

tion of the charge of Strabane. The congregation is to be cited to appear for its interests on the 24th. The reports on the Augmentation Scheme were received. More than half of the congregations have been visited with, in many instances, good results. It was resolved to apply for six students during the summer; also to apply for leave to take Mr. Walter Laidlaw, of Princeton Seminary, on trial for license. Rev. C. Campbell was transferred to the Presbytery of Toronto. The reports on Sabbath schools and on the State of Religion were submitted, and the clerk was instructed to send them on for the Synod's Committee.—J. LAING, *Pres. Clerk*.

PRESBYTERY OF BARRIE.—This Presbytery met at Barrie on Tuesday, 18th March. Present, seventeen ministers and seven elders. Dr. McLaren was nominated as Moderator of the next General Assembly. An application from Mr. Hutcheson lately minister of Guthrie Church, Oro, for leave to retire from the active duties of the ministry was favourably received. The papers in regard to Mr. Hutcheson's resignation and application were to be sent to the Committee on the Aged and Infirm Ministers' Fund. The following were elected as commissioners to the General Assembly: ministers, by rotation, Messrs. Rodgers, McConnell, Geddes and Henry; by ballot, Messrs. Burnett, and Carswell. Elders: Messrs. J. Gray, M.A., R. Little, of 2nd Innisfil congregation, Andrew Melville, George Duff, W. I. Forbes, and P. Cockburn, M.P. Unusual interest in the appointment of elders was manifest, the election being by nomination and ballot, except in respect to Mr. Gray who was elected by acclamation. The conveners on the State of Religion, Sabbath Schools, and Temperance were instructed to forward their respective reports without delay to the Synod's conveners. The reports of the committees on Augmentation of Stipends and Home Missions engaged the attention of Presbytery for a considerable time. In the former it was stated that with two exceptions all the congregations in the bounds were visited, and those were specially dealt with which were reported last year as giving stipend less than \$750 and manse. Of this class, thirteen in number, seven had agreed to come up to that amount, one increased \$50, one \$75, and another \$100 while three made no increase. The total sum of supplement to be asked was \$462.50. In receiving the report the Presbytery thanked the committee and agreed to "express gratitude for the success attained in the efforts to carry out the scheme, inasmuch as so many congregations have come up to the minimum and the scheme has met with so liberal a response." Mr. Fairbairn of Esson, Willis and Mitchell Square churches asked for counsel and aid in view of the increasing labour involved in the working of his charge. He was advised to secure the services of a student missionary for the summer, in the expectation that the income of the congregations would be sufficient to provide for the expense incurred. The work of the mission fields was arranged for summer. The Student's Missionary Society are to occupy six groups: new stations at Sterling Falls, Foley and Coager, and Longford and Black River are to be wrought. Thirteen student missionaries and catechists will be asked from the Home Mission committee for the stations under the immediate care of the Presbytery. The Presbytery agreed to recommend the committee to appoint one of its own members as ordained missionary to the Nipissing and Commanda stations.—ROBT. MOODIE, *Pres. Clerk*.

HOME MISSIONS AND AUGMENTATION.

MR. EDITOR,—Will you allow me through your columns to urge upon all the congregations that have not yet sent in their contributions to the Home Mission Fund, to do so at latest, by the 25th of April. The Committee on the Augmentation of Stipends, will meet on the 29th April, to make apportionment of the Augmentation part of the Home Mission funds, and in order that the minimum of \$750 and manse may be reached, and a good balance left in the treasurer's hands (according to instructions of last Assembly), it is absolutely necessary that full returns be made by the above mentioned date. The committee find, on looking over the returns already made, that many of our largest and wealthiest congregations have as yet sent nothing, either for Home Missions or Augmentation, while others have sent sums altogether disproportioned to their estimated ability, and the urgent demands of the fund. The sum of \$45,000

has been received in all, but \$60,000 or \$65,000 can easily be reached, if a united effort is put forth during the next three weeks.

WM. COCHRANE, *Convener Home Mission Com.*
Brantford, March 29, 1884.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.—Rev. Dr. Reid has received the following anonymous contributions for the Schemes of the Church, viz.: A Friend, Simcoe, for Foreign Missions, Formosa, \$5; A Little Girl, Vernonville, for Foreign Mission, Formosa, \$1; A Friend, Dorchester Station, for Foreign Mission, Formosa, \$4; Anonymous, for Church and Manse Fund in the North-West, \$1; A Presbyterian Friend, Maxville, for Home Mission, \$1; Foreign Mission, \$1; Knox College, \$1.

SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHER.

INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

April 13.
1884.

PAUL AT EPHESUS.

Acts 19.
8-22.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"And many that believed came, and confessed, and showed their deeds."—Acts 19: 18.

TIME.—A.D. 54-57, three years.

PLACE.—EPHESUS.—The capital of the Roman Province of Asia. Situated in the middle of the Asiatic coast of the Egean Sea, and at the converging point of the great roads from the East, it was a place of considerable importance and extensive commerce. It was called one of the eyes of Asia, Smyrna, forty miles to the north, being the other. It stood in a flat, marshy plain about five miles long from east to west, surrounded by mountains except on the west, where the river Cayster flowed into the sea. The glory of Ephesus was the Temple of Diana, one of the seven wonders of the world, and whose magnificence was truly a marvel. It was the second building for the purpose, the first having been burnt down the night that Alexander the Great was born. This temple far exceeded the first in grandeur. The image of Diana, the object of so much superstitious reverence was a rude wooden figure, nearly the shape of a mummy, such a figure as savages might have worshipped, but far removed from the ideal God of cultured refined Greeks; such, however, is the folly of idolatry wherever it is found. To day a few wretched huts alone mark the site of this formerly wonderful city, while up to a few years ago every trace of the exact position of the temple of Diana had been lost for many centuries. After long research, some fragments of pavements, pillars, etc. have been dug up. The story of Ephesus is a very impressive one, read in the light of Rev. 2: 1-7.

Notes and Comments.—Ver. 8. "Synagogue." he had been invited by the Jews on his previous visit. Chap. 18. 20. "Boldly." with freedom and fearlessness. "Three months" so long as there was no opposition, official or individual. "Disputing." Rev. "reasoning." the first would be by appeals to the Scriptures of the Old Testament; the second by appeals to their understanding and heart. "Kingdom of God." its nature and the way to it.

Ver. 9 "Divers" various, men amongst his hearers, Rev. "hardened and disobedient," "spoke evil." took opportunities to revile the truth before the crowds that gathered to hear Paul, endeavouring to stir up a tumult as at Thessalonica, Corinth, etc. "Tyrannus." probably a professor of philosophy, converted by Paul's teachings, who gladly allowed his "School" to be used as a place of instruction in the truths of the gospel.

Ver. 10. "Two years," active labour without persecution apparently, three months in the synagogue, and an additional nine months or so, details of which are not mentioned, make the three years of chap. 20: 31. "All Asia." proconsular Asia; the word "sounded out" from Ephesus, probably Paul made journeys to the neighbouring cities, there were six other important churches in this district. Rev. 2: 3.

Vers. 11, 12. We find here how God adapts means to the end, at Ephesus there were "special miracles." The city was a great seat of magical and curious arts, in opposition to these was shown the "great power of God," in fact their very superstition was used to advance the truth. They would come to regard as sacred the clothes moistened with sweat from Paul's body (he worked with his hands for the support of himself and those with him, chap. 20: 34); and the aprons he wore in the worship, and so they took these garments to the sick, evidently their own idea, not Paul's, and thus faith, mixed with error as it was, God honoured as he had done in a similar instance before Chap. 5-15. "Diseases—evil spirits." plainly distinguished, we must not suppose, as some would have, that the latter is only a phase of the former, no miracles were worked at Corinth so far as we know.

Vers. 13, 14. "Vagabond." Rev. "Strolling Jews." men who went about from place to place, pretending to cure demoniacs. "Adjure—by Jesus." these men used a formula of incantation and bearing that Paul preached Jesus they thought that the magical power was in the use of that name. "Scora, chief of the priests." an indefinite term, meaning here, probably, the leading, priest in one of the synagogues of the city. It has been suggested, however, that he was an apostate Jew acting as priest in the idol temple, or that the title was part of the imposture. "Did so" lit. were doing so, this was one instance.

Vers. 15, 16. "The evil spirit—the man:" note how they are carefully distinguished. "Jesus—Paul:" yes, they did "know" the master and all His servants; the demoniac tribe had felt their power, the idea really is "I acknowledge their authority." "Who are ye?" an utterance of scorn and contempt. "Leaped upon them:" with the strength of frenzy, demoniacal possessions gave preternatural strength; it was so with the Gadarene demoniac. "Overcame." Rev. "mastered both of them." it would appear as if in this special instance two of the seven sons had undertaken the task, the "vagabonds," of ver. 13, referring to the seven, the "certain" to the two. "Naked:" the outer garments torn off does not necessarily imply more than that.

Ver. 17. Two results are noted as following the discomfiture of the exorcist impostors: "fear," an assurance of the power of Him who was preached by Paul; "name of—Jesus—magnified," while punishment fell upon those who profaned it, yet by it: right use wonders were daily wrought.

Vers. 18, 19. Here is the action of the converts resulting,—"confessed," their former folly and sin in the practice of magical arts: the "curious arts," next noted "books" which contained their "mysteries," magical signs, formulas of incantation, receipts for philtres, written amulets and the notorious "Ephesian letters," mysterious words engraved upon the image of Diana and used for magical purposes, "burned," the only thing to do with bad books. "Fifty thousand pieces of silver." about \$10,000, the books were doubtless rare, and so costly.

Ver. 20. "Grow:" in extent. "Prevailed," in power; the event just narrated was at once a result and a cause; produced by the action of the gospel on the hearts of those who received it, further triumphs were assured by the exhibition of such a self-sacrificing spirit.

Vers. 21, 22. The very success of the gospel in Ephesus, led Paul to desire fresh fields in which to work and conquer for Christ "Purposed in spirit." not a supernatural revelation, such has he had received on previous occasions, but probably, his own judgment and desires, guided by the Spirit of God. "Macedonia and Achaia." he had already laboured there. "Jerusalem:" Paul always felt tenderly toward the mother church although never cordially welcomed by it, even now he had his plans to relieve their temporal necessities. "Rome:" yes he went there, but in a very different manner to that he had purposed, he went as a prisoner. His "I must," was confirmed by God's "thou must" of chap. 23: 11.

HINTS TO TEACHERS.

Prefatory.—Our subject is another illustration of all-conquering power of gospel truth. Each place that Paul visited, Corinth, Athens, Thessalonica, Berea, Philippi, Ephesus, bore witness to the same, but with different manifestations. Each has its truths and lessons for us, let us endeavour to find them in this account of apostolic labours in Ephesus and to press them home in our classes.

Topical Analysis.—(1) Paul preaching and working miracles (vers. 8-12); (2) A house divided. Satan against Satan (13-16); (3) Proof of the power of the gospel, (17-20); (4) Paul's purposes (21-22).

On the first topic we may show how, still "as his custom was," he went into the synagogue, and for a space of three months carried on his struggle with the Jews, "disputing and persuading." Paul was emphatically a preacher of one theme and that theme was Christ; he had a message to deliver and he delivered it. The message was Christ Jesus and Him crucified: this we shall more fully see in our next lesson was the beginning and completion of the "Kingdom of God." The love of Christ constrained him, his convictions of the grandeur of redemption gave eloquence to his tongue, and persuasiveness to his tones: he believed, and therefore he spoke. Would that some touch of that fervour could be in all our teaching. Then God owned his teaching by miracles, "special miracles." None had been wrought in cultured Athens or in busy Corinth, but here, under the shadow of that colossal superstition, the temple of the Ephesian Diana, God will manifest His power. Note that it is said "God wrought," almost as if Paul were the passive instrument. Even the vagabond exorcists adjured by Jesus whom Paul preacheth, "not worketh miracles. Paul everywhere was pre-eminently a preacher, a witness for Christ. This was his work.

On the second topic. We may point out how all attempts to overcome evil by evil must fail. So likewise all presumptuous pretensions to be the servants of Jesus; we may take the name of Jesus on our lips and yet give Him no place in our hearts, but be children of our father the Devil. Teach that true, acceptable working for Christ must be preceded by fellowship with Christ. Nor must we speak for Christ to obtain importance or make for ourselves a name, such must ever come to scorn and shame.

On the third topic, show that where the gospel is received in truth it becomes the ruling power of the life; these men could not be believers and yet follow their former sinful practices, so, if Christ is received He must be master of the daily life, improper pursuits must be given up, and any harmful business must be abandoned. The steps in the Christian life are belief, confession, sacrifice, the last is the hardest; but it will never be less so to your scholars than to day; habits are hardening, the gossamer web may become a cable to bind hand and foot to Satan. Urge sacrifice for Jesus now, press this. Whatever you have found keeps you from Christ, has led you into evil associations, or may be harmful to others, give it up at once and for ever.

On the fourth topic, let Paul be a model to you of Christian earnestness and unwearying labour. If we cannot do His work we can yet have His spirit, and do the work of Christ where God has placed us. Hold up this "kingly man," greater than Caesar or Alexander, to the admiration of your class, who if he sought fresh conquests, sought them all for Christ.