

more the lives of our modern missionaries to tell their congregations about them. The views expressed seemed to meet with general assent. The conference closed Thursday at noon, Prof. Watson giving the last lecture in the form of answers to questions put in.

Mention should be made of the debate on the single tax held Wednesday evening. Rev. Salem Bland, and Rev. M. Craig, of Oakville, supported single tax, and Prof. Shortt replied. The audience was decidedly against the single tax theory.

The alumni before leaving settled the next year's programme. It is a very satisfactory one, and the members are already looking forward to it with interest. Mr. Begg continued his lectures on "The New Life in Christ" for the benefit of the students.

OF PRAYER ON PUBLIC WORSHIP.*

One of the greatest defects in our form of worship lies in the excessive length of the prayers generally offered. The express command of our Saviour, regarding the length of prayer, seems to be wholly disregarded, and the words not being few, are too frequently not well chosen. Instead of consisting of ascription of praise to God, confession of sin, and the offering of petitions, they become diffusive, discursive, and often times sermonizing. The attention of the worshipper is sometimes called to watch, with something of apprehension, whether the leader of his devotions will be ably successfully to escape from the entanglements of some long and involved sentence, or will fail in the attempt. Ordinary worshippers complain greatly of the undue length of our public prayer, and confess to inability to maintain due attention, while strangers to our forms are, to say the least, not attracted by this feature in our service. The remedy is simple, and if our prayers were shorter, more numerous and more specifically confined to special subjects, the advantage to minister and people alike would be very great.

The question is sometimes asked whether it might not be expedient to have some liturgical form of prayer. This is a wide subject and gives rise to a diversity of opinion. Any suggestion even of such a thing is usually met with the cry that it is not Presbyterian. Those who raise this objection forget, what is often overlooked, that Presbyterianism is neither an order of service nor a system of doctrine, but a form of government. They display ignorance of the fact that the use of liturgies is a very ancient custom, so ancient indeed that expressions from some of them have found their way into the received text of the Scriptures, and that in Scotland, for upwards of 100 years, a liturgy was in daily use. They seem unaware that Knox had much to do with its preparation, and that many godly men were much attached to it. It must be remembered that the historical opposition in Scotland was not to a liturgy but to a particular one. The Scottish liturgy, or Book of Common Order, permitted, or indeed expressly enjoined, extempore prayers, or "conceived" prayers, as they were then quaintly called, to be offered by the minister at certain places in the service. That several churches holding the Presbyterian system use liturgies to this day seems to be unknown to many Presbyterians, and while they allege that the use of any set form of prayer is unscriptural, they condemn such churches as the Waldensian, the Moravian and the Dutch Reformed. One thing is certain, that if we want of a liturgy has lost thousands of members to the Presbyterian Church. Our service is too much dependant on the gifts of one man, and our people, confessedly, have too little part in public worship. When a church is provided with a liturgy its members can meet together for worship, at home or abroad, in the absence of a minister, and many who would not venture to offer extempore prayer could yet use

a liturgical service with propriety and advantage. In many places and at many times, public worship is celebrated by means of the use of the liturgy of the English Church when otherwise it would never be performed, and many Presbyterians who have lived abroad or been in foreign service by land or sea, have thus become familiarized with it, and on their return home have not renewed their connection with our Church. Those who have travelled somewhat can bear testimony to the truth of this, and to the fact that a continual drain on our members is thus going on. So much is this realized that the Presbyterian churches in Britain have unitedly established services on the Continent of Europe, during the season of travel, at points most frequented by tourists. Some of the older Presbyterian divines suggested the propriety of ministers sometimes writing out prayers and reading them. It is to be presumed that our ministers premeditate the subject and order of their public prayers, and to some extent commit them to memory. Such being the case, it is difficult to understand what objection can be raised to any minister preparing special prayers and reading them. The duty of a minister is to conduct the prayers of others, and it is submitted that the use of a carefully prepared manuscript prayer would be greatly for the benefit of the congregation. An avoidance of repetition, of an irreverent use of God's name, and the insertion of dogmatic statement, sometimes of a questionable accuracy, would be secured, and probably the fact that prayer is petition might be more likely to be remembered.

It must be regarded as unfortunate that the antipathy of Presbyterians against prelacy and popery, should have led them to deprive themselves of these rich stores of devotional assistance which are found in many of the ancient and modern liturgies, and which have no necessary connection with one or the other. The conclusion arrived at by many thoughtful persons in liturgical and non-liturgical churches is that, a union of the dignified and reverential forms of ancient prayer, with the use of free prayer, would be superior to any existing methods.

APPROPRIATING MISSIONARY CONTRIBUTIONS.

MR. EDITOR,—Writing in a recent number of THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN, it is asserted by "One of the King's Children," that it is "high time that the question of dividing the funds collected in the different congregations for schemes of the church were discussed." It is very doubtful if any practical good would result from the discussion of this question. What is needed is not discussion, but the practical application of missionary principles, and the prayerful cultivation of the spirit of missionary giving in all our congregations.

It is evident that feelings somewhat strained do at present exist in certain quarters touching the respective claims of missions especially home and foreign. This ought not to be, and is unworthy of any of the members of the great Presbyterian Church. On the one hand, the needs and claims of Home Missions are clearly and forcibly presented by pen and voice from time to time, by the Rev. Dr. Robertson, the energetic and unwearied superintendent of missions for the North-west. On the other hand, the claims of Foreign Missions are in a most interesting and inspiring manner brought before the Church by our highly esteemed Foreign Mission secretary, the Rev. R. P. McKay. As an illustration of this I only need refer to his "Leaflet series for Young People's Societies," issued in catechetical form, three numbers of which have been issued. They are simply charming and highly instructive. Why should the superintendent of missions for the North-west, and the Foreign Mission secretary be held up by some as if they were antagonistic to each other, when they are honestly seek-

ing to accomplish in the very best possible manner the work assigned them by the General Assembly of our Church? Would that more of us did our work as faithfully and diligently as these honored servants, then there would be less of the spirit of fault-finding. Whatever misgivings may prevail, certain it is, the blame does not rest either with the superintendent of missions for the North-west, or with the Foreign Mission secretary. Probably a study of the reports of the Assembly's Blue Book may throw a little light on this subject. Not a few of the congregations are reported as paying from \$1,000 to \$1,700 towards stipends. That they are paying too much, I do not for a single moment wish to be regarded as thinking; what I desire to direct attention to is, that these same congregations are reported as contributing from \$125 to \$400 towards all the other schemes of the Church. What is the inference drawn? One of two things: the amount paid towards stipend indicates wealth in these congregations capable of much more being done for missions than is being done; or if not, the amount paid for stipend is altogether out of proportion to the amount paid to the other schemes. When one of the King's Children declares that, "No congregation is doing the right thing that does not send for the definite spread of the gospel in heathen lands dollar for dollar that they spend on self to maintain gospel ordinances," the fact that the claim made for Foreign Missions, holds equally good for Home Missions is lost sight of. And to speak of "this piece of humbug in theory" and that congregations sending nothing to Foreign Missions have no right to sing, "Jesus shall reign," etc., breathes, to my mind at least, rather of the Pharisee than the Christian spirit. What is specially needed is that we who are ministers should see that the claims of the various schemes are faithfully presented to our respective congregations, and seek at the same time to impress upon the members of churches that all their givings should be made a matter of prayer and conscience.

JAMES A. BROWN.

FOREIGN MISSION FUNDS.

MR. EDITOR,—Will you allow me to draw the attention of your readers to a few facts:

1st. That the General Assembly's estimates are, for this year, \$71,118 for the General Fund and \$44,273, for W.F.M. Society work.

2nd. That the funds of the W.F.M. Society cannot be applied to the work carried on by the General Fund. It is for women and children.

3rd. That if congregations in making their appropriations lean upon what the W.F.M. Society are doing and do not deal generously with Foreign missions, we shall certainly have a deficit and serious embarrassment.

4th. That last year we were saved from a deficit by a legacy amounting to nearly \$12,000. No such legacy has come this year and we have by new appointments largely increased our responsibilities.

5th. That the work in our mission fields is steadily growing, and if we are to gather in the fruits of our own labors, we must increase the staff from year to year. To go back and withdraw missionaries would certainly not be creditable—would be an intolerable reproach to the Church. These points are often repeated, but are not yet recognized by many congregations. We simply ask an equitable distribution of funds, having due regard to every other scheme of the Church.

R. P. MACKAY.

Sitting room was at a premium last Sunday night in Chalmer's Church, Woodstock, when Dr. Mackay gave the second of his addresses to young men on the subject "The Young Man Who is in Demand." "I look," said Dr. Mackay, "for a time when our young men will be all consecrated, our business purified, our politics Christianized, our poor made to feel that they dwell among brethren, righteousness in our streets, peace in our homes, and an altar at every fireside—I look for this because I believe in the power of the Holy Ghost."

Teacher and Scholar.

BY REV. A. J. MARTIN, TORONTO.

Mar. 20th, 1896. REVIEW. (Luke i. Luke xii.)

CATECHISM—Q. 30-32. GOLDEN TEXT.—Luke xii 8. MEMORY VERSES.—Ps. 2.

HOME READINGS.—M. Luke i. 1-80. T. Luke ii. 1-3, 38. W. Luke iv. 1. v 39. Th. Luke vi. 1, vii. 50. F. Luke viii. 1, ix. 50. S. Luke ix. 51, x. 42. Sab. Luke xi. 1, xii. 59.

As usual it seems that the line of reviewing to be followed with most profit is that suggested by our golden text. We remember what the man born blind, whose sight had been restored by Jesus, said in answer to the question "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" "Who is He, Lord, that I might believe on Him?" So when we are called to confess Jesus before men, the most natural thing is to ask, Who is He? In the twelve lessons of the quarter we have twelve "cartoons," each presenting this Jesus to us in some striking and instructive aspect. The first lesson shows us that this Jesus is the fore-announced of God. From the gates of Eden onward we find Him promised; all the Prophets spoke of Him and were in some measure forerunners of Him, and their "going before" found its culmination in John Baptist, the Divinely prepared forerunner. This Jesus must be some great one indeed come with a mighty purpose to be so heralded. The second lesson shows us that this Jesus is one who has passed through all the stages of development and experiences incident to human life from childhood up to full manhood. He is thus fitted both to be an example and a helper to us. The third lesson shows us that Jesus far transcends in excellence and power all His forerunners. In His presence John forgot everything save that before him stood the "Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." So should we never forget the peculiar excellence and glory of this man Christ Jesus. The fourth lesson presents us with Jesus' own estimate of the work assigned Him by God. He was anointed to preach the glad tidings of deliverance and eternal life, and to show men the foundation upon which his proclamation is founded, viz: His self-offering. Lesson five gives us an illustration of the power of this Jesus to forgive sins and to heal of all infirmities. Thus we see in Him the one fitted to do for man everything man requires for restoration to God. In lesson sixth Jesus claim as to the authority of His word and the importance to men of His receiving and acting upon it is plainly set forth. A mere lip profession can avail nothing, it must reach to the heart and the life. Lesson seventh shows Jesus again as Lord over all things, for even disease and death in obedience to His command let go their victims. The eighth lesson shows us Jesus tender and compassionate and earnest to give the very best gifts within His power to them who sought Him. The poor woman and the ruler of the synagogue both came for a temporal blessing, but were led on step by step both to desire something better and to believe to the saving of their souls. Lesson nine exhibits Jesus as intent on not merely finishing His own work, but laying strong and firm the foundations upon which His disciples could proceed, that through them the work might be carried on to completion. Lesson tenth shows us this Jesus loyal to the Word of God, and making that Word glow again with new life and new meaning. The word of the truth had long been known but its spirit was first made clear by Jesus. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." He showed to be a command whose observance is not conditioned upon who is our neighbor, but upon a heart filled with neighborliness. Then what encouragement do we find in lesson eleven, as Jesus appears before us with those promises of blessing to be bestowed in answer to prayer. And what comfort and incentive to earnestness and faithfulness do we derive as we regard Jesus as the coming one. Thus we see Jesus as the long promised of God, as the example and helper of man, as the preacher of good tidings, as the healer of diseases, as the Saviour of souls, as the interpreter of truth, as the answerer of prayer, as the returning Lord—as the One dominated through all by the intense desire to accomplish the Father's purpose. Shall we not then confess that he is our Lord?

The Rev. Alexander McMillan, of St. Enoch's Church, Toronto, lectured in the South Side Presbyterian Church, Toronto, on Tuesday, March 18th. The lecturer gave a minute and very fascinating description of the origin and development of religious life in Scotland, and in a specially interesting manner spoke of the important facts to be gleaned from the ruins and relics of buildings and places in the historic town of St. Andrews. There was a very large attendance, and every one greatly appreciated the lecture.

* Extract from a paper on Public Worship, prepared at the request of the Toronto Presbyterian Council by Mr. Wm. Morimer Clark, Q.C., chairman of the Board of Management of Knox College.