

advance their well-known sermons, and people flocked to hear them, as they would to listen to Macbeth or Othello, played by some well-known actor, or to hear the stereotyped lectures of public orators. We cannot understand why hearers do not more frequently invite their ministers to repeat discourses whose merits they loudly praised on first hearing them.

It should also be borne in mind that if a sermon is delivered only once, it has reached but a small section of the people. Take them as a whole, there is a very large number of persons who are never absent from church—let it be rain or sunshine. But as we single them out from any particular congregation, they are comparatively few. In these days of travel, how many regular members are absent every Lord's day for the purposes of business or pleasure. How many in the course of a year are not present on account of sickness. What a large number who because of family distress, or it may be death, miss some of the precious Sabbath services of the year. How many who have listened to a sermon and have gone away with a very meagre knowledge of its contents, or who notwithstanding its excellence have failed to receive any impression from it. Then there are those of slower apprehension, but of very earnest purpose, who require more than one hearing to grasp the thought. Think of the endless repetitions of a school-master to teach even his advanced classes. The lesson has to be gone over and over again. It has to be broken up and explained. And after all, the wonder is, what an imperfect knowledge of the subject has been gained. It is only one hearer in a thousand who fully grasps the thought of a well prepared sermon. And then we have to think of the young and rising generation. It may be that since the sermon was first delivered a large number of infants have grown up to be capable hearers, and a considerable sprinkling of boys and girls, who were rather thoughtless, have become pious members of the Church; while others were not born when the discourse was composed. The sermon, which is a minister's master-piece, may be re-delivered more than once to meet the special wants and necessities of such cases. We are speaking of course of the normally long pastorate of the Presbyterian Church. To the itinerating system of the Methodists, or the too frequent changes of pastors which take place in our own and other churches, such remarks as the above do not apply. Such ministers soon discover the value of old sermons in their new fields of labour.

A good deal might be said in favour of a not too slavish practice of using old sermons, from the tendency to largely improve these and practically make them new on their re-delivery. We once heard a sermon read slavishly word for word without the lifting of an eye or hand on the part of the preacher, and thus read three times in the course of eight months. There were ministers in the olden time of whom it was said they did the work of a parish handsomely for a life-time on a stock of three or four sermons. It is not for this unedifying, wearying, dry-as-dust process we are contending. The minister we have in view is one who will work up his sermon for its re-delivery, who will add to it

from his reading and experience, who will make it so much part of his own being, that he will be able to enrich it with the suggestions of the moment when he is giving it forth. Then it will be indeed an invaluable utterance. But there is a still greater advantage from a judicious use of old discourses, that it enables the preacher to give the more care, thought, and time to the new ones. Many a sermon is spoiled by being finished too quickly. Like newly cut grain it is not fit for the mill. Many a text is not understood at first, but given time and meditation, it grows and grows upon the mind, till it is bristling with lustreful points. Many a sermon is thoroughly prepared as to composition, or the orderliness of its thoughts, or the aptness of its illustrations, but who will say it is thoroughly prepared for delivery? If a certain great actor said at the end of six months' study of one of the plays of Shakespeare that he was not ready to do it justice, and at the end of another six months, he was still not ready, what shall we say of a masterly sermon? Can it be effectively delivered by reading it over once or twice before going to the pulpit? Dr. Taylor, of New York, who reads in the pulpit, spends hours in reading up his sermon previous to its delivery. And if one delivers without notes, much application must be given beforehand to the manuscript. Many reasons might be adduced for spreading the preparation of a sermon over weeks or it may be months, rather than hours or days. In these circumstances, the pulpit work of an ordinary pastor could not be kept up, if he is to do such ample justice as we have indicated to special subjects. The re-delivery of an old sermon now and again will be an invaluable help. And therefore in the interests of new and fresh discourses, we commend an occasional stirring up of the barrel.

PRESBYTERY OF OTTAWA.—The last regular meeting of this Presbytery was held in Knox Church, Ottawa, on the 6th and 7th August. The Rev. D. M. Gordon, B.D., was appointed moderator for the ensuing six months. The following minute was passed in reference to the removal by death of James Whyte, late minister of Manotick and Gloucester: "We desire as a Presbytery to acknowledge the hand of God in the solemn event which has removed from our midst a brother much beloved and highly esteemed, Rev. James Whyte, minister of Manotick and Gloucester. The Christian character of our deceased brother was such as endeared him to all who had the pleasure of his acquaintance. His piety was most fervent, yet humble and unobtrusive. In labors he was abundant, never sparing himself in the great work to which he had devoted his life. He was instant in season and out of season, preaching and visiting with unwearied diligence and zeal. His pulpit abilities were of a high order, his sermons bearing marks of much and earnest study and rich with the precious truths of God's word. In language simple, forcible and clear he preached Christ and him crucified. For a long time he labored without any very marked result, but at last God sent a very plentiful rain upon his heritage and the heart of his faithful servant was made exceedingly glad. As a member of Presbytery Mr. Whyte will be greatly missed. So punctual was he in attendance that his presence could almost be counted on with certainty. The varied work of the Presbytery had the deepest interest for him, and his close acquaintance with that work added to his many other excellent qualities made him an invaluable counsellor. The sympathies of our beloved brother were thoroughly catholic. While loyal as any man could be to the Church of his choice and ever ready to defend the truth as held by her, he could appreciate the good work done by others, and rejoice in their prosperity. He loved all who loved the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth. The cause of temperance, Sabbath School work, and gen-

eral education found in him an able and earnest advocate, and one whose place it will not be easy to fill. We would express our tenderest and most heartfelt sympathy with his family in their sore bereavement. God has asked much at their hand, but He can supply all their lack. We commend the widow, the fatherless children and the aged mother to Him who is the God of all consolation as well as of all grace, that He may richly comfort them. We desire also to assure his sorrowing congregation of our sympathy, and remind them of the unfailing presence of the chief shepherd. To them their beloved pastor being dead yet speaketh. Our prayer is that the life he lived, as well as the words he uttered, may be greatly blessed to them. It must be a source of great comfort to his family and to all his friends that during his long and painful illness, which was so patiently borne, our brother left so many precious testimonies of his interest in Jesus. Again and again he spoke of the nearness of the Saviour whom he had known so long and who did not forsake him when passing through the valley of the shadow. He rests from his labors and his works do follow him." Mr. Muir was appointed to declare the charge of Manotick and Gloucester vacant on Sabbath the 18th inst., and thereafter be moderator of the session, and that the session arrange for the supply of the pulpit. As this was the last meeting previous to the division of the Presbytery, considerable time was occupied in arranging matters in connection therewith. It was agreed that inasmuch as the largest portion of the congregation of Beckwith and Ashton is within the bounds of the new Presbytery of Lanark and Renfrew, and the minister and elders express a desire to be connected with this Presbytery, that it be regarded as included in said Presbytery. In reference to the brethren about to leave the Presbytery the following resolution was passed: "Whereas by the action of the supreme court of the Church a considerable portion of the Presbytery has been detached for the formation of the new Presbytery of Lanark and Renfrew, we who remain members of the Ottawa Presbytery desire to place on record our deep regret at the separation thus rendered necessary, and to express our heartfelt sorrow in parting with brethren whose wise counsel and loving intercourse have rendered our meetings of Presbytery so pleasant and profitable, and whose zeal and activity have contributed so much to the successful carrying on of the work. We assure the outgoing brethren of our unabated confidence and esteem and of our best wishes for their welfare. Our fervent prayer is that the Spirit of the Lord may abide in the new Presbytery as a spirit of wisdom and of love, guiding its counsels and knitting its members together in the bonds of brotherly affection and holy fellowship, and that the cause of Christ may be greatly prospered within its bounds. An adjourned meeting was appointed to be held in Carmel Church, Cumberland, on Tuesday the 27th inst., at 10 o'clock a.m., when a Presbyterial visitation of the congregation will be held. The next regular meeting is to be held in Bank Street Church, Ottawa, on the first Tuesday of November.—J. CARSWELL, *Clerk.*

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MEETINGS OF PRESBYTERY.

BRUCE.—In Knox Church, Kincardine, on last Tuesday of September, at 2.30 p.m.

HURON.—Presbytery of Huron will meet at Wingham, on 2nd Tuesday of October, at 11 a.m.

LINDSAY.—At Woodville on the last Tuesday of August, at 11 a.m.

PETERBORO'.—At Cobourg, on the last Tuesday of September, at 11 o'clock a.m.

TORONTO.—In the usual place, on the first Tuesday of September, at 11 a.m.

WHITBY.—At Whitby, on the 3rd September, at 11 o'clock a.m.

CHATHAM.—The Presbytery of Chatham meets at Thamesville on Tuesday, the 17th Sept., at 1 o'clock p.m.

PARIS.—Presbytery of Paris meets in Zion Church, Brantford, on Tuesday, 17th September, at 2 p.m.

KINGSTON.—Next quarterly meeting of this Presbytery will be held in St. Andrew's Hall, Kingston, on Tuesday, 24th September, at 3 p.m.

OTTAWA.—In Bank street Church, Ottawa, on the first Tuesday of November.

STRATFORD.—In Knox Church, Stratford, on 24th September, at 9.30 a.m.

LONDON.—Next regular meeting in St. Andrew's, Sarnia, on last Tuesday in September, at 7-p.m.