

congregation of Bluevale: "The Presbytery of Huron, while agreeing to the translation of their brother, Mr. Hartley, who for several years held one of the pastoral charges within the bounds of this Presbytery, cannot allow the occasion to pass without placing on record their testimony to his ability as a preacher of the Gospel, and to his courteous bearing towards his brethren in the ministry. Moreover, he was always found ready to assist officially whenever his services were called into requisition. The Presbytery sincerely desire that the divine blessing may accompany their brother in his new sphere of labour; also, that whatever trial or difficulty may have fallen to him may prove to enhance his usefulness in the future, and aid him, through grace from on high, to win the plaudits of the Master, 'Well done, good and faithful servant.'" Messrs. James W. Orr and David Perrie were recommended to the Board of Examiners of Knox College as suitable candidates for the ministry. The standing committees for the year were appointed to take charge of the schemes of the Church. The Presbytery is to meet again at Clinton on the second Tuesday in September, at ten a.m.—A. McLEAN, *Pris. Clerk.*

**PRESBYTERY OF GUELPH.**—This Presbytery held its usual bi-monthly meeting on Tuesday, the 18th inst., in St. Andrew's Church, Guelph. There was a large attendance, and a great amount of business fell to be transacted. The following is a brief report of the matters of chief interest: After making up the roll and reading the minutes of last meeting, the Presbytery proceeded to the election of a Moderator in room of Mr. Middlemiss, whose term of office had expired, and who received the thanks of the Presbytery for the very able and efficient manner in which he had discharged the duties of the chair for the past twelve months. By a unanimous and cordial vote, Mr. Wm. Millican, of St. John's Church, Garafraxa and Mimosa, was called to the position. Commissioners from Kirk Sessions to elders to represent them in Presbytery and Synod was read, approved, and the persons specified therein had their names put on the roll, and a Committee consisting of the pastor and representative elders of the churches in Fergus and Elora were appointed to prepare a scheme of missionary meetings and sermons, and report at next ordinary meeting; Mr. James Middlemiss, Convener. Commissioners to General Assembly lately held at St. John, reported their diligence in the matter, and their conduct was approved. The list of vacancies and Mission Stations was revised, when it appeared that there were two of the former and two of the latter. Auditors were appointed to examine the books of the Treasurer and report. A Committee on Finance for the year was chosen; Mr. Thomas McCrea, Convener. Mr. J. C. Smith reported that, in accordance with leave granted, he had gone to Eramosa, and after preaching in the First Church there had moderated in a call which had come out unanimously in favour of Mr. Angus McKay, a licentiate of the Church. The conduct of Mr. Smith, in moderating was approved. The call was laid upon the table, signed by ninety-eight members in full communion and thirty-four adherents, all duly certified, accompanied by a guarantee of stipend to the amount of \$750 annually, with a manse and glebe of fifty acres of land. The call was then sustained as a regular Gospel call, and having been placed in the hands of Mr. McKay, who was present, he at a subsequent period signified his acceptance of the same, when the Presbytery appointed a meeting, to be held on the 1st of August in Chalmers Church, to hear his trial discourses, the subjects of which were to be assigned to him by the Clerk, and make arrangements for his ordination and induction, should his trials be found satisfactory. Satisfactory reports were received from the Committee appointed to visit Ireston respecting arrears against the congregation there to certain funds. The report from the Committee to Glenallan and Hollin respecting a similar matter was read, and the Committee was re-appointed, with the addition of Mr. Smellie and Mr. Middlemiss to travel farther in the matter and report at next ordinary meeting. It was reported that the General Assembly had agreed to the memorial of the Presbytery in reference to Mrs. Smyth, relict of the late Rev. D. Smyth, of Eramosa, to place her name on the list of annuitants on the Widows' and Orphans' Fund, on condition of the payment of five hundred dollars into that fund. Mr. Middlemiss and Mr. Smith reported that the Assembly had most cordially

agreed to the request to retain the name of Mr. Torrance on the roll of Presbytery. Mr. Russell, of Hawksville, was instructed to carry out the decision of the Presbytery at a former meeting, as to the calling in of the assessors then appointed to act with the Session of Hawksville and arrange for the election of a trustee for the Elmira church property. The Clerk submitted an estimate of the bare travelling expenses of Commissioners to the late General Assembly, and the amount per family that would be required to be raised in the congregations in the bounds to meet the same. The estimate was approved, and he was instructed to issue notices to congregations. On application made, leave was granted to the congregations of Nassagaweya and Campbellville, and of the First congregation, Guelph, for moderations in call which they intended to give. Agents were appointed to look after the different schemes of the Church in the bounds. The Clerk reported the supply received for the ensuing quarter, from the Committee on the Distribution of Probationers, and the allotment he had made of the same. Leave was granted to the congregation of St. Andrew's Church, Berlin, to mortgage their church property in the sum of \$2,500, to cover improvement and repairs they intend to make on the same. In accordance with a resolution passed by the General Assembly at its meeting in St. John, the name of Mr. John Wilkie, Missionary to Indore, was put upon the roll of Presbytery, as it was by it that he was ordained as a missionary of the Church to foreign lands. Next ordinary meeting was appointed to be held in Chalmers Church, Guelph, on the third Tuesday of September. The roll was called and marked, and the proceedings were closed by pronouncing the Apostolic benediction.

**SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHER.**

**INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.**

**LESSON XXXII.**

Aug. 6. } **THE FRUITLESS TREE.** } Mark 11: 12-23.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—"Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit."—John 15: 8.

**TIME.**—Monday, the day following the triumphal entry. Vers. 20-23: on the next day—Tuesday.

**PLACE.**—Vers. 12-14; 20-23, on the way from Bethany. Vers. 15-19: Jerusalem.

**PARALLEL.**—With vers. 12-14; 20-23, Matt. 21: 17-22, with vers. 15-18. Matt. 21: 12-13. Luke 19: 45-48.

**Notes and Comments.**—Ver. 12. "From Bethany" where He had rested the night before, probably in the house of Martha and Mary; though some suggest that He had passed the night in the open air, in solitude and prayer. "He was hungry." He would work a miracle for the hungry multitude, but not for Himself.

Ver. 13. "A fig tree" a common and much-esteemed article of food. Matthew tells us it was by the way-side; "bearing leaves" and therefore holding forth the promise of fruit; "if haply" if therefore; "nothing but leaves, for the time of figs was not yet." we cannot enter into a lengthened explanation of this, as to the various kinds of figs and fig trees—suffice it for our instruction, that, as *Trench* says: "That tree, by putting forth leaves, made pretensions to be something more than others, to have fruit upon it, seeing that in fig trees the fruit appears before the leaves. Yet when the Lord drew near, it proved to be but as the others, without fruit, as they." It was, if we may so speak, a hypocritical tree—a tree of false pretences—and as such was condemned.

Ver. 14. "Answered." Christ's answer to pretence. "No man" that which fails to serve Christ is not worthy to serve man. One miracle of judgment among so many of mercy, and thus to teach a solemn lesson. The reference to Peter in ver. 21 suggests him as the source of this account.

Ver. 15. "Into the temple—to cast out:" now comes the judgment which His looking round the last lesson had foreshadowed. This traffic took place in the court of the Gentiles (see plan). Connect this fact with the words of the Saviour in ver. 17, "for all nations:" a market was held for the sale of animals and things necessary for the Temple service—none the less a desecration. "Money changers:" the Temple tribute had to be paid in Jewish coin, while the currency was Roman; hence the necessity of exchanging it, for which, doubtless, the collectors found the Temple a convenient place. "Sold doves:" the offerings of the poor—Luke 2: 24.

Ver. 16. "Would not suffer—any vessel:" they were using it as a thoroughfare—a use of the Temple which the Pharisees sanctioned, because it was only the court of the Gentiles, and as such of no consequence. Jesus taught by His stern act better thoughts; how He accomplished it we do not know: there must have been something in Him that inspired awe and reverence.

Ver. 17. "My house:" a combination of two scriptures, Isa. 56: 7; and Jer. 7: 21; "for all" (Rev. "the") nations, or as *Bengel*, "to all nations." You have only given the Gentiles this outer court, and you have made it for them "a den of thieves" a scathing and terrible rebuke. In this scene the indignation of Jesus flames forth, as it only did in a

similar incident in the earlier part of His ministry, or in His denunciation of the hypocrisy of the Scribes and Pharisees.

Ver. 18. But the men who ought to have suppressed the traffic, only winked at it, likely enough making a profit out of the matter, "feared" Him, and therefore plotted "how they might destroy Him." they had not formed this determination for the first time, but it was renewed now; the "how" was the question, answered probably the very next night by the proffered treachery of Judas.

Ver. 19. "When even:" Rev. reads "every evening:" conveying the idea of His practice the whole of that week.

Ver. 20. The narrative returns to the fruitless tree. From Matthew we might suppose that the withering followed immediately on the sentence; but Mark gives clearer details—not contradictory. Matthew, as his manner was, gives the complete picture at once. Yesterday full of leaves, to-day withered and "dried up from the roots:" solemn parable of the destruction of the fruitless and wicked—1 Thes. 5: 3.

Ver. 21. Again we note the minuteness of detail which tells of a participator in the scene. The language of Peter implies an interval such as Mark gives: "Thou cursedst:" Peter's words, not Christ's; yet a curse it was—not passionate, vindictive, but calm, judicial, and intended to convey a great moral lesson.

Vers. 22, 23. "Have faith:" and marvellous as this appears, you shall be able to do greater things; faith is the secret of power; "whosoever shall say—shall not doubt—he shall have whatsoever he saith:" these promises must be read in connection with verses 25, 26, and other passages where limitations are expressed or implied. We are not to suppose that foolish or useless, let alone harmful requests, will be granted because we believe; but God gives us these broad promises to lift us up to the possibilities of faithful prayer, for our errors are far oftener on the side of doubt than of presumption. Have any of us proved the full power of faith?

**HINTS TO TEACHERS.**

**Dangers.**—Do not lose sight of the spiritual teaching of the two incidents in this lesson, by much talk about the incidents themselves. Like many others we have had in this course of lessons, the picture of the cleansing of the Temple and of the withering away of the fig tree will be so attractive as to detain us too long, unless we fully understand that the value of each is in its symbolical teaching.

**WHAT AND HOW TO TEACH.**

**Topical Analysis.**—(1) The cleansing of the Temple (vers. 15-19). (2) The marvel of the fig tree (20, 21). (3) A lesson of faith (22, 23).

On the *first* topic, we may show that this was another proof of Christ's anger against covetousness and fraud; it was not simply that the Temple, the place of worship, the "house of prayer," was desecrated by being made a noisy market, but that, in addition to this, dishonesty was there; it was "a den of thieves." Jesus Himself worked in the Temple, but it was work of merciful healing; for we find from Matthew that after He had cleansed the Temple, the blind and the lame came to Him there, "and He healed them." No house of God is desecrated to-day by deeds of love and kindness; rather, such places should be the centre of all such work. But there is no spot on the whole earth that is not profaned by such men and such work as Christ indignantly cast out of the Temple. Rise from this to the higher truth as taught in 1 Cor. 3: 16, 17, and 6: 19; and urge that the bodies of your scholars, the temples, made not with men's hands, but by God Himself, for His dwelling place and glory, should be kept free from everything that would defile, and cast out their Maker and Lord. Show how they may be kept pure by the word of the living God, and the blessedness that will follow here, and in that place where the Lord himself is the Temple forever.

On the *second* topic, show that this was a symbol, teaching the worthlessness and the doom of mere profession. The fig tree was fair to look upon; it had promise of fruit; it said, as it were, Look at me, how luxuriantly fruitful I am; come and take of my fruit. But it was fruitless—all show, pretence, nothing but leaves. Then came its destruction; its hypocrisy and deceit were its ruin; it pretended to have fruit, but had not, and so the righteous anger of the Master withered it by a word. You will know the truths taught here; caution earnestly against profession without possession. There should be the former, but only because there is the latter. Outside religion alone—mere show—will not stand the searching glance of the Master.

The *third* topic has come before us in various aspects during this year, so that we need not dwell on it. (Refer to notes on ver. 23.) We do not know—we have never realized what undoubting prayer can do. Sometimes we come across sublime illustrations of it—John Falk, George Muller, Immanuel Wichern, and his "Das Rauhe Haus," with a noble army of men and women of faith—yet they would be the first to say how far they had been from realizing the full power of faith.

**Incidental Lessons.**—Of the *first* topic—That there is a reverence due to the Father's House; this the Saviour vindicated.

That Christ's Temple is the human heart. Shall we not seek to keep it pure?

Of the *second* topic—That profession only, is the mere leaf of godliness, hypocritical and deceitful.

That leaves are a promise of fruit; where Christ finds one He looks for the other.

That that which is fruitless is practically dead, and only fit for the fire.

That our scholars should bear fruit.

That Christ sees the leaves; shall He see fruit?

That the time of fruit is now.

The fruits for which Christ looks.—Gal. 5: 22, 23; Eph. 5: 9.

**Main Lessons.**—Privileges and profession without fruit. The sin and doom.—Isa. 5: 1, 7; Lam. 2: 6; Amos 8: 10; Matt. 3: 8-10; Luke 13: 6-9; Rom. 2: 25, 28, 29.