

Church News.

We are thankful for items of Church News from local exchanges, which we would not otherwise see. To insure publication in next issue, they must reach us by noon on Monday. A consideration of items is unavoidable.

The call from Cobourg to Rev. J. Hay, B.A., of Campbellford, has been sustained by the Presbytery of Lindsay. Mr. Hay's induction has been fixed for July 30th.

On their return from a holiday trip Mr. and Mrs. Shearer of the Caledonia manse, were presented with an address and other expressions of good will from the congregation.

Rev. W. D. McKinnon, D.D., formerly pastor of Central Church, Hamilton, and latterly of New York, has accepted the pastorate of the church, Pasadena, Cal., for one year, stipend \$2,500.

At the late meeting of the Presbytery of London, the call from Aylmer and Springfield to Rev. J. B. McLaren, of Canby, was sustained. At the same meeting the call from Appin and Tait's Corners to Rev. R. McIntyre, of Nelson, was also sustained.

The *Stratford Herald* says: "Rev. Peter Wright, B.D., preached an excellent sermon in the Central Methodist church, Sunday evening, on the words 'Christ is all in all.' At the close, Rev. Dr. Griffin gave expression to the pleasure he felt at having Mr. Wright in that church again before his departure for Manitoba, and prayed that God's blessing would accompany him."

This attention of our readers is directed to the announcement of Woodstock College, in our advertising column. The new Principal, Mr. W. H. Huston, M.A., is an experienced and successful teacher, and the College, under his management, may be relied upon to give satisfaction to its patrons. Parents and guardians in quest of a good boarding-school for their boys could not do better than correspond with Mr. Huston.

At a meeting of the trustees of the Woodstock Collegiate Institute, on June 27th, the resignation of Mr. George S. Rauchen was accepted and he was relieved of his duties. Mr. Rauchen was the first Head Master of the old Woodstock Grammar school, established in 1833. He has therefore been a prominent figure in that town about forty-five years. On the appointment of the present Principal, he was assigned to the mastership of the classical department, which he has filled for the past five years. He has thus in the capacities of Principal and Classical Master been connected with the institution, from which he now retires, nearly half a century. Mr. S. Rauchen has long been connected with Presbyterianism in Woodstock, and is personally well known to many readers of the REVIEW in all parts of the country. They will follow him with good wishes in his retirement.

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.
REPORT ON STATE OF RELIGION.

FOLLOWING are extracts from the Report on the State of Religion presented and adopted at the late General Assembly.

I.—THE ELDERSHIP.

Three questions bear upon the functions of the elders. The substance of the replies furnished indicate with regard to the first of these "That the Elders 'perform their duties in prayer meetings,' etc., with commendable and efficient fidelity, and that, in general, they have 'districts assigned to them,' the families in which they visit with regularity, especially in connection with the seasons of administering the communion. Exceptions are noted noted. All elders are 'assisted with a sense of their official duty.' All do not realize their privileges, whether as individuals or as office-bearers. But in the majority of the reports there is no 'uncertain sound.' The conviction deepens from year to year that the strength of Presbyterianism depends to a degree well nigh incalculable, upon the earnest, persistent 'works of faith and labours of love' discharged by our noble army of Elders."

Comparatively few Sessions report that they held special prayer meetings for blessing on the congregations; but this practice appears to be on the increase, and nearly all speak of devoting attention to this subject at the ordinary meetings of Session. Wherever this duty is upheld the reports speak of the beneficial results, alike as regards the services of the pastor and the edification of the people.

Of cases in which, as expressed in one of the returns, "elders are only elders in name, not in life or in service," the most discouraging is that of a Presbytery within the bounds of the Synod of Montreal and Ottawa, which reports as follows:—"The elders do not perform their duties as they should. Only three Sessions of those reporting can be said to do all that is required of them. In a few cases one or two attend the Sabbath school and prayer meeting, but in more cases, even that is not done." Another Presbytery within the same bounds reports its "fear that very few have regular systematic visits from the elders." On the other hand, one Presbytery in the Maritime Provinces says:—"In almost every return evidence is given of the interest manifested by the elders in prayer meetings, Sabbath schools, and the visitation of members under their care, as well as the sick, aged and infirm. This report speaks of 'two Sessions sending in returns, though destitute of a settled pastor—returns not a whit behind any of the others in their record of faithful work done in the past, and cheerfulness of outlook for good work in the future. In one of these fields a series of special services was planned and arranged for, with the most gratifying results.' This is as it should be. In cases where glaring dereliction of duty is reported, it seems to your Committee that some action, in the part of the Assembly is called for, with the view of rendering more emphatic the conviction of the Church with regard to the value of the services that can be rendered to the cause of Christ, where elders are faithful to their official vows, and in the discharge of those duties for the performance of which experience abundantly demonstrates their competency."

II.—ATTENDANCE AT RELIGIOUS SERVICES.

(a) On the Sabbath almost uniform answer is "well," or "remarkably well." One of the reports from a Presbytery within the Maritime Provinces says:—"The terms employed in speaking of the attendance at religious services on Sabbath are almost, without exception, of a most encouraging character. There are probably few, if any, localities in this or in any other land in which the sacred Day of Rest is better observed, outwardly at least, than within the bounds of this Presbytery." The Report of the Synod of Montreal and Ottawa speaks in equally cheering terms, "except in winter in some congregations" of one of the Presbyteries, "where many men are away in the woods." From the scattered reports of Sessions which have come into the hands of your Committee similar testimonials could, in well nigh every instance, be presented. The conclusion seems warranted that the pulpit is by no means losing its hold upon the regard of the people, and gives no token of ceasing to be operative over their life. "The Spirit of God," to quote from our noble Shorter Catechism, continues to "make the preaching of the Word an effectual means of converting and converting sinners, and of building them up in holiness and comfort, through faith unto salvation."

Like remarks may be made with regard to the communion services, at which, on the whole, the attendance, both absolute and relative, to the numbers on the communion roll, would appear to be steadily increasing in some cases remarkably—on the increase. This is not the fact, however, at least generally, with the attendance at the weekly prayer meeting. Rarely does any report use a stronger expression than "fairly good," and cases are mentioned of congregations here and there which have no prayer meeting. The report of one Session in the Maritime Provinces gives the noteworthy presentation of "four prayer meetings on Wednesday evening, two cottage prayer meetings, and a Young People's Sunday morning at 10 a.m., say 300 attending in all these." This congregation, need hardly be said, is conspicuous for the devoted character of its elders, and goes far to substantiate the statement contained in the report of the Presbytery to which this congregation belongs, that "a working Eldership is the backbone of Presbyterian vigour and development." By comparison with former years, the tone of the reports as to prayer meeting attendance may be characterized on the whole, as hopeful. But much remains to be done ere this "means of grace" can be said to occupy the position in the organization of our system warranted by its importance.

III.—THE FAMILY AND CONGREGATION

(a) As to family worship in the household, the returns leave us very much in the dark. The answers are vague. It is not possible to form any definite or even approximately accurate estimate to what extent this time-honoured custom is observed. It is quite certain that in very many households it is neglected. Might it not be to edification did your venerable Court take two steps: (1) To issue a pastoral letter of which family worship should be the theme; and (2) To appoint a committee to prepare a manual containing a lectionary (with the passages of Scripture for every day either indicated or printed at length), together with suitable hymns and prayers for family use? The circulation of such a manual, stamped with the approval of the General Assembly, and containing say, prayers for every day in the week or month, would, your Committee venture to believe, effect not a little towards securing a larger measure of regard among our people to the practice of family worship.

(b) As to Sabbath observance, while the day is spoken of generally as being well, or fairly well, kept, according to the majority of the reports, there is, in most cases, some evil to be complained of. Thus, "Cheese and butter factories to which Protestant farmers persist in sending their milk," "supplying milk for the city," persons who "do not scruple to go fishing on Sabbath," "walking and driving for visiting and pleasure," "needless travel and traffic on the Government railway," and "on the railway in general," "Romanist laxity of observance" with its influence; these and similar facts are commented upon in a majority of the returns. Here it may be permitted to be noted that, after encountering much difficulty, the Presbytery of Halifax, Nova Scotia, was largely instrumental in securing the passing of a resolution by the Provincial Legislature at its last meeting which will most materially strengthen the hands of the law-abiding throughout that Province in their efforts to conserve this sacred heritage. The indications are hopeful. It is believed, that the mind of the age is being aroused to a sense of the grave importance of Sabbath keeping to the welfare of our communities temporally, as well as in view of their spiritual and eternal interests and life.

(c) With regard to the teaching of the Shorter Catechism in our Sabbath schools, the testimony is, with hardly an exception, in the affirmative. The exceptions are cases in which, owing to unavoidable circumstances, these schools are of the class termed "Union," and where, accordingly, no distinctive theology is imparted. But these are on the decrease. The reports as to "memorizing the Word of God" are in a satisfactory. Thus, one says: "The Golden Text in Sabbath school is the most that is memorized, we suspect, and that is not always well done." When to this is added the fact that in families the "grand old practice," as one Presbytery report terms it, of teaching the Shorter Catechism is not attended to as it should be, or even "that the Sabbath school work interferes with family effort," that "the principle of 'division of labour' is being applied in practice to this as to every other department of life," "all the more need arises," to quote from the same report, that no pains be spared to render the Sabbath school efficient. If parents will neglect their duties and forfeit their privilege of leading their children in the "Four an' o' iving waters," in the Church with regard to the value of the services that can be rendered to the cause of Christ, where elders are faithful to their official vows, and in the discharge of those duties for the performance of which experience abundantly demonstrates their competency."

(c) and (d). On the subjects of liberality and the increase of a missionary spirit, the truly reliable information, it seems to your Committee, is that furnished by the statistical returns, by a comparison of the

year's financial results and number of persons devoting themselves to missionary work with the doings of former years. In general, be it said that, while the answers vary, the tone of the reports is hopeful, and in some cases highly encouraging. Missionary meetings, W. F. M. Societies, W. H. M. Societies, monthly visits of collectors, mission bands, a most special attention at prayer meetings, the circulation of missionary literature—in one instance, the Elders taking each some field or department and preparing a short address on the subject monthly, these and the like are among the methods employed to foster the spirit of obedience to what have been termed "the Church's marching orders." "Go ye unto all the world," etc., it may be hoped that of all this activity the fruits will prove increasingly abundant. (To be continued.)

OBITUARY.

REV. SIMON C. FRASER.

THIRTIETH passed away quietly at his residence, Brandon, on the morning of June 4th, last, the venerable Rev. S. C. Fraser, at the mellow age of 84 years. Deceased was born in Aberdeen, Scotland, in the year 1804. For a while he pursued a journalistic career, at one time being editor of the *Aberdeen Courier*. In his thirty-third year he came to Canada, since which time he has occupied pulpits in Megantic, Renfrew, Thorold and Hamilton. He was stationed at Renfrew for upwards of twenty years, during which time he was clerk of the Presbytery and inspector of schools under the old system. He leaves surviving him, of his family, two daughters and three sons. Of the former Miss Annie Fraser attended at his bedside until the last moment. The other daughter is residing in Ontario, the wife of Dr. Hill. The sons are A. C., the present mayor of Brandon, George V., of the firm of Gibson, Fraser & Webb-Bowen, of Winnipeg; M. S., who up to the time of his father's illness, was pursuing his medical studies in Montreal. One son, W. J., died during the reverend gentleman's lifetime, in the midst of what promised to be a brilliant college career, having taken ill while pursuing his studies in Germany. Rev. Mr. Fraser before coming to Ontario, laboured in New Brunswick, where he occupied the chair of Principal of the High School of St. John's. He took his degree of M.A. in Aberdeen University. The funeral services were conducted, in the presence of a large company, by Rev. Alex. Urquhart and Rev. A. B. McTavish.

MEETINGS OF PRESBYTERIES.
CALGARY.

A *progre nata* meeting of the Presbytery of Calgary was held at Calgary on the 26th of June. Mr. J. McLean of Great Village, Nova Scotia, being present was invited to sit and deliberate at the meeting. Mr. J. C. Herdman, the Clerk of the Presbytery intimated his desire to resign this office as well as that of Convener of Home Mission Committee. After discussion it was agreed that no immediate action be taken regarding Mr. Herdman's resignation of the convener'ship, but that he be relieved of the duties of the clerkship. Mr. McLeod was appointed to fill the vacancy. Letters of transference were read from the Toronto Presbytery in the case of Mr. Robert Johnston a recent graduate of Knox College, who was taken on trials for license on leave of the Synod. The trials being sustained, Mr. Herdman who occupied the chair, engaged in prayer, and in the name of the Great Head of the Church and by authority of the Presbytery licensed Mr. Johnston to preach the Gospel. After an appropriate address, arrangements were made for the ordination service in the evening. At the afternoon sederunt matters pertaining to Home Mission work within the bounds of the Presbytery were discussed and encouraging reports presented by Messrs. Deeks, Moffat and Clarke, student-missionaries who were present. In the evening Mr. Johnston's ordination was proceeded with. Mr. McLean conducted the opening devotional exercises and preached from 1 Cor. xii. 47. Mr. Herdman having asked and received satisfactory replies to the questions prescribed for such occasions, engaged in prayer, during which by the imposition of hands, Mr. Johnston was ordained to the work of the Gospel ministry. The clerk briefly addressed the minister, after which Mr. McLean pronounced the benediction.—A. J. McLeod, Clerk.

KINGSTON.

Met in John street church, Belleville, on Tuesday the 2nd inst. The attendance of members was small—only nine ministers being present. No Elder put in an appearance. Mr. M. W. McLean was chosen Moderator for the next six months. A deputation from the mission staff of Montreal, Lonsdale and Shannonville appeared, asking that the hours of service in that field be defined. It was decided that service be held every Sabbath forenoon at Melroe, and every alternate Sabbath afternoon at Lonsdale and Shannonville, at such hours as may be deemed most suitable. Permission was granted by the General Assembly to take Mr. James Rattray, B.A., on trials for license on the understanding that he appears before the authorities of Queen's College for examination on the work of the third year in Theology. Permission was also given to place the name of the Rev. T. G. Smith, D.D., on the roll of the Presbytery. Standing committees were appointed for the ensuing year. The Home Mission report was presented and read by Mr. McLeod, Convener, from which it appeared that Mr. John A. Snodgrass had resigned his appointment as ordained missionary at Conception and Hillier, on the ground of ill-health. His resignation was accepted, and another designated to the field. Mr. John McKinnon, M.A., B.D., was appointed ordained missionary to Roslin and Thurston for a period of two years. There are, at present, eleven missionaries employed within the bounds, four of whom are ordained. The Convener was authorized to secure the services of a student to labour in Haliburton county during the summer. Messrs. Houston and Gracy were appointed to arrange for the dispensation of ordination at the mission stations in the eastern section of the Presbytery; and Messrs. McLean and Gray to make similar arrangements for the western section. A special meeting of Presbytery was appointed to be held at

Kingston, in Cooke's church, on Tuesday the 30th inst., at 3 o'clock p.m., to take Mr. Rattray on trials for license.—A. Young, Clerk.

WINNIPEG.

A SPECIAL meeting of the Presbytery of Winnipeg, was held in Knox church, Winnipeg, on the 4th of June. Mr. McFarlane was appointed Moderator *pro tem*. Messrs. Fraser and Craig gave the reasons which had induced the congregation of the North church, Winnipeg, to secure lots for their new building south of Brixton street, and after discussion, it was moved by Dr. Agnew, seconded by Prof. Hart, and agreed, that the Presbytery change the limits assigned to the North congregation from Pritchard street to Selkirk street and that the Presbytery approve of the purchase of the proposed lots. Rev. Mr. Bryden handed in his resignation of the congregation of Selkirk and Little Britain. It was agreed that the demission be laid on the table, and the congregation cited to appear for its interests at the next meeting of the Presbytery. Drs. Bryce and Duval reported in regard to their visit as a deputation of the Presbytery to Selkirk. The report was received and adopted, and the deputation thanked. The committee appointed to examine Mr. Richard Weir, of Halimoral, applying to be received as a student of theology, reported that they had examined him in Calderwood's Moral Philosophy, in Latin and in Greek, and that the result of the examination had been satisfactory. The Presbytery was notified of the Rev. David Anderson's acceptance of the call to Springfield, and it was agreed that his induction take place in the Springfield church, on Tuesday the 25th of June, provided that certain conditions which have been imposed upon the congregation be fulfilled. It was agreed that Prof. Hart preside at the induction; that Rev. James Hamilton, preach; that John Hogg, address the minister, and Rev. Joseph Hogg address the people. Prof. Hart intimated that he had received news of the death of Rev. S. C. Fraser, one of the fathers of the Church, resident in Brandon. The clerk and Prof. Hart were appointed a committee to draft and forward a letter of sympathy with the bereaved family; and the Moderator called on the Rev. John Hogg to lead the Presbytery in prayer with reference to the death of Mr. Fraser.—ANDREW B. BAIRD, Clerk.

STAFFORD.

A SPECIAL meeting was held on the 21st ult., for the purpose of hearing Mr. Wright's decision regarding the call addressed to him by the congregation of Portage la Prairie. Mr. Wright was heard and having intimated his acceptance of the call it was agreed to grant his translation, and the Clerk was instructed to inform the Clerk of the Presbytery of Brandon of the decision. It was also agreed that Mr. Wright should preach his farewell sermon on the 14th July. Mr. Tully was appointed to declare the pulpit of Knox church, Stratford, vacant on the 21st, and Mr. Turnbull was appointed Moderator of the Session during the vacancy. Messrs. Hamilton, Tully, Stewart and M. Ballantyne were appointed to prepare a minute and report on Mr. Wright's removal.

A regular meeting was held on the 9th inst., in Knox church, Stratford; Rev. John Campbell, Moderator. Mr. Campbell's term of office having expired, Rev. W. M. McKibbin, M.A., was appointed Moderator for the next six months. Rev. Mr. Drummond, of Newcastle, being present, was invited to correspond with the Presbytery. The Presbytery took into consideration the case of Burns church, Milverton, against Mr. Joseph Brydone, ex-treasurer of that congregation. It was resolved that "The Presbytery having heard the delegates from the congregation of Milverton, and the ex-treasurer's books, is of opinion that the session and congregation of Milverton, together with assessors of Presbytery to be appointed, should take the matter into their care and proceed with the case in conformity to the laws of our Church, and adopt such measures as may seem to them required to secure justice in the case." Extract minutes of the General Assembly were read; Harrington and Brookdale, showing that Brookdale should pay \$15 to Harrington; that the arrangements made in 1880 be set aside, and that application be made for a supplement to Harrington. The committee appointed to prepare a minute and report on Mr. Wright's removal reported as follows:—"In agreeing to the translation of the Rev. R. Wright, B.D., from Knox church, Stratford, to Portage la Prairie, in the Presbytery of Brandon, we, as a Presbytery, desire to place on record an expression of our sincere regret at the removal from the midst of us of a dear brother, who for the last nine years has been actively associated with us in Presbyterian work and who has always manifested a deep interest in advancing the Redeemer's cause, not only in the large and important congregation over which he has been pastor, but also in other congregations within the bounds of the Presbytery. Mr. Wright's able and energetic services in the cause of Temperance are well known in the Church at large, he being for the past five years the convener of the General Assembly's Committee on Temperance; but it may not be generally known that he has always been ready to apply his varied excellent gifts in helping forward every good work for the intellectual, moral and spiritual benefit of the community around, as well as for the building up of the Church. In parting with our dear brother we would desire to follow him with our prayers that our kind Lord and Master may accompany himself and his family on their long journey, take them in safety to their new home, and make him eminently successful in winning souls to Christ and edifying believers in his new sphere of labour. We would also express our sincere sympathy with the congregation of Knox church in losing a pastor to whom they so deeply loved, and we hope that the Lord will soon send to them one who shall lead their souls with the bread of life." Mr. Turnbull called and obtained leave to moderate in a call in Knox church, Stratford, when it was agreed to do so by the congregation. Mr. Pantou was appointed Moderator of Tavistock session, and was instructed to take steps for the election of elders in Shakespeare. The Presbytery then adjourned to meet in Fularton, on the 9th September at 7:30 p.m., when Mr. Chrystal is to read a paper on "Exemptions from Taxation."—A. F. TULLY, Clerk.

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