

ments are being made by the Kingston Presbytery to furnish supply during the winter months.

PRESBYTERY OF OTTAWA.—This Presbytery met on the 3rd instant, when sixteen ministers and four elders were present. Mr. Clark, of New Edinburgh, was appointed Moderator for the next six months. Missionary deputations and deputations appointed to visit augmented congregations gave in their reports. Mr. Caven was appointed convener of the committee on Protestant Education in the Province of Quebec. In connection with Cumberland, it was agreed to defer final action on Mr. Hughes's resignation till Wednesday, the 11th inst., when the Presbytery will hold an adjourned meeting in the church there. The request of the Daly street congregation for leave to change the name of their church, and to be known hereafter as "St. Paul's," was granted. Number one of the General Assembly's Committee's report on Marriage with Deceased Wife's Sister was adopted. On number two, the Presbytery declined to pass any resolution. A motion on the point respecting discipline was laid on the table till the next regular meeting of Presbytery. An overture anent a summer course of lectures in some one of our Theological Colleges to permit students who may volunteer for winter work in the Mission Field to complete their course without loss of time, was presented, received and ordered to be transmitted to Synod, and Dr. Moore and Mr. Armstrong were appointed to support it. The following ministers were appointed to attend the General Assembly in June next:—Messrs. Caven, Hughes, Armstrong, Dr. Moore, Farries and White. Also the following elders:—Messrs. Hardie, Hay, Leslin, Drummond, Dr. Thorburn and Wm. Lough.

MONTREAL NOTES.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

The Crescent Street Congregation (Rev. A. B. Mackay, pastor), have recently taken a new departure in the matter of raising funds. To meet the interest of the debt and all the running expenses of the church, except the minister's stipend, they rely on pew rents, which yield about \$4,500 per annum. The money required for the salary of the minister, and for missionary and benevolent purposes, is raised by means of a weekly Sabbath offering in numbered envelopes, deposited on the collection plates. If the amount obtained in this way exceeds a certain sum, the excess is to be applied to the reduction of the debt on the church property. To raise sufficient for the minister's salary, and as much for missions as was got in 1883, the sum of \$160 per week is required. The new plan went into operation at the beginning of the year, and has thus far proved a gratifying success, the average Sabbath contribution reaching nearly \$200. It is hoped that even this amount may be largely exceeded, so that the debt on the church may be entirely removed in a very few years. In almost every instance where the weekly Sabbath offering by means of envelopes has been heartily adopted and efficiently worked it has been found successful, and the cases are very rare where a congregation has returned to the former method of raising funds. It would be well were many more of our congregations in country districts as well as in cities and towns to introduce this system. The trouble and annoyance often incident to the collecting quarterly or half-yearly of pew rents or subscriptions would be obviated. Ministers could be paid monthly and, in most cases, a much larger amount would be annually got than by any other system where the terms of payment were less frequent. Most of our church members who could and would give twenty-five cents, fifty cents, or one dollar or two dollars weekly, would hesitate were they asked to give twenty-six times the amount in one sum at the end of each half-year.

The congregation of Knox Church (Rev. J. Fleck, pastor), in this city, introduced the weekly envelope system last year, and the managers in their annual report represent it as working satisfactorily, with the prospect of still greater success. In their case there are no pew rents, and the envelopes include contributions for all congregational and missionary purposes. Last year the total receipts were \$5,476, out of which they appropriated \$1,299 for missionary and benevolent objects, and \$200 for the Sabbath school, after meeting the minister's stipend and all current expenses. In addition to this the congregation contributed, by special subscription, \$100 for the Montreal College, and \$310 for Augmentation of Stipends.

The Rev. Principal McVicar, D.D., preached on Sabbath last at the opening of a new church in Richmond, Ontario, part of the charge of the Rev. T. A. Glassford, B.A., in the Presbytery of Ottawa.

A conversazione under the auspices of the Philosophical and Literary Society of the Presbyterian College, was held in the David Morrice Hall on Friday evening. About five hundred ladies and gentlemen were present, representing all the congregations of our Church in the city. The whole of the buildings were thrown open for inspection. During the evening an interesting literary and musical programme in English and French was gone through. The Rev. J. Barclay, M.A., presided. Refreshments were served in the

dining hall. The fine appearance of the whole buildings, especially of the hall, corridor and library, was the subject of general commendation. A most pleasant evening was spent. It is hoped that the conversazione by this Society of our College will become a permanent annual institution. Its effect is decidedly good in bringing together socially the members of different city churches, and in deepening the interest of our people in the work of the College.

The city has recently been visited by the Rev. J. M. Crombie, M.A., from Scotland, who has preached with marked acceptance in several of our churches here. Mr. Crombie has for the last two or three years been assistant minister in St. George's, Edinburgh, and purposes settling in Canada. He visits Toronto next week, preaching in St. James' Square Church on March first.

A series of lectures is being delivered monthly in Knox Church under the auspices of the Presbyterian Sabbath School Association of the city, with special reference to Sabbath school work. The lecturers thus far have been Mr. William Dawson, Rev. G. H. Wells, Prof. Campbell and Rev. Principal McVicar. The attendance and interest have been well maintained.

We have been visited this week by the severest snow storm for the past fifteen years, sadly interfering with railway travel. Unfortunately, this was the week fixed for the visitation of some of the augmented congregations and French fields in the Presbytery. The blocking up of the roads has prevented the deputies from fulfilling their appointments. While the early part of the winter was somewhat mild, we have had continuous cold weather for the past five or six weeks, the thermometer being almost every day below zero. The beautiful ice palace on Dominion Square, remains intact. Far exceeding those of preceding years, it is an object of universal admiration. It may be interesting to many to know that its architect, Mr. A. C. Hutcheson, is an active office-bearer of one of our congregations, a well known frequenter of our church courts and the lecturer on Sacred Architecture in our Theological College here.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.—Dr. Reid has received the following, per Rev. J. F. Campbell: Friend, Huntingdon, \$2; Reformed Episcopalian, \$5; Poor Widow, supporting herself and widowed mother, \$5; Poor Man, as result of above, \$1; A. H. P., \$1.

Sabbath School Teacher.

INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

March 8,
1885.

PAUL BEFORE FELIX.

{ Acts xxiv.
10-27.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"A conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men."—Acts xxiv. 16.

TIME.—May, A.D. 58.

Introductory Review.—1. Relate what occurred on Paul's last visit to Caesarea. 2. Distinguish the Praetorian and Legionary soldiers. 3. How many soldiers accompanied Paul from Jerusalem to Caesarea? 4. Relate the stages of Paul's first missionary tour. 5. What kind of a man was Felix? 6. What is the history of Drusilla.

EXPLANATORY.

The request from the Council that Paul should again be brought down for trial was too late. Paul was on the way to Caesarea, and the Council is requested in turn to go thither to prosecute their case. We can imagine their disappointment and humiliation at the thought of going seventy miles, to appear before a heathen court as prosecutors, instead of sitting in judgment according to their own law.

But they go—accompanied by a Roman advocate, familiar with Roman law—to plead their cause before Felix.

I. Tertullus' address.—The address characteristic of the cause. It is false from beginning to end. It begins with flattery. He praises the governor for worthy deeds, which he never did, and expresses public thankfulness which was not felt. Felix was detested by the Jews.

Thinking thus to ingratiate himself—which is one of the devil's common methods—he proceeds to falsehood. In the indictment there are three charges against Paul; that he was *seditionous*, a *sectary*, and *profaned the Temple*; and one against Lysias: that with great violence he took Paul away from them as they were proceeding against him in a perfectly legal manner.

II. Paul's reply.—It may be viewed *negatively* and *positively*. He begins, as Tertullus did, with a direct reference to his judge, but in a very different spirit. No flattery, but expresses gratification that he is to defend himself before one who has been so long governor as to know the laws and peculiarities of the Jews, and thus fairly comprehend the situation, v. 10. He then answers the charges.

Negatively.—1. *Sedition*. This he directly denies, ver. 12-13. It is only twelve days since he went up to Jerusalem and he challenges them to prove that he was, during that time, even in discussion with any one, in the Temple or synagogue, or city, let alone exciting sedition, and these Jews from Asia (ver. 18), should behave to prove their charges. Let the pupils recall the first attack made upon Paul in the Women's Court.

2. *Profanation of the Temple*. This charge is answered in ver. 11, 17, 18 by the words "for to worship"—"offerings"—"found me purified." All show that Paul did not despise and dishonour the Temple, but actually was engaged in its worship when arrested. This verifies the sincerity of Paul

when he first assented to perform the Nazarite vow. It was *real worship*, that he had in view, not pretence.

Positively.—*Herey*. His answer to the charge of being a *sectary*, passes from the negative to the positive, and leads to the most important part of his address. It is negative, inasmuch as—although he admits that he belongs to the *Nazarene sect*—he denies their interpretation of the word "sect." They mean to charge him with belonging to a party that is separated from, and denies, the true faith. Paul answers that, instead of being opposed to the true religion, it is built upon, and embodies the doctrines, and perpetuates the life of the Old Testament.

1. *So worship the God of my fathers*, ver. 14. In worshipping, God through Christ he was doing as his fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob did. If they had seen God by any other medium than the *Mediator*, He would not be the God Paul worshipped. So our God and worship are the same as those of the sainted Patriarchs; "your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it, and was glad." John 8. 56.

2. *Believing all things which are written in the Law, and in the Prophets*. Paul believed, as Christ taught, that all law and prophecy must be fulfilled—and his endeavour was to prove that in the Nazarene their fulfillment was found.

3. *Slope of a resurrection of the just and unjust*, ver. 15. Paul is more and more forgetting that he is on his defence, and as on former occasions, takes the opportunity of proclaiming the Gospel. There is to be a resurrection, because Christ rose. And it is to be a resurrection of the *just and unjust*. What the effect of that thought may have been on his wicked persecutors, cannot now be told—but the likelihood is that some of them winced at the thought of a Judgment Day. For the terrible distress of the *unjust* on that day, see Rev. 6. 15-17.

But the apostle had "hope toward God, that there would be a resurrection." To the *just*, the resurrection is the brightest point in the future. When body and soul are united, happiness will be complete, and the full reward bestowed to Paul and all kindred spirits.

4. *And herein do I exercise myself*, etc., v. 19. The apostle becomes more practical still. The thought of the resurrection life, has a very direct bearing on this life. "We shall reap as we have sown." "In order, therefore, to enjoy the prospect of that day, he tried to do his duty toward God and man."

"*Conscience void of offence*" i.e., not do that, which will offend conscience, whose office it is to reprove sin.

Exercise myself. Many should say that to live such a life as to satisfy conscience is more easily said than done. To that Paul says "I am at it"—"I exercise myself to reach it." The soldier, or the artist, or tradesman cannot come up to the ideal he has in his mind, but by painstaking application, so the one who will reach a pure and holy life must do so by constant exercise.

5. *Almsgiving*, etc. It is in the line of such duty that he came to Jerusalem with *alms* for the poor of Judea. He had never forgotten this Christian duty of "remembering the poor" in his own poverty and abundant labours.

That was keeping a conscience void of offence toward men.

He then exercised himself in duty toward God, by religiously employing himself in the Temple, and whilst thus engaged was seized by the mob.

III. Decision of the Court, ver. 22. Felix knew more about Christians than the Jews thought he did. He was living amongst them, and knew that they were not the turbulent spirits they were represented to be; "Having more perfect knowledge of that Way." But Felix is not so just as to vindicate the right. He does not want to offend the Council, and, moreover, he has an eye on the "alms" of which Paul spoke, so he postpones the case on the plea that he must see Lysias before the matter is decided. The Jews go home, disappointed, and Paul is kept in easy confinement.

IV. A prisoner of Christ still.—1. His friends have access to him, ver. 23. Old Philip and his daughters will be frequent callers at Paul's quarters, so would all the other Christians vie with each other in ministering to his wants. And every interview would help them to realize that liberty of spirit that cannot be restrained.

2. *Felix and Drusilla*.—It is likely that Paul's bearing won the respect of Felix as formerly of Lysias. He and his wife have an interview about "the faith of Christ." Now can we not see Paul's eye glow as he is trying to make the best of his opportunity and force the Gospel home to the hearts of his two wicked hearers! "He reasons of righteousness, temperance and judgment to come."

Righteousness.—A holy life, what it is, and its advantages. How the wicked past would rise in their minds!

Temperance.—Self control, not our limited use of the word as to drink. It covers all excesses which are to be resisted.

Judgment.—The punishment of that day made the criminal tremble.

Felix trembles.—Drusilla, is perhaps, so wicked as to be beyond impression, but Felix feels, but nothing more. He puts action off, for another time. He thought his wife would laugh at him, or could not bring himself to the point of letting go sin, and laying hold on eternal life.

How often people are satisfied when the minister makes them feel, and yet nothing comes of it. It is of value only when it makes men "exercise themselves in keeping a conscience void of offence toward God and men."

3. *After interview*.—Probably Felix never felt so strongly again. His passion for money got the mastery, and he trifled with Paul, trying to induce him to give money and purchase his release. How plainly he may have hinted his object we cannot tell; but, at any rate, Paul would not indulge the evil passion of Felix, or compromise his own character by bribery.

4. *Left Paul bound*.—The last act of Felix, as he leaves Judea, and gives the reins to Festus, is to leave Paul bound; An injustice to Paul, and for a cowardly purpose. He expected to answer charges when he got to Rome, laid against him by the Jews, and in order to appease their wrath, he leaves Paul bound.