

Lord Jesus Christ," taking for his text Psalm lxxii. 17. After the sermon the Rev. John Robertson, of Black River, gave an address, in the course of which he congratulated the people upon the success of the good work they had put their hands to, and exhorted them to go on in peace and harmony until the buildings should be completely furnished; and expressed the desire that it might be the birthplace of many souls. The services were concluded with singing and the benediction. Many citizens of Chatham were present. The collection, which was deposited upon a table as the congregation entered the church, amounted to \$60.

THE demise of an old and highly respected citizen of Alvinston, Mr. John McKenzie, is chronicled by an exchange. Mr. McKenzie was born at Inverness, Scotland, on the twenty-third of September, 1817, and emigrated to Nova Scotia with his parents while an infant. In 1834 he moved into London township, where he resided for about ten years. During the rebellion of 1837 and 1838 he took an active part, but before the campaign was ended he met with an accident, while jumping out of a waggon, which made amputation of his right leg above the knee necessary. In 1844 he moved into the city of London, where he commenced a grocery establishment, which he managed very successfully for several years. He then went to Brucefield, near Goderich, and commenced a general store, but tiring of that locality he moved to Lobo for a short time; and in 1872 he commenced store keeping in Alvinston. Mr. McKenzie was a straightforward, honest, upright gentleman, and by his actions made many friends. Mr. McKenzie's mother survives him, and is a hale, hearty old lady of ninety-three years of age. She lives at Hyde Park, in the township of London. The deceased was always a strict member of the Presbyterian Church. Early in life he endeavoured to serve his Creator, and at the time of his death he expressed a strong hope of inheriting that house not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens. The funeral sermon, which was instructive and impressive, was preached in the Presbyterian church, Alvinston, by the Rev. J. R. Johnston, B.A.

MR. ARCHIBALD McALPINE died on the thirteenth inst. at his residence in Mossa, after a short illness. He was a young man of noted piety. He made a public profession of his faith in Christ and became a member of the congregation of Mossa Presbyterian church at the early age of eighteen years. The congregation was then under the pastoral care of the Rev. Archibald Stewart, now of North Easthope, and the session about a year thereafter took steps to elect and ordain a board of deacons. Mr. McAlpine was one of those whom the congregation elected, and who were ordained on January 11th, 1875; and ever since, till he was laid aside by his last illness, he discharged the duties of his office with alacrity and efficiency. His last illness was inflammation of the bowels which attacked him so severely that from the first he himself had no hope of his recovery, although his physicians for several days gave favourable reports of his symptoms. His mind was bright to the last; and he talked to his friends as much as his strength would permit about his good hope through Christ, giving them kind counsels concerning their souls' salvation. His death may be said to have been a great sermon, which it is hoped those who witnessed will not forget. He leaves a wife and a child, his father, who is an elder in the same congregation, his mother and a large circle of attached friends to lament his loss. The funeral was attended by a very large concourse of sympathizing acquaintances. An appropriate sermon was preached on the occasion by his pastor from the text, "Help, Lord; for the Godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men." Is. xli. 1. He was buried in the hope of a glorious resurrection.

THE Rev. W. D. Armstrong delivered an interesting address on the evening of Sabbath, 19th inst., in the Daly Street Presbyterian Church, Ottawa, giving his impressions of the state of religious life in Scotland. He referred to the deep interest taken by people here in all that affects the welfare of that land. To many it is endeared by all the associations of youth and early hopes and joys. By many it is revered as the land of our fathers. Its grand religious history is enshrined in all our hearts and memories. A little country indeed, but a fountain of blessing to many lands, even to the uttermost parts of the earth. Our own Presbyterian Church in its early days was nursed by her as a child upon the mother's lap.

But has there not come a great change over Scotland? Has the fine gold not become dim? Has not religious life deteriorated in the land of our fathers? These questions are asked more especially with regard to three points. (1) Family discipline and worship; (2) The keeping of the Sabbath; (3) Faithfulness to the doctrines of the Church. It is true that family religion is not what it once was. It is true that the keeping of the Sabbath has not now that pre-eminence which made the Scottish Sabbath proverbial. It is true that there has been much questioning as to forms of belief, and there have been heresy cases before the Church courts. The spirit of enquiry and the intellectual commerce of nations have much to do with these changes. But all change is not necessarily for the worse. The Sabbath School, the young men's meeting and other forms of social religious training are taking the place, or at all events seeking to fill up the defects, of the older method, whilst a more rational and well defined faith must be the result of all earnest inquiry after truth. Among the encouraging and hopeful features Mr. Armstrong alluded to were (1) The great number of earnest, faithful, consecrated pastors, who, in preaching, teaching, organizing, are giving themselves wholly to the work of saving souls. Scotland never had a nobler ministry than at the present time, although lacking in those who by their power render themselves conspicuously pre-eminent; (2) A marked movement among laymen of position, many of whom have not only consecrated their business but have given themselves to the Lord in personal endeavour; (3) A widespread and thoughtful sympathy with the Lord's work everywhere; (4) The great advance being made in the cause of temperance. In concluding he referred to some of the ecclesiastical questions that bulk so largely before the public eye, especially the agitation for disestablishment in which there is no little bitterness, and expressed his thankfulness that not in these discussions nor even in her great Church courts, but in her great cities, and in personal acquaintance with her pastors and their work he had felt the throb of the religious life of Scotland.

## SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHER.

### INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

#### LESSON XXXVI.

Sep. 9.  
1883.

RUTH AND NAOMI.

[Ruth i.  
14-22.]

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God."—Ruth 1: 16.

CENTRAL TRUTH.—Dwell with the people of God.

INTRODUCTION.—The Book of Ruth, after the wars of the Book of Judges, is like a cool and grassy place in the fields after a hot and dusty road. It is an appendix to the Book of Judges. The time has been computed, with great probability, to be about 1222 B.C.; though some place it a hundred years further back. But at this latter date there seems to be too great an interval between Boaz and David. A man of Bethlehem, Elimelech, with Naomi, his wife, and two sons, went in a time of famine across the Jordan, and lived in Moab. The sons grew up: Mahlon married Ruth, and Chilion married Orpah, women of Moab. The father and the two sons died. Mahlon means "sickly," and Chilion means "pining;" and very likely the father and his sons were of weakly constitutions. The three women were left. Ten years from her arrival in Moab, Naomi would return to Bethlehem. Her daughters-in-law started to go with her. She advised them to stay.

I. THE CHOICE OF ORPAH.—Ver. 14.—And wept again. it was a tender parting. They had been kind to her and to the dead; (ver. 9); and the poor widow was going home alone and poor. Orpah kissed her mother-in-law: she loved Naomi, but she left her. She had probably professed Jehovah's worship; but was now going back again to the gods of her people.

Ver. 15.—Thy sister is gone back: her religious principles were not so settled as those of Ruth. She could indeed serve Jehovah in Moab; but could better do so in Israel. Naomi rightly understood that when Orpah went back, she would return "unto her gods." Return thou: Ruth and Orpah had their free choice. Naomi did not wish them to come with her, and then regret it.

II. THE CHOICE OF RUTH.—Ver. 16.—Entreat me not to leave thee: no finer burst of godly eloquence was ever uttered, than by Ruth to Naomi. She would go where she went, she would stay where she staid; she would share her experience, and choose her people, and serve her God. Her mind was calmly and perfectly made up. Just the state of mind to be prayed for: and possessed by a convert.

Ver. 17.—Where thou diest, will I die: neither in life nor death did she wish to be parted from her. Naomi's life must have been very attractive and saintly to inspire such love on the part of Ruth. This is an open, but unfrequented path to success in the Lord's work. The Lord do so to me: a solemn form of words often found in the Bible. An oath.

Ver. 18.—Saw that she was steadfastly minded: Naomi ceased urging her to return, when she saw she was fully resolved to go. The young disciple will find that a steadfast avowal of obedience to Christ, generally disarms opposition. *The hesitating tempt themselves.*

III. THE RETURN HOME.—Ver. 19.—They too went. it was a sorrowful returning. The two women, each perhaps carrying a little bundle with some articles of clothing and keepsakes of the dead, lodging at night with people as poor as themselves, ascending the 4,000 feet from the Jordan to the high crest of Bethlehem; weary and alone. Yet God was with them. All the City was moved. Every walled place was called a "City." Bethlehem was very small. People were just as fond of news then as now, and everyone would be talking about Naomi's coming back. And coming back so poor and lonely! Is this Naomi? Just the expression some of us would use, if we met somebody under very altered and unexpected circumstances. This story was very distressing to Naomi. No one wishes to be talked about. Our neighbours take more interest in our "circumstances" than they do in our souls!

Ver. 20.—Call me not Naomi, call me Mara: Naomi is "pleasant;" Mara (same as Mary) is "bitter." Don't worry bitterly. God's hand had been laid very heavily upon her. It is possible, however, that there was something of complaining in her heart. "The bitter first, Christians, and then the sweet; the Cross first, and then the Crown!"—Bunyan.

Ver. 21.—I went out full. not in goods, but with loving husband and two sweet boys. Home again empty: all dead whom I loved: nothing left but memory of happier days. The Lord hath testified against me. perhaps she felt they had done wrong in leaving Judah and going to Moab, and that the Lord had punished them for it. A stronger faith might perhaps have kept them in the inheritance of their fathers, trusting God's promises.

Ver. 22.—Ruth the Moabitess: the Moabites were descended from Lot. They spoke the same language as the Israelites (as the "Moabite Stone," found a few years ago shows), but were idolaters. Ruth's heart seemed to be sincerely turned to God. Barley harvest. it comes early even with us. Barley, if sown early, is ripe before the wheat. Naomi had heard (i. 6) that there was a good crop; and arrived when bread-corn was abundant. Ruth was not to proud to glean in the fields of Boaz for Naomi. Boaz afterwards married Ruth, and King David was their great-grandson, from whom by earthly descent comes Jesus the Saviour.

#### PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

1. Much depends upon a good choice. Ruth chose to go to Bethlehem! What is your choice?
2. It was a great help to Ruth to have Naomi to lead her. We shall always find good examples near if we look for them.
3. "So they two went until they came to Bethlehem." Two of the same family line, and equally poor, afterwards came to Bethlehem. (Luke 2: 4-5.)
4. "Ruth comes forth out of Moab, an idolatrous people, full of wantonness and sin, and is herself so tender and pure."—Lange. An illustration, if we choose to take it, of the coming of the heathen to God. Naomi led her; the Church leads there.

## SYMPATHY SWEETENS OUR SORROWS.

### MOTHER.

A touching incident occurred not long ago at the distribution of prizes in the English School of Sciences and Art at Keighley.

The Bishop of Manchester gave the prizes. To the pupils and most of the large audience the Bishop occupies the place of father to his children: not only reverence as a man of God, but as a liberal, practical thinker—one of the leaders of opinion in England in all matters which influence the elevation of humanity.

Surrounded by the boys and their parents, the good Bishop suddenly was led to speak of his own mother, and told the story of how she, "not a clever managing woman," had been left a widow with seven children—how her great love and trust in God had helped her to live, sacrificing not only luxury, but comfort, to make a home, bare of all but the most meagre necessities, bright and happy as that home Beautiful, whose chambers were called Peace, and from which could be seen the hills of heaven. Most of her children, through her efforts, have risen to positions where they could help to make the world wiser and better.

"She is now," said the Bishop, with broken voice, "in my home, paralyzed—speechless and helpless: and when I looked at her sweet face this morning I thanked God, who had given her to me. I owe to her all that I am."—*Golden Days.*

Is it hard to serve God, timid soul? Hast thou found gloomy forests, dark glens, mountain-tops on thy way? All the hard would be easy, all the tangles unbound, wouldst thou only desire, as well as obey. —*Faber.*