

There is a flourishing Sabbath school, and a well-attended weekly prayer-meeting. The unanimity, liberality, and interest in Church work manifested by all—and very remarkably by the young men and women of the congregation—is a very healthy sign. It could only be such a spirit that could not merely hold together, but increase the congregation during their prolonged vacancy. It was remarked that there are few congregations in the Church doing their duty better, and more worthy of being called "the willing workers." There is every reason to believe that this will be one of the strong congregations of the Church in a few years, and, from the position it occupies in a large and rising village in one of the finest agricultural districts of Ontario, this is greatly to be desired. The people are full of hope and zeal, and should Mr. Martin, of Norwich, see his way to accept their call, there is little doubt of continued and increased success. The sum realized at the anniversary services, without any special call on the liberality of the people, was \$152.

THE thirty-second annual meeting of the Orillia Presbyterian congregation was held in the Sabbath school room on Wednesday, 14th inst. The Rev. R. N. Grant occupied the chair, and opened the meeting with devotional exercises, the Rev. J. Gray leading in prayer. Mr. Wm. I. Forbes presented and read an address to the congregation from the kirk-session. It alluded in appropriate terms to the retirement of the late minister and the induction of the present pastor, and impressed on the congregation their duty towards the latter. Mr. A. J. Alport submitted and read the report of the deacons' court and the managers. It showed a very healthy and hopeful state of financial affairs. The free-will offerings on the Lord's day, in the shape of envelopes, collections, and casual contributions amounted for 1882 to \$2412.2. It also stated that, although the expenditure for the past year has been of an exceptional kind in consequence of repairs and refitting manse, alterations to vestry, etc., the funds subscribed by the congregation have proved adequate to meet all demands, and to leave a balance on hand at the close of the year of \$148.50, enabling them to settle the few claims outstanding, and to meet the half-year's interest accruing on mortgage debt, without trenching on current revenue. The receipts of the year include a gift of \$200 from the estate of the late Mrs. Darling which has been applied towards the reduction of the amount of mortgage. Mr. T. J. Decatur, secretary, read a full report of the Sabbath School Teachers' Association, showing that the school is prosperous and progressing. The number of scholars on the roll of the school is 250, and in the Bible class, 60, making in all 310. The teachers and officers number 28. The average attendance of the school, including infant class, was 185, and of the infant class alone, 51. The amount raised by the school and Bible class was \$169.87. It was stated that the infant-class room had been completed and it was now formally handed over to the congregation. The cost was about \$395, of which \$195 had been paid, partly by a subscription of \$101.88. The Missionary Association collected \$291.95 for the schemes of the Church. An instalment of \$210 was also paid towards the endowment of Queen's College. The income from the cemetery was reported at \$167, and that of the Young People's Association at \$77.81. The summing up of these various items is as follows: Free-will offerings by envelopes, collections, and casual contributions, \$2,212.24; legacy of late Mrs. Darling, \$200; Sabbath School Association and Bible class, \$169.87; Missionary Association, \$291.95; subscription for infant-class room, \$101.88; instalment towards endowment of Queen's College, \$210; cemetery fund, \$167; Young People's Association, \$77.81. Total, 3,430.75. The congregation then proceeded to the election of three managers. Mr. J. Torrance Jack was unanimously re-elected, and Messrs. W. Thomson (Longford), and John Fyfe unanimously re-elected for two years. Mr. John World was also with the same unanimity re-elected treasurer of the cemetery fund. Messrs. E. B. Alport and C. Warner were appointed auditors for the current year. The chairman called attention to the mortgage of \$1,800 on the church property, and, in a forcible address, proposed that immediate steps be taken to wipe it off when it fell due on the 2nd August next. Subscription papers were handed round, and \$700 subscribed in a short time. A committee was appointed for the further prosecution of this object.

PRESBYTERY OF OTTAWA.—This Presbytery met in Bank Street Church, on the 13th February. The Rev. George Jamieson, of Aylmer, was appointed moderator. The session records of Knox Church, Ottawa, of the congregations of Cumberland and Chelsea were examined and attested in the usual form. Mr. W. H. Geddes, student of theology, was examined in Latin, Greek, Hebrew, philosophy, theology and personal religion, with a view to making application to the synod for permission to take him on trial for license. His examination was sustained. The Home Mission Report and Recommendations were submitted and considered. The following committee was appointed to consider the probationer scheme and bring in a finding to the adjourned meeting on the 20th March: Mr. Farries, convener, Dr. Moore, Messrs. McDiarmid, Clark, Bennett, White, ministers, and Messrs. H. Robinson and Thomas Wilson, elders. The discussion of the scheme occupied a considerable part of the evening sederunt. Mr. Durie, Treasurer of the Presbytery Fund, submitted his report, which was received, and the thanks of the Presbytery tendered to him. Mr. George Hay presented a report of the attendance of elders at Presbytery meetings, which was received and its recommendation adopted. It was agreed to hold a conference on Sabbath school work on the evening of the 20th March, to which Sabbath school workers in Ottawa and neighbourhood are invited, especially the members of the Ottawa Sabbath School Normal Class. Parties were appointed to prepare short papers, to be read on the occasion. The accounts of the Presbytery's Home Mission treasurer were audited and found correct. The following members were appointed members of the next General Assembly, to meet in London, Ont.: Messrs. G. M. Clark, R. V. McKibbin, M. S. Oxley, Dr. Moore, F. W. Farries and Wm. Caven, ministers, and Messrs. J. McMillan, James Brown, E. H. Bronson, W. Lough, James Campbell and George Hay, elders. Reports of missionary deputations were given by Messrs. Caven, Bayne and Findlay. A resolution was passed and a committee appointed on Sabbath observance, said committee to co-operate with other Presbyteries or other bodies of Christians in order to secure a better observance of the Sabbath. A committee was appointed to consider remits of Assembly and report to a future meeting. The Rochester elders together with the pastor, were appointed an interim session for the congregation of Hull. Messrs. Blackburn and Steele, from Chelsea, were heard on the re-arrangement of the supply of certain mission fields. Dr. Moore, convener of the committee appointed to supervise the studies of a student placed under the care of the Presbytery by the General Assembly reported in favourable terms of the examination passed. After other matters, not of general interest, were attended to, the Presbytery, after occupying four entire sederunts, adjourned, to meet on March 20th, at 10 a.m., in Bank Street Church.

SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHER.

INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

LESSON X.

Mar. 11, }
1883. }

THE SEVEN CHOSEN.

{ Acts vi.
1-15. }

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom."—Acts 6: 3.

CONNECTION.—Gamaliel having advised caution and moderation, the council dismissed the apostles, with a command to cease speaking of Jesus. But they continued to teach, in the temple, and in private houses.

I. A TROUBLE WITHIN THE CHURCH.—Ver. 1.—In those days; this time of peace and progress. Probably the first year after Christ's ascension. Multiplied (*Reunion*, "was multiplying"), some thousands had been gathered in; and more every day. "Grecians (*Reunion*, "Grecian Jews"): foreign-born and Greek-speaking Jews. Hebrews: the native Jews. The former would be less bigoted in their views; and many of them richer, than the Jews of Palestine. Widows were neglected: many of these would be new-comers and strangers in the city, and perhaps, too, the other Jews might be a little "put out" by their free-and-easy ways concerning many matters of the ceremonial law. So, there might be some reason for complaint. Much destitution among widows in ancient times. Lived in more seclusion than with us—few remunerative employments—re-marriage not looked favourably upon. Daily ministrations: food, or money, or both, distributed to the needy.

II. THE TROUBLE MET, AND REMOVED.—Ver. 2.—Twelve called the multitude: the apostles place the responsibility of work upon the entire membership. No drones in the Christian hive. The whole membership was

brought together. Leave the word . . . serve tables: division of labour has been a wonderful blessing to the Church. The apostles could have managed the charities of the Church. But in doing so, they would take time from the preaching of the word; and others would miss a good training in Christian usefulness.

Ver. 3.—Look ye out . . . seven men: the membership were taught to choose the public servants of the Church. It was not an innovation. See Deut. 1: 13. Seven was a favourite number; and there seemed to be need for as many at this time. Full of the Holy Ghost: they were full of the Spirit, before the apostles' hands were laid on them. Holy Christian character and much of God's favour ("grace") are necessary for even the more secular offices in the Church; where come so much close business-contact with the world.

Ver. 4.—Prayer . . . ministry: "prayer" here means the general conducting of worship. "Ministry" is service. Same word as in ver. 2 ("serve"). They preferred there should be a division of labour; and the spiritual parts left in their hands.

Ver. 5.—They saying pleased: the brethren agreed to this wise proposal, and chose seven men; all probably of the class who were complaining—for all the names seem to be Greek. Very likely some of these very men had come to the apostles as a "deputation" from the Grecian Jews. The best way to prevent discontent with the administration of affairs, in Church or State, is (as old Herodotus says) "to take the people into partnership in the Government." Stephen . . . Philip: Stephen's course was short and bright. Philip became an eminent preacher of the word. Of the others we know nothing further. Anciently, some thought Nicolas was the origin of the name "Nicolaïtanes" (Rev. 2: 6, 15); but we know of no good reason for this. He was a Gentile, who had become a Jew by profession. The others all seemed to be of Jewish blood.

Ver. 6.—Set before the apostles: large sums of money had been entrusted to the twelve (Acts 4: 34-37), and they reserved the right of approving the men to whom its administration was to be handed over. Prayed . . . laid hands: solemnly and with prayer, sanctioned their appointment. Mark, first election, then ordination; and no authority for ordaining a man in the Christian Church till he has been chosen by God's people to an office in which to be ordained.

Ver. 7.—Increased . . . multiplied: the preaching of the word was found everywhere. Those who knew the truth were zealous and successful in bringing it before others; and converts became daily very numerous. Priests . . . obedient: what would greatly strengthen the Church in the city, was that, of the learned and influential priesthood, there were many believers in Jesus.

III. TROUBLE FROM THE WORLD.—Ver. 8.—Stephen: the Lord ever honours strong faith. In that day, and with Stephen, He honoured it by enabling him to do many miracles.

Ver. 9.—Synagogue of the Libertines, etc.: Libertines, freed men, Emancipated Roman Jews. Doubtless there were several synagogues here intended. The foreign Jews would gather themselves into synagogues, according to their various nationalities. And doubtless, also Saul, in the synagogue of the Cilicians, would dispute with Stephen. Mark the strong probability that here the Holy Spirit first vigorously began the *Italy War* with him. Asia: not Asia in our sense; nor even Asia Minor, but the province having Ephesus as capital.—Acts 20: 16; 1 Pet. 1: 1.

Ver. 10.—Not able to resist: no man who receives the Scriptures as the supreme standard of morals and belief, can make headway against the claims of Jesus Christ to his soul.

Ver. 11.—Suborned men: hired or employed men to give evidence. The charge was blasphemy.

Vers. 12-14.—Stirred up: these bigots of the foreign synagogues got the others enlisted in a crusade against this "new doctrine." False witnesses: the men were acting a corrupt part, and full of malignant hatred against Stephen. They were therefore "false witnesses," although what they said was substantially true. God told Daniel, by the angel (chap 9: 26), that the city and the sanctuary should be destroyed; and Stephen only said what they read in the synagogue every worship-day.

Ver. 15.—The face of an angel: we know not what the lustre was; whether the holy calmness of a saint of God, or a miraculous shining of his face, as Moses's—Ex. 34: 29. We suppose it to be the latter.

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

1. The difficulty about the foreign-born widows has been probably often exaggerated in people's minds. It was a small fault, and nobly remedied.
2. The administration of this fund was placed largely in the hands of the complaining party. Nothing sobers a man so much as a responsibility.
3. This should have suggested to the native Jews, the idea of the administration of the ordinances of the Gospel, and its saving blessings extended by, and to others beyond their own people.
4. Christianity is the highest type of kindness and humanity.
5. A great blessing (ver. 7) is often followed by a great trial (ver. 12). A fact simple enough; but there is a better way of putting it—God prepares us for great trials, by giving us large blessings beforehand.

A MARRIED woman, named Emma Bruce, a member of the Salvation Army, was charged, on her own confession, with having murdered a woman in Glasgow in 1871. Although cautioned, prisoner said: "I have delivered myself up. I have been a big sinner, and all that I have confessed I have done, both before God and man. I have given it all up for Jesus, whether it is life or death for me." The prisoner was remanded.