

did the frescoing, and Grant, who pointed the Grace Church spire, the outside work. Sunday morning week the pastor preached a rededication sermon, selecting his text from Psalm lxxxvii. 4-6. He said Zion represented the Church of God, and the Church was the great instrument in the world for the reclamation of man. God loved the gates of Zion more than the dwellings of Jacob. It was only where the Church was represented in its true agencies that you found the worship of the true God. "May it be our highest wish and earnest prayer in the rededication of these renovated walls," said Rev. Mr. McBain, "that this place may be the birth place of souls; and may it be said of this man and of that man that he was born here."

DEEPLY interesting and impressive services were held at Portneuf last Sabbath when the sacrament of the Lord's supper was dispensed by the Rev. James M. Whitelaw, B.A., of Valcartier. These services were interesting because it is upwards of thirty years since the communion services or, indeed, regular services of any kind were held here by the Presbyterian Church. It was as the dawn of a brighter era in the history of the Presbyterians of this important mission. This field, situated on the line of the C. P. R., between Montreal and Quebec, being about thirty-five miles from the latter city, was opened as a mission last spring by the Students' Missionary Society of Morrin College. This Society is to be congratulated on their choice of this field out of the various unoccupied fields that surround the city of Quebec, and also on their appointment of Mr. George H. Smith, B.A., to labour there under their auspices during the summer just closed. Mr. Smith laboured with much acceptance to the people, and his untiring efforts to advance the cause of Christ are extremely gratifying in their results to both the people and the Society. At the preparatory services held on the Saturday twelve were received on profession of faith into full communion. To show the importance of this mission it might be stated that their Sabbath collections for the summer months amounted to over \$70, which sum increased considerably the amount guaranteed by the field to the Society for supply. The people fully appreciate the interest taken in them by the Students' Society, especially in sending such a superior man as Mr. Smith. At a business meeting held the other Saturday at the close of divine service the people pleaded strongly for weekly services during the winter months. It is to be hoped that Chalmers and St. Andrew's congregations of Quebec, who have patronized the Society, so liberally in the past will do their utmost to give the Society that financial support which will enable it to man this important field every Sabbath during the coming winter. The Students' Missionary Society of Morrin College has an important work—truly pioneer work—to do, as there are so many fields where there are a number of Presbyterian families who in many cases never hear the sound of the Gospel, while in others they are being gradually but surely led away step by step by Adventists, Universalists, etc., and by intermarriage into the Roman Catholic Church—which is but a proof that man must have some form of religion. Many of these fields could not be worked by the Home Mission Committee of our Church, being too poor, scattered, etc., but after a few years of earnest, prayerful work it is hoped that this society will be in a position to ask the Home Mission Committee to take over a number of its fields, while the efforts of the society are exerted in gathering together and awakening an interest in spiritual affairs in other fields.

THERE was a very pleasant gathering in the lecture-room of Knox Presbyterian Church, St. Catharines, on Tuesday evening, October 22, the occasion being the twenty-second anniversary of the induction of Rev. George Burson to the pastorate. The Ladies' Aid Association improved the opportunity to give an "At Home" for the enjoyment of the congregation. After a bountiful supper had been served, at the request of the ladies, Mr. Robert Lawrie was called upon to preside. After singing by a quartette composed of Misses May and Chaplin and Messrs. Charles and Colin Macgregor, the chairman read the minutes of Session in which the proceedings of the induction of Mr. Burson in 1867 are recorded. The chairman called attention to the singular fact that of the ten present at that meeting five have been taken and five left; that of the two ministers who were present one had been taken and the other left, and of the two elders one had been taken and the other left. The chairman also stated that Mr. Burson, Captain Norris and himself were the only persons now remaining in the official positions which they occupied twenty-two years ago, Captain Norris having been unanimously elected as trustee or manager twenty-eight successive years, and the chairman having been a member and Clerk of the Session for nearly twenty-six years. The many changes that have taken place in the congregation since Mr. Burson's induction were feelingly alluded to. The membership during Mr. Burson's pastorate has increased more than one hundred, and the debt of \$4,000, which was on the church twenty-two years ago, with an additional expenditure of \$9,000, has been reduced to the comparatively trifling sum of \$2,000. The contributions to the Schemes of the Church have, during the same period, increased fourfold. The many changes that have taken place in the other congregations were alluded to, the comparison showing that Mr. Burson is the oldest minister in the city, and is the second oldest member of the Hamilton Presbytery. Rev. Mr. Murray, of Grimsby, is the oldest. The chairman concluded a very interesting and felicitous address by presenting, on behalf of the Ladies' Aid Association, to Mr. and Mrs. Burson two elegant and expensive chairs, which they immediately occupied with much comfort to themselves and pleasure to all present. Mr. Burson made a feeling reply, alluding to the many acts of kindness shown him by the congregation since his settlement among them, and, on behalf of himself and wife, returning thanks for this new manifestation of confidence and esteem. Rev. Mr. Ratcliffe spoke briefly, but to the point, congratulating Mr. Burson on his long pastorate. Miss Chaplin followed with a beautiful vocal solo, which she rendered with much effect; but the musical gem of the evening was the duet sung by Miss May and Mr. Lawrie, which will bear frequent repetition. Mr. Norris as senior trustee and Mr. John R. Monro, as chairman of the Board of Managers, made short talks, the latter concluding by moving a vote of thanks to the Ladies' Aid Association. Mr. Norris seconded the motion, which was unanimously adopted; Mrs. Lawrie, as president of the Association, replied appropriately and eloquently as "the speaker of the house." The doxology was then sung; Mr. Burson pronounced the benediction, and the delighted audience dispersed. Miss Flo. Macgregor presided at the piano during the evening.

PRESBYTERY OF WHITBY.—This Presbytery met at Oshawa on the 15th inst. The Rev. A. Leslie, of Newtonville, Moderator. All the ministerial members were present, and a fair representation of elders. After disposing of some matters of little interest to the public, the Presbytery entered on the consideration of the Remits sent down by the Assembly; first, on the Constitution of the Assembly. It was resolved that no change be made for the present. Second, the appointment of a secretary for the Sabbath schools. This was remitted to the Committee on Sabbath Schools, with instructions to report at next meeting. Third, the Aged and Infirm Ministers' Fund. This was also remitted to the representative of that fund. Mr. Fraser, of Bowmanville, was welcomed back by the Presbytery after a six months' trip to Europe. He looks greatly improved in his health and ready to throw himself into his work again. A very interesting report was read by him on Systematic Benevolence, which was received and adopted with its recommendations. If the plan proposed can be carried out all our congregations will be greatly benefited. Mr. Fraser was instructed to present an overture on this subject to the Synod of Toronto and Kingston at its next meeting. Mr. McKee's name was substituted for Mr. Fraser's as Convener of the committee on Temperance. The Session records of Claremont and Pickering were examined and attested in the usual manner. Mr. Eastman read a report of a visit of the committee to

the congregations of Enniskillen and Cartwright, which was adopted by the Presbytery. A similar report was given by Mr. Durham of a visit of the committee to Ashburn and Utica; the Presbytery expressed its satisfaction with the hopeful condition of the charge. Mr. Wilkie, the esteemed missionary of Indore, India, was present, and gave a very interesting address on his work at Indore. The Presbytery, recognizing the importance of educational work in the present stage of our mission in Central India, and grateful to God for its successful beginning, express satisfaction with the appointment of the Rev. J. Wilkie as Principal of the college at Indore, and sympathy with the effort he is now making to raise \$10,000 for a collegiate building there, and commend it to the liberality of the congregations and members of Presbytery. The Presbytery hereby pledge themselves to do all in their power personally to aid him in obtaining the required sum. The Session of St. John's, Pickering, gave in a report in reference to the burying ground on the seventh line. They would be pleased if the Claremont Session would co-operate with them in maintaining and enlarging the said burying-ground. Mr. Drummond laid on the table his resignation of the congregation of Newcastle on the ground of continued ill-health. The Presbytery expressed its sympathy with Mr. Drummond and the congregation, and resolved to take the usual steps, and cite the congregation to appear for their interests at the meeting of Presbytery in January next. The notices sent down by the Home Mission and Augmentation Committees, naming the sums this Presbytery would be expected to raise for these Schemes, were read, as also the abstract for all the Schemes of the Church. These papers were handed over to the several Conveners of the Presbytery concerned, with instruction to take such action as they thought best to raise the amounts named. Mr. Fraser, in accordance with previous notice, moved, That it is desirable that the Presbytery should hold an evening sederunt at two of its quarterly meetings, with a view to conference and discussion upon matters relating to the spiritual life and work of the Church. This was agreed to, and arrangements were left with a committee for holding the first meeting in Bowmanville on the evening of the third Tuesday of January.—A. A. DRUMMOND, Pres. Clerk.

PRESBYTERY OF WINNIPEG.—This Presbytery held a *pro rata* meeting on the 17th inst. Mr. Baird reported that since the last meeting of the Presbytery, which had refused to sustain the call from Fort William to Mr. J. L. Simpson, because it had not a sufficient number of signatures, he had received notice that an additional number had been obtained, making the whole number now up to sixty-five members and forty-nine adherents. It was moved by Dr. Bryce, seconded by Dr. Agnew, and agreed, that the Presbytery, while noting the irregularity in connection with the call, sustain it, and order it to be transmitted to Mr. Simpson in Toronto. In the event of Mr. Simpson accepting the call, it was agreed that the induction be held in the church at Fort William East on Tuesday, November 5, at three p.m.; that Rev. Mr. Neilly, of Schreiber, preach, and Rev. Mr. Pringle, of Port Arthur, to preside and address the minister, and that Rev. Mr. Nairn, of Rat Portage, address the people. Mr. Simpson has intimated by telegram his acceptance of the call. The congregation of Popular Point asked for a grant of \$120 to enable the congregation to complete its church, which is now being built and is to cost \$600. Dr. King moved, and it was agreed, that the application be forwarded to the Church and Manse Building Board, with a cordial recommendation that the request be granted. A petition was presented from Keewatin, asking to have the benefit of the services of a resident minister, instead of a continuance of the present arrangement by which services are given in connection with Rat Portage. It was moved by Dr. King, seconded by Rev. Joseph Hogg, and agreed, that the Presbytery, having heard the application of the members of Keewatin congregation, would express its gratification at the application, and its sympathy with the people in their desire to have a resident minister to watch over them; but in the absence of the Moderator of the Rat Portage Session, and of any communication from the Rat Portage congregation, it feels itself precluded at this stage from taking final action in the way of erecting Keewatin into a distinct charge. It also agrees to notify the Rat Portage congregation of the application, and summon it to appear for its interests at the next meeting of the Presbytery, when final action will be taken; and, in justice to the important interests at stake, it empowers the Home Mission Committee to arrange for such supply in the meantime as will best safeguard those interests. The committee on the examination of students who have resided during the summer within the bounds of the Presbytery, reported that sermons by the following students had been handed into them, and had been carefully examined; and that suggestions and criticisms had been appended, and that the students are now certified to the College Board: Messrs. Andrew Brown, A. Chisholm, S. W. Thomson, J. L. Small, Allan Moore, James Buchanan, A. C. Manson, W. O. Wallace, H. F. Ross and Jonas Johnson. Three students had not sent in exercises, and it was agreed that these receive a second notification to comply with the requirements of the General Assembly. It was moved by Dr. King, seconded by Prof. Hart, and agreed, that any students who wish to enter the theological department of the college be required to confer with this committee, of which Rev. James Douglas is Convener, and that the committee be empowered to certify them to the college Senate. The Presbytery then adjourned to meet again in the same place on December 10.—A. B. BAIRD, Pres. Clerk.

#### THANKSGIVING COLLECTION.

THURSDAY, NOV. 7TH, 1889.

At a meeting of the Executive of the Board of French Evangelization, held on the 23rd inst., grave anxiety was felt as to the present condition of the funds of the Board.

The ordinary French fund is in debt to the extent of \$10,000. The debt of the Pointe-aux-Trembles building fund is \$4,000. Of the \$25,000 required for the purchase and repairs of Colligny Ladies College, Ottawa, only \$1,550 have been received, leaving \$23,450 still unprovided for.

It was resolved to make an appeal to all the congregations of the Church for a special collection on Thanksgiving Day, leaving it to the ministers and Sessions of each congregation to decide for which of the above named funds the collection should be made.

The work is at present in a hopeful condition. The Pointe-aux-Trembles' schools have opened for the session with an attendance of one hundred and twenty pupils, to be considerably increased in a few days. The college at Ottawa has been opened with an efficient staff of teachers, and promises to be most successful, there being already sixty-two pupils, twenty-one of whom are boarders. It is expected that it will be self-supporting when the cost of the buildings and of the necessary repairs has been defrayed. Only contributions specially designated for this purpose can be utilized—no portion of the French fund being available for the Ottawa College.

We commend this appeal to your consideration and very earnestly solicit your co-operation in securing from your people a liberal Thanksgiving collection on behalf of some one of the above named objects. In the name of the Executive,

Yours faithfully,

D. H. MACVICAR, D.D., LL. D., Chairman.

ROBT. H. WARDEN, Secy-Treas.

Contributions should be sent direct to Rev. Dr. Warden, 192 St. James St. Montreal. Montreal, Oct. 28th, 1889.

## Sabbath School Teacher.

### INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

Nov. 10, 1889.

#### DAVID'S GRIEF FOR ABSALOM.

2 Sam. 18: 18-33.

GOLDEN TEXT.—A foolish son is a grief to his father and a bitterness to her that bare him. Prov. xvii. 25.

#### SHORTER CATECHISM.

Question 53.—We are to worship God with reverence (Deut. vi. 13. xxviii. 58). In Scripture "name" expresses nature and character and that by which these are manifested. The name of God includes, therefore, His titles, attributes, ordinances, word and works. "In vain" means either irreverently, as in profanity, or falsely, as in perjury. The meaning is the same, for perjury includes all that leads to it—deception, lying and irreverence toward the God of Truth. We are required to treat with great reverence everything whereby God maketh Himself known. An oath is an act of worship, wherein we invoke God, as God knowing all things and as final Judge, to hear our declaration and to approve or punish. It may be in assertion, as in witness bearing, or in promise, as in oath of office. Oaths are lawful—(1) being acts of worship; (2) often commanded by God (Ex. xxii. 11); (3) Christ used them (Heb. vi. 13; Matthew xxvi. 63). They may be required by authority (Matt. xxvi. 63) or offered between man and man (Gen. xiv. 3; xvii. 31; 2 Cor. i. 23). Christ (in Matt. v. 33-37) forbids irreverent and unnecessary or trivial appeals to God, and all profane swearing. A vow is also an act of worship, wherein we consecrate something to God and His service. Oaths and vows are not binding when the performance of them would be contrary to God's revealed will. The sin is in the making, not in the keeping of such (Acts xxiii. 12, 14; Mark vi. 26; 1 Sam. xxv. 22, 32). We are forbidden—(1) All deception, falsehood and perjury. (2) All irreverence of God's name, as in the careless use of his names, attributes and ordinances for emphasis in conversation or expressions of surprise, as well as in profane swearing; and the use of God's Word in jesting, in tempting or in upholding false doctrine (Jer. xxiii. 34-38; Matt. iv. 6, xxvii. 47; 2 Peter iii. 16). All this is enforced by the determination of God to punish those who treat Him or His cause with disrespect.—A. A. Hodge, D.D.

#### INTRODUCTORY.

When David received information that his son Absalom had raised a rebellion against him, he was prostrated with grief and dejection at the unexpected news. He at once made preparations for a hasty departure from the city of Jerusalem. With the exception of a few inmates of the palace all his family and body-guard accompanied David in his retreat from the city. He did not care to risk himself and his cause in the capital, fearing that it might be captured and not knowing who were his friends nor how numerous within the city were Absalom's sympathizers. He therefore resolved to seek safety by a timely retreat. Memorable was the march of the aged monarch as he went forth in slow and mournful procession with covered head and bare feet, and with similar signs of grief were they who accompanied him. Several incidents took place by the way, one of them must have been very humiliating and annoying to the fugitive king. A man, Shimei, a devoted adherent of the house of Saul, came out and cursed David and exulted over his misfortune, throwing stones and dust at him. As an evidence of David's self-control and patience he leaves the man to rail on unmolested, even when some of his attendants proposed to silence the cursing Shimei by taking his life. Absalom with his friends and followers took immediate possession of the city, and Ahitophel's counsel was that David should be immediately pursued and overwhelmed, but a friend of David, Hushai, managed to delay pursuit by assigning several reasons why it would be unwise to follow the advice of the distinguished counsellor. So disappointed was he, and probably foreseeing that unless the blow was immediately struck, Absalom's plan would fail, that he would meet a traitor's punishment. David crosses the Jordan and his friends rally in great numbers to his defence. Absalom pursues him and soon the two armies encounter each other in the wood of Ephraim. As Absalom is eagerly pursued by a party of David's men he seeks to escape. Riding on a mule his head caught in the branches of a tree under which he passed; the mule ran away and left him hanging. Though David had given instructions to spare the life of his rebellious son, Joab, when he found him, inflicted on him his death wound.

I. Messengers bring the news to David.—Like all ambitious persons Absalom desired to be remembered. He had done no great and good deeds by which the people would remember him; he therefore built a monument to himself in the king's dale. What is called Absalom's pillar is to be seen in almost every picture of Jerusalem, but this is not the one that he built, it is distinctly a Roman piece of masonry, and not at all like a pillar that Absalom would be likely to build. Ahimaz, the son of Zadok the priest, one of David's oldest and truest friends, is eager to carry to David at Mahanaim the earliest tidings of the victory, but Joab, dreading David's anger at the disobedience to his command in killing Absalom, probably did not wish to expose Ahimaz to the possible consequences, refuses his consent. He, however, sends another messenger, Cushie, or the Cushite, who at once starts out. Having again asked, permission is at length given to Ahimaz, who being fleet of foot and taking a nearer way comes first into David's presence.

II. David Receives the Messengers.—Waiting anxiously for tidings from the battle-field the king and his attendants are on the alert. David is waiting at the gate, and the sentinel is on the top of it steadily on the look-out. He sees one running in the distance, but from the peculiarity of his gait he soon learns that it is Ahimaz. Then Cushie is seen to follow. As soon as he approaches the messenger salutes the king in the courtly language of the East and tells of the victory. The father's chief question is for the safety of his misguided son, "Is the young man, Absalom, safe?" To this the messenger evades giving a direct reply. He is then told to stand aside till the other's tale is heard. To the same question he does not answer directly, but his language conveys to David's mind the fact that his son is among the slain.

III. David's Mourning.—David was a man of strong nature. His feelings were intense. His grief over his son's death was terrible. The father's heart is moved to its depths. He who years before had mourned so deeply for the loss of his friend Jonathan weeps bitter tears over the loss of his son who had caused him so much sorrow and suffering. How deep is parental love! In that lament how deep the pathos, "O my son Absalom! my son, my son, Absalom! I would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!" The wounded heart of the bereaved father pours itself out in unavailing grief.

#### PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

Absalom's attempt to usurp his father's kingdom, like his own life ended in failure.

The pillar he built did not perpetuate Absalom's memory, but his wasted life and mistaken ambition has done so as an impressive warning.

David's grief was all the heavier because his son's death was the end of an evil life.

No young man, nor anyone else can be safe who rebels against God.