

ministers in the county are specially invited and expected to attend. Rev. Prof. McLaren, Convener of the Foreign Missions Committee, has promised to be present and give a short address. Ministers and other friends throughout the country who can make it convenient to attend are cordially invited, and ample accommodation will be provided for them in Christian homes. Such would do well, however, to communicate their intention to be present to the Rev. Mr. McMullen or myself. Will the kind friends who contributed so nobly to the Training School Fund take note of the date of the "farewell," and endeavour to have all subscriptions paid in at least a week before that time?

I have the following acknowledgements to make this week: Thamesford, per A. McMullen, \$42.80; St. George, per W. B. Wood, \$60; Marshall McKay, Kentucky, \$5; Rev. Mr. Hartley's congregation, Rogerville, \$80; Rev. L. McPherson, East Williams, \$50.

W. A. MCKAY.

*The Manse, Chalmers' Church, Woodstock,  
September 12th, 1881.*

P.S.—Dr. McKay will preach in Harriston, and in some other place in that neighbourhood, on Sabbath, 18th inst.

#### STATE OF RELIGION—A CORRECTION.

MR. EDITOR,—Allow me space to correct an error in the last Assembly's Report on the State of Religion. Referring to the query regarding the "liberality of the people," it says: "The Synod of Toronto and Kingston seems to have overlooked the important query; perhaps on account of the larger place given in the report to the subject of special services and the encouraging results of the same." I deem it due to the Committee which prepared that report, and to myself, its Convener, to correct this error. We were glad to be providentially called to give a good deal of space to the important matter referred to, but did not overlook the other, as the following extract will shew. After referring to the many defects in the returns, our report says: "We have little difficulty in concluding that a large proportion of our congregations are characterized by . . . much liberality, shewn toward the support of the Gospel at home, and its propagation abroad. These are facts and features of our religious life of high value, and we do well to recognize thankfully the existence of so high an average."

WALTER M. ROGER.

*Ashburn, September 9th, 1881.*

#### PASTORAL CHANGES.

MR. EDITOR,—Your excellent article in last issue on "Pastoral Changes" touches the very nerve and lays bare the root of a great and growing evil in our Church. Several cases have come under my notice, where a worthy and faithful minister was driven from his congregation by a small clique, to the great grief of the congregation as a whole. Had the congregation got an opportunity of voting on the issue, they would have sustained and retained their minister, but the latter gave up the conflict and withdrew. My impression is that too many ministers yield far too readily to a little opposition on the part of a few malcontents. A few of the trustees get soured against the minister because he won't submit to their dictation, or meekly bear their insolence, and assuming that they "run the Church" they resolve to drive him out. If in such a case the minister leaves, the blame should not be laid on the congregation. When or where did a congregation of solid, pious Presbyterian people take sides with a few mischief-makers against their pastor, if he was a faithful and devoted pastor among them? Some trustees, because they manage the finances, treat the minister as if he were their paid servant, and forget that they are simply handling the funds of others, and are themselves the public servants of the congregation. This is a most terribly widespread evil in the Church, and a thorn in the flesh to many ministers. But what remedy can be found for the insecurity of the pastoral office and the present tendency to so frequent change? My impression is that the fault is not all with the people, but to some extent with the ministers themselves. They often leave when, in reality, the number of the congregation in their favour is greater than at the time of their settlement, and the attachment far stronger. They do not find out the mind of their people until it is too late, and the clique who "run the

Church" have accomplished their purpose, and the next minister passes through a precisely similar experience. What is the remedy for this? Clearly that the minister should put himself in more direct communication with his people, and not conceal from them (as ministers so often do) the heartless insolence with which they are often treated by a few who think they are the whole congregation, and assume to speak and act as if they were. In nine cases out of ten the pastor would find his people a solid body at his back, and the few mischief-makers would become as gentle as lambs. The minister who has trouble of this kind can do far more to remedy it than either the session or the Presbytery can. Let him exercise some firmness and endurance, remembering that the congregation as a whole is not to be blamed, and that the evil is so common that it is in vain for him to try a change as a way of escape. In some cases a change is the best course for both minister and congregation, no doubt; but change will never remedy, but on the contrary intensify, this cause of suffering to so many pastors, and of grief and injury to the congregations concerned. Let the minister give his people a chance of shewing where they stand before he makes up his mind to leave them.

LAITY.

#### THE DUSTY ROOM.

A young girl was sweeping a room one day, when she went to the window-blind and hastily drew it down. "It makes the room so dusty," she said, "to have the sunshine coming in."

The atoms of dust which shone golden in the sunbeams were unseen in the dimmer light. The untaught girl imagined it was the sunshine which made the dust.

Now, many persons imagine themselves very good people. One poor old man, who had lived all his life without a thought of love to God, said he was willing to die. He didn't owe any man a shilling. If the Spirit of God should shine brightly into such a heart, how would it look? It would shew them sins enough to crush them. This light of the Spirit is like the sunshine in the dusty room. It reveals what was before hidden. When we begin to feel unhappy about our sins, let us never try to put away the feeling. Don't let us put down the curtain, and fancy there is no dust. It is the Holy Spirit's voice in our hearts. He is shewing us ourselves; and, better still, He will shew us the true way to happiness.

### SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHER.

#### INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

##### LESSON XXXIX.

Sept. 25.  
1881.

##### TEMPERANCE.

{ 1 Cor. ix.  
22-27.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things."—1 Cor. ix. 25.

##### HOME READINGS.

M. 1 Cor. ix. 22-27 Temperance.  
T. 1 Thess. v. 1-10. Sobriety Enjoined.  
W. Dan. i. 8-17 . . . Not Defiled.  
Th. 1 Cor. iii. 16-23 . . . Consequence of Defilement.  
F. Phil. iv. 1-23 . . . "Whatever Things are Pure."  
S. Eph. v. 8-21 . . . Fruit of the Spirit.  
Sab. Rom. xv. 1-7 . . . Be Christlike.

##### HELPS TO STUDY.

A blank having as usual been left in the International series at the end of the quarter, we fill it with a lesson on Temperance, a subject that can scarcely be brought up too often.

The lesson may be taught under the following heads: (1) *The Accommodating Apostle*, (2) *Motives for Self-denial*, (3) *The Physical and the Spiritual Contests*, (4) *Necessity for Earnestness*, (5) *Subjugation of the Carnal Nature*.

AN ACCOMMODATING APOSTLE.—Ver. 22. Almost anyone will perceive at once that it is not weakness of body the apostle is here speaking of, but rather weakness of mind, weakness of will or purpose, weakness in determining and acting; or, to speak still more particularly, the weakness that renders a person liable to be led towards evil by things which are in themselves morally indifferent. There were a good many things that Paul might do without the least injury to his own moral or religious character, but which he was afraid of doing on account of the effect which they might have upon others who were not so strong-minded as he was. In the eighth chapter of this same epistle Paul says: "If meat make my brother to offend I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend." Would he not have said the same regarding wine and strong drink if drunkenness had been as prevalent in his day as it is now? There are still a few strong-minded moderate drinkers who claim that they are quite safe in using intoxicating liquors, and who call those who practice total abstinence weak brethren, and affect to despise them.

They are too selfish to act upon the generous principle that actuated the apostle, and abstain for the sake of others even although they do not require to do so for their own sakes. These are not now quite so numerous as they have been in bygone times. Some of them have, by witnessing the terrible havoc that strong drink is making in the world, and by the teachings of God's providence, being constrained to join their "weak brethren," while others, and sad to say the greater number, have, notwithstanding all their boasted strength, gone down into the drunkard's ranks. The total abstinence army is not made up of "weak brethren." There are thousands of total abstainers who never were in danger personally of becoming drunkards. These are acting just as the Apostle Paul would have done in similar circumstances, because they are Christians as he was, let us hope, and love their fellow-men as he did.

I am made all things to all men. The apostle uses the term "all things" in a restricted sense, meaning only all things that were not sinful. He employs an almost identical expression in the same way in the last verse of the next chapter. See also Rom. xv. 2.

II. MOTIVES FOR SELF-DENIAL.—Ver. 22, 23. Paul accommodated himself to the weaknesses of men, in so far as that could be done without interfering with his duty to God, in order that he might by all means save some. For this he was ready at any time to sacrifice his personal tastes, habits, views, feelings and prejudices in all matters not essential to religion; for what were there when placed in the balance against the human soul. Fired with the spirit of his Master, Paul's heart burned to see sinners saved, and he did not consider life itself too much to give for the Gospel's sake.

III. THE PHYSICAL AND THE SPIRITUAL CONTESTS.—Ver. 24, 25. The reference here is probably to the Isthmian games which were held every second year in the neighbourhood of Corinth.

And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. "Even in our own day," says the "Westminster Teacher," "we have illustrations of the same abstinence and self-denial in training for physical contests. The oarsmen and boat crews that row in regattas go through a long preparatory training, in which they not only practice with the oar, but by special diet and exercise bring up their bodily condition to its very best. Even the miserable pugilist becomes temperate that he may be in full health and vigour for his contest. Thus men are ready to deny themselves, restrain their appetites and control their desires, that they may do their best in some trial of physical strength. They know that intemperance wastes their strength and imperils their success. Now the lessons are very plain. Surely the incorruptible crown held before each one of us is far more worth the struggle than the pine or laurel wreath, or the belt, or cup, which is offered in these physical games. And the same principle, or law of success, also applies. Spiritual victory can be obtained only by putting our bodies under the severest discipline. There are many persons who fail of heaven because they are not willing to deny themselves what their appetites crave. Many throw away a crown of glory rather than dash from them a wine glass."

IV. NECESSITY FOR EARNESTNESS.—Ver. 26. The apostle does not waste his strength upon imaginary foes. The contest in which he was engaged was real. The Christian life is a struggle, a warfare against many evils, prominent among which is intemperance; and Christians are every day finding out that in resisting the encroachments of intemperance they must fight the enemy on the total abstinence line or be utterly discomfited. "I believe" in appealing to the conscience of the moderate drinker," said John B. Gough, "and asking him to be a hero. What is heroism but self-sacrifice? All heroes are workers for others. . . . Ask the world's great men in what their greatness consists. One will tell you, 'I make marble breathe'; another, 'I make canvas speak'; another, 'I sing a song that ages will repeat'; another, 'I conquer a world.' Are these men heroes? Perhaps. Are they great men? Perhaps: but listen. Across the hills of Galilee is heard the voice of Him who spake as never man spake. Reverently we ask, 'Prophet of Nazareth, what is Thy greatness?' Hear the reply: 'I come to seek and to save that which was lost.' 'By what means?' 'By giving myself a sacrifice for them.' Competitors for heroism, fix your eye there, and take your rank according to the most magnificent standard of heroism that ever the world knew."

V. SUBJUGATION OF THE CARNAL NATURE.—Ver. 27. Our fleshly lusts and passions must be restrained, subdued, "crushed with heavy blows," as Paul literally says, if necessary to prevent their having the mastery. However strong or violent these may be in the case of any individual believer, still, in God's strength he is enabled to overcome them.

Let that by any means, when I have preached to others I myself should be a castaway. Another extract from the "Westminster Teacher" will throw light on this passage: "Sometimes people foolishly say, 'If I am to be saved I will be saved, no matter how I live.' No greater mistake was ever made. No one is saved who does not fight the battle of life with heroic courage to the end. Paul believed most thoroughly in the security of believers. The eighth chapter of Romans proves that. Yet he believed also and said that 'to be carnally minded,' that is, to be ruled by the flesh, 'is death.' In the second and third chapters of Revelation, the refrain of each of the epistles to the seven churches, is 'To him that overcometh.' Glorious things are promised. They shall eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God. They shall eat of the hidden manna and receive a white stone. They shall be clothed in white raiment, and their names shall not be blotted out of the book of life. But in every case they must overcome before they can reach these joys. Life is a battle, and the crown is given only to the victors. And victory can be gotten only by being united to Christ. There is no other one who can overcome the hosts of Satan and the power of sin. But if we are in Christ's company, we shall be victorious over all evil, and be more than conquerors through Him that loved us."