

4. As stated in a circular issued some months ago, all books, documents, old letters, old sermons, pamphlets, minutes of Synods and Presbyteries, which may be sent to me, will be carefully used and safely returned in due time, if required, or they will be retained if permitted, to be classified and bound, with connecting and explanatory notes, for permanent preservation, for the use of our Church, in Knox College.

Next week I hope to complete my notice of the life and labours of Rev. D. W. Eastman, and I shall try to follow it with succeeding chapters more rapidly than I have heretofore published. This will depend much however, on the promptness with which my appeals for information shall be responded to.

H. S. McCOLLUM.

*St. Catharines, Jan. 25th 1879.*

P. S. Just as I was about to deposit this communication in the Post Office, the mail brought me from Rev. H. Gracey, of Gananoque, a package of papers, mostly fragmentary items left by Rev. William Smart. Though of themselves, apparently unimportant, they are helpful hints, and have furnished some information for which I have been long searching in vain. He has struck a lead which will bear working; and there are many such leads within "prospecting" reach of Presbyterian pastors.

H. S. M.

### THE GOSPEL IN ITALY.

(Concluded.)

The questions of main importance were two, and had been made the objects of careful study by the congregations, which had sent their single reports to the gentlemen to whom had been committed, by the last Conference, the charge of condensing such statements into one, to be studied and discussed in a thorough manner at the present meeting. The first was the question of the "Sanctification of the Lord's Day," Rev. B. Pons, evangelist at Leghorn, lecturer. Sabbath keeping is a very difficult question for our young churches. As you know, Sabbath observance is not enforced by the civil law here, as it is with you. If such observance were enforced by the laws of the country, the problem would be easily solved, and Sabbath-keeping would take its place amongst the habits and customs of the people, who would have no opportunity of openly transgressing the commandment. But in Italy the greatest part of business is very often transacted on that day. The Government offices are open, the shopping and trades are going on as usual, at least for half the day, so that the members of our churches find themselves in a very awkward condition. On one hand they feel themselves bound by God's command, on the other they know that if they refuse to work, they will lose the bread of their families. How to reconcile these two extremes - this is the question. The lecturer's opinion is that first of all we must try as individuals and as churches to exercise an influence on public opinion, so as to bring those in authority and power to the observance of that day more on economical and hygienic grounds, than from religious motives, which would have no force with different classes of people. This end must be accomplished by means of public lectures and conferences, and leading articles in the newspapers, as well as societies for the sanctification of the Lord's Day, to be constituted in every district and in every congregation, and under whose auspices pamphlets should be printed and circulated. Lastly, the ministers and church sessions should impress upon every church member the necessity of Sabbath observance for themselves and for the sake of example, although disciplinary steps could not, as yet, be taken against those who are obliged, in spite of themselves, to neglect this ordinance.

The question next in importance was that of *voluntary contributions*, lecturer Sig. E. Laforte, deacon of the church of Palermo. A church must live by itself, and work by itself. This is a general principle which has been realized by all the churches that like ours, have no official connection with the State. We are satisfied with being tolerated and protected, but we want to be free from any interference at the hand of the Government. Therefore we must provide the means for carrying on our missionary work. But how shall we do it? The mother Church has quite enough to think of herself. We have hitherto applied to the liberality of Christian friends in Great Britain, Ireland, and America, but those resources might fail us by some unexpected circumstance, and we cannot expect that the poor people of our congregations who

give their penny per week for the sustentation fund, after they have contributed to the other schemes of the church, will be able to do much towards Italian evangelization. Let us hope however that the applications made to our friends will be liberally responded to for a long while, and that as God has provided for the past, He will provide for the future, but meanwhile let us not be idle. Let us educate our people to give. Let us make them understand that it is their privilege and their duty, and in order to encourage personal effort, let us have financial committees in our Presbyteries, for the purpose of increasing the contributions, and of making of our Church a self-supporting Church. Some progress has been made already in that way, as it appears from the financial statements of the various years. There was collected for the schemes of the Church, in 1870, \$1,900, in 1873, \$4,223. in 1876, \$5,359, and in 1878, \$8,677. But as we require every year more than \$50,000, the deficit is great still, and we trust that our British and American friends will not fail when the need is pressing.

The Conference then took up the proposals of various kinds, forwarded by the Presbyteries. It was a great saving of time that they had been previously discussed at Presbytery meetings, so that nobody was taken by surprise. First to be taken in hand was a liturgy, drawn up by Prof. Revel, and which had been sent, by the third Conference, to the several districts, in order that it should be examined as carefully as possible. But as the opinions of the districts were rather of a contradictory kind, the Conference agreed to ask the Waldensian Synod to appoint a committee with the special purpose of drawing up a liturgy that would suit both the branches of the Church. A question that had stirred the feelings of many a church session and more than one Presbytery, was the name to be given to the mission-churches. Four of the Presbyteries agreed to call them "The Evangelical Waldensian Church." Others, pointing out such a name as a hindrance to missionary work, because not being typical of any denomination, wanted them to be called simply "The Evangelical Church," adopting at the same time, as their motto that of the Waldensian Church. *Lux lucet in tenebris*. The Conference decided this to be a premature question, and resolved to leave it in abeyance.

To complete the Presbyterian edifice, the Presbytery of Tuscany had proposed that the General Conference should be henceforth regarded as equal to the Waldensian Synod, and endowed with legislative power, without any further need of the sanction of that Assembly, that each branch of the Church, without becoming severed from each other, should have a meeting of its own; and, finally, that a General Assembly composed of the representatives of both the Synod of the valleys and the Synod of the mission churches should be held once every three years, to which Assembly should belong the supreme authority, and every final decision. Considering that the membership of the Churches of the valleys is more than that of the mission churches, although the number of congregations is much smaller - so that with the federative system, the former churches should not be fairly dealt with - the General Conference, while they recognize this to be the aim which must be kept in view as the crowning of a true Presbyterian organization, and while they express the wish that the progress of the work should be such as to make of this proposal a necessity, deem it premature at the present time, and send the question to be studied by the Presbyteries.

This was the course of the proceedings of the Conference. On the Saturday morning, all the members thereof met in the church for a service of mutual exhortation and edification, when the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was celebrated with the deepest solemnity. Let me not forget to say that brotherly letters of invitation were forwarded to all the ministers of the foreign churches that are at work in Italy, but only one of them was enabled to be present amongst us, Rev. Dr. G. B. Taylor, American Baptist, who was welcomed in the Assembly along with pastor Appia from Paris, and pastor Rochedieu from Belgium. On Monday the 2nd of September, the Waldensian Synod was opened in Torre-Pellice, with the ordination to the holy ministry of two young men who had completed their studies in our college at Florence, and had spent some time in foreign universities. They were now to enter, in regular form, the mission-field. The preacher took as his text,

Ezekiel xxxiii, 7. "I have set thee a watchman to the house of Israel," and spoke of the duty, of the responsibility and of the reward of the faithful watchman. The ministers present then laid their hands on the young brethren in the name of the Lord. The Rev. Dr. Lorimer from London, Rev. D. Miller from Genoa, and Rev. Dr. Yule from Scotland, took part in the ceremony, and afterwards delivered brotherly addresses that were thankfully received, and cordially answered by the moderator, Dr. Lantaret. The first question which engaged the attention of the Synod, was the annexation of a new parish, some thousands of miles distant from the Church of the Valleys, I mean the Colonia del Rosario in Uruguay, to which more than a thousand Waldensians have emigrated. A minister was sent to them last year. He was cordially received by all the members of that church, which according to its request, will henceforth be called the Seventeenth Parish of the Waldensian Church. Both the Home Committee and the Mission Bo. I gave in full reports of their operations, which were considered very satisfactory, and the same gentlemen were appointed to form the two committees for next year. A very interesting report on the *catahumens* was read by the minister of the parish of Rora. How to instruct the young men; how to conduct the Bible-classes; how to keep the young people under the influence of the Gospel after they have been received into membership - these were the main points on which the lecturer laid stress. The exercise of discipline in the Church, and the duty of contributing more and more to the Church schemes, were also the subjects of very interesting and practical discussions. The attention of the Assembly was then drawn to our schools and colleges. The preparatory college at La Tour is in a prosperous condition and numbers seventy-five pupils, though it is to be deplored that owing to the vastness of the programme, classical studies are to some extent neglected. The Divinity Hall that had been transferred to Florence in 1862, to enable our students to become thoroughly acquainted with the Italian language, numbers at present, seventeen students, taught by three professors, who have made themselves known by works of real theological value. Attached to the school is a library containing 7,000 volumes, amongst which is a rich collection of all the editions of the Bible printed since the time of the Reformation. At their last sederunt the Synod expressed their unanimous and deep feeling of grief for the lamented death of King Victor Emanuel, and their confidence that the son will follow his father's steps in his loyalty to the constitution, and that he will grant freedom of conscience. The expression of the constant faithfulness of the Waldensian people to the dynasty of Savoy was conveyed to King Humbert I. who, in an interview which he had in July last, with the moderator of our Church, gave the assurance that nothing would induce him to interfere with the liberty which we have enjoyed hitherto.

Turin.

W. MEILLE, Evangelist.

### COLLEGE LECTURESHIPS.

MR. FINTOR, Several letters have lately appeared in your columns from "Dubius," "Covenant-Keeper," and "Clericus," regarding lectureships in Knox and Queen's colleges. You have also kindly given in "editorials," what you consider *the legal aspects* of the questions in dispute, for which accept thanks. I fear however that plain readers are apt to get somewhat confused by the lengthened replies given to the queries of your correspondents. Possibly any further attempt may be but to darken counsel with words, but there can be no great harm in briefly stating how the matter appears to one who makes no pretensions to legal lore, and who cannot claim to be posted in the decisions of Church Courts.

I presume, after the learned and pungent communication of "Covenant Keeper," that "Dubius" must admit that the authorities of Queen's College have the legal right to appoint professors and lecturers, when and as they see fit, without so much as submitting their nominations to the General Assembly. But "legal rights" is one thing - the wisdom and expediency of making such appointments in such a way is another. I confess it seems a little strange, to hear it whispered over the Church, that certain ministers have been offered - or have declined as the case may be - certain professorships in Queen's college, without the slightest reference to, or recognition of, the General Assembly. It would, I believe, very much increase