

nothing more interests me more than Christ's gracious attitude towards the morally degraded and the hope he cherished in regard to them." In explanation of my question I told Professor Bruce that, as so many loosely regard him as "very broad," I wanted to make clear the nature of his breadth. "My breadth," he rejoined, "largely takes the form of protest against the legalism that is associated with Evangelical piety, my desire being to get back to the true evangelism. More and more I make it my business in preaching and writing to exhibit to my fellowmen the grace of Jesus Christ who viewed even the worst of men as capable and worthy of being redeemed. Most of my texts are taken from the gospels. Having got certainty of religious conviction through the gospels, I lay great stress upon the value of the historical element in Christianity as the test of what is healthy and true in all contemporary presentations of it. I bring every phase of Christianity—philosophical Christianity, church Christianity, pietism which is subjective Christianity—to the touchstone of the gospels."

In reply to a question as to theological drifts in Scotland, Professor Bruce said "In the Established Church there is a decided tendency towards sacramentarianism. The movement is apparently associated with intense orthodoxism—an acceptance of the teaching of the church as final. In the Free Church theological life, while dominated by the spirit of faith and reverence, is freer and perhaps more untrammelled than in any other religious community. In the United Presbyterian Church there are indications of a revival of theological interest in connection with which I may mention the name of Professor Orr, author of *The Christian View of God and the World*. No, I don't notice any marked anti-supernatural tendency. Pfeiderer when here was listened to with attention and respect, but I do not think his views found much acceptance."

"Whom do you regard as the coming men in Scotland on theological and literary lines?"

"In the Free Church James Denney will without doubt make his mark as theologian and scholar. Another interesting young writer is H. A. A. Kennedy, D. Sc., of Callander, who has published a book on the Sources of New Testament Greek. In the Established Church I regard with much interest and hope William P. Paterson, B.D., professor of systematic theology in Aberdeen University, and Alexander Kennedy, professor of Hebrew in Edinburgh University. Among the men in the United Presbyterian Church who may do good service are D. W. Forrest, M.A., of Wellington Church, Glasgow, who follows Professor Orr as Kerr lecturer, and Adam C. Welch, B.D., of Helensburgh, whose work is of high quality."

"What does your experience suggest as to how hard working ministers can keep up their studies?"

"I have learned how much a man can accomplish in a twelve month by doing a little every day. A great deal of reading, and writing too, can be done by the utilization of one's odd hours and half hours. Goethe says time is endlessly long, and Matthew Arnold, commenting on that, tell us that, if we would only make use of the hours we waste, we might all attain a high measure of culture. I find that now with less strength I can do far more work in a day than I did as a young man, simply because I make a more diligent use of my opportunities. I think," smiling, "one of the besetting sins of ministers is laziness."—*London Correspondent of The Congregationalist, Boston.*

The Victoria Regia water lily now in bloom at the Botanical Gardens is the largest plant ever seen in London. It covers a surface of 400 square feet, its leaves being 7 feet in diameter.

There is a church at Moscow which cost \$4,000,000. Of that sum \$1,000,000 was for gold used in plating the dome.

## Missionary World.

REV. JAMES NISBET.

The following extract from the sketch of our missions to the Indians in the North-West, by Professor Baird, just published, will be read with interest, because of its being of the pioneer of all our missionaries and mission work among a people passing slowly, it may be, but surely away.—[Ed.]

James Nisbet was a native of Glasgow, and came with his father and other members of the family to Canada in 1844. In the same year he began his attendance on classes in Knox College and continued to attend for four years, completing his course in 1849. Immediately thereafter he spent some time as agent of the Sabbath School Society of Montreal, but he was in 1850 ordained as minister of Oakville, between Toronto and Hamilton, and continued in that charge, a laborious and successful minister, till the date of his removal to the North West, twelve years afterwards. Missionary interests had already taken a firm hold upon him. His brother Henry was a missionary in Samoa and he himself, during the later years of his ministry in Oakville, was in the habit of spending a considerable part of every winter in visiting spiritually destitute parts of Ontario, lying within what are now the bounds of the counties of Simcoe, Grey and Bruce. Such was his aptitude for this work, and such his success in it, that it was more than once proposed to set him free from his pastoral charge that he might give his whole time to mission work on the frontier. During these years the Presbyterian Church of Canada was feeling its way towards the establishment of its first foreign mission. The slowness and caution exhibited by the Synod (then the supreme court of the Church), and the manifest absence of enthusiasm, read somewhat strangely now, although these events belong to the same half-century as that in which we are now living. Urged on by appeals from the Rev. John Black, of Kildonan, the Synod in 1857, in response to an overture from the Presbytery of Toronto, approved the establishment of a mission among the American Indians, and thereafter for the next ten years each Synod endorsed the proposal and till the tenth year did nothing more. It was only in 1866 that an actual beginning was made and Mr. Nisbet, who had already for four years been helping Mr. Black, in the Red River Settlement, carried his headquarters five hundred miles further westward along the course of empire. If the interest taken in the mission by the Canadian Church as a whole needed a good deal of urging, there was some compensation in the keenness of interest shown by the Red River people. The settlement gathered at the Kildonan Church to bid the missionary good-by with many prayers, for him, his companions and his work. An address was presented to him, and contributions in money and kind, amounting to about £100, were given to assist in establishing the mission. This little hamlet, hundreds of miles away from the nearest town, whose Presbyterian settlers had asked in vain for forty years for a missionary, and who had now been blessed in the life and work of the Rev. John Black, were anxious to see the good work carried to the regions beyond. Elaborate preparations had been made and the caravan set out for the prairies of the Saskatchewan, prepared to build houses and kill game for food, as well as to teach and preach. The mission party consisted of ten persons, and included, besides Mr. and Mrs. Nisbet and their child, helpers of various degrees, the two chief being Messrs. George Flett and John McKay. Mr. McKay was to be farm manager and superintendent of buildings for the mission. Mr. Flett was to be interpreter and was at this time on his way eastward from Edmonton and was to meet the party at Carlton. They set out with eleven carts and a light wagon on the 6th of June, 1866, and after the many vicissitudes and delays which are inevitable in a country where the carts had to be formed into rafts at the crossing of every considerable stream, and where the horses had to be turned loose every night to forage for themselves, they reached Carlton, on the North Saskatchewan, 500 miles from their starting point, in 39 days.

## PULPIT, PRESS AND PLATFORM.

Ram's Horn: When ever God's help is needed the Christian should believe that God is there to help.

J. H. Shorthouse: It is not easy to ruin him with whom the pressure of Christ's hand yet lingers in the palm.

Arthur Helps: It is with advice as with taxation; we can endure very little of either, if they come to us in a direct way.

The Interior: The biggest fool on earth is the "practical" politician and the business man who "never mixes religion and trade."

Charles Reade: Not a day passes over the earth but men and women of no note do great deeds, speak great words, and suffer noble sorrows.

Principal A. M. Fairbairn: Particular churches with their specific politics, do not break the unity of the Catholic Church visible, while their faith and love constitute the unity of the invisible.

United Presbyterian: Common suffering brings the sufferers nearer to each other; the bonds of sympathy thus formed are among the most enduring. To the descendants of Israel the time of captivity was the time of re-union.

Presbyterian Witness: The English speaking world wants a religion based upon the pure Word of God and saturated with the spirit of well ordered freedom and progress. Think of the Anglo-Saxon race in bondage to Italian monks with their enchantments and precious old bones!

Ram's Horn: Nature has no statutes of limitation. Time does not liquidate its bonds. The casuist who congratulated himself that Providence blessed his Sabbath labor as his week-day toil, was reminded by a Christian neighbor that "God does not always settle his accounts on the first day of November."

Christian Intelligencer, N.Y.: Read God's Word, study God's Word, preach God's Word. No other words abide, no other words convict the conscience, no other words edify the soul, no other words show man his sin and his Saviour, no other words have regenerating grace and sanctifying power.

Dr. Alex. Maclaren: The one condition of the Christian churches doing their Christian work is that they shall be clothed and filled with God's spirit. Do not let us rely on machinery; do not let us rely on external; do not let us rely on advertising tricks which might do very well for a cheap shop, but are all out of harmony with the work that we have to do; but let us rely on this, and on this alone.

Rev. Andrew Murray: We believe too little in the power of prayer to bring about definite results. We do not live close enough to God, and are not enough entirely given up to His service and kingdom to be capable of the confidence that He will give it in answer to our prayer. O, let us pray for a life so one with Christ that His compassion may stream into us, and His spirit be able to assure us that our prayer avails.

John Charlton, M.P.: If the structure of Hebrew Society and the Hebrew State is compared with that of other ancient States, the superiority of the Hebrew is at once seen to be immeasurable, and if some of the provisions of the Mosaic code were incorporated in our own laws, some of the most serious difficulties that confront us in the present day, would be avoided. Moses was the king of legislators. The spirit of the institution which he founded was copied by Cromwell, and by the Puritans, and has leavened and given form to the laws of England and America.

## Teacher and Scholar.

BY REV. W. A. J. MARTIN, TORONTO.

Oct. 20th, 1895. } RUTH'S CHOICE. { Ruth i., 14-22.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Ruth i. 16.  
MEMORY VERSES.—16-17.  
CATECHISM.—Q 79

HOME READINGS.—M. Ruth i. 1-22. T. Ruth ii. 1-23. W. Ruth iii. 1-18. Th. Ruth iv. 1-22. F. Isa. xi. 1-10. S. Mat. ii. 1-11. Sab. Mark x. 17-30.

Sometime during the rule of the Judges, probably about Gideon's day there arose a sore famine in Israel, so sore that some, even of those who were faithful to God, went out of the land of promise to seek their living elsewhere. Among these was one Elimelech, who with his wife, Naomi, and their two sons went to the land of Moab. Though surrounded with idolaters, and though the sons married Moabish women, this family kept the love of God in their hearts, and when, in the providence of God, the father and both the sons died, Naomi's heart so thirsted for the living God that she set out for her old home at Bethlehem. According to Eastern customs her daughters-in-law went with her to see her a short distance on her way, and when the parting place was reached both refused to part with her. Lovingly Naomi urged them for their own sakes to go back to their own homes, doubtless longing at the same time that her advice should be unheeded. Orpah thought of her earthly prospects and went back, but Ruth had learned to love and reverence both her mother and her mother's God, and forgetful of herself, deliberately made choice to go on. Orpah made choice of the things which are seen, to her eternal loss; Ruth made choice of the things which are unseen to her eternal gain. Let us consider *Ruth's choice* and its consequences.

I. *Ruth's Choice*.—Naomi's heart was no doubt touched when Ruth clave unto her, and she desired to know the grounds upon which that action was taken; therefore she reminded Ruth of what Orpah had done, making special mention of her people and her gods to whom she had returned. Ruth soon made clear that her choice did not spring from mere impulse. With the vehemence of her love she cried, "Intreat me not to leave thee." Her choice had been deliberately made. Naomi's poverty she would share. Naomi's burdens she would carry. Naomi's people shall be her people, and Naomi's God shall be her God. Surely that choice was an all embracing one. Ruth did not make it without sufficient knowledge. She knew that in making it she had, humanly speaking, sacrificed her earthly hopes. Poverty and friendlessness would likely be her portion, a childless life, and an unnumbered death in the midst of a strange people, yet that choice she deliberately made doubtless because she had learned to know Naomi's God and felt that to follow Orpah would be to sacrifice eternal hopes. Ruth's choice was of Jehovah to be her God, counting the privations and hardships which would accompany that choice as nothing. It is an example of the choice we are called upon to make every day. God in preference to the pleasures and joys and wealth which this world offers, what shall our choice be?

II. *Its Consequences*.—We have scarcely a hint of these in our text, but our teaching would be sadly deficient were we to say nothing about these. Jesus Himself told His apostles that there is no one who gives up aught of the things of this world for His sake and the gospel's who shall not receive reward both in this life and in the life to come. We need to have the advantages of a right choice pointed out for our encouragement. The return home of Naomi and Ruth must have been rather an unpleasant experience, for the latter particularly. Bethlehem was only a small place and the family of Elimelech had been one of note, so that when Naomi returned in poverty and bereavement, it set the tongues of the gossips going throughout the whole town. They (the women, for the form of the Hebrew verb is feminine) came about the new arrivals with curious, prying eyes and wondering questions. "Is this Naomi?" Then in addition to the pain this must have caused to the shrinking Moabitess, she had to listen to the querulousness of Naomi, who bemoaned her sorrows, while at the same time she acknowledged their justice. So often to the young Christians there are unpleasant things to face. If only, like Ruth, they can receive them calmly and bravely take up the service they have chosen, like her, they shall find joy and reward in serving. Through her desire to minister to the needs of her aged mother-in-law Ruth was ready to endure even the gibes of the gleaners and reapers. But through her fidelity she won the loving regard of Boaz, who determined to perform for her a kinsman's (goel's) duty and so took her to wife. Thus Ruth received her recompense in this life—a noble husband, loving friends and true-hearted children, and from her as His ancestors sprang the world's Redeemer. Thus Ruth was not without earthly rewards for the choice she made that day in the border lands of Moab. But, after all, her highest rewards were in herself. The assurance she possessed of God's love, the peace of conscience which was hers, her joy in the communion and fellowship of God's people, and her increase in the things which pertained to Jehovah's people, would in themselves have been more than sufficient recompense for all she had given up, even though her earthly lot had been what she anticipated at the time when her choice was made.