

MONTREAL NOTES.

THE congregation of Chalmers Church recently elected a number of new elders. Three of those elected agreed to accept, and were on Sabbath last ordained to the office of elder. Their names are Messrs. John H. Scott, Robert Miller and Jas. Stuart. This congregation is making steady progress under the Rev. G. C. Heine, its pastor. It is now nearly twenty-five years since the Sabbath school was organized, and it is proposed duly to celebrate the occasion. It is hoped that the small debt on the ground on which the church stands will be wiped out during the year 1886, so that the church property may be entirely free from encumbrance.

At the meeting of the Quebec Presbytery in November, the Rev. Jos. Allard tendered his resignation of the pastorate of the French Church in Quebec City, with a view to accepting an appointment as missionary of the French-Canadian congregation in Fall River, Massachusetts. Rev. R. H. Warden met with the congregation in Quebec last week, when they unanimously resolved to petition the Presbytery against Mr. Allard's removal; and in token of their attachment to him and their earnest desire to retain his services they largely increased their subscriptions. Mr. Allard has yielded to the desire of his people and resolved to withdraw his resignation.

ON Tuesday last, the regular monthly meeting of the Presbyterian Sabbath School Association of this city was held in Knox Church—Mr. James Croil in the chair. There was a large attendance of ministers, Sabbath school teachers and others. Principal MacVicar took up the Sabbath School lesson—Isaiah lv., first to eleventh verses—and illustrated the manner in which it should be taught. The meeting was one of great interest. At the next monthly meeting, on the 19th of January, the Rev. Prof. Scrimger lectures on the Book of Daniel.

AN organ recital and service of song was held in Erskine Church on Tuesday evening, conducted by the choir of the congregation, under Mr. R. J. Weir, organist, assisted by Mr. E. A. Hilton. The service was highly appreciated and enjoyed by the large number present.

AT a meeting of the Celtic Society, held on Thursday evening in the Presbyterian College, two instructive papers were read: one on "Manx Literature," by Mr. A. W. Moore, M.A., Isle of Man, and the other, by Mr. McLean, Tarbert, Argyshire, on the "Origin and Language of the Scottish Highlanders." The paper of last month on "The Early Settlement of Glengarry," by Mr. John McLennan, ex-M.P., is being printed by the *Alexandria Review*. A committee was appointed to arrange for a social gathering under the auspices of the society.

NUMEROUS meetings have this week been held by the city churches. At St. Mark's and St. Joseph Street, sales of useful and fancy articles have taken place; a successful concert was given in Chalmers Church and a lecture delivered in St. Matthew's Church, by Mr. A. F. Drummond, on "Canada During and After the Glacial Times."

THE Rev. J. McCaul, B.A., of Stanley Street Church, has gone West to spend the Christmas vacation.

FOR a considerable time past efforts have periodically been made in Montreal to secure the establishment of a Protestant insane asylum for the Province of Quebec. Thus far these have not resulted in accomplishing much. Another effort is at present being made which, however, does not seem likely to succeed. A list of the governors or directors appeared in our city papers this week and while the names of ministers of other churches, notably the Episcopal, appear on the list there is not a single minister of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, although there are twenty of our ministers residing in Montreal—a much larger number than of any other denomination. There is a feeling on the part of many here that the Episcopalians are desirous of largely controlling some of the city charitable and benevolent institutions, though Presbyterians are among the largest contributors to these. It is greatly to be desired that in connection with the proposed Protestant insane asylum, there should be no ground for any such feeling. The composition of the board of directors or governors is unfavourably commented on in this respect, as is also the fact that the meeting held this week was in the Bishops' house, and was attended almost entirely by Episcopalians. At this meeting, a committee of three was appointed to canvass the city for subscriptions. It is fair to say that none of these were Episcopalians; this honour being conferred by the meeting on those of other churches. The Presbyterians are likely to contribute more largely toward such an object if they are represented by some of their ministers on the board of directors, whether that board be provisional or permanent.

THE Rev. J. C. Cattanach M.A., of Sherbrooke, has decided to accept the call to Andrew's Church, Halifax, and intends leaving his present charge early in January.

A MUSICAL and literary Christmas entertainment is to be given in the lecture room of Knox Church, on the evening of Monday next, the 28th inst. An attractive programme has been prepared. The proceeds of the entertainment are to aid in meeting the expense of certain improvements recently made in the Sabbath school rooms.

HOME MISSION COMMITTEE.

ANNUAL CIRCULAR, 1885-86.

As the time is at hand when congregations and mission stations make their appropriations to the different Schemes, permit me to remind you of the continuous and increasing demands upon the Home Mission Committee, and to express the hope that the contributions for the present year will in no case fall short of the past. The deep interest that continues to be manifested by the Church in this scheme, and the generous response that has been made for many years, gives the assurance that as the work expands the funds will be cheerfully provided. To Home Missions we

are indebted for the marked increase of settled congregations which has characterized the last few years, while at the same time, by thus multiplying the sources of liberality, all the other benevolent Schemes of the Church are assisted. The maintenance and extension of Home Mission work thus helps all the other Schemes of the Church.

EXTENT OF THE WORK.

The Home Mission Report of last Assembly contains the names of 208 Mission Fields, or 614 preaching stations under the care of the Committee. Of this number 277 are in Manitoba and the North-West, and seventy-eight in Muskoka. The still more rapid extension of the work, not only in these more distant fields, but in the Manitoulin Islands, and in the lumbering districts of the Ottawa, simply depends upon the ability of the Committee to undertake new obligations.

BRITISH COLUMBIA.

A new and important field, and one that must for some time be expensive to work, has now been opened up in British Columbia. The brethren already there, Messrs. Mackay, Fraser, Thomson and Chisholm, while doing excellent work and meeting with great success, are quite unable to meet the necessities of a somewhat scattered population, and are earnestly pleading for additional missionaries. An influx of population, more or less, will follow the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway, for which our Church must be prepared.

EXPENDITURE.

The expenditure of the Committee for the present year for purely mission work will not be less than \$31,000. Of this amount the Committee have promised \$21,000 to Manitoba and the North-West, in addition to Augmentation grants. With this amount (\$31,000) and the balance on hand at the beginning of the year, the Committee will be enabled with some degree of confidence to make new appointments and additional grants to Manitoba and the North-West, to British Columbia, and similar important fields. Without making any apportionment of the amount to Presbyteries or congregations, the matter is left to the conscientious judgment of all concerned. "Freely ye have received—freely give."

AUGMENTATION.

The Sub-committee on Augmentation having already issued a circular setting forth its claims, nothing further need be said on its behalf. Over 180 congregations are aided by the Augmentation Fund, involving an expenditure for the present year of \$32,000, or, adding the deficit of last year, \$4,000, a total sum of \$36,000.

THE FIFTEENTH DAY OF MARCH.

Contributions to the Home Mission and Augmentation Funds should be sent to Rev. Dr. Reid not later than the 15th day of March. The Home Mission Committee meets the following week, when all claims for the present half-year are passed. As the grants made to augmented congregations are conditioned upon the state of the Fund, it is absolutely necessary that all moneys should be in hand or reported not later than the above date. If this is not attended to, ministers who receive assistance from the Fund may be put to considerable inconvenience by payments being delayed.

The Committee earnestly hope that every minister will see to it that his congregation does its part in raising the sums named for Home Missions and Augmentation. In order that mission stations receive the grants promised, they are enjoined to take up a collection in aid of the Fund. Presbyteries are requested to see that this is done before their claims are sent in to the Committee. WILLIAM COCHRANE, Convener, Home Mission Committee.

Brantford, Dec. 15, 1885.

Sabbath School Teacher.

INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

Jan. 1. } JOSIAH AND THE BOOK OF THE LAW. { 2 Kings
1886. } 22:1-13

INTRODUCTION.

The history of the Kingdom of Judah is a history of religious revival. We have studied two of these under Joash and Hezekiah, and we now come to a third and the greatest of all. Hezekiah was succeeded by his son Manasseh, who, as far as he was able, destroyed all the good work of his father—something too often seen in life. He even did more evil than the original inhabitants of the land whom the Lord destroyed. He restored the altars for Baal and the Asherah as did Ahab, King of Israel. He introduced—so far as is known—a new idolatry: the worship of the sun, moon and stars, and provided sacred horses and chariots for that purpose (xxiii. 11). He encouraged and practised necromancy and enchantments and such abominations, by the law condemned, and which were in the best periods in the history of the nation destroyed. In addition to all that, he committed the horrible sin of sacrificing his son to Moloch, and slaying many of the true worshippers of God, so that, it is said, the streets of Jerusalem flowed with blood. It is by him that tradition says Isaiah was slain—by being sawn asunder—and is referred to in Heb. xi. 37. Manasseh was taken away to Babylon a prisoner, led like a beast by a hook in his lip—and, under the severity of his treatment repented. He cried to the Lord for mercy, and was heard and restored to Jerusalem, where he endeavoured during the remainder of his life to undo the mischief he had done. But, like many others who try to reclaim a wasted life, he found it hard work. He was succeeded by his son Amon, who followed the bad example of his early life, instead of the good example of his latter days—another of the griefs that parents have to endure, even when they are truly penitent for past neglects. Amon was assassinated by his servants, and the assassins in turn were slain by the people of the land, and his son Josiah made king in his stead.

EXPLANATORY.

I. Josiah. — We have first a general statement of his character given:

(1) Age. — He was only eight years old when crowned king. This may have been an advantage. Had he grown up to manhood under the influence of his father, he might have been ruined. But after his father's death he fell into the hands and under the influence of better men, and became eminently useful. In chap. xi. 3 we saw that Jehoash was only seven years old when he was made king; and was good so long as the High Priest lived. Both became energetic men in the service of Jehovah at an early age—Josiah at sixteen was converted, and Jehoash at twenty-three took active measures. They began earlier to exercise an influence for good. We should redeem the time, and become useful as soon as we can. Time is short.

(2) Birth. — His mother was a native of Bozath, in the plains of Judah, of whom nothing is known.

His mother's name was Jedidah, which means "the beloved of the Lord." Names are not a guide to character, nor is it always right to judge the parents by the children. Yet the rule is—although there are exceptions—that when parents do their duty, that the children will be dutiful. Some contend that to that rule there is no exception. If so, what a sad commentary on parental faithfulness is the present state of society! We know, however, that sovereign grace often does overcome parental neglect, and that out of families badly regulated, noble sons and daughters come.

(3) Character. — "He did what was right in the sight of the Lord." The standard by which a life was judged was its likeness to the life of David, and, notwithstanding his defects, he was a model king. Jesus is our model, and as kings and priests to God, we should seek to be like Him. "Turned not aside to the right hand nor to the left." Many temptations of all kinds, and from all sides, come; but we should not regard them, but keep a straight course looking unto Him.

II. The Great Discovery. — This is the central thought in this lesson.

(1) The Occasion. — What we find in ver. 3-7 is related in order to show how the discovery was made. We are informed at more length, and with more regard to chronological order, in Chron. xxxiv. how events transpired. He first began his work by a partial destruction of altars, idols and other idolatrous instruments. He then addressed himself to the restoration of the true temple worship, and much money was collected for repairs in the house of the Lord. That money was put into the hands of honourable overseers, who had the work properly done. It is whilst the High Priest was dealing with this money, in some way not stated, that the Book was discovered. It was an accident so far as men were concerned; but who can look at the results that flowed from it and call it an accident? It was a part, and a very important part, of the divine plan. So are all these things we call chances.

(2) The Book. — It was the Book of the Law, and in Chron. xxxiv. 14 it is said, by the hand of Moses. Some have supposed that it was an original copy written by Moses himself; but, if it were, that would have no special value, although very interesting. It is the Book itself that is of value.

In Deut. xxxi. 26 the command is given that a copy should be deposited by the side of the ark. This may have been thrown aside by Manasseh; or, as the Rabbins say, buried by Ahaz under a heap of stones. It was the Pentateuch, or the five books of Moses.

(3) The impression. — It is not to be supposed that this was the only copy in existence. The prophets were familiar with the law, and Jeremiah and other prophets were then living. But the king, for some cause, was ignorant of it, or of the part that was then read to him, and probably the part read was Deut. xxviii., with its blessings and curses; or, if he had read them before, his eyes were not opened to see them as he now did. How often it occurs that passages read a hundred times before open up to the mind, and make an appropriate impression!

The whole of this book should be as real as this was to him, for it is the voice of God speaking everlasting truth.

The impression upon Josiah was so deep when he heard the threatenings of God's law against the sins of the people that he rent his clothes. That is the spirit in which the Ninevites acted after hearing Jonah's message. So the publican praying in the temple, and so every one who is convicted of sin, and sees the curse to which he is exposed. If the Spirit would descend with power the whole unconverted world would cry out as the three thousand did when Peter preached on the Day of Pentecost.

(4) The effect. — (a) The king at once appointed a commission to wait on the Prophetess Huldah, who dwelt in the second part, that is on Mount Akra, called the second city. She told him that the nation was doomed. It was too late to save it now, but that the king himself would die before the calamity would come because of his humility and penitence and obedience.

(b) He next called an assembly of the chief men of the nation and read the law to them, and entered into a covenant with them to serve the Lord and destroy idolatry. If he had succeeded in inducing true penitence in the people, then they might appeal to the divine mercy; but the national heart was too corrupt, and the calamity came.

(c) He then entered on a crusade against idolatry, and most faithfully and thoroughly did he do the work of destruction and desecration. That is what we need to try to do. If we are honest we shall not harbour any sin in our hearts.

(d) He solemnized the Passover Feast, which lasted for eight days. They had a great religious awakening which was not deep and sincere, or it would have been more lasting. Josiah was slain in battle. He went against the King of Egypt, unnecessarily, when on the way to fight the Assyrians, and fell at Megiddo. He was the best of the kings since David's time, and was the last good king of Judah.