

collections during the Sunday amounted to \$115, and the amount realized at the tea meeting was something over \$125.

In a notice of Principal MacVicar's lecture in Guelph last week, the *Mercury* says: He pointed out that there was a spirit of unbelief abroad, as seen in the social discontents which at present exists and in the antagonism which it daily growing stronger between rich and poor. He dwelt on this at some length, and showed that the tendency of the age was toward a greater cleavage between these two classes; that the rich were becoming richer, and the poor poorer; that in modern life monopolies and combinations and great corporations were the order of the day; that people were getting farther away from the simpler modes of life, and that the rage nowadays was for show and wealth, and calling everything by big names. The same thing was noticeable in religious matters. Rich men wanted fine churches, a grand ceremonial, while a cheaper Gospel with its message of salvation was considered good enough for the poor man. All this fostered a spirit of discontent among the great mass of the people, and gave rise to combinations among them sometimes as tyrannical as the tyranny of wealth and monopoly. Then reference was made to evils visible in our churches—how unbelief was fostered by seeing these often rent asunder by minor differences, and by squabbling over matters of detail; by the spread of sceptical and debasing literature, by a spurious æstheticism; by the efforts to corrupt the daily press and such magazines and reviews as occupy the higher fields of literature; by attempts to corrupt the teaching in colleges and universities, and even in the lower departments of education, and in many other ways which the lecturer pointed out. He then went on to show how this spirit of unbelief was to be met. It should not be met in a timid or fearful spirit, for had we not truth and right and God and religion on our side? These are eternal, and cannot be destroyed. We had Christ on our side, which was the great fact in human history, and on Him as our rallying-point we should manifest a courage and power in confessing Him at all times and under all circumstances. The lecture was of a very high order. It was a fearless exposure of the sins, the weaknesses and follies of the age, and on the other hand pointed with unerring hand to the influences by which these can be counteracted and men and women be made better and purer.

The Young People's Association of Knox Church, Cornwall have issued a very attractive programme of meetings for the year. Officers—Rev. James Hastie, honorary-president; Mr. A. Bruce, president; Mr. Will Davis and Mr. Mark Harrison, vice-presidents; Miss Warwick, treasurer; Mr. William Cummings, secretary; Miss Brown, Miss McLachlan, Miss Hastie, Mr. W. A. Smart, Mr. R. Tanner, Mr. J. Copeland, jun., committee for meeting and entertainments; Miss Mary Smart, Miss Grace McEwan, Miss L. Paupst, Mr. R. McKay, Mr. W. Dingwall, Mr. H. C. Patterson, committee for invitation and reception. A prayer meeting is held every Sabbath morning from ten to eleven, at which a brief address is given by the chairman on the topics for the day. The weekly meetings are held on alternate Thursday evenings. Besides the usual literary and musical features of such meetings, arrangements are made also for lectures and missionary concerts. The first lecture for the winter was delivered last month by Dr. Kelly, of Montreal, on "The Expulsion of the Acadians, and Longfellow's 'Evangeline,'" and proved very interesting. The last meeting consisted of a missionary concert, in which the whole programme was carried out by members of the two mission bands—the senior and the junior—organized by Mrs. Donald McEwan last summer. The meeting was presided over by Mrs. McEwan, and the short papers read on Missions by the young ladies, and the pieces sung, were all replete with interest and profit. A collection for missions was taken up at the close.

The Presbytery of Guelph, according to previous appointment, met on Tuesday week in the First Presbyterian Church, Eramosa, to proceed with the induction of the Rev. J. McL. Gardiner to the pastorate of the Church. Rev. J. W. Rae, Acton, preached to a large congregation from Chronicles xxviii. 20-21, after which Rev. Dr. Wardrope, who had acted during the vacancy as Moderator of the Session, briefly narrated the steps taken with a view to securing a pastor. He then put the usual questions to the pastor elect and offered prayer for the Divine blessing on the new relations between pastor and people. The members of the Presbytery then gave to Mr. Gardiner the right hand of fellowship, and recognized him as pastor of the Church and a member of the Presbytery. Thereafter, the Rev. J. A. R. Dickson, B.D., Galt, and Rev. Dr. Torrance addressed pastor and people respectively. At the close of public worship, the newly inducted pastor, accompanied by Dr. Torrance, repaired to the door of the church, where he received a cordial welcome from his people. In the evening a tea meeting was held, and the well-spread tables were repeatedly filled by the assembled friends. After tea the gathering, which completely filled the audience room at the church, was addressed by Rev. Messrs. W. G. Armstrong, Hillsburg; J. W. Rae, Acton; J. B. Mullen; C. Pedley, Fergus; J. A. R. Dickson, Galt; D. Strachan, Rockwood, and the new pastor. The choir of St. Andrew's Church, Guelph, was present, and by their excellent music contributed largely to the interest and success of the meeting. The proceedings were closed shortly after ten, the benediction being pronounced by the chairman, Rev. Dr. Wardrope.

The basement of the First Presbyterian Church was well filled on Monday, says the Brockville Recorder, the occasion being the farewell entertainment to Rev. George Burnfield on his resigning the charge. Mr. J. R. Reid occupied the chair, and the choir furnished excellent music at intervals. Addresses were made in succession by Rev. Messrs. MacGillivray, Cheatham, Williams, of Pembroke, Allen and Brown. Mr. Allen Cameron, after a few remarks on behalf of himself, read an address from the Sabbath school, which was suitably replied to by Mr. Burnfield, in which he referred to the great interest he and Mrs. Burnfield had always felt in the Sabbath school, and in the young people. The address of the evening, however, was that on behalf of

the congregation, read by Mr. J. R. Reid. It was highly eulogistic, and expressed appreciation of the reverend gentleman's work during his pastorate. It expressed that appreciation in a very tangible way, for at a suitable point Captain Buckman stepped forward, and handed Mr. Burnfield a purse of \$150; the purse in which the money was contained, as the chairman explained, was worked by Miss Nellie Buell while an invalid. When Mrs. Burnfield was referred to, Miss McArthur came forward, and, on behalf of the young ladies, handed Mr. Burnfield, for her, a silver and glass fruit dish. Mr. Burnfield replied at some length, referring to the twelve years of his pastorate—twelve of the best years of his life, thanking them for all their kindness, and expressing the hope that if any of them ever came to Toronto he would be able to help them, and he was prepared to do so, whether they had been friends or enemies, to the utmost of his power. He felt sad at having to say good-bye, and whether he would ever address them again from the pulpit after next Sunday or not, probably not, he urged them not to forget the ministrations of the past twelve years, and he hoped there would be a final meeting where good-byes had not to be said. Many were visibly affected while the reverend gentleman was speaking. Mrs. Gordon Starr, leader of the choir for the past two years, was also presented with a diamond ring in recognition of her cheerful and gratuitous services. Mr. Thomas Brady reading the address to that lady. The proceedings were brought to a close at a late hour with prayer by Rev. E. Woodcock.

PRESBYTERY OF BRANDON.—This Presbytery met at Portage la Prairie at the call of the Moderator December 7, to consider the resignation of Rev. J. F. Dustan, of Knox Church, Brandon, the Book of Forms and such Home Mission business as might demand attention. Mr. Dustan adhered to his resignation on the ground that since the resignation of the pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, Brandon, there was a prospect of the re-union of the two congregations, and he was anxious that both congregations be free. Commissioners were heard, and it was agreed to allow Mr. Dustan's resignation to lie on the table till the March meeting of Presbytery. A committee, consisting of Messrs. Robertson, Todd, Bell, Murray and Stalker, were appointed to consider the Book of Forms, and report. The Home Mission Committee were authorized to allocate amounts to congregations for Augmentation and Home Mission Funds; to look after supply of First Church, Brandon.—S. C. MURRAY, Pres. Clerk.

PRESBYTERY OF LINDSAY.—This Presbytery held an adjourned meeting at Eldon, in St. Andrew's Church there, on Monday, Dec. 12, and was constituted by the Rev. John Gillis, Moderator. The Rev. E. Cockburn was requested to act as moderator, and the resignation of Mr. Gillis was taken up. Mr. Gillis and representatives from the Session and congregation of St. Andrew's Church were heard. After due deliberation the Presbytery accepted the resignation, and appointed the Rev. R. Gunn to preach on the 18th inst., and declare the charge vacant. The Rev. Dr. McTavish was appointed Moderator of the Session, and Rev. D. B. McDonald, of Scott and Uxbridge, Moderator of the Presbytery in room of Mr. Gillis. The Presbytery record their deep regret at parting with their Moderator and brother, the Rev. John Gillis, who, though but recently received into this court, has endeared himself to all the members, so that he carries with him the best wishes of the Presbytery, and the earnest prayer that the Lord may soon open up to him a field of usefulness, and pour out upon him and his family a rich blessing there. The Presbytery would also express their earnest desire for the welfare of the congregation now vacant, and trust they will unitedly engage in seeking the advancement of the cause of Christ in their locality, and at an early date obtain a pastor to labour among them in the Lord's work.—JAMES R. SCOTT, Pres. Clerk.

PRESBYTERY OF SAUGEN.—This Presbytery met in Mount Forest on December 13. All the ministers were present and a good many of the elders. Mr. Davidson was appointed Moderator for the next six months, and took the chair. The Rev. R. Fairbairn, at present supplying Balaclava, Ayton and East Normanby, being present, was asked to sit and deliberate. It was agreed that in connection with the ordinary meeting of Presbytery in future there be evening meetings for the public, and that the members of Presbytery be appointed to speak on the subjects appointed to be discussed. Mr. Davidson reported that he had visited Cedarville and Esplin congregations, and that they had promised to do their utmost to reduce the supplement, even though they had been weakened by parties removing from the bounds of the congregations. Mr. Scott gave in the treasurer's report, which was received, and the thanks of the Presbytery tendered to him for the amount of trouble he had taken. Mr. Scott was re-appointed treasurer. Messrs. Niven and McKenzie were appointed auditors. Mr. Straith gave in the Home Mission report. He stated that the Presbytery was expected to raise \$500 for Home Missions and \$400 for Augmentation. Each congregation was assigned its proportion for these Schemes. Committees were appointed to examine remits, and report at next meeting. On the Book of Forms, Mr. Aull, Convener, Messrs. Park, McNair and Straith to examine from pages 5 to 38, Messrs. Aull and Cameron from pages 39 to 68, and Messrs. Fairbairn and Johnston from pages 69 to 132. On amending chapter xxiv. section 4 of the Confession of Faith, Messrs. Baikie, Cameron and Johnston. On constitution of General Assembly and travelling expenses, Messrs. Aull and Bickell. The Rev. Dr. Ure was nominated as Moderator of next General Assembly. Mr. Davidson read a carefully prepared statistical report, which was adopted. Messrs. McNair, Thorn and Aull were appointed to arrange for the meeting of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society, and to invite Dr. Wardrope to address the meeting, which is to be held on the evening of the next ordinary meeting of Presbytery. The Presbytery adjourned to meet in Palmerston on the second Tuesday of March next, at ten a.m.—S. YOUNG, Pres. Clerk.

Sabbath School Teacher.

INTERNATIONAL LESSON.

Jan. 8,
1888.

THE MULTITUDE FED.

Matt. 1
13-21.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life.—John vi. 35.

SHORTER CATECHISM.

Question 55.—In the light of this question how sacred all things become. All nature is a revelation of God, a means by which He becomes known. Our bodies and spirits should be a living sacrifice. The soul should be a temple for God's indwelling. The commandment forbids its profanation. The Word of God and ordinances of religion ought to be treated with reverence. The names used to denote the Divine existence and perfections are to be held sacred. All profane swearing by these is a sin expressly forbidden by the third commandment.

INTRODUCTORY.

The place where this miracle was wrought is generally understood to have been the Plains of Butaiha, some little distance south of Bethsaida, on the north-east shore of the Sea of Galilee. After the martyrdom of John the Baptist, the Saviour withdrew to the "desert place," where His disciples found Him after returning from their evangelistic tour. The people, eager to listen to His teaching, followed Him in great numbers.

I. The Compassionate Saviour.—One reason why in the days of His flesh the common people heard Christ gladly was because He was so merciful and compassionate. He still possesses those attractive qualities. He is the same yesterday, to-day and forever. His is a full-orbed compassion. He thinks of men's needs bodily and spiritually. Because He understood the people's wants as no other could, His compassion was tender and true, and divine in its fulness. The sick and the sorrowing never applied for His help in vain. He healed their sick. He began with their bodily ailments, but He did not end there. He ever sought to heal the sin-burdened souls of men. The disciples also feel for the multitude. They go to Jesus and say, This is a desert-place. The time is now past. The day was nearing its close. So interested have the people been in hearing His words and witnessing His cures that they have waited on till the evening shadows were gathering. The disciples suggest that Jesus should dismiss them, that they might go to the village to buy bread. To this the Saviour replied, They need not go away; give ye them to eat. They did not anticipate what was to follow; they are astonished and say, "We have but five loaves and two fishes."

II. The Miraculous Feeding of the Multitude.—He who has power over all things with a majestic simplicity says, "Bring them hither to me." Then the people were orderly arranged, and recline on the grass, in the manner in which they took their meals at home. They could thus be conveniently and completely served. When all was ready, Jesus took the loaves and fishes, "and looking up to heaven, He blessed" them. It is with heart and soul we should worship God in prayer; yet every sincere worshipper will assume a becoming and reverential bodily posture. Here and in other instances we read of Jesus lifting up His eyes to heaven, in trustful and reverential looking to the Hearer and Answerer of prayer. Just as the father of a family begins the household meal by giving thanks, and asking God's blessing, so the Saviour blesses what is provided for feeding the multitude. The good old custom of grace before meat is a most becoming thing, and has the highest example to recommend it. The disciples were employed in distributing the food to the multitude—an example of benevolence to the disciples of every age, and symbolic of their higher mission to be disseminators of the bread of life. The divine bounty is complete and abundant. In the Father's house there is bread enough, and to spare. None of the 5,000 men, besides women and children, were sent empty away. No one was overlooked. If the bread that perishes is so abundantly provided for, is there not reason to believe that the Gospel provision is ample and full for the satisfaction of the soul's every real want? While in the divine bounty there is profusion there is no waste, there is no encouragement to prodigality. The sin of wastefulness is both great and common. The manufacture of intoxicants from grain designed for food is by many regarded as a wicked waste of God's bounty, and they that indulge their appetites in this manner are not generally in a position to gather up the fragments. Poor people often only add to their poverty by wasting what they have. The rich, by their prodigality and luxurious indulgence, often help to increase the load of human misery. The broken pieces of the feast thus miraculously provided were not to be thrown away. They were gathered up that nothing might be lost. It is told of Thomas Carlyle that when he found pieces of bread lying in the street, he carefully picked them up, and placed them on the fence railings that the birds might get them. The miracle, like all Christ's miracles, was self-evident in its completeness. Christ's power over nature was demonstrated. From the five loaves and the two fishes the great multitude was abundantly fed, and after all, twelve baskets were filled with the fragments. This miracle also emphasizes the fact that man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

What a tender and compassionate Saviour Jesus is!

We can bring all our wants to Jesus. The smallest thing that concerns us is not beneath His care and sympathy.

Let us never forget to give thanks for God's goodness and bounty.

We should never forget how far-reaching is the meaning of Christ's saying, "Gather up the fragments."

When Christ is concerned for the bodily wants of men, may we not trust Him for all the wants of the immortal soul?