

die man; he might scatter a congregation which had ever been united and prosperous, yet he remained in the enjoyment of his manse and income and they had no means of arresting or becoming acquainted with his disgraceful career unless he was guilty of some scandalous conduct." The rights of ministers were often pleaded, but in the best days of the Church, ministers were more taken up with the people's rights than their own. Ministers were for the people and not the people for ministers. There should be some such oversight that the fact of having to render a periodical account of his stewardship even to his fellow men would have the effect of putting a minister on his mettle and stimulating him in the discharge of his duty. If such is such elsewhere, especially in what is reputed to be the most active Presbyterian Church in Scotland, it is well for us if there is no such in our own Church. True, there has been a good deal of effort put forth during the past year in this and the adjoining Provinces, but for what? Simply for the raising of money and telling people their duty in this respect and that, too, at the expense of special agencies, amounting to \$3,550. It is no less noteworthy that apart from money matters, how very little of the time relatively, is taken up by our Synods and Assembly in devising and determining ways and means for the greater efficiency of ministerial work and the spiritual progress of our Church in our own land in our settled pastorates. If a single Moody by the blessing of God can gather in his ten thousands, is it not well for the Church to look on and learn? If the Presbyterian polity is so near perfect, it is not well to distrust it, but systems like trees are known by their fruits. Now, however, that the people by ministerial pressure have very generously and by a special effort unmuzzled the ox that it may the better tread out the corn, the least that they can look for is that ministers will in turn take their counsels for duty to themselves, and by special effort go and do likewise. Mark you, it was only the ox that treadeth out the corn that God commanded to be unmuzzled, and I leave you and your readers to infer what was to be done with the ox that did not tread out the corn. OBSERVER.

RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

MR. EDITOR.—In reply to "W R," allow me to say, that if he had been present at the General Assembly and heard the proposal of the Hon. Edward Blake anent the matter to which he refers, and the *modus operandi*, he would have seen that it was as far from the Hon. gentleman's mind as it is from his own to have the study of the Bible enforced by "civil pains and penalties" in our public schools, at least on those not willing to submit to such instruction.

The Hon. Mr. Blake's contention is, that the law as it now stands permitting religious instruction to be given at the close of the school hours, viz., after four o'clock, is to all practical purposes a dead letter. He also showed cause why the law failed; that the pupils, and to some extent the parents or guardians had a dislike to what seemed like detention. This keeping in of the pupils after hours is now so much associated with "pains and penalties" as to render this part of the school law inoperative.

But in his proposal the Hon. Mr. Blake is desirous to work on the old lines and simply to have the car which contains select portions of the Bible shunted ahead a little, say to three o'clock. The conscience clause being here inserted, "that parents or guardians objecting to their children or wards being thus instructed in Scripture, from any grounds whatever, such pupils to have the privilege to retire as though school was closed." I need not stay to argue the advantages of such a plan. These select portions of Scripture will form a text-book; this text-book will be placed on the time table of the school. Pupils will receive, prepare and recite lessons from this book as from any other; pupils will receive credit for perfect recitations in this book as in any other. The teacher will act the part of a judicious parent in the supervision of the pupil's study in relation to this text-book as to that of any other text-book.

The conscience clause being inserted in the school law, I have no fear of the "pains and penalties" attached to this text-book being any more out of place than any other text-book. The teacher to whom is committed the

"Delightful task to rear the tender thought,
And teach the young idea how to shoot,"

will be responsible for the pupil's progress in this study

as in any other, and such responsibility implies a kind and beneficial authority, without which, the subject of study, though good in itself, would be a bore instead of a blessing to all who engage in it. I may advert to the felt need of some such course being adopted in a future article, in the meantime, I, as a lover of my native land, shall ever feel indebted to the Hon. Edward Blake that he has "lent the authority of his great name for the securing of such an object."

STUART ACHESON.

Clover Hill, July 14th, 1884.

REGINA AND NEIGHBOURHOOD.

On the 10th of July, I moderated in a call at Regina, which came out in favour of Mr. A. Urquhart, of Knox College, who laboured there last year. The call was hearty and unanimous. It was sustained by Presbytery and accepted, and arrangements are made for Mr. Urquhart's induction. Regina is situated about 400 miles west of Winnipeg, on the line of the C. P. R. It is the capital of the new Province of Assiniboia, the seat of government of the North-West and the head-quarters of the mounted police. The Governor being Chief Indian Commissioner, the business of that department is transacted here. The town is not large, but it is growing, and as soon as the surrounding country is brought under cultivation, Regina must become an important centre. Our congregation there is in a healthy state. They worship at present in Mr. Nicoll's hall, but steps have been taken for the erection of a church. The Church and Manse Building Board have been asked to give assistance. Suitable lots have been secured from the North-West Land Company free of cost.

The next day Mr. Urquhart drove me north-west of Regina, about twenty-four miles, to Caresdale. The road lay along the Wascana Creek (Pile of Bones.) At Regina the banks are low, but as the Qu'Appelle is approached the banks become high and sharp. The Valley of the Creek is wide, and the stream flows in serpentine folds through a growth of maple and elm. Along the banks the trees were loaded with June berries. Settlers were gathering them in all directions, and at the rate of twenty-five to thirty quarts in a forenoon.

I was agreeably disappointed with the country. The land is rolling prairie of great fertility and easily cultivated. The soil is a brown argillaceous mould. The land is all taken up and a good deal of it is broken. This year the rainfall was not sufficient for a good yield, and yet the appearance of the crops was very fair. Let the land be brought under cultivation, farm buildings be erected and groves planted, and I know of no district to surpass that between Regina and the Qu'Appelle.

At Caresdale there is a good settlement, and the people are largely Presbyterians. The congregation that assembled at the little "Shack" used for a place of worship, astonished me. At the close of the service organization was effected—fourteen communicants having been enrolled. These people, last summer and autumn had been meeting themselves, since no minister could be sent to them. The Rev. W. Martin, of Exeter (four of whose brothers are settled here), visited the settlements and preached last summer. Mr. Urquhart, who has proved himself a true missionary, has been driving out here every alternate Sabbath to give them supply this summer. He occasionally preaches also at Long Lake, some distance north-east of Caresdale, and another point between Long Lake and Regina.

But no one man can undertake the work to be done. North of the railway to the Qu'Appelle, the land is taken up. Between Regina and Moose Jaw in a distance of forty-five miles, we have no missionary. Were a young vigorous man settled at Peuse (midway between Regina and Moose Jaw), and operating north and north-east, there would soon spring up a large congregation. There must be at least fifteen townships, more or less, sparsely settled without a minister. There is a splendid field for some energetic man who wants to lay his own foundation and rear his own building. He will be sustained by seeing growth, and the reflection of having helped to plant the standard on virgin soil. Will some of our young men volunteer to take a position between Mr. Urquhart and Mr. S. J. Taylor, our efficient missionaries at Moose Jaw?

Winnipeg, July 17th, 1884. JAMES ROBERTSON.

OBITUARY.

The death of the Rev. Mr. Fraser, which took place recently at the residence of his son-in-law, Mr. John Caldwell, Montreal, removes one who will be much missed by a very large circle of friends, to whom his unselfishness, geniality and tender heartedness warmly endeared him. Mr. Fraser may be said to have been the father of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. He was ordained in 1819 in connection with the Relief Church of Scotland, and was for some time minister in Dalkeith. In 1827 he came to Canada, and became pastor of the Presbyterian congregation in connection with the Church of Scotland, in the town of Niagara, then relatively a much more important place than it is now. He remained there a short time, and then connected himself with the Dutch Reformed Church in the United States, returning to Canada, and becoming pastor of the Scotch Church in Lanark in 1844. In 1861 he retired on his commutation allowance from the active duties of the ministry, and took up his residence in Montreal. His intellect remained unclouded to the last, and he took a deep interest in ecclesiastical matters. In 1867 he published a volume of sermons affectionately commended to "humble minded Christians in plain congregations," which proved very acceptable to a considerable section of the public. He was a member of St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, Montreal, but took a keen interest in the spread of evangelical truth in and around the city. It may not be amiss to remark that at the time Mr. Fraser settled as minister at Niagara there was no Synod or General Assembly in connection with the Presbyterian body in Canada, the first Synod having been constituted in St. Andrew's Church, Kingston, in 1831, at which eleven ministers and two elders attended.

He passed quietly away, being mercifully spared any suffering. He was an humble, consistent follower of the Saviour, and his family has that fact to console them for their loss. He leaves several sons and one daughter, Mrs. John Caldwell, with whom he resided previous to his death. One of his sons, Mr. Joshua R. Fraser, is known to some extent as the author of "Forest and River Life in Canada," "Three Months among the Moose," and other sketches. Another son is in the ministry in the Western States. He was buried in Mount Royal Cemetery.

THE Rev. P. Milne, a Canada Presbyterian missionary in the New Hebrides, gives a wonderful summary of progress in ten years in those islands. Ten years ago, Anietyum was the only Christian island in the group, and there were printed in the language of that island the New Testament and several small portions of the Old Testament; now the whole Bible is printed, and the natives have contributed \$8 500 toward it in arrowroot. Ten years ago, Aniwa and Futuna were all but heathen islands, with nothing printed in the language; now Aniwa is a Christian island, the whole population attend church and school, and a good many of them are church members. On Futuna, about half of the population there regard themselves as worshipping people, and they have the substance of the four Gospels in their own language. Ten years ago it was not safe for missionaries in Tanna. Now the Gospel is preached freely to thousands, and the New Testament has been translated into the language of the people. Ten years ago there was little of Christianity in Erromanga. There were not above eight or ten church-members. Two years ago there were fifty church-members, twenty five of whom were teachers. A good many more have been baptized since then. The majority of the people are now favourable to Christianity. The New Testament is nearly all translated. Ten years ago there were but two Christian villages on Efate. There are now five or six others partially Christian. Genesis, Mark, Luke, and the Acts are printed. Ten years ago Nguna, a small heathen island, about five miles north from Efate, was occupied by a missionary for the first time. Last year, thirty-four adults and seven children were baptized, and there are now forty church-members in full communion, and eight baptized children. Two of the baptized are chiefs, one of whom is the highest chief on the island. He had ten wives, but before his baptism he put them all away except one. Only about a third of the group has been reached thus far; but all the heathen islands are asking for missionaries. A hundred thousand people still remain in heathenism.