

**PRESBYTERY OF SARNIA.**—This Presbytery held its regular meeting in Forest, on Tuesday, March 9. Rev. R. W. Leitch was appointed Moderator for the next six months. Rev. Hector Currie, minister, and Mr. Alex. Gilliland, elder, were appointed representatives of the Presbytery on the Synod's committee on bills and overtures. Reports of deputations appointed to visit congregations, and hold missionary meetings, were received. The Presbytery expressed satisfaction with the same, and noted for special pleasure the intimation of an increase of salaries in the case of the Watford and Adelaide congregations. A communication was received from the congregation of Petrolia, in answer to a citation in regard to the supply of Marthaville by Rev. Mr. McLintock; in terms of said communication, Presbytery agreed to let matters remain there as they are till next ordinary meeting in June. Rev. Mr. Tibb, Convener of the Presbytery's Committee on Temperance, gave in a report which was received and adopted, and the thanks of the Presbytery given to the Committee—especially to the Convener, who was instructed to transmit the report to the Convener of the Synod's Committee on that question. Rev. Mr. Tibb, in the absence of Rev. John Thompson, read an excellent report on the State of Religion, which was received. The Presbytery expressed regret that so few sessions had responded to the circular on that question, and the Convener was instructed to communicate with the said sessions, and request them to transmit answers for the formulating of a report to be transmitted to the Convener of the Synod Committee on the State of Religion. Rev. Mr. Currie, Convener of the Presbytery's Home Mission Committee, gave in a report from the 1st of October, 1885, to the 1st of April, 1886. It was agreed to receive the report and consider its recommendations. It was agreed to press for \$4 per Sabbath for Forest, instead of \$2.50, as granted by the General Assembly's sub-committee in October last; to ask for \$50 for Mandamin, in the event of the Marthaville arrangement falling through, after June next; to ask \$150 for Corunna and Mooretown; and to ask for \$300 for Oil Springs and Oil City. On motion of Rev. Mr. Currie the Presbytery agreed, after hearing the report of the deputation appointed to visit the congregation of West Williams and North-East Adelaide, in regard to Augmentation, to recommend the Home Mission Committee to place the above congregation on the supplemented list, and ask \$150 per annum. It was further agreed that the Convener of the Presbytery's Home Mission Committee be instructed to secure a student for each of the Home Mission fields, and ask for a grant of \$2 per Sabbath for the mission field of Sombra and Duthel Church; and further, that the Home Mission committee of the Presbytery be instructed to take into consideration the cost of supply of mission fields, and report to the Presbytery at a meeting to be held during the meeting of the Synod in Sarnia, in April next. In the evening a missionary meeting was held, addressed by Rev. Messrs. Anderson, Currie and Cuthbertson. The Presbytery elected the following delegates to the General Assembly: John Leet, George Cuthbertson, and Robert Hume, M.A., John Anderson and J. S. Lothead, M.A., ministers; Robert Rae, Thomas Gordon, William Bryce, William Cole and Macdougall, elders. The committee appointed to draft a deliverance in regard to the remits of the Assembly gave in a report which was received and adopted, and ordered to be entered in the minutes of the Presbytery. The Presbytery agreed by a large majority to recommend the continuance of a lectureship, instead of the appointment of a professor in Knox College. The next ordinary meeting was appointed to be held in Sarnia on the 29th of June next, at nine a.m., in St. Andrew's Church there.—GEORGE CUTHBERTSON, Pres. Clerk.

**PRESBYTERY OF GLENGARRY.**—The quarterly meeting of this Presbytery was held on Tuesday, the 9th ult., the Rev. John Matheson, Moderator. There was a full attendance of members. The Presbytery proceeded to the appointment of a permanent Clerk in the room of the late Mr. Lang. The Rev. Mr. Fraser, after a very feeling allusion to the loss the Presbytery had sustained in the death of Mr. Lang, who, by his marked ability and steadfast attention to the duties of Clerkship, had done such good service in the Presbytery, and who had also, by his courteous and obliging manner, endeared himself to all its members, proposed as his successor the Rev. Mr. Burnet, of Martintown. This motion was seconded by the Rev. Mr. MacLennan, of Kenyon, and unanimously agreed to. The Convener of the Presbytery's Home Mission Committee was enjoined with the Clerkship, as had formerly been the case. On motion of Mr. MacLennan, seconded by Mr. Mackenzie, Dr. McNish and Mr. A. Macgillivray were appointed a committee to draw up a minute in reference to the lamented death of Mr. Lang. A call from the congregation of Alexandria in favour of the Rev. David McLaren, of Toronto, was presented and read. The call was stated to be a most hearty and harmonious one. It was signed by thirty-five communicants and sixty-three adherents, and was accompanied by a guarantee of stipend for \$500 and a manse. Messrs. J. Wilson and H. Munro appeared in prosecution of the call, which was unanimously sustained and ordered to be transmitted to Mr. McLaren. A call from the congregations of St. Luke's, Finch and South Finch in favour of the Rev. Donald Stewart, of Wallacetown, signed in all by 122 communicants and 112 adherents, was presented. The guarantee of stipend is for \$750, and there is also a manse. Messrs. W. McElhern, J. McMillan and M. McLean appeared as commissioners from the congregations in support of the call, all testifying to the heartiness and unanimity of the people in the matter. The Presbytery unanimously sustained the call, and directed that it be transmitted with relative papers to the Presbytery of London. The Rev. J. A. Murray, of St. Andrew's Church, London, and the Rev. A. Urquhart, of Dunwich, were appointed to appear before that Presbytery in the prosecution of the translation of Mr. Stewart: the former in behalf of the Presbytery of Glengarry and the latter in behalf of the congregation of Finch. Rev. Mr. Fraser reported in behalf of the deputation appointed to visit East Lancaster, from which it appeared that that congregation is now in a position to call a minister, being able to offer a

stipend of \$500 and a manse. Messrs. McNown, Conde and McVehie, representatives from that congregation, explained their present circumstances and asked for a supplement of \$250. On motion of Mr. Macgillivray, seconded by Mr. Cameron, the Presbytery resolved to accede to their request, and to recommend their application to the consideration of the Augmentation Committee. Leave for moderation of a call was granted to the congregation of Dalhousie Mills. The committee appointed to consider and report as to the appointment of another professor to Knox College, Toronto, recommended "that the Presbytery do not nominate, and further express their belief that the lectureships hitherto in practice, in addition to the regular work of the Professors, had better in the meantime be continued." The recommendation was unanimously adopted. Rev. J. Matheson read a report of the Presbytery's Sabbath School Convention held at Williamstown on the 16th and 20th January last, with the contents of which the Presbytery expressed much satisfaction. Reports were given by deputations appointed to visit the supplemented congregations, all of which testified to the prosperity and zeal of these congregations. In the case of Summerstown, it was intimated that they had agreed to increase their minister's salary by \$25, and by so much lessen their claim upon the Augmentation Fund. Alexandria had also increased its contributions by \$50. The following were appointed commissioners to the General Assembly: Ministers, by rotation, Revs. W. Ferguson and J. K. Bailie; by open vote, Revs. Dr. McNish and A. Matheson; elders, Messrs. I. R. Ault, W. J. Scott, G. Elder and Alex. McMillan. On motion of Mr. McLennan, Dr. Burns, of Halifax, was nominated for the Moderatorship of the General Assembly. The remits sent down by the General Assembly were next considered, and returns adopted in regard to them. Mr. Fraser gave in the report of the deputation appointed to visit the congregation of Knox Church, Lancaster. The report was of a very encouraging nature, and was unanimously received and adopted by the Presbytery, thanks being accorded to the committee for their diligence. Mr. McLennan, Kenyon, read and handed in the report of the committee on the State of Religion. The report was received and its recommendations adopted. Mr. Calder read and laid on the table the report of the committee on Temperance, which also, on motion duly seconded, was received and its recommendations adopted. The Presbytery resolved to petition the Dominion Parliament against making any such modification of the Scott Act as would allow the sale of wine and beer. Messrs. Calder and Macgillivray, the Moderator and Clerk, were appointed to prepare and forward the petition. The following were appointed as the Presbytery's Home Mission Committee:—Rev. J. S. Burnet (Convener), J. Fraser, J. Matheson and J. McKenzie. The next meeting of Presbytery is to be held at Alexandria, on Tuesday, July 6 next, at eleven o'clock a.m.—JOHN S. BURNET, Pres. Clerk.

#### OBITUARY.

THOMAS A. ANDERSON.

At the comparatively early age of thirty-seven Mr. Thomas Anderson has passed away. He was a native of Portsoy, Scotland, where in his father's establishment he was trained to journalism. Coming to Canada in 1874 he was for a time connected with the *Ottawa Free Press*, and subsequently a *Hanover* reporter. He engaged in several journalistic ventures in Western Ontario, making warm friends wherever he went. After the *Chatham Tribune* ceased publication Mr. Anderson was for a time connected with *THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN*. From this office he went to the *Quebec Mercury*, on whose staff he continued till his death.

Mr. Anderson was amiable in disposition and possessed of sterling qualities, which commanded the esteem of all who knew him. He was a genial and facile writer, and possessed the poetic gift in high degree. The Rev. Dr. Wardrop, in conducting the funeral services paid a graceful and well deserved tribute to his worth.

## Sabbath School Teacher.

### INTERNATIONAL LESSONS

April 18, 1886. } THE FIRST MIRACLE. } John 2. 1-11

GOLDEN TEXT.—"This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth His glory; and His disciples believed on Him."—John ii. 11.

#### INTRODUCTORY.

Let us not forget that these are the first days of our Saviour's ministry, which makes every word and act peculiarly suggestive. His first invitation to Andrew and John, "come and see," represents His attitude to mankind. His words to Peter show His ability, rightly to place men in His economy. His command to Philip shows the Christian's relation to Himself. His promise to Nathanael shows the glory to come.

And now we come to the first miracle, which illustrates the purpose for which He came to this world—to transform everything in life into something richer, larger and more heavenly. May the transformation rapidly progress in our own hearts whilst we apply ourselves to the study of the truth.

#### EXPLANATORY.

I. **Jesus at the Marriage.**—Cana, the village in which the marriage took place has not, with absolute certainty, been identified, but it is supposed to have been four or five miles north-east of Nazareth.

It was on the third day from the calling of Philip, so that at that time they walked the eighty or ninety miles from Bethany to Nazareth. When they arrived the mother of Jesus was there, and upon their arrival Jesus and His disciples were immediately called. Nathanael was a citizen of Cana and known to the family. The other disciples were called as His friends.

(1) *Sanctifies social life.*—He created us for social life. Asceticism is a perversion of nature. But our social life should be hallowed only such conversation and amusement and conduct as would be consistent with His presence. Holy joy is richer and deeper than joy that is unholy.

(2) *Consecrates marriage life.*—That he should begin His work—especially perform this significant first miracle at a marriage ceremony is very suggestive. The great transformation that He is to effect must reach the very foundation of society—that is the family—must go back of that even, and guide in the choice of husbands and wives—which is the beginning of a consecrated home. All the selections and joys of life should have their inspiration in the endeavour to please Him.

II. *In the Time of Trouble I will Deliver Thee*—A difficulty arose which to us seems slight, but to them would be extremely mortifying. The laws of Eastern hospitality demanded an abundance of provisions that, according to our customs, would not be indispensable, nor would failure of supply be at all so disagreeable. It may be that the arrival of Jesus and his friends—unexpected guests—caused the failure.

(1) *Mary's appeal.*—She manifests her own womanly consideration by feeling distressed on account of the family perplexity. She, it is commonly believed, was a relative. She came to Jesus quietly and told Him the difficulty. There has been much discussion as to what her motive was—whether she hinted that He and His disciples should break up the company or that He should work a miracle. The probability is that she had nothing definite in her mind; but had learned by many years' experience in the home at Nazareth that He was a wise counsellor—could find solution for difficulties when every one else failed, and had believed that He could do so now. How far the memory of all the wonderful things and prophecies about His birth and life enabled her to understand Him and expect miracle, as interposition none can tell. But she did the right thing—in a time of trouble—go and tell Him.

(2) *His answer.*—"Woman, what is there to Me and thee?" This is a gentle rebuke—it is an intimation to Mary that she did not understand Him—that He has passed away from the relation in which He used to stand to her; has entered upon His ministry and now all things are to be done as directed by the Father.

"*My hour is not yet come.*"—The exact time for the performance of the miracle had not come, although in a few minutes it did come—just as in chap. vii. 8, He said the time had not come to go up to the feast, although it came soon after. Thus all the obedience of Christ, who came not to do His own will but the Father's, was exactly on time—not a second the one way or the other. Let us wait patiently on Him, for He will not tarry.

This correction given to Mary has been much dwelt upon against the Roman Catholic doctrine of Mary's sinless nature.

(3) *Instructions to the servants.*—Whether Mary understood Him or not, she did not feel discouraged or lose faith because of his apparent refusal. She told the servants to do whatever He might tell them. That is the manner of true faith—makes preparation for the expected blessing. It lays hold on the promise and knows it will not fail.

III. *The Miracle Wrought.*—There were standing in the court six water pots that contained two or three firkins a piece. A firkin is equal to nine gallons, so that each of these stone vessels was very large, containing from eighteen to twenty-seven gallons. They were a family necessity because of the frequent washings of the Jewish law.

(1) *Fill them.*—That is the first command, which was at once obeyed. Any water that was already in the pots was first removed, and then they were filled to the brim—in all from 108 to 162 gallons. That is an illustration of the bounty of God's providence. There is enough and to spare in our Father's house. The abundance becomes more ample as we rise into the possession of the highest blessings.

(2) *Draw out now.*—This is the second command and in the interval between these two the miracle was wrought. How unobtrusive! Godlike! The ruler of the feast, i.e., the president of the banquet, was astonished at its excellent quality. He asked an explanation of the bridegroom—saying that it was contrary to the usual custom to keep the best wine to the last. Ordinarily, the best was used first, when taste was keen, and then the inferior quality would not be unpleasant.

Of course the presence of Christ settles for ever the question of any excessive drinking at that feast. He would not have been there nor ministered to it, if that were so.

How wonderful a miracle it was! What an illustration of the power of Christ! He causes the vine to grow and develop the grape and produce the wine. So every process in nature is the result of His wisdom and power. But this shows us that He is not confined to one method. He could produce the wine without this process. He could bring about in endless other ways all the results so marvelous in our eyes. "How unsearchable His judgments, and His ways past finding out."

*Best last.*—That is a good illustration of Christ's, in contrast to the world's, method. He gives us trial and labour and sorrow and tears here, but as time passes life gets richer in spiritual things, and at last a crown of glory that fades not away. The world gives all its good thing at first. Its pleasures and enjoyments gradually die out, men get surfeited, they lose the power of enjoying them, and there is nothing left but a dreary, comfortless, hopeless eternity. Christ came to ennoble life, to elevate our conversation, our thoughts, our social intercourse, our service, our whole life—to convert water into wine.

#### PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

1. It is a blessed wedding at which Jesus is a guest.
2. Family troubles may begin early, but He can supply every need.
3. The end of such a family will be to see the glory of Jesus.
4. Do not give up to Satan anything that can be consecrated to Christ.
5. The love that made wine for the good of man would abstain from wine for the same cause.