the Hebrew word manna means What is it?—the expression of surprise with which the Israelites greeted the first appearance of the wondrous supply. By some it has been suggested that from inscriptions recently deciphered on Egyptian monuments there was a substance similar in appearance, though differing in others, with which they were familiar, called by the same name, and that when they first saw the miraculous food in the wilderness they exclaimed, It is manna.

II. Divine Manifestations.—God supplies the wants of His children: He supplies all their spiritual wants. The Israelites may not have been so conscious of their spiritual as they were of their bodily hunger, but their restlessness and murmuring were clear evidences of it. Moses and Aaron said unto the people, "At even then ye shall know that the Lord hath brought you out from the land of Egypt." They had blamed Moses for bringing them into the wilderness. But when the evening supply of quails was gathered, and the evening meal eaten, they would be reminded that God had delivered them from bondage and was providing for them abundantly. "And in the morning then ye shall see the glory of the Lord." Thus with each new day they would see in God's regular and ample provision a manifestation of His glory. They might be faithless and given to murmuring, but He was faithful to His promises. When Aaron explained to the people the provision God had made for them and the conditions according to which it was to be received, they looked toward the wilderness and beheld the glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud. The guiding pillar was more than an indication of the direction in which they were to march; it was the Shekinah, the symbol of the Divine presence. At this particular time it may have assumed an unusual brightness, impressing their minds with a sense of God's nearness to them, that they should trust Him, and that it was sinful and foolish to murmur against Him or His divinely commissioned servants. Then the Lord repeats His purpose to Moses which again the leader is to state to the people, closing with the words, "And ye shall know that I am the Lord your God." God's daily benefits would be so convincing that they would possess daily experimental knowledge that God stood in such close relation to them. To them this would be great source of strength and comfort. There are still more abundant and convincing reasons why we should possess like assurance.