

Toronto Presbytery.

A meeting of the Toronto Presbytery was held Wednesday forenoon in Knox Church—the Rev. Mr. Christie was Moderator.

COOK'S CHURCH.

The Rev. W. Reid reported that the Moderator's call for Cook's Church, Toronto, had been in favour of the Rev. James Gardner Robb, of Clogher, Ireland with promise of a salary of \$3,000 per annum.

The call had been signed by 251 members of the congregation and 91 adherents. The Rev. Mr. Reid's conduct was approved by the Presbytery.

It was also agreed that the Rev. Dr. Watts, of Belfast, Rev. M. McElwaine, of Aughnacloy, and the Rev. Mr. Greer, of Five Mile Town, Ireland, be requested to represent the Presbytery of Toronto in support of their call before the Presbytery of Clogher.

APPLICATIONS.

An application was presented for the moderation in a call at Chollentham and Mount Pleasant. Two applications were considered in, and the Rev. James Pringle was appointed to moderate at such time as the session may determine on. The congregation promise their pastor a salary of \$700, and a manse to live in.

Similar applications were received from the Congregations of York Mills and Fisherville, with a promised salary to the pastor of \$600. The application was concerned in, and the Rev. Mr. Cameron appointed as moderator.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH UNION.

A lengthened discussion respecting church union with other Presbyterian Churches in Canada occupied the principal time of the afternoon and evening session. The following resolutions were proposed:—

Rev. Dr. Topp moved, seconded by Rev. J. M. King, "That the Presbytery, having considered the remit of Assembly with regard to the matter of Union, approves the said remit *simpliciter*."

Rev. W. Reid moved as an amendment, seconded by Professor McLaren, "That this Presbytery, while recognizing the importance of union among churches holding so much in common as the negotiating churches do hold; and trusting a satisfactory union may ere long be consummated, regret that, for various reasons, especially on account of the absence of any distinct recognition of the Headship of Christ over the church and nations, or of any definite deliverance such as was asked for by the Assembly of 1872, indicative of the sense in which the language of the standards on these points is understood by the churches negotiating this union; they cannot regard the present basis as satisfactory, and they therefore recommend further negotiations, with a view to the removal of difficulties felt by many in this church, to the basis in the form in which it has been set down.

Prof. Gregg moved an amendment to the amendment, seconded by Dr. Jennings: That the Presbytery, having considered the remit of Assembly respecting union with other Presbyterian churches in Canada, resolve to approve of the basis of union as adopted by the General Assembly, and reserve for further consideration at a future meeting of the Presbytery, the resolution appended to the basis.

After some discussion Prof. Gregg asked leave to withdraw his amendment, which the Presbytery granted.

On the amendment proposed by the Rev. W. Reid being put to the vote, it was declared lost, eight voting for the amendment and fourteen against, and in favour of Rev. Dr. Topp's resolution, which was declared carried.

The meeting then adjourned until 9.30 Tuesday morning.

NEW CONGREGATION.

Two reports were received from sessions in the city ament the creation of a new congregation on Collegio-street, to which no objection was offered. It was moved and agreed that the Rev. J. M. King be appointed to congregate the people thereof, and that with him Messrs. Pickan Kerr, and Bell, elders, constitute an interim session, and be empowered to dispense the communion on an early day.

REV. DR. JENNINGS' HEALTH.

The Rev. Dr. Jennings informed the Presbytery that his health was failing, and asked for the expression of their mind in connexion therewith. It was agreed on motion to record sympathy with the Rev. Dr., and also that a meeting of the Presbytery be held on the second Tuesday of March, and that Dr. Jennings be empowered to examine Commissioners from his session and congregation to appear at the meeting, with a view to some arrangement being made to meet the necessities of the case.

RESIGNATION OF THE MODERATOR.

The Moderator, the Rev. Wm. Christie, having left the church, the subject of his resignation, offered at last meeting of the Presbytery, was taken up. A report from a Committee formerly appointed in regard to this matter, was read, stating that they had visited the congregations concerned, and found that there were circumstances which rendered it inadvisable to press the withdrawal of the resignation. Messrs. John Still and Peter Forsyth, Commissioners from the congregation were severally heard, as was also the Rev. Mr. Christie. It was then moved and agreed to accept of Mr. Christie's resignation; that the Rev. Alex. Carrick should preach at Mono Centre and Mono West on the 15th instant, and declare the charge vacant, and that the Rev. A. McFaul be Moderator of session during the vacancy, and enjoin the interested congregations to pay arrears of stipend with all convenient dispatch. Rev. Messrs. Pringle and Cameron were appointed to draw up a minute expressive of the mind of the Presbytery, with regard to their parting with Mr. Christie.

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

It was moved and agreed that at next meeting of Presbytery on the 10th March

and at one o'clock, the Presbytery should appoint Commissioners to the next meeting of the General Assembly.

Mr. George Bruce, missionary at Aurora and Newmarket, introduced the question of the desirability of giving a supply regularly at Holland Landing. It was agreed to encourage Mr. Bruce in providing supply with the consent of the Rev. Mr. Cameron, of Bradford, and that the services of students be secured in connection with Mr. Bruce, until the close of Knox College.

LICENSE.

The Presbytery then proceeded to receive trials of license from Mr. William Rensselaer. All these trials having been heard and cordially approved of, Mr. Rensselaer was licensed to preach the Gospel throughout the Church.

The Advancement of Opinion.

Society, we believe, is constantly advancing in knowledge. The tail is now where the head was some generations ago. But the head and the tail still keep their distance. A nurse of this century is as wise as a justice of the quorum and custalorum in Shallow's time. The wooden spoon of this year would puzzle a senior wrangler of the reign of George the Second. A boy from the National School reads and spells better than half the Knights of the Shire in the October club. But there is still as wide a difference as ever between justices and nurses, senior wranglers and wooden spoons, members of Parliament and children at charity schools. In the same way, though a Tory may now be very like what a Whig was a hundred and twenty years ago; the Whig is as much in advance of the Tory as ever. The absolute position of the parties has been altered! The relative position remains unchanged. Through the whole of that movement, which began before these party names existed, and which will continue after they have become obsolete, through the whole of that great movement of which the Charter of John, the institution of the House of Commons, the extinction of Villanage, the separation from the See of Rome, the expulsion of the Stuarts, the reform of the Representative System, are successive stages. There have been under some name or other—two sets of men,—those who were before their age, and those who were behind it; those who were the wisest among their contemporaries, and those who gloried in being no wiser than their great-grandfathers. It is delightful to think, that in due time, the last of those who straggle in the rear of the great march, will occupy the place now occupied by the advanced guard. The Long Parliament of 1710 would have passed for a most liberal Parliament in the days of Queen Elizabeth; and there are at present few members of the Conservative Club who would not have been fully qualified to sit with Halifax and Somers at the Kit-Cat.—*Macaulay*.

Stealing of Dr. Guthrie's Sermons.

The Doctor told us two interesting stories in connection with one of his published sermons, which I give as nearly as I can in his own words:—"Some years ago, I was advertised to preach for Dr. Cooke, of Belfast, on a particular Sabbath. Before I left home I received a letter from an Irish minister, asking me as a great favour, that I would not take my text on that occasion, 'Behold, I stand at the door, and knock'; and then went on to say, 'I am ashamed to give you my reason for this; but, being in Edinburgh one day, I heard you preach from that text. On my return home I was very much pressed for time, and I thought I might use your discourse, with as much of your language as I could remember; and it succeeded so well, and it was so highly prized by my people, that I gave it in Dr. Cooke's church, with similar results.' But this was not all; for the letter went on to say, 'And I have yet another favour to ask of you, my dear sir—that you will not preach from another text (naming it), and I will give you my reasons for making this further request: One day, when I was again late in preparation for my pulpit, a student came in to see me, to whom I told how I was circumstanced. 'Oh,' said he, 'I was in Edinburgh last Sunday, and heard Guthrie preach. I took notes of the sermon. Will they be of any use to you?' Well, sir, I then, and again, as in the other case, repeated them to Dr. Cooke's congregation. 'Of course,' said the Doctor, 'I took a different text from either of these two; and after sermon a gentleman came up, and grasping my hand said kindly, 'Thank you, sir, for obliging me, and keeping off the two texts as I requested.' 'Ah,' says I, 'my good friend, is this you? Well, it was very easy for me to oblige you?' But I have still another story to tell you about that very text. There was a vacant charge in one of our country districts, to which probationers were appointed to preach as candidates. Well, sir, the first came and gave out that text, and preached from it in as many of my words as he could remember. The next Sabbath the second did the same; but the third Sabbath the elders had got wisdom, and so they asked the preacher if he would kindly tell them his text. 'With the greatest pleasure, gentlemen,' he answered. 'It is, Behold, I stand at the door, and knock.' 'Well then,' said the elders, 'as we have heard that sermon these two last Sundays, you will perhaps oblige us by something fresh.'—*Recollections of Dr. Guthrie in 'Sunday at Home.'*

Dr. Chalmers' old congregation, the English Presbyterian Church at Manchester, has given a call to the Rev. J. Kerr Craig, Kamsbottom, to become their minister.

An author, no less eminent than judicious, makes the following distinction between the words Innocence, Wisdom and Virtue:—"Innocence consists in doing no harm, and occasioning no trouble in society. Wisdom consists in being attentive to one's true and solid interest; in distinguishing it from a seeming interest; in a right choice and a constant adherence to it. Virtue goes further; it loves the good of society, and frequently prefers it to its own advantage."

Work.

BY KARL KLIVE.

The writer, having been an earnest worker for more than half a century, craves the privilege of saying a few words on the subject of work.

What writer has not, somewhere and at some time, published some good words in praise of work? But he who writes these lines knows of many kinds of work, which have been very earnestly and steadily pursued—yes, Karl Klive has himself pursued earnestly and long some kinds of work which deserve naught but words of censure—and of such works he is now going to write:—

1. A forty years' excessive use of tobacco, in the two most offensive ways—chewing and smoking—does not now present, in the retrospect, very pleasing reflections. The waste of time and money, the damage to health, the slavery to an evil habit, the annoyance of others, and the bad example, led Karl to say of his forty years' hard work, "It is bad, very bad—it is evil, only evil—without one particle of good." Could those forty years be lived over again in the light of present experience, they would be spent in the earnest avoidance of the intellectual and moral degradation of slavish subjection to an animal appetite.

Say not, reader, that these are the words of a sour, cross dyspeptic, who is not to be heeded. Sour, cross, and dyspeptic he was when he smoked and chewed. But freedom from that bondage of tobacco has brought back health, cheerfulness, pleasant views of life, and kind feelings to all mankind; and, with the kindest feelings to his many dear friends who use tobacco, he writes these lines to warn youth against a habit which will eat up all the nerve and muscle of their manhood.

2. The writer has spent much time, thought and money on subjects of study which are curious rather than profitable. As the occupation of one's leisure, and a relaxation from the labor of severe thought, these curious subjects have a proper place, and serve a good end. But they have only their proper place when they are amusement, relaxation. To make them the hard work of life, to consecrate one's days and nights to them, while we live in a world of ignorance, error, sin, sorrow, and sickness, is to forget why we are here, and to have a conscience so seared as to be hardly capable of feeling its responsibility to God. The writer feels that he has here far too often stopped over that narrow line which separates right from wrong, and made the studies and pursuits which best leisure alone, the occupation of hours which belong, of right, to graver, sterner duties.

3. Many people in this world are pursuing a dreadful drudgery in an effort to retain a heartfull of the world and a handful of religion, the largest amount of worldliness and the least possible measure of godliness. No bondage on earth is to be compared to this. One might better be in Egypt under the taskmasters making bricks without straw. The bricks could be thus made, for one could go forth and get for himself the straw, which was denied. But here the labour is for naught, it brings and can bring nothing but sorrow and shame. He who has a conscience sufficiently active to impel him to desire and seek a handful of religion, will find it quite active enough to make him thoroughly unhappy with his heart full of worldliness. He will condemn himself for his sensuality, pride and self-seeking. He will have religion enough to embitter all his worldly enjoyments, and not religion enough to give him the least portion of peace of conscience or joy in the Holy Ghost. The writer has a sorrowful experience of this point. And in view of it he says: Spend not your money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which satisfies not.—*Christian Intelligence*.

Plutarch's Silence as to Christianity.

"Plutarch himself may be entirely acquitted of any conscious attempt to fight against the truth which was higher than any which he had, and which within two centuries was to take the world as its own. Strange to say, Christianity is to him utterly unknown. Even such passing notices as 'we have of it in Tacitus, in Suetonius, in Epictetus, would be sought in his writings in vain. As far as has been hitherto traced, there is in these no single distinct reference, not so much as an allusion to it. When we call to mind his extensive travels, his insatiable curiosity, the profound interest which he felt in all moral and religious speculations, the manner in which he was instinctively drawn to whatever was noblest and best, we could have no more remarkable commentary than this on the words of Scripture, 'The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation.' If we place his birth, as I have suggested, at about the year A. D. 50, then long before he began to write, St. Peter and St. Paul must have finished their course. All around him at Rome, where he dwelt so long, in that Greece where the best part of his life was spent, in Asia Minor, with which Greece was in constant communication, in Macedonia, there were flourishing churches, Christianity, if I may so say, was everywhere in the air; so that men unconsciously inhaled some of its influences, even where they did not submit themselves to its positive teaching. But for all this, no word, no allusion of his testifies to his knowledge of the existence of these churches, or to the slightest acquaintance on his part with the Christian books. Of such an acquaintance, whether mediate or immediate, it seems to me that we can hardly refuse to acknowledge some traces and tokens in the writings of Seneca and Epictetus, but none in Plutarch. If any notices of that sort, which was still everywhere spoken against, and which his contemporary Pliny could style 'a perverse and excessive superstition,' reached his ears, he probably looked at it as a mere variety of Judaism: for of that he often speaks, although without any insight into its true significance, and like most of the Greek and Latin writers of the time, seeing it only on its least attractive, or we might say, its most repulsive side."—*Archbishop Trench's Plutarch*.

Remove the Sting.

BY REV. ALEXANDER CLARK.

When a soldier is wounded in battle by arrow-head or a minnie-ball, he may cry aloud for the surgeon to ease his pain; but if he cannot endure the extraction of the barbed point or the enemy's missile, he may cry in vain for ease. The cause of his anguish must be entirely removed. As long as the wood or the lead remains in his flesh there will be tendency to intenser and festering pain.

If, when a house is burning, the tenants should pray God to stay the raging of the flames, and at the same time pour oil upon or add fuel to the fire, there could be no reasonable hope for the quenching of the destroying element.

So a sinner dare not trifle with the Almighty by pleadings after comfort until sin has been utterly uprooted and removed. To cover the guilty wounds of the soul with any words of palliation or excuse, or to beg any mercy for the sake of person, position, or circumstance, is a heinous offence toward God. It is downright foolishness to seek the throne of grace until the partition wall of sin between the transgression and the law be broken down. Sin crosses over this boundary, intrudes, presumes, and hinders the expression and the result of prayer. Even the heathen, when they pray to their gods for health, take good care of their stomachs in matters of diet, and of their bodies in the acts of common life.

The sinner who feels his burden of guilt can have it removed only by full confession in the honest hour of soul repentance. Penitence, to meet God's favor, knows not a thought of compromise. Sorrow for sin, to bring the peace that blesses and abounds, is thorough, entire, unreserved, and pours itself in tears before the cross.

To God the sinner openly confesses all his sin. Nearest and dearest friend may never know the depth of the agony. But when God sees, hears, answers, and pardons, the broken heart rejoices and is fronted again toward things heavenly and divine. It is a new creation; old things pass away.

It is perilous to experiment with God by half-acknowledged transgression. No sincere disciple ever counsels a partial reformation merely, or the dropping off of some aggravated habit to the retention of others of hidden or minor importance. Christianity is no policy. It covers no fault; it convicts at no wrong. The follower of Jesus, while tender toward the sinner, pitiful, sympathetic, and ever forbearing and loving, makes not the slightest plea for unconfessed and unforgiven sin. To cloak corruption is to doubly mock the Saviour. The only teaching of the Gospel is "first pure, then peaceable." The believer's life, hid with Christ in God, is a consecrated conscience—a soul illuminated by the Holy Spirit—free in the sonship of God; and such a life has no fear of contamination with evil by its tender and helpful approaches toward the outcast and the lost in any place or at any time.

The Church to-day has much of the priest and Levite-ology of "hands off," and too little of the dismounting, stooping, up-lifting, and ready-pocket help which has made the memory of the rocky road to Jericho as beautiful a picture as that of the angels' ladder by the Beth-el-way. While the wounds which Satan makes are deep and sore, let the poisoned shaft be clean drawn out, however penetrating the pain; and then the oil, and the wine, and the inn, with the poor cripple's hotel bill paid in advance.

Permanence of Stones and Gems.

The charters graven on the rocks in a valley of the Sinaitic Peninsula are still quite legible, though they must be of great antiquity, if not the actual workmanship of the Israelites during their wanderings there. One reason, and apparently a just one, assigned for the commandments being written on stone is, that their permanent obligation might be thus indicated. But in many cases even the rocks themselves, by the long continued action of air and moisture, undergo a gradual decay, and as they crumble down they often liberate, in all their integrity, the gems which had previously been imprisoned in their substance; and thus these gems are frequently proved to be more enduring than even the rocks themselves. Perhaps from a consideration such as this some of the Jews believed that the stones on which the ten commandments were engraved were not portions of an ordinary rock, but tablets made of some costly gem. If we look at a gallery of antiquities we cannot fail to observe that while the glass of the ancients has undergone every kind of change the gems retain their integrity, and in some cases, as, for example, in that of the sard, even the original polish—a fact which Pliny had observed, for he declares that the sard retains its high polish longer than any other gem. A necklace of emeralds has been found among the ruins of Thebes; and even the engravings executed on gems by eminent artists in ancient times have lost nothing of their sharpness and elegance.

This character of permanence is in some instances strikingly illustrated even as regards colour; thus the lapis lazuli, on which the ancients used largely to engrave, and which was also employed as a pigment under the name of ultramarine, is so unalterable in colour, that this very excellence proves disadvantage in old paintings, for while the other colours have faded it still retains its original freshness and brightness; and by its perpetual youth and unfading charms destroys the harmony of the painting. Zirconia, again, is the most infusible of earths, and is the main constituent of zircon or hyacinth; and the indestructible nature of the sapphire is the reason why it is used for drawing gold and silver wire through, because it is found that the holes do not enlarge and thus the same thickness of wire is constantly secured.—*Christian Treasury*.

The tongue of a fool is the key of his counsel, which, in a wise man, wisdom hath in keeping.

Open your mouth and pursue cautiously, and your stock of wealth and reputation shall, at least in repute, be great.

The English papers say Dr. Hayman, the present Head Master of Rugby, is not exactly a second Dr. Arnold. He has just been dismissed from the office and will retire at Easter.

The Palestine Exploration work is making satisfactory progress. The sites of old cities have been identified, and it is said that Jerusalem a number of Judeo-Greek sarcophagi with inscriptions have recently been examined.

GRATITUDE.—Gratitude is the main-spring that sets all the wheels of nature agoing; and the whole universe is supported by giving and returning, by commerce and commutation.

There is no silence like the speech you cannot listen to without danger of locked jaw! Given a divine heroism, to smooth it well in human dullness, to touch it with the mace of death, so that no human soul shall henceforth recognize it for a heroism, but all souls shall fly from it as from a chaotic torpor, an insanity, and honour—I will back our English genius against the world in such a problem!—(*Carlyle*.)

If I could not send a man among the mountains, or through the valleys, or by the side of streams, I would shut him up in the resounding recesses of the old Testament. There is a more loving description of nature in the Psalms alone, than in all Greek and Roman literature. Yet the Bible has been used so unfairly, and a truckling priesthood have drawn from it such base arguments, that men of free and generous natures have been repelled by it, and have gone away with the wings of literature and the feet of science to find God in the great realm of nature. In those sciences which might be called the light infantry of progress, the Zouaves of thought, that are skirmishing in the valleys, and hanging along the hills, and sending vanguards against the enemy, there is much infidelity.—*Spurgeon*.

YOUTH MELANCHOLY.—The keen susceptibility to pleasure and joy implies a keen susceptibility to pain. There is, probably, no time of life at which pains are more intensely felt; no time at which the whole man more "groaneth and travaileth in pain together." Young men are prone to extreme melancholy, even to disgust with life. A young preacher will preach upon afflictions much more than an old one. A young poet will write more sadly. A young philosopher will moralize more gloomily. And this seems unreal sentiment, and is smiled at in after years. But it is real at the time; and perhaps is nearer the truth at all times than the contentedness of those who ridicule it. Youth, in fact, feels everything more keenly; and as far as the keenness of feeling contributes to its truth, the feeling, whether it is pain or pleasure, is so much the truer. But in after life it is the happiness, not the suffering of youth, that most often returns to the memory, and seems to gild all the past.—*The Education of the World, by Bishop Temple*.

The importance of the superintendent's office grows in the estimation of experienced Sunday-school workers as the question is considered, Who is chiefly responsible for the wise management and efficiency of a Sunday-school? The superintendent can give shape and character to his school, so far as any human agency can compass this work. If he is fitted for his place, the school is likely to succeed. If he fails to fill the place, the school suffers. An Irish writer on "A Model Sabbath-school" says on this point: "I know a church in connection with which a few years ago there was a most flourishing Sunday-school. The superintendent migrated. He was succeeded by another. The school from that hour has gradually declined, until there are only about twenty children, most of whom are fit only for the infant class. What was the cause of this serious declension? I hesitate not to answer. The inefficiency of the superintendent. The churches generally, I fear, have attached too little importance to this office. I have known cases in which the superintendency has been sent out, hat in hand, begging some one to accept the dignity; and I am almost ashamed to say, it has sometimes been conferred as an empty honour on a gentleman of good position."

The United Presbyterian Missionary Record announces the conversion of a learned Mohammedan teacher at Ajmere, India. Imdad Hussein, although a preacher of the Mohammedan religion, had for some years been seeking the truth. His faith in Mohammedanism was first shaken by some Christian books on the points of controversy between Christians and Mohammedans. Then he began to read the New Testament and pursued his study of the Word of God for seven years. The result of his inquiry was a visit to Ajmere, with a view of having some remaining difficulties solved and of being received into the Christian Church. Having two wives, he passed through a hard struggle in giving up the second and favourite one, and was on the 1st Sabbath of August, 1873, baptized. Since his residence with the missionary he has received news from his father of the death of his first wife, and thus the way is opened for his reunion with the one whom he had only given up for Christ's sake and who is also asking for the way of salvation. In the earnest and able confession of faith which he wrote when urging his application for baptism Imdad Hussein shows that his longing for years had been for an intercessor. He had carefully examined into the character and words of Mohammed, and found him wanting in this particular. Then he had inquired for years into the divinity and sufferings of Christ, until he found peace and pardon in believing.

MARRIED.

At Bicester, Banbury, on the 20th inst., by the Rev. D. B. Whimster, assisted by Rev. A. Stevenson and the Rev. A. Stenmann, Mr. James Henry, to Miss Jane Bassett, all of Oxford.

In St. Vincent, at the residence of the bride's father, by the Rev. D. B. Whimster, Mr. Arch. Cuthbert, of Montreal, to Miss Caroline Mary of St. Vincent.