

MINISTERS AND CHURCHES.

WE have been requested to notify all whom it may concern, that all communications on Home Mission work, within the bounds of the London Presbytery, must be addressed to the Rev. John Rennie, Conventer, Ailsa Craig.

A CONTEMPORARY intimates—on what authority is not stated—that the Rev. A. D. McDonald, of Seaford, has declined a call addressed to him by the Presbyterian congregation of Stratford, to succeed the Rev. Mr. McLeod, lately translated to Toronto. We suspect there must be some mistake somewhere.

THE second annual meeting of the Sabbath School Convention of the Presbytery of Saugeen was held in Guthrie Church, Harriston, on Tuesday, 27th ult. During the forenoon and afternoon sessions addresses were given by ministers and Sabbath school workers within the bounds of the Presbytery on very important subjects in connection with Sabbath school work. In the evening Rev. J. McEwen, of Ingersoll, gave a very interesting and instructive address on "Normal Classes for Sabbath School Teachers, and their Importance to the Church." It was highly appreciated by the Sabbath school workers. The Rev. Dr. Bell, of Walkerton, gave an address on "The True Relation of Instruction to Conversion." It was carefully prepared, clear, logical, scriptural, handling the subject in a masterly manner. It was a rare treat. The next meeting of the Convention is to be held in St. Andrew's Church, Mount Forest.

THE Rev. Mr. Hodnett, of Perrytown, has been appointed by the Home Mission Committee to Manitoba, and will, we understand, proceed to his new field almost immediately. We are also glad to learn that during the present month several of our ministers will pay more or less extended visits to the North-west. Among these we may mention the Rev. Mr. Warden, of Montreal, and the Rev. Mr. Pitblado, of Halifax. The Rev. Mr. McGuire, of Jarvis, is also at present in Manitoba preaching in one of our stations. As we have once and again stated, the present population of the North-west is very largely Presbyterian, and those who are continually going in are very considerably of the same description. If accordingly the necessary supply of preachers is now sent, and adequate pecuniary help be forthcoming for a few years, our Church in those vast regions will be greatly and permanently extended and a very large amount of good effected. We may now go in and to a very great degree possess the land. But if the present opportunity is neglected, it is not likely that one so favourable will ever recur.

THE ceremony of laying the corner stone of the new Central Presbyterian Church, Galt, took place on Monday, 26th ult., and was in all respects highly successful. Amongst the clergy present were Revs. Principal Caven, Knox College, Toronto; Dr. James, Hamilton; Dr. Wardrope, Guelph; Messrs. King, Toronto; Inglis and Thompson, Ayr; J. K. Smith, Galt; Tait, Berlin; Dr. Cochrane, Brantford; Rev. Mr. Green, of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, Galt, and the Rev. Mr. Smith, M.A., Guelph. The ceremony commenced by singing the 100th Psalm by the choir, led by Mr. Murray. Prayer was then offered by Dr. Wardrope, after which the duties of adjusting the corner stone were successfully performed by Principal Caven. After the usual records and coins had been deposited able and stirring addresses were delivered by Principal Caven, Mr. Smith of Guelph, and Dr. Cochrane of Brantford, all having a bearing on the interesting occasion for which they were met. The proceedings were brought to a close by singing the usual doxology. The ladies of the congregation held a social in the town hall in the evening, which was largely attended. After all had partaken of the rich repast, they adjourned to the hall, where they were entertained by able addresses by several clergymen present. The proceedings were interspersed with vocal and instrumental music, which was deservedly applauded by the audience. Miss Addison, Miss Hume and Miss Scott took part in these performances. Mr. Maitland and Mr. Murray rendered solos which were well received. The two solos by Miss Addison were rendered with considerable sweetness and taste. The accompaniments by Miss Scott and Miss Hume were all that could be desired.

PRESBYTERY OF MANITOBA.—This Presbytery met in the Presbyterian church at Portage la Prairie on

the morning of the 21st of July. Rev. Dugald McGregor was by authority of the General Assembly received as a minister of the Church. Rev. Mr. Wellwood, appointed by the Home Mission Committee of the Assembly to labour at the railway crossing of the Little Saskatchewan, was received as a member of the Presbytery. Rev. Mr. McGuire, of Jarvis, was present, and was asked to sit as corresponding member. Rev. J. S. Stewart was elected Moderator for the next six months. Rev. Prof. Bryce was elected Treasurer of the Presbytery. There was presented by Rev. Mr. Ross a report bearing upon the advisability of separating the Nelsonville group of stations into two districts. The report was exhaustive as to the statistics of that field, and Messrs. Ross, McRae, and A. H. Cameron were thanked for the faithfulness with which they discharged the duty imposed on them by the Presbytery. Owing to the fact, however, that the station did not send in complete subscription lists to the Presbytery, the report, with all papers, was laid on the table, and the Clerk instructed to write to these stations so that they may send in information bearing on finances. The Home Mission Committee reported that Rev. Mr. Russell had been obliged through ill-health to give up preaching for a time, and recommended that some one should be appointed immediately in charge of Greenwood, the field thus rendered vacant, that the Committee had placed Mr. Lawrence in charge of that field in the meantime; that Rev. Donald Ross had proceeded to Prince Albert with the view of remaining there; that the Conventer had received a communication from Edmonton asking for a minister at that point; that Mr. McDonald, the writer of the letter, had been written to by the Clerk and assured that the Presbytery would do all it could for Edmonton; that the Committee had corresponded with the Conventer of the Assembly's Committee with the view of having another missionary appointed to Prince Albert, so that a supply might be given to Carrot River district and other settlements in the neighbourhood of Prince Albert; that owing to the return of Mr. Farquharson to college, as also the return of Mr. Caswell, provision must be made for the supply of the two fields in which these gentlemen labour; that the people of Turtle Mountain were asking for services at that point, as also those in townships 11 and 12, range 14 west, and those at the Roseau Crossing and the Ridges. Prof. Bryce was appointed to visit Rock Lake district and organize stations there. The matter of the supply of Turtle Mountain was deferred till the next meeting of the Presbytery. Rev. Mr. McGregor was appointed to take charge of townships 12 and 13, range 14 west, in addition to his present field. Rev. Messrs. Scott and McGuire were instructed to visit Dominion City and the Ridges, and organize stations at once; and the stations were instructed to send subscription lists at once to the Home Mission Committee; and were informed that steps would be taken immediately to have a missionary appointed to that field. Rev. Mr. Smith read an interesting report of his work in the Little Saskatchewan district. It was arranged that Mr. Wellwood should take the railway crossing, McTavish, and Rolling River as his field, and Mr. Smith, Rapid City, etc. Messrs. Smith, Stewart and Wellwood were instructed to meet and arrange for the supply of Oak River. Mr. McRae urged the Presbytery to do something for the supply of Cypress River district. The field is large, embracing twelve townships, and the settlers are numerous. The Presbytery appointed Mr. McRae to visit that district and labour for one month this fall, and requested Messrs. Bell, McKellar and Ross to give such assistance in the supply of that field with Mr. McRae as would be within their power, it being understood that the field is placed under the supervision of Mr. McRae. Dr. Black read the report of the Foreign Mission Committee, shewing that steps had been taken to survey a part of the Prince Albert property into town lots, and dispose of the same; that a building was to be erected immediately on Mr. Mis-ta-wa-sis' reserve for the accommodation of Rev. Mr. McKay, who is to labour there permanently. It appears that the work under Mr. Flett is advancing rapidly. The Fort Pelly Indians are desirous for a missionary of their own. The Clerk directed the attention of the Presbytery to the very unsatisfactory state of affairs in the North-West Territory as regards the establishment and support of schools. It would seem that owing to defects in the law, and the sparseness of the population, very few schools are established; in fact, Mr. Robertson knew of only one in the

Little Saskatchewan country. A committee, consisting of Messrs. Robertson, Smith, and Wellwood, was appointed to correspond with the Government and take whatever other steps might be thought necessary to hasten the establishment of schools.

SCOTCH SERMONS: 1880.*

The names of some of the writers would prepare us to look for considerable literary merit in these sermons; and several of them are very respectable compositions. Those contributed by Principal Caird exhibit the power of rich and sustained illustration for which this famous preacher is remarkable. The sermons of Knight, McFarlan, Rain and Story, may also be specially mentioned as exhibiting good literary talent.

Certain ethical and social principles of Christianity are put in an interesting light, and enforced with a good deal of freshness and power. Some of the writers have keen sympathy with the spiritual struggles of man, and seem anxious to help them to a better position. We dare not carry our praise farther.

The preface leads us to expect that the book will be the manifesto of a School, and the most cursory examination of its contents shews that it is so. "The volume has originated in the wish to gather a few specimens of a style of teaching which increasingly prevails amongst the Clergy of the Scottish Church. It may serve to indicate a growing tendency, and to shew the direction in which thought is moving." It is the work of those whose hope for the Church lies in a "profounder apprehension of the essential ideas of Christianity." For ourselves we can only say that the less "thought" shall move in this direction the better, and that the "profounder apprehension of Christian ideas" comes, in some instances, perilously near to the total rejection of them. We state with sorrow that a good many of these sermons by Scottish divines are deeply rationalistic, and that many of the great doctrines which the Presbyterian Church has been honoured to teach and defend, are attacked and rejected—in some instances burlesqued and contemptuously thrown aside. We have here "another gospel which is not another." We have the "Spirit of the Age" in one sermon, deliberately put in the place of the Spirit of Christ as the witness to truth. The volume teaches that Scripture is not inspired throughout, and that it derives its authority from accordance with the religious consciousness; that the religious consciousness of man is the test of truth; that man's original condition is that of a savage, worshipping trees and serpents, that Christianity is merely the development of a religion which appears first as a fetichism, or nature worship, and is divine only as nature worship is divine; that miracles are only a dogma of the Church; that we are justified, not on the ground of Christ's righteousness imputed to us and received by faith alone, but on the ground of our own character; that the imputation of Christ's righteousness is a mere figment of theology. The doctrines of depravity, atonement and regeneration are all denied.

We have not made an exhaustive statement of the errors of this book. One writer goes the length of saying that there are many "pious and religious men accepted of God" who reject "the teachings of the Gospel," and who are saved by means of the "discipline supplied through the divine order" of nature.

Charges so serious should not be lightly made, and we are only sorry that the evidence on which they rest is so abundant and unquestionable. It can give us no satisfaction to sustain such an indictment against Presbyterian ministers—men whom we should gladly hail as champions of the truth, even as they are under solemn vow to maintain and defend it.

This is how Mr. McFarlan speaks of the Scriptures: Men "cannot be certain that all the words in them attributed to Christ and the apostles, were really the words they spoke, undiluted, undisturbed, unexaggerated. Neither can they be absolutely sure that the miracles ascribed to them were actually wrought by them. They cannot, therefore, accept the words which Christ is reported to have spoken, nor those which the apostles unquestionably wrote as the utterances of teachers—infallible in all they said and wrote." "They claim the right to judge each of their utterances in the light of their own Christian consciousness, and to deny divine authority to any of them which fall beneath the ethical standard which, as men illuminated by the Spirit of Christ, they have set up for

* Toronto: Willing & Williamson.