

class, and hence when sittings are held at a high price, the many who cannot afford to pay the sum asked, turn away from the sanctuary, and endeavour to do without the public services of religion. There are the *immoralities of a few leading members*. I say a few. For it must be admitted that by far the greater number of members of our Christian churches are true men—pure in their private and public lives. But it must be also admitted, that there is brought to the surface of society, from time to time, a minority guilty of crimes condemned by the decalogue. And these, like offensive odours rising before a pure spring, keep men away from the House of God. There is *heartlessness in the utterances of the preacher*. What the people want is heart in religion. A man may read from his sacred desk a sermon ever so well written, lacking neither logic for fitting illustration; but if his soul is not in what he says, it falls flat, and the people, after hearing him a few times, turn away like hungry sheep from barren acres.

THE United Presbyterian Presbytery of Edinburgh has agreed to recommend to the Synod, that marriage with a deceased wife's sister shall no longer be a bar to membership in the Church.

THERE is a movement in the south of France, numbering 3,000 persons, calling themselves, "Catholic Free-Thinkers," who want to break away from Roman Catholicism, and call Protestant pastors.

ON Sunday an invalid member of St. Paul's Church, Montreal, while in his house, a quarter of a mile from the church, heard the sermon by means of a telephone, the receiving apparatus of which was attached to each side of the pulpit.

MR. MOODY verifies his avowal that he does not preach for money by refusing a draft for \$30,000 which was sent to him by English publishers of his hymn books. The money, which was due him as a royalty on the sales, has been returned.

REV. GEORGE PATTERSON, D.D., has returned from Scotland where he went some three months ago in the interests of Manitoba and the North-West. The terrible financial collapse in Scotland prevented his doing much for the object he had in view.

LEO XIII., notwithstanding serious obstacles, is successful in achieving some reforms. He is doing what he can to abolish sinecures and to effect retrenchment in expenditure at headquarters. He proposes, moreover, to remodel the entire system of ecclesiastical offices in Rome.

A GAELIC service has recently been instituted in Montreal by the Gaelic-speaking students of the Presbyterian College in that city. It is held in Stanley street Church on the Sabbath afternoon, and is attended by large numbers of the class for whom it is designed. Messrs. Mathieson, McLean and Morrison are the students who conduct it in turns.

A CONFERENCE of leading coloured men in the United States is to be held in Nashville, Tenn., May 6th, next: The objects of the conference are "to consider the situation of the coloured people in the South, relative to the enjoyment of life, liberty and property; also their educational, moral social and political condition and the question of emigration."

LAST week were held the annual meetings of the two largest Presbyterian congregations in England—Dr. Donald Fraser's Church in Marylebone, and Dr. Oswald Dyke's in Regent Square. The total annual income of the former was reported to be £6,300 and of the latter £4,200. The seatholders in Marylebone were 1,140, and the communicants in Regent Square 662. If the financial statement shows merely an external prosperity, it may be hoped that the large and growing membership augurs something better. The congregations however, are served by the two ablest men in the English Presbyterian Church.

THE American Diamond Dictionary, containing 80,000 words, orthography, pronunciation and definitions, according to the best English and American Lexicographers, illustrated with nearly 200 engravings; satisfies the wants of the scholar and at the same time is what a plain learned person needs. It is decidedly the best dictionary ever printed. Contains 700 double column pages. Superbly bound in cloth and gilt. Type clear and handsome. Sent free upon receipt of sixty-three cents to pay actual postage and packing charges. This great offer is good for sixty days only, and made solely for the purpose of introduction. But two dictionaries will be sent to one address. This appears but once. Order now. Send silver, currency or one cent postage stamps. Address at once, NATIONAL BOOK COMPANY, ROCKLAND, MASS.

SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHER.

INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

LESSON XI.

Mar. 16, } DELIGHT IN GOD'S HOUSE. { Ps. lxxxiv
1879. } 1-13

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Blessed are they that dwell in thy house; they will be still praising thee."—Psalm lxxxiv. 4.

HOME STUDIES.

- M. Psalm xx. 1-9 . . . Help from the sanctuary.
T. Psalm xxvii. 1-14 . . . One thing desired.
W. Psalm xlii. 1-11 . . . Longing for Zion.
Th. Psalm lxxiii. 1-11 . . . Thirsting for God.
F. Psalm lxxxiv. 1-12 . . . Delight in God's house.
S. Psalm lxxxvii. 1-7 . . . The gates of Zion.
S. Psalm cxiii. 1-9 . . . The house of the Lord.

HELPS TO STUDY.

There is considerable difference of opinion as to the authorship of this Psalm, but it was most probably written by David when, driven away from his home and throne by the undutiful and rebellious Absalom, he was an exile in Gilead beyond Jordan (Note 1). And what is it that David misses most, what is his greatest loss and deprivation? Not the comforts of his own home, nor the dignities of his crown, but the privileges of God's sanctuary.

We seldom value anything adequately until we lose it. Blessings brighten when they take their flight. The Arctic traveller, amidst the darkness of a Polar night, values the light far more than we do with our bright sunshine. Water is of priceless value in a desert, and so is sight to one who has become blind, and health to one who has lost it. Our privileges are so many, constant, that familiarity with them breeds a kind of contempt. But if once we lost them we would then better appreciate their worth. David in his exile longs for the house and worship of Jehovah, and sets forth in this Psalm his longings for the sanctuary. It consists of three parts:—

I. THE JOY OF THE DWELLERS IN GOD'S HOUSE—Vers. 1-4 and 10.

How amiable. Literally, "dear to the heart." The mind rightly constituted, and in relations with God, will take pleasure in the services of God's house. Tabernacles. Plural form, referring to the various divisions of the tabernacle, and courts surrounding it. Describe them. Lord of hosts. A title often applied to the Almighty, referring to the multitudes of all created beings and things beneath His sway. Fainteth. The Psalmist in a land of strangers, far from the privileges of God's house, in his sorrow and exile, years after the temple more than for his throne. God Himself is all his desire. His soul is athirst for communion and fellowship with God—Ps. xxiv. 8; xlii. 1; Job xxiii. 3.

He piles up words to express the intensity of desire. It is his soul, his heart, his flesh; the whole man. No half-hearted service is his. He longeth, fainteth, crieth out. He envies the sparrows and the swallows, that they can go where he cannot. This, which is a common remark in older commentators, is disputed in later ones; but one of our most observant modern travellers, Dr. Tristram, has actually seen the swallows' nests in the Mosque of Omar at Jerusalem, which stands on the site of the temple.

The Living God. The Israelites loved to think that, while other nations worshipped dead idols, theirs was a living God. Ever let us keep in mind that we have not only a *living God of power* but also a *living Christ of mercy*. My King, and my God. David felt a personal relation to Jehovah, as his Lord; so Paul said of Christ, "who loved me and gave Himself for me." Let us cherish an individual interest in the love and care of our Lord. They that dwell in Thy house. Not only the birds brooding over their young on the beams of the tabernacle, but the priests who served at the altar day and night, and those worshippers who, like Anna in after centuries (Luke ii. 37), spent much of their time in the sacred courts. Still praising. That is, at all times engaged in worship—Rev. iv. 8. Selah. A Hebrew word indicating a pause at the end of a stanza, and, perhaps, calling for instrumental interlude.

In ver. 10 the Psalmist proclaims his love for the house of God above all places, be the time ever so short—One day; be the position ever so humble—a doorkeeper. But it shall be for ever and ever, and we shall be kings and priests unto God.

One day with God is more precious than years without His presence. Doorkeeper. Literally, "I would choose rather to sit at the threshold;" preferring the lowest place among God's people than the highest among sinners. The saint at his worst is more fortunate than the sinner at his best. (1.) He has more happiness. (2.) He possesses more enduring peace. (3.) He has better prospects. Tents of wickedness. As the tabernacle was a tent, this comparison is suggested, rather than "palaces of wickedness."

II. THE JOY OF THE PILGRIMS TO GOD'S HOUSE: verse 5-9—David next pictures the happiness of a journey to the sanctuary, with its services in prospect. Yet their route is not a pleasant one. Whatever the Valley of Baca may be, whether a real or an ideal place, whether a valley of weeping or a valley without water, clearly there is nothing inviting in it. But so happy are the pilgrims that they make it a well, turn bitter tears into a fountain of joy, or find a spring in their own hearts where there is none outside. Moreover, so far from fainting and being weary by reason of the journey, they "renew their strength;" they go from strength to strength; and none of them utterly fail, for every one of them in Zion appeareth before God. (Ver. 7. comp. with Isaiah xl. 30, 31.)

Weakness leaning on God becomes omnipotence. In whose heart are the ways of them. An obscure clause, which has been variously interpreted. One renders it, "In whose heart are the pilgrim ways;" that is, the path over which

the pilgrims journeyed to the annual feasts at Jerusalem. The Psalmist calls to mind the companies filling the roads which led to the House of God, and counts them happy, while he is far away among strangers. Valley of Baca. Otherwise translated, "valley of mulberry-trees," or which seems preferable, "valley of weeping." Perhaps it was a name applied to one of the ravines leading to Jerusalem, which are mostly barren and desolate. A well. "A place of fountains." The faith and love of the pilgrims transform the desert valley into a place of fertility. Some think that the reference is to wells dug by the pilgrims for the needs of their journey, which were serviceable to others who came after them. Thus the children of God become a means of blessing to the world.

In Zion. . . . before God. From the fact that the journey of these pilgrims is represented as ending in Zion and not Moriah, it has been inferred that the psalm was written during the reign of David, after the ark had been brought to Zion, and before the erection of the temple on Mount Moriah. The Psalmist beholds in vision the joyful company of the pilgrims in the court of the tabernacle, while he is far distant in the land of Gilead. God of Jacob. Perhaps in this title there is an appeal to God as the Being with whom prayer prevails. Thine anointed. David, the anointed of the Lord, here prays for mercy and peace, and restoration to the privileges of God's house.

III. THE JOY OF HIM WHO TRUSTS IN GOD—vers. 11, 12.

Finally, David thinks not of himself, not of the pilgrims to Jerusalem, but of the Lord whom he and they love and trust. The eleventh verse is one of the most beautiful and comprehensive descriptions of God in the Bible. He is a sun, giving spiritual light, and warmth, and power, and life; a shield, a certain defence against every foe. As regards spiritual things, he gives grace in this world and glory in the next. As regards temporal things, no good will He withhold. That which seems good to one may prove evil to another, and hence God does not bestow it upon His saints. The Psalmist realized that his trials and deprivations were, after all, for his own good. Trusteth in Thee. Even where we cannot see God's hand, we can enjoy the blessedness of trusting Him. When we know God thus, and find that He is all this to us, then we shall value His house of prayer.

EXPLANATORY NOTE.

1. Upon Gittith (Gathie). Probably a kind of string-instrument in use among the men of Gath, which David and his men were in the habit of using. The Targum gives, "on the harp which David brought from Gath." For the sons of Korah. One of David's Choirs. Korah was grandson of Kohath, and therefore first cousin of Moses—Exod. vi. 16, 21. He perished in the rebellion of Dathan and Abiram—Num. xvi. Heman, the first of the masters of song appointed by David, was a descendant of Korah; and of the twenty-four orders of singers in the temple worship, fourteen were presided over by his sons. Twelve psalms are dedicated to them, as to Asaph. That they were simply intrusted with the arranging and singing of these psalms is highly probable.

VIRGINIA'S bell-punch liquor law has given so general satisfaction that it is to be continued in force another year; the increase of revenue on sales has been twenty-five per cent. during a year.

MEETINGS OF PRESBYTERY.

BRUCE.—In Knox Church, Kincardine, on Tuesday, 18th March, at 2 o'clock p.m.

GUELPH.—In Knox church, Guelph, on the third Tuesday of March at 10 o'clock a.m.

PETERBOROUGH.—A. Port Hope, on the last Tuesday in March, at 11 a.m.

LONDON.—In First Presbyterian Church, London, on the third Monday in March, at 2 p.m.

KINGSTON.—In Chalmers' Church, Kingston, on Tuesday, March 25th, 1879, at three p.m.

CHATHAM.—In St. Andrew's Church, Chatham, on Tuesday the 18th March, at 11 a.m.

BROCKVILLE.—At Edwardsburg, on Tuesday the 18th March, at 7 o'clock p.m.

OWEN SOUND.—In Division street Church, Owen Sound, on March 18th, at 10 a.m.

OTTAWA.—In Knox Church, Ottawa, May 6th, at 3 p.m.

BARRIE.—At Barrie, on Tuesday, 25th March, at 11 o'clock a.m.

MONTREAL.—In St. Paul's Church, Montreal, on Tuesday, 1st April, at 11 a.m. A Sabbath School Conference will be held in the evening, to which all the teachers in the Presbytery are invited.

HAMILTON.—The next stated meeting will be held in Central Church, Hamilton, on the third Tuesday of March, (the 18th), at ten o'clock, a.m.

LANARK AND RENFREW.—The next meeting will be held in Zion Church, Carleton Place, on Tuesday, 18th March, at 1 p.m.

SAUGEEN.—In St. Andrew's Church, Mount Forest, on Tuesday the 11th day of March, at 2 o'clock, p.m.

TORONTO.—On the first Tuesday of March, at 11 a.m. Commissioners to General Assembly to be appointed at 3 p.m.

PARIS.—Will meet in Dumfries street church, Paris, on the first Tuesday of March, at 11 o'clock, a.m.

WHITBY.—Meets at Oshawa on third Tuesday in April, at 11 o'clock a.m.

HURON.—Meets in Clinton, on third Tuesday of March, at 11 a.m.

QUEREC.—In Quebec, on the third Wednesday of April.

STRATFORD.—In St. Andrew's church, Stratford, on the third Tuesday of March, at 9.30 a.m.

GLENGARRY.—Meets in Knox Church, Lancaster, on Tuesday, 18th March, at 1 o'clock p.m. Session Records are ordered to be produced at this meeting.