

tions in the North West, and Rev. W. A. McKay, addressed the meeting. The pastor, Rev. W. T. McMuller, occupied the chair, and gave a review of what had been done by the congregation and Sabbath school and Bible class during the year. The total amount raised for the Schemes of the Church within the congregation during the year was found to be \$816.94. Of this amount the Sabbath school and Bible class contributed \$200. The appropriations made are as follows: Home Missions, \$396.50; Foreign Missions, \$254.34; Colleges Fund, \$80; Aged and Infirm Ministers' Fund, \$15; French Evangelization, \$45; Assembly Fund, \$12; Synod and Presbytery Fund, \$14.10. In consequence of a resolution last year to close all the accounts of the congregation on the 31st December, the statement now given covers only nine months, and some contributions are yet expected.

THE new Presbyterian church, Fairbairn, Egremont, was opened on the 8th ult. The weather was unfavourable and the sleighing was entirely gone, yet the attendance, morning, afternoon and evening, was very good. Rev. Donald H. Fletcher, of McNab street, Hamilton, conducted the services at half-past ten a.m. Rev. N. Smith, of the Canada Methodist Church, Holstein, preached at three o'clock p.m., and the Rev. Mr. Fletcher spoke again in the evening. On Monday evening a good tea was provided in the old building, and after tea the congregation assembled in the new church. The choir sang the One Hundredth Psalm, after which prayer was offered by the Rev. N. Smith, and the Rev. Mr. Fletcher delivered an interesting and instructive lecture on Palestine. After the lecture, Mr. James Swanston, chairman of Building Committee, made a report, and it was found that there was still \$50 debt on the church, and it was resolved to wipe it out, which was done, and the church was declared open free of debt. On Tuesday evening there was another social gathering. The collection on Sabbath amounted to \$66, the proceeds of Monday \$106, and of Tuesday \$26, making in all \$198.

ON Tuesday evening, the 17th ult., says the Markham "Sun," a large number of the members and adherents of Zion Church, Cedar Grove, met at the manse, Markham, and after tea—amply provided by the ladies present—Mr. Wm. Boyd, on behalf of the congregation, presented their pastor, Rev. James Carmichael, with an address and a very valuable fur overcoat, as an expression of their appreciation of him as their pastor and of his labours among them. Mr. Carmichael, who was taken completely by surprise, thanked Mr. Boyd and all present for the very handsome gift, and also spoke of the kindness and sympathy that had always been extended to him by that portion of his charge. From the same generous friends Mrs. Carmichael was also made the recipient of a beautiful set of glassware, consisting of thirty pieces. Dr. Armstrong, and Mr. McLean of the High School, who were also present, spoke very warmly of their pastor, and trusted that he might be spared, not only to wear the coat, but to minister to such a kind and loving people as those belonging to Zion Church, Cedar Grove. A very pleasant evening was spent in singing, accompanied by instrumental music, when the party dispersed at an early hour, feeling all the happier in being instrumental in making others happy.

THE annual congregational meeting of Knox Church, Winnipeg, was held on the evening of the 18th ult. The financial abstract for the year ending December 31st showed the receipts to be \$6,172.24, and the expenditures \$6,134.77, leaving a balance on hand of \$37.47. The report of the Board of Managers showed the weekly offerings and open collections to be \$4,960.31, against \$4,683.02 for last year, being an increase of \$277.29. This is considered satisfactory in view of the fact that the congregation had been without a settled pastor for five months in the year, and that there had been a large number of withdrawals for a second congregation. The trustees reported that they had agreed with the Hudson Bay Company for the purchase of lots 177, 178, 179, 180 and 181, in block 4, for \$6,950. The old church property was advertised for sale in February, possession to be given May 1st. The average attendance of Sabbath school scholars was 151; average attendance of teachers and officers, 20; average attendance of members of the Bible Class, 63; total average, 234. The Sabbath school treasurer's report showed

the receipts to be \$525.64, and the expenditures \$475.03, leaving a balance of \$50.61. The report of the Session presents the following statistics: Families belonging to the congregation (approximate), 230; single persons not connected with families, 200; communicants on the roll, 330; communicants reported last year, 368; communicants added during year, 96; communicants removed during year, 134; average attendance at Lord's Supper, 160; baptisms, infants 38, adults 7 total 45; deaths, 26.

THE annual meeting of Old St. Andrews Church congregation in this city was held on the evening of the 25th ult., the proceedings opening with prayer. The Rev. Mr. Milligan presided, and Mr. Brodie was appointed secretary. The report of the Session was read, and several interesting facts relating to the progress of the Church during the past year were stated. The number now in communion with the Church is 345, a clear gain over the preceding year of thirty-three. The number of children attending the Sabbath school, or rather the number of names entered on the roll during the year, was 254, with twenty one teachers and two librarians. The entire contributions for the year amounted to \$5,026.95, and the total expenditures to \$4,734.75, leaving a balance on hand of \$292.20. The financial statement exhibited a most satisfactory state of affairs, shewing a large increase over the contributions of the year before. A vote of thanks was tendered the Ladies' Association for their successful efforts tending to improve the financial condition of the congregation. Mr. McHardy responded for the ladies in a most suitable manner. The auditors of last year were re-appointed, and on motion it was decided that the annual meeting of the congregation should be held on the third Wednesday of January of each year. The ballot for three members of the Board of Managers to replace the retiring members resulted in the election of Messrs. Brodie, McHardy, and McNab. A committee composed of the following gentlemen, to collect subscriptions for the completion of the church, was appointed: Messrs. Ebey, McMaster, Kent, Morris, Gibb, McNab, McHardy, Vest, and Brodie. The committee are to report on the 10th of March next, at which time it will be known whether it will be advisable to prosecute the work of church completion or not.

## SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHER.

### INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

#### LESSON VII.

Feb. 17. } CHRIST'S FOES AND FRIENDS. } Mark iii. 20-35.

Commit to memory verses 31-35.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"He that is not with Me is against Me."—Matt. xii. 30.

CENTRAL TRUTH.—We are all either the friends or the foes of Christ.

HOME READINGS.—M. Mark iii. 20-35.—T. Matt. xii. 22-30. W. Luke xii. 14-26. —Th. Heb. x. 23-31.—F. John vi. 53-71.—S. John vii. 21-31.—Sab. Rom. viii. 1-17.

TIME.—Summer and autumn, A.D. 28. V. 20 belongs to the summer, and follows closely the last lesson, and the sermon on the Mount. The other events of the lesson took place some weeks later, in the autumn.

PLACE.—Capernaum.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS.—Matt. viii. 5. Luke vii. 1, with v. 20. The account of vs. 21-30 is found more full in Matt. xii. 22-45. See Luke xi. 14-26. The parallel of vs. 31-35 is given in Matt. xii. 45-50; Luke viii. 19-21.

HARMONY OF EVENTS.—The twelve apostles having been chosen, Jesus preached the sermon on the Mount (Matt. chs. v., vi., vii.). Returning to Capernaum (Matt. viii. 5). He healed the centurion's servant (Matt. viii. 5-13). On his return great crowds gather (Mark iii. 20); raises the widow's son at Nain (Luke vii. 11-17); answers the messengers of John (Matt. xi. 2-19; Luke vii. 18-35); dines with a Pharisee (Luke vii. 36-50); continues His circuit through Galilee (Luke viii. 1-3); returns to Capernaum, cures the demoniac (Matt. xii. 22-24); answers the Pharisees (Mark iii. 22-30); the interference of his mother and brethren (Mark iii. 21, 31-35).

HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.

20. *Multitude cometh together* from all parts to Capernaum. This verse covers several weeks. *Eat bread* food, their meals. 21. *Friends* relatives and family friends, not the disciples. *Went out* from Nazareth, fifteen miles away. *Lay hold on Him* to put Him under restraint. *Beside Himself* in a sort of ecstasy no longer master of Himself. Some perhaps thought Him really insane. 22. *Scold from Jerusalem*: feeling uneasy in regard to this Reformer, and sent possibly as the result of conference with the Herodians (Mark iii. 6). *Said* Jesus had just healed a demoniac, dumb and blind (Matt. xii. 22). *Beelzebub, or Beelzeboul* a heathen god. Applied by the Jews to Satan, the prince of devils. 23. *How can Satan, etc.*? not one Satan cast out

another Satan, but Satan cast out himself. It was absurd that Jesus could be in league with a being He forever opposed and fought. 24. *A kingdom divided* as regards other kingdoms it must be a unit, though it may embrace within itself many parties and divisions. 25. *House* household, family. 26. *Heathen* as prince of evil, he has forsaken his kingdom. 28. *All sins forgiven* they are forgivable on repentance. *Blasphemies* blasphemy was a scornful speaking against God. It was a sin against God answering to treason in our own times. 29. *Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost* blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is treason by professed members of the kingdom of God against the Spirit of God. All wilful, wanton, determined opposition to the work of the Holy Spirit, either in other hearts or our own, approximates this sin.—Abbott. *Heathen forgiveness* because it is the only crime which in its nature closes the door of the soul, and keeps it closed against the ingress of divine mercy. *Eternal damnation*. better, eternal judgment. 31. *Brethren* (1) either the own brothers of Jesus, or (2) sons of Joseph by another marriage, or (3) cousins, sons of Cleopas. They were named James, Joseph, Simon and Judas. 34. *Looked on them*. His disciples sitting around Him (Matt. xii. 49). 35. *The same is my brother*. all who are children of God are brothers of Jesus, (1) like Him in character; (2) under the same fatherly love and care; (3) heirs with Him of God and His home. *And mother*: Jesus feels towards us a deeper, tenderer, stronger love than a mother's love, the highest earthly love.

SUBJECT. FRIENDS AND FOES OF JESUS DESCRIBED.

I. CHRIST MISUNDERSTOOD BY FRIENDS.—Vers. 20, 21. The "friends" spoken of here were probably relatives and family friends. In John vii. 3-9 we find that at least during the early part of the Saviour's ministry, "His brethren did not believe in Him," and as long as that was the case they could understand neither His words nor His actions. When they heard that He had returned from Jerusalem followed by an immense multitude, that He had formally appointed a company of attendants, that wherever He came the whole population turned out to see and hear Him, they came to the conclusion that His untiring labours and the constant excitement in which He lived had affected His mind, and that it was necessary to place Him under restraint. "Are these not," says Dr. John Cumming, "the types of the world still? Let a man shew as much zeal in the service of God as one shews in the service of an earthly master, and thousands will say, 'Much religion has made him mad.' How strange it is that the world will bear with the most exalted enthusiasm in a patriot, with the most devoted enthusiasm in a statesman, with great enthusiasm in a philanthropist; but, the moment that the enthusiasm is transferred to a subject worthy of its noblest fervour, then the world says that much religion has made you mad!"

II. CHRIST FALSELY ACCUSED BY ENEMIES.—Vers. 22-27. "The Scribes which came down from Jerusalem" appear to have whispered their false charges among the people. They were not addressed to Jesus. Dr. Cunningham Geikie says: "They believed that the world of evil spirits, like that of angels, formed a great army, in various divisions, each with its head and subordinates, its rank and file; the whole under the command of Satan. To Beelzebub was assigned the control of that division which inflicted disease of all kinds on man; and Jesus, they hinted, was playing a part under him in pretending to drive out devils from the sick, that He might win the people to listen to His pestiferous teaching. They would not admit that His power was divine; and the ideas of the time necessarily assumed that it must be the opposite. It was of no avail that light streamed in on them, for bigotry, like the pupil of the eye, contracts in proportion to the outward brightness." The Saviour, knowing what these cowardly enemies were saying in secret, challenged them to an open discussion, brought their insidious charges to the light, and proved them to be absurd, shewing, by analogy with earthly institutions, that Satan's kingdom cannot be divided against itself—that is, although the realm of evil contains many opposing elements, divisions, discords and contradictions, still, in relation to the kingdom of goodness, it is at one, and cannot be expected to carry on a persistent and destructive course of opposition to itself, especially when that course results in benefit to its victims.

THE SIN AND PUNISHMENT OF CHRIST'S FOES.—Vers. 28-30. In verse 29, instead of "is in danger of eternal damnation," the Revised Version reads "is guilty of eternal sin," and this is what Dr. Philip Schaff, one of the revisers, says on this passage. "The unpardonable sin, though it may begin with one act of blasphemy (ver. 30), results in a state of sinful activity which continues forever. For this reason it is unpardonable. The punishment is perpetual because the sin is perpetual. The sin excludes pardon because it excludes repentance. The remark of Matthew refers to the guilt, that of Mark to the sin itself, explaining the former. This is the most fearful aspect of eternal punishment; namely, being forever deprived of the needed influences of the Holy Spirit, and hence in a state of eternally growing sin and guilt." Consistent existence is evidently implied by the word chosen. Further, while the text verse suggests a particular form of the unpardonable sin, this phrase favours the view that it is an active state rather than a particular act."

IV. BELIEVERS, CHRIST'S KINDRED.—Vers. 31-35. There is nothing contemptuous in the question, "Who is My mother or My brethren?" The Saviour did not disown His domestic ties, but He taught that these were (says Dr. J. A. Alexander) as nothing in comparison with those which bound Him to His spiritual household. Dr. Morrison draws attention to the fact that "Jesus does not add 'father' to His brother and sister and mother. . . . His relation to His real and only Father towered far above all other relations. Believers are acknowledged by the Saviour as His brethren; they are children of God, 'heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ'; inheriting, says I do doubt, a pure and holy nature, capable of infinite blessedness, all the wealth of heaven, . . . and the personal care and love of God Himself."