

Missionary Association was formed in the congregation, which is in a healthy and vigorous condition. They recently sent to the treasurer in Toronto about \$54 in aid of Foreign Missions. Up to the middle of last month the congregation had service but once on a Sabbath. Now, under the new arrangement, there will be services morning and evening, the want of which has always been much felt in a place of nearly two thousand inhabitants. The spirit and liberality of the congregation are highly commendable, and, doubtless, the progress will be even more marked in the future than it has been in the past.

THE Toronto Church Extension Association held its annual meeting on Monday evening last in St. James' square Presbyterian Church. The attendance was not large, indeed considering the importance of the work of the Association to the best interests of Presbyterianism in the city, it was discreditably small. J. Lang Blaikie, Esq., President of the Association, occupied the chair. On the platform were several of the city ministers. After devotional exercises the annual report was read by the secretary, C. B. Robinson, Esq. From this it appeared that the work of the Association had been greatly hindered from want of funds. Resolutions, strongly urging an increased amount of interest in the objects of the Association, were moved and duly seconded by Rev. Messrs. Smith, Cameron, Inglis, Kirkpatrick and Hogg, with Alexander Fraser, Esq., and cordially adopted by the meeting. The following are the office-bearers for the coming year: President, J. Lang Blaikie; Vice Presidents, J. M. King, M.A., and Rev. W. Reid, D.D.; Treasurer, W. Rennie; Secretary, C. B. Robinson; Committee: John Kerr, W. Mortimer Clark, Arch. Macdonald, T. Kirkland, M.A., R. J. Hunter, James Allison, John Leys, John Mackie, Alex. Fraser, R. J. Wylie, H. B. Gordon, A. N. Creelman, Jas. Brown, S. C. Duncan-Clark, A. McMurphy, M.A., Robert McLean, John Young, Geo. C. Robb, Geo. Gall, Jas. Mitchell, John Harvie and John Winchester. To the Presbyterians of Toronto there is perhaps no more important and pressing scheme of united action than that which is aimed at by this Association. It will not be creditable either to their zeal or liberality if it is not prosecuted with ever-growing energy and success.

THE following are the statistics of membership, finance, etc., of Knox Church, Embro, for the ecclesiastical year ending March 31st, 1880. In reckoning the number of families, single individuals are not included, though they must be visited pastorally. Three single individuals are regarded as a family. On this basis the returns are as follow: Number of families connected with the church, 180; number of households to be visited pastorally—in Embro corporation, 63; in the townships, 165; total number of households, 228. The number of souls (as near as can be estimated), reckoning men, women and children—in Embro, 275; in the townships, 687; total, 962. The number on the roll on August 19th, 1873, was 130; number added to the roll since 1873, by profession of faith, 125, by certificate, 38; number removed from the roll by death and by certificate, 62; number on the roll at present, 231. Since 1873 the average addition by profession of faith, each year, has been (almost) 21. About \$300 a year has been contributed to missions. The financial and statistical returns made for the present year are the following. Number of members added during the year, 31; number of baptisms during the year—of adults, 2; of infants, 22; total, 24. Number of baptisms since August, 1873—of adults, 8; of infants, 150. total, 158. Contribution for the year. to Home Mission debt, \$100; to Home Mission ordinary revenue, \$100; to Foreign Mission by congregation, \$72; to Foreign Mission by Ladies' Foreign Missionary Society, \$21; to French Evangelization, \$57; to Colleges, \$49; to Infirm Ministers' and Widows' Fund, \$21; to Assembly, Synod and Presbytery Funds, \$21; total, \$441. Total paid for all other congregational expenses, including building of sheds for horses, \$2,722; total, \$3,163.

PRESBYTERY OF MONTREAL.—The regular quarterly meeting of Montreal Presbytery was held in St. Paul's Church, Montreal, on the 6th and 7th April, 1880. There was a good attendance of members. On motion of the Rev. A. B. Mackay, the city ministers and elders were appointed a committee, with the Rev. R. H. Warden as Convener, to make the necessary arrangements as to the approaching meeting of the General Assembly to be held in the city. A com-

mision from Knox Church, Montreal, appointing Mr. W. D. McLaren Presbytery elder, was approved. The Home Mission report was submitted by the Rev. R. H. Warden. It shewed encouraging progress. Its recommendations were adopted, including the re-appointment of the Rev. J. Jones to Taylor Church, and the designation of \$250 (of the \$500 of special contributions to be sent to the Assembly's Home Mission Fund) to the Presbytery of Barrie, to aid in paying in full the missionaries of that Presbytery from whose grants a deduction was made a year ago. The Revs. Prof. Ferguson of Kingston, Messrs. W. M. Black of Scotland, Dewey of Richmond, Q., Amaron of Three Rivers, Munro of Manotick, McLennan and Mathieson of Glengarry, and Dr. McNish of Cornwall, being present, were invited to sit with the Presbytery as corresponding members. The committee appointed for the purpose reported that \$8,000 of the debt on Stanley street Church had been paid off, subscriptions promised for a considerable portion of the balance, and the interest of the whole remaining amount guaranteed for the next five years. The Presbytery expressed their gratification with the result. The following commissioners to the General Assembly were elected by rotation: The Rev. Messrs. Johnston, Forlong, McKerracher, Doudiet, Halley, and Scrimger; and by ballot, Principal Macvicar, Dr. Jenkins, the Rev. Messrs. R. Campbell, J. S. Black, J. Patterson, and the Rev. R. H. Warden, Messrs. A. C. Hutchison, D. Morrice, Alexander McPherson, Dr. Christie, J. Stirling, W. D. McLaren, G. S. Spence, Wm. Darling, W. King and Jas. Brodie, elders. A report was presented by the Rev. J. S. Black on behalf of the Sabbath school committee, giving interesting information and statistics as to the schools within the Presbytery. The report was received and adopted, and ordered to be transmitted to the Synod's Committee on Sabbath schools. The Presbytery held a Conference in the evening with Sabbath school teachers, when two subjects were discussed, viz., "Sabbath School Libraries," and "The Relation of the Sabbath School to Missions." The following were appointed a committee on Sabbath schools for the ensuing year: Messrs. J. S. Black, P. Wright, W. R. Cruickshank, D. Morrice, J. L. Morris and W. Paul. The Rev. J. A. Vernon was, on application, received as a catechist of the Church. The report of the committee on the State of Religion within the Presbytery was submitted by the Rev. C. A. Doudiet. It was on the whole encouraging. An interesting discussion took place as to the best means of advancing the spiritual interests of the congregations within the bounds, and a special committee was appointed to consider and take action in regard to the matter. The following students—graduates of this session of the Presbyterian College of Montreal—were examined, and the Presbytery agreed to apply to the Synod for leave to license them as preachers of the Gospel: Messrs. J. A. Anderson, B.A.; J. K. Baillie; C. McLean; M. D. M. Blakely, B.A.; T. A. Bouchard; A. H. Macfarlane, B.A.; T. A. Nelson; J. F. McLaren; P. R. Ross, and W. Shearer. On motion of Mr. R. Campbell, the Presbytery resolved to petition the Legislature to take no further action in regard to the Bill relating to marriage with a deceased wife's sister, until an opportunity was given the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada to express an opinion upon it.

SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHER.

INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

LESSON XVII.

April 25. } CONFESSION AND CROSS-BEARING. } Mat. xvi. 13-28.
1880. }

GOLDEN TEXT.—"If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me."—Matt. xvi. 24.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Matt. xiii. 44-58. Jesus again Rejected.
T. Matt. xiv. 1-12. Death of John.
W. Matt. xiv. 13-21. Five Thousand Fed.
Th. Matt. xiv. 22-36. Jesus Walks on Water.
F. Matt. xv. 1-20. The Disciples Defended.
S. Matt. xv. 21-39. Syro-phenician Woman.
Sab. Matt. xvi. 13-28. Confession and Cross-Bearing.

HELPS TO STUDY.

The conversation between Christ and His disciples, recorded in our present lesson, took place probably about six months before the crucifixion.

In the time—nearly a year—that passed since the day by the Sea of Galilee, described in last lesson, the people of northern Palestine had determined to make Jesus an earthly king against His will (John vi. 15); His enemies had become more embittered, and He had not attended the passover, but had remained in Galilee (John vii. 1); He had delivered the discourse contained in John vi., about eating the flesh of the Son of Man and drinking His blood, and many had fallen away from Him (John vi. 66).

In this lesson we are taught: (1) *Who Christ is*, (2) *What Christ was to do*, (3) *What was to be done to Christ*, (4) *What Christ's Followers are to do*.

I. WHO CHRIST IS.—Vers. 13-17. In answer to the question, *Whom do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?* the Saviour draws from His disciples a brief statement of the world's opinions regarding Him—not for His own information, but in order as usual, to place the false side by side with the true, so that they could be the more easily distinguished when apart.

These opinions are as numerous and as various now as they were when the question was asked. Some say that Jesus was a good and wise man—nothing more; some, that He was partly deceived and partly a deceiver. But a much more important question for each of us is, *Whom say ye that I am?*

A recent writer says: "It matters less to you and to me what others think of Jesus, than what *we* think of Him. If everybody else is in error on this point, and we look at Jesus in a proper light, all is well with us, however sad we may be over the failure of others. And if everybody else holds a correct belief, and we are in error, it is as bad for us as if there were no truth in the universe. If you believe that you are not a lost sinner, you will not—you cannot—look to Jesus as a Saviour; for there can be no Saviour if there is no danger to be saved from. Or, if you believe that you are lost, but that Jesus cannot be trusted to take you just as you are and save you absolutely, you will not—you cannot—look upon Him as *your* Saviour. In what light do you look at Jesus? Do you look upon Him as a needed Saviour? Do you look upon Him as a sufficient Saviour? Do you look upon Him as *your* Saviour? Whom do you say that Jesus, the Son of Man, is?"

In answering this question, Peter, as usual, occupies the position of spokesman for the twelve; and the Saviour recognizes the answer, *Thou art the Christ the Son of the living God*, as the teaching of the Holy Spirit.

II. WHAT CHRIST WAS TO DO.—Vers. 18-20. He was to establish His kingdom on earth, to build His Church (see Zech. vi. 12, 13; 1 Pet. ii. 5; Eph. ii. 21, 22; 1 Cor. iii. 9), founding it upon a rock.

Was this rock Peter? The Church of Rome says it was. Many of our modern Protestant commentators are of the same opinion; and they may certainly hold that opinion without becoming Papists, for what Peter gets does Rome no good; but is Peter the "stone which the builders rejected" and which has "become the head of the corner?" Is Peter the "foundation" other than which "no man can lay?" The whole teaching of Scripture is against the view that the Saviour would speak of any mere human being as the foundation of His Church. There is no violence done to the text by taking the words *Thou art Peter (petros, a rock, masculine) and upon this rock (petra, feminine) I will build My Church*, to mean that the Church would be built on the doctrine, or fact, proclaimed in Peter's confession, viz., the divinity of Christ. In any case the most that can be accorded to Peter is a place among "the apostles and prophets" upon whom the Church is said to be built, "Christ Himself being the chief corner stone" (Eph. ii. 20).

Tell no man. This prohibition was only temporary, and was removed when the apostles were commanded to "preach the Gospel to every creature."

III. WHAT WAS TO BE DONE TO CHRIST.—Vers. 21-23. We now find the Saviour beginning to prepare His disciples for the events of the near future, and to teach them that His way to the accomplishment of the great work in which He was engaged lay through suffering and death. The disciples did not, as yet, know enough to enable them to reconcile the two apparently contradictory facts of the establishment of the kingdom and the death of its Lord; and so Peter took Him and began to rebuke Him. He began, but he was not permitted to finish his rebuke, for, as Dr. Alexander says, he "was cut short by one of the severest answers ever uttered, which effectually taught him his mistake and brought him to his senses."

IV. WHAT CHRIST'S FOLLOWERS ARE TO DO.—Vers. 24-28. Christ offered no false inducements to followers. He placed no delusive hopes before them. Neither does He now. He calls us to a course of self-denial, and hardship, and suffering, and death if need be, but He calls us to glory and to honour and to immortality as the end of that course.

Whosoever will save his life shall lose it. We give Dr. Alexander's exposition of this passage, or rather of the corresponding passage in Mark: "*Whosoever will* (is willing, wishes to) save his life (i.e. his natural life or the life of his body, for its own sake, as the highest good to be secured or sought) *will* (by that very act not only lose but) *destroy* it. He cannot perpetuate his life on earth, and by refusing to look higher forfeits heaven. The converse is then stated as no less true and important. *Whosoever loses or destroys* (i.e. allows to be destroyed if needful) his life (in the lower sense before explained) for My sake, in My service and at My command, not only now while I am present upon earth, but even after my departure, for the sake of the Gospel, the diffusion of the truth and the erection of My kingdom, he shall save his life in losing it, or only lose it in a lower sense to save it in the highest sense conceivable. The difficulty of distinguishing precisely between life and life in this extraordinary dictum only shews that the difference is rather of degree than of kind, and instead of weakening strengthens the impression."

For what shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul. Again we find that the best we can do with our limited space is to give Dr. Alexander's short but comprehensive exposition: "*What will it profit a man* (what will he gain on ordinary principles of value or exchange) *if he gain* (acquire in the usual commercial sense) *the whole world* (i.e. all that it can offer as an object of attraction or desire, the aggregate sum total of enjoyment, whether sensual, ambitious, intellectual, pecuniary) *and lose* (a most emphatic passive form—be made to lose, be injured, ruined with respect to) *his own soul* (the word before translated 'life' but here denoting rather that which lives, enjoys and suffers). What are enjoyments if there is no one to enjoy them, if the man himself is lost, i.e. lost to happiness forever?"