

Ministers and Churches.

OUR TORONTO LETTER.

The Rev. Robt. Thornton, D.D., and Mrs. Thornton, of London, Eng., are at present in the city. Dr. Thornton was one of the early students of Knox College, and although not an alumnus, he still maintains a warm affection for the institution in which his earlier student days were passed. He has for many years been the minister of an important congregation in London.

It was supposed that the Rev. Armstrong Black would be inducted as minister of St. Andrew's on the 7th of September next. That date had been fixed upon as the earliest upon which it would be safe to make the appointment, allowing for the ordinary delays of travel. Some further delay has arisen, however, in connection with the time of sailing, and it is probable that the date of the induction will be postponed till the following week.

Only Knox and West churches, of the larger congregations, have their own ministers this month. Some are on the Muskoka Lakes, some down by the sea, some over the sea, and even the heated term has not cured others of liking for the convention. All will return at the close of the month, and those who have been sitting at the feet of Nature will come back with quickened spiritual as well as natural powers.

When the minister who preached in St. Andrew's last Sabbath morning entered the pulpit, not more than two hundred occupied seats prepared for six times that number. It was disheartening, of course, and we were sorry to find that the sermon had evidently been prepared for the absent thousand. At least it did not seem to interest either the preacher or his congregation. The theme was a fine one, but the treatment of it suggested that the preacher had a painful necessity laid upon him. It is distinctly harder to preach to the few than to the many, and the difficulty is increased when the few are scattered over a large area. But if the preacher will remember that he is sent to deliver a message, and that he is under bonds to speak it, whether men hear or whether they forbear, he will preach to an audience of one as if God had specially commissioned him to deliver a special message to that one.

The increasing popularity of Toronto, as at least a resting place for the summer tourist, makes it an easy matter for the sessions of the city churches to secure an excellent supply during the ministers' vacation. The residents of the city who have remained here during the hot spell—and they are not a few—do not object if they have enjoyed the freshness and vigor with which the ever-new "old story" has been presented. They have come from the east, by the sea, and from over the sea, and they have told the same message. After all, the Gospel is the dominant note in the common speech that binds us into one, whether we claim east or west, inland or coastland as our home.

Henry Davies, in the Globe of Saturday last, deals with the statement, so often made, that Toronto has too many churches, and traces it back to its source. His estimate that there are one hundred and fifty churches in Toronto is a generous one. His estimate that the average seating capacity of these is seven hundred is too generous. Even then one-half of the population cannot get within the church doors, and find a seat there. In trying to discover the originators of the cry of over-churching, Mr. Davies is led to ascribe it, and we agree with him, to the unattached religious bodies that open mission rooms here and there throughout the city. One-half of these are nondescript aptly described as agencies for the dissipation of religious energy. Often these small bodies have their origin in the disappointed pride of a church member who could not carry a point in the larger congregation. Disgruntled, the member sulks at home till that becomes monotonous; then, gathering two or three at the home on a Sabbath afternoon, proceeds to worship God after an improved manner (their own). The life of each of these gourd-growths is very brief, and their strength is nil, but they develop with alarming rapidity.

Rev. Dr. Jordan, of Stratroy, is supplying the pulpit of Westminster Church, Toronto, during August. The Rev. Jno. Neil, pastor, is in Muskoka.

THE DOMINION PRESBYTERIAN

Rev. Dr. Morrison has gone to Chicago to supply the pulpit of Rev. W. J. McCaughan.

Mrs. Burns, widow of the late Rev. W. Burns, formerly of Knox Church, fell recently in Toronto and broke her leg.

Some time on Thursday night, Aug. 5, or at an early hour on Friday morning, thieves broke into Victoria Presbyterian Church and stole the contents of several mite boxes, as well as the communion cups, but left the communion pitcher and plate untouched. The thieves effected an entrance through an open transom.

The Rev. Alex. MacKay, D.D., started Saturday morning last for Parkhill, in the Presbytery of Sarnia, where, in the absence of the pastor, he will preach for four Sundays. Parkhill district was chiefly settled with Highlanders from Ross-shire and the Western Islands. In early days the Gaelic was the prevailing language, but now, like all other Highland settlements, the English is more spoken than it used to be.

OTTAWA AND VICINITY.

Rev. J. McNichol, of Aylmer, was appointed moderator of the Presbytery of Ottawa.

The pulpit of St. Andrew's Church was occupied at both services last Sunday by Rev. Prof. W. G. Jordan, of Queen's University, Kingston.

The Ottawa Presbytery met in Bank Street Church. Resignations were received from Rev. T. A. Nelson, of Bristol, Que., and from Rev. D. D. Millar, of Taylorville.

Rev. Prof. Ross, of Montreal, occupied the pulpit of Bank Street Church on a recent Sunday. In the morning he preached on Sabbath observance, and stated that the slackness with which the Sabbath was observed is increasing. This was due in a large measure to a large number of men being engaged in work on Sunday. These people lose their respect for the Sabbath and they influence others. Again, in the cities every year the business man takes his family and goes to some summer resort for a holiday. Church is neglected while they are away and they become used to considering the Sabbath as but little different from any other day in the week. The proper observance of the Sabbath, Dr. Ross stated, tended to better morals, and should be maintained, not as a duty, but as a privilege.

HAMILTON.

Rev. A. J. McGillivray, of St. James' Church, London, preached in the Westworth Church last Sunday.

Rev. J. C. Smith, of Indianapolis, Ind., who is the son of a former pastor of St. Paul's Church, this city, preached at both services in connection with Central Presbyterian Church in Association Hall last Sunday.

WINNIPEG AND WEST.

The Rev. Joseph Hogg, of St. Andrew's Church, Winnipeg, is spending a short holiday in Duluth, Minn.

Rev. J. S. Muldrew, of Morin, conducted the services in St. Andrew's, Winnipeg, on Sunday last.

The pulpit of Knox Church, Winnipeg, was last Sunday occupied by Rev. C. H. Cooke, of Smith's Falls, Ont.

Rev. Peter Wright, D.D., of Portage la Prairie, preached in St. Stephen's Church, Winnipeg, last Sunday.

The Rev. C. B. Pitblado has arrived in California on his round-the-world tour. In this State he will spend some weeks before returning to his work in Winnipeg.

At Point Douglas Church, Winnipeg, on Sunday morning, Rev. C. W. White conducted the regular quarterly children's service. Rev. D. Munro, the pastor, preached.

At a special meeting of the Presbytery of Victoria, B.C., on the 20th July, the Rev. Alex. Fraser, from the Presbyterian Church in the United States, was received into the ministry of the Church by leave of the General Assembly.

Miss Edith J. Miller is visiting at her home in Portage la Prairie. The rest here will enable her to return to New York with renewed vigor to fill the many and important engagements, arranged for her by the noted impresario, Wolfsohn. Miss Miller will sing at the hospital concert in Portage la Prairie on August 17th and in Winnipeg on Sept. 7th.

NORTHERN ONTARIO.

Rev. Edward W. and Mrs. McKay, of Madoc, are spending some weeks at "Dunrobin," Beaverton, the summer residence of Mr. D. Gunn.

Rev. Mr. Smith, the newly inducted pastor of Kirkfield Presbyterian Church, occupied the pulpit in the Presbyterian Church, Woodville, on last Sunday.

Rev. J. L. Ross, D.D., of Guelph, preached in Knox Church, Beaverton, on a recent Sabbath. The congregation was large, and the sermon an able and most eloquent one. A lawn party was held under the auspices of Knox Church Ladies' Aid Society, at the residence of Mr. Donald Grant. The attendance was large, and the programme and addresses were of a very high order. The proceeds amounted to \$65.

The Presbytery met on Tuesday last and sustained a call from Sarawak, Kemble, and Lake Charles to Dr. McRobbie. The salary will be \$975 with a manse and four weeks' vacation. The call was forwarded to Dr. McRobbie, and in the event of his accepting it the clerk was granted power to fix the date of induction. Mr. Hunter will preside; Dr. Waite will preach; Dr. Somerville will address the ministers, and Mr. Thompson will address the congregation.

MONTREAL.

Rev. Edward Taylor, of Albern, B.C., of the Presbyterian Home Mission, was in the city on his way to Cape Breton.

Several of the city churches are being renovated, notably St. Paul's and St. Andrew's (Church of Scotland) and the organ for St. Paul's, the gift of Lord Strathcona, is now being placed in the church.

WESTERN ONTARIO.

Dr. Hamilton, of Metherwell, occupied the pulpit of St. Andrew's Church, Stratford, last Sunday.

Rev. J. A. Scott, Hespeler, has declined a call to the First Presbyterian Church, Brantford.

The Rev. Dr. Johnston, of St. Andrew's Church, London, preached in Detroit on Sabbath, the 23rd July, and the Rev. Dr. M. P. Talling, of Toronto, occupied St. Andrew's pulpit in his absence.

The Rev. Geo. Gilmore, B.A., Pottersburg, has returned from Rossland. He "kodiked" 150 scenes, and is now preparing a couple of lectures on his trip, to be illustrated by the views with lime-light lantern.

The Presbyterian Church, Shakespere, is undergoing a thorough renovation. Through the activity of a number of the members who canvassed the congregation for subscribers, the building is to be repaired and other much-needed improvements made.

Rev. Fred H. Barron, of London, occupied the pulpit of St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, Ingersoll, on Sunday, and for the next two Sundays will officiate in the absence of the pastor. Rev. E. R. Hut, who takes charge of Dr. McFavish's Church in Toronto for the same time.

In the removal by death in Mitchell of the late Mrs. James Elder, July 8th, the Presbyterian Church has lost one of its oldest and most faithful members. She was born in Scotland, and had long passed the four score years. In her youth she was a Sunday-school scholar under the tuition of the late Rev. Dr. Burns in the Abby Church, Paisley, of whom she delighted to tell many interesting reminiscences. Mrs. Elder came to this country in 1832, and settled in Huntingdon, Que., where she enjoyed the rare privilege of sitting under the ministry of the late Rev. W. C. Burns, who afterwards was so celebrated as a missionary in China. In 1847 she came to Stratford, and became a member of St. Andrew's Church, and continued such up to 1895, when she removed to Mitchell, that she might enjoy the loving care of her daughter, Mrs. Walter Thomson, in her declining years. As she possessed a most remarkable memory, enriched by extensive reading in Church history and other religious literature, her conversation was deeply interesting. Mrs. Elder's staunch loyalty to the cause of the Master embled her to exert an influence for good which those who mourn her loss will not willingly let die. In an age of indifference and unbelief, such a life of simple faith, devoted self-sacrifice and courage is as salt in the earth, which we can ill spare.