

recommend Mr. McCreath to the Assembly's Home Mission Committee, for employment in the mission work of the Church as a catechist.

PRESBYTERY OF PETERBOROUGH.—This Presbytery met in Port Hope on the 11th January at ten o'clock. The Rev. D. Sutherland, of Warkworth, presided. There were present eighteen ministers and four elders. Messrs. McKenzie and Thompson were appointed to address the Woman's Foreign Mission Society in the evening. Messrs. Bell, Cameron, McEwen, Carmichael, ministers, and Mr. R. Tulley, elder, were appointed a committee to superintend the studies of Mr. McArthur in terms of the Assembly's action anent catechists going forward to the work of the ministry. Mr. Carmichael was authorized to form a Session at Havelock, and to act as its Moderator until the settlement of a pastor. Messrs. Mitchell, Cleland, Clark and Chisholm were appointed a committee to take the necessary steps toward the election of trustees for the church property at Oakhill. The consideration of the question of union of Oakhill with Garden Hill and Knoxville was deferred until the next meeting. The report of the Committee on the Statistics of the Presbytery was read by Mr. Bennett, the Convener. The report showed that there was great inequality in the contributions of the congregations toward the support of ordinances at home and abroad. The recommendation of the committee was unanimously adopted, viz.: That the congregations lowest on the list of contributors be affectionately exhorted in the name of the Presbytery to endeavour to come up to the average over the whole Presbytery in the matter of contributions. A unanimous call from Warsaw and Dummer to the Rev. R. Hyde, a minister without charge, was read and sustained as a regular Gospel call. The call was signed by forty-two members and thirteen adherents. There accompanied the call a guarantee of salary for \$450 with manse. The congregation ask for \$300 from the Augmentation Fund. This petition received the hearty endorsement of the Presbytery. A letter was read from Mr. Hyde, declaring his acceptance of the call in the event of its being sustained by the Presbytery. The ordination and induction were appointed to be held in the church at Warsaw, on Tuesday, the 1st February, at two o'clock in the afternoon. Mr. Bennett was appointed to preside, Mr. McEwen to preach, Mr. Andrews to expound the polity of the Church, Mr. Carmichael to address the minister and Mr. Hay the people. The Committee on Superintendence of Students were instructed to hear the discourses of Mr. Hyde, and examine him on the subject appointed by the Church as prescribed in our Book of Forms. Mr. Bennett was authorized to assign subjects for trial discourses. The meeting for examination was appointed to be held in St. Andrew's school room, Peterboro', on Monday, 31st January, at eleven o'clock in the forenoon. It was agreed to adhere to the rotation system of appointing delegates to the General Assembly. Several reports were presented regarding visits made to mission fields and augmented congregations since last meeting. Said reports showed that some very interesting meetings had been held in the interval. Other reports will be called for at next meeting, when final action will be taken upon them. The clause in the remit on the marriage question, sent down by the Assembly for the consideration of Presbyteries, was approved of, viz.: "That the discipline of the Church shall not be exercised in regard to marriage with a deceased wife's sister, a deceased wife's aunt or a deceased wife's niece." The remit on "Ecclesiastical Co-operation" was also to some extent considered. It was agreed to appoint a committee, consisting of Messrs. McEwen, Hay, Mitchell, Carmichael, ministers, and Messrs. D. Smith, of Lakefield, and J. Clark, of Campbellford, elders, to consider the remit, and to report at next meeting. The next meeting of Presbytery was appointed to be held in St. Paul's, Peterboro', on Tuesday, the 22nd March, at ten o'clock in the forenoon. A communication was read from the Convener of the Committee on the Aged and Infirm Ministers' Fund, urging the Presbytery to use all lawful means to constrain congregations to greater liberality in the support of the fund. Mr. Bennett reported regarding the congregations which had responded to the appeal for aid in the repairing of the Memorial Church at Fredericksburgh, and earnestly besought those who had not yet responded to do so as soon as possible. The Presbytery agreed to hold a union meeting in the evening with the Woman's Presbyterian Foreign Missionary Society. This meeting was held in the Mill Street Church at half-past seven o'clock, presided over by the Moderator of the Presbytery. The meeting was opened with the usual religious exercises. An abstract of the report of the society for the year was read by Mr. Mitchell. The meeting was then addressed by Mr. Thompson, of Hastings, and Mr. McEwen, of Lakefield, in the absence of Mr. McKenzie. The speakers dwelt on the subject of missions generally.—WILLIAM BENNETT, Pres. Clerk.

MONTREAL NOTES.

In last week's notes the printer omitted a word in the sentence, "It is hoped that the few large and wealthy congregations in the Presbytery will contribute their fair share to the Augmentation Scheme." It should have read: "The few large and wealthy *country* congregations," etc. There is no room to doubt that the city congregations have contributed their fair proportions in the past. Indeed throughout the whole Church this is very manifest, as a perusal of the returns will show. In round numbers there are 10,400 communicants in the city congregations in the Western Section of the Church, and \$9,800 communicants in all the other congregations. Last year the city congregations contributed \$13,000 to the Augmentation Fund, whereas the others only gave \$10,400. In other words, while the city congregations contributed an average of 67 cents per member to this Scheme, the others gave less than 12 cents per member. Several large town congregations and many country ones gave nothing, while from very many a mere trifling sum was got. The following table is worthy of close study. It gives the rate per member contributed by the several Presbyteries for Augmentation last year:

	CENTS.		CENTS.
Toronto.....	56	Chatham.....	14
Montreal.....	56	Sarnia.....	14
Kingston.....	34	Lindsay.....	13
Hamilton.....	25	Barrie.....	13
Quebec.....	23	Huron.....	12
Ottawa.....	23	Glengarry.....	10
Lanark.....	23	Stratford.....	9
Manitoba (synod).....	22	Guelph.....	8
Whitby.....	20	Saugeen.....	6
Brockville.....	17	Maitland.....	6
Peterborough.....	15	Owen Sound.....	5
London.....	15	Bruce.....	5
Paris.....	14		

Any one at all acquainted with the Church can see at a glance from the above table that in some of the wealthiest and strongest Presbyterian districts of the country the contributions for this Scheme have been very far from liberal. But why reproduce this table, after all that was said on the floor of the General Assembly last year, and especially after the action of the Assembly in voting down a recommendation giving power to the committee to reduce the equal dividend, if necessary? Because it is greatly to be feared that the same state of matters is to be repeated this year. Of the \$30,000 required, only \$8,600 had been received up to the beginning of this month, and the year closes on the 30th of April. The Scheme, though in its leading principles almost identical with the old Supplementary Scheme, very evidently does not meet with approval in many sections of the Church. Its failure will have a most disastrous effect, especially in the Province of Quebec and in Eastern Ontario, where the Presbyterian and English speaking community does not keep pace with the increase of population, and where, consequently, the ability of our people to support Gospel ordinances is being gradually impaired. An illustration of this is seen in the fact that in what used to be known as the Scotch county of Glengarry about one-third of the names on the voters' lists this year are those of French-Canadians. It is most sincerely to be hoped that even yet contributions will come in to enable the committee to meet in full the grants promised, without drawing on the small reserve fund on hand at the beginning of the year. There is abundance of ability on the part of our people, and no scheme should commend itself more heartily to their sympathy and support.

The congregation of Beauharnois and Chateauguay—Rev. J. M. Boyd, pastor—is one of the most spirited congregations in the Presbytery. Though only numbering sixty families in all, it pays its minister's salary in full, without asking any help from the Augmentation Fund, and in addition has this year contributed \$108 to the Schemes of the Church. There is nothing special in the circumstances of the people to account for this. It shows what can be done by an ordinary congregation when minister and people are alive to the interests of the Church, and are willing to do what they can to further the cause of Christ.

Mr. Wm. Miller, a member of the Rev. C. M. Mackeracher's congregation, Howick, has recently contributed the sum of \$100 each to the Foreign Mission work in Central India, and in the New Hebrides.

The Rev. J. Mackie, of St. Andrew's Church, Kingston, preached in Erskine Church last Sabbath morning. The Rev. J. Cumberland, of Amherst Island, officiated in Melville Church, Cote St. Antoine. Mr. Cumberland is visiting a few of the Presbyterians here on behalf of the McDowall Memorial Church Fund.

The resignation of the Rev. John Fraser, Indian Lands, has been accepted by the Presbytery of Glengarry. Mr. Fraser proposes retiring from the active duties of the ministry after forty-two years' service.

Special evangelistic services have been held for the past two or three weeks in the Valleyfield Church, the pastor being assisted by the Rev. J. M. Macintyre. The meetings have been well attended, and much interest awakened.

The St. Matthew's congregation—Rev. W. Cruikshank, pastor—are now publishing a monthly *Record* of their own, as a supplement to the *Presbyterian Record*. It consists of four pages, and is chiefly devoted to congregational matters and reports of meetings, records of baptisms and deaths, personal items, etc. It gives home readings for every day of the month, bearing on Sabbath school lessons. It is well edited, neatly got up and will doubtless be found helpful in binding the congregation closely together, and in deepening the interest of all its members and adherents in the several organizations connected with the Church.

Sabbath School Teacher.

INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

Feb. 27, } **DESTRUCTION OF SODOM.** } Gen. 19:
1887. } 15-26.
GOLDEN TEXT.—"Escape for thy life."—Gen. xix. 17.

SHORTER CATECHISM.

Question 11.—God is the Creator, and He is also the Governor, of the universe. Providence is His government. Earthly rulers can only see a little way before them, and that imperfectly. God provides; that is, sees the end from the beginning. In the sphere of human activity man possesses freedom of choice, but not less certainly than in the physical kingdom do God's laws govern in the moral world. These laws are most holy, the result of infinite wisdom, and applied with irresistible power. That government is exercised in the preservation and overruling of all His creatures and all their actions. All history is the evolution of God's unerring purposes, which are characterized by justice and beneficence. We may not, with our present limited vision, be able to read aright the wondrous book of God's providence, but, with the Psalmist, we can say, The Lord reigneth, let the earth be glad.

INTRODUCTORY.

After Abraham's intercession for the inhabitants of the cities of the plain the angelic messengers went on to Sodom. Lot entertained the angels unawares. The narrative gives a glimpse of the awful wickedness reached by the people of Sodom. Their crimes cried to heaven for vengeance. Sodom's last night was a dreadful night.

I. Warned of Impending Destruction.—When the morning arose Sodom's last day had dawned. It may be that the sun rose with his accustomed splendour, that no unusual indications were visible, but the terrible end was very near. Even Lot's sons-in-law would not believe that there was any danger. They scorned the warnings addressed to them, and refused the last opportunity presented of being saved. Lot did not disbelieve God's message. Yet he is reluctant to obey. Abraham's obedience was implicit; Lot's was hesitating. The warning is made yet more emphatic. The angels hastened him. They urged him to make his escape "lest thou be consumed in the iniquity"—i.e., the punishment because of the iniquity of the city. Even yet he lingered. He knew that the wickedness of Sodom was so great that the threatened overthrow was certain as it was just. He knew that God's word could not fail, but he lingered. It could not be sympathy with evil that made him hesitate. Why, then, did he delay? His earthly possessions had obtained such a hold over him that he is reluctant to part from them. They were nearly causing his ruin. He was assured of his own safety and that of those nearest to him, but he lingered. God is merciful to him. The messengers are urgent, and they lay hold of him and his family to hasten them away.

II. Escape from Destruction.—At last they are away from the doomed city. The open plain is reached, but safety is not yet attained. It is said "when they had brought them forth that he said"—the Angel of the Lord—"Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountains, lest thou be consumed." When one is thoroughly convinced of danger the one absorbing thought is how to get beyond its reach. Lot would seem to have divided thoughts. He requires warning upon warning to convince him of the urgency of entire compliance with God's command. It seems as if he was not only intent on his own safety, but also in the preservation of his property. He pleads against compliance with the command in its completeness. How merciful and forbearing the Hearer of Prayer is? Lot was conscious of God's forbearance and mercy, and, rightly enough, on that he rests his hope of being heard. He had faith in God, but it had not the strength of Abraham's faith. He seemed unwilling to trust God. He was told to escape to the mountain, but he now says: "I cannot escape to the mountain, lest some evil take me and I die." God, who had saved his life from the impending destruction, could protect him on the mountain, but he is afraid. Looking at the small town of Bela, he entreates to be permitted to take refuge there, because it was a little one. From this circumstance the name was changed to Zoar, meaning little. Again God is merciful, and grants his request. There is no abatement in the urgency for his flight. Once more the Angel of the Lord says to him: "Haste thee, escape thither; for I cannot do anything till thou be come thither." Marvellous is God's care of His people! I cannot do anything till thou be come thither. At sunrise Lot and his daughters enter the city of Zoar. Now they are safe.

III. The Overthrow of the Wicked.—At last God's judgments that had waited long are about to overtake the dwellers in the cities of the plain. The divine forbearance will wait no longer. In Scripture there are references to the cities that were overwhelmed in that dread overthrow; only two are here named. They were Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboim. Then the Lord rained upon them brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven. The lower valley of the Jordan was bituminous. Whether by the lightning or volcanic action, or through both, is not stated, but all agencies are in the divine hand. God makes them subserve His purposes. Then the whole plain was wrapped in a whirlwind of fire, and not a solitary one from these crowded and corrupt cities survived to tell of the complete ruin in which they were involved. Wickedness cannot endure. It must be repented of and forsaken, or the punishment must overtake it. "Be not deceived, God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." The populous cities and the fertile plain become one wide waste of desolation, an abiding example of sin and its effects. When Lot entered Zoar one of the members of his family was missing. His wife, contrary to the oft-repeated command, had lingered and looked back. "and she became a pillar of salt." She was struck instantaneously, either by the lightning bolt, or suffocated by the sulphurous fumes, her rigid form being covered with saline incrustations, so that she had the appearance of a pillar of salt. She had escaped the doomed city, she had reached the plain; but she looked wistfully back. She was on the way to safety, but she failed to reach it.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

God is merciful and long-suffering. He is also just. Long time will be given for repentance, but it has its limit. Worldliness exposes its victims to terrible dangers. But for repeated urgings Lot would have perished in the plain. The doom of the wicked is both certain and terrible.

To be in the plain when we should be on the mountain is dangerous.

If we would escape from the overthrow that sin brings we must accept God's way of salvation. They that persevere unto the end, the same shall be saved.

THIRTY-EIGHT new temperance papers were started during the year 1886.

THE fact that three printing-offices in San Francisco are owned by Chinamen shows that these enterprising immigrants are about taking up another industry. In China native printers, though ignorant of English, have learned to set type almost as rapidly as white printers who understand the language.