

address was accompanied by a purse containing the handsome sum of \$107, which was handed to the recipient by Mr. Wm. Akitt. Mr. Fraser said a few words in reply, heartily thanking the donors for their valuable gift and kind address, and expressing the hope that the tokens of deep spiritual interest, already shewing themselves in the congregation, might become more manifest, and that all might be found more earnest and active in the time to come. A delightful evening was spent over the contents of the well-filled baskets, with which the ladies had come provided, and in listening to an impromptu concert, in which, in addition to local talent, a large part was borne by Mr. Robert Haddon, of Knox College, whose admirable rendering of several recitations drew forth great applause.

THE new manse for the congregations of First and Second Chinguacousy (Mayfield and Claude), which has been under construction during the past season, has lately been completed, and is now occupied by the pastor, the Rev. R. D. Fraser, and his family. It stands on the glebe lot of five acres, close to the village of Claude. The building is of red brick, with arches over doors and windows, and bases and caps of chimneys of white brick, and with Caledon freestone door and window sills; two storeys, with cottage roof. The ceilings are ten feet high, both on ground and first floors, and the study, drawing-room, dining-room and hall, are finished with rich cornice and centre pieces. The rooms are eleven in number, and are so arranged that the entire house is easily heated. The congregations have shewn a laudable desire to have the new manse both elegant and comfortable. Now that it is finished it holds its own well among the several handsome residences in the community. The total cost of the building is \$2,500, which is divided equally between the two congregations, and which will be paid in full at no very distant date. These congregations are now exceedingly well equipped in regard to buildings, the brick churches and the large school-halls and sheds, built during the late pastorate of Rev. R. Croll, now of Simcoe, being equal to those belonging to any country congregations in the county.

THE ordination and induction of the Rev. David Y. Ross, M.A., Presbyterian minister appointed to the charge of Westport, Newboro', Morton and Delta, took place in the church at Westport on the 29th inst. The Presbytery of Brockville at its last meeting delegated several of their number for this purpose. Some of these, however, were unable to be present. At four p.m. the ordination service took place, conducted by the Rev. J. Richards, of Lyn, and the Rev. George Burnfield, M.A., of Brockville. At the conclusion of the service the newly ordained minister was conducted to the door and heartily welcomed by the people. In the evening a welcome tea-meeting was held, which was largely attended and heartily enjoyed. Mr. E. Siler, of Morton, was unanimously called to the chair. Highly interesting and instructive addresses were then given by Mr. W. H. Friedenburgh and Mr. Hastings, of Westport; Mr. John Driffin, of Newboro', the Rev. Mr. Richards, Rev. Mr. Burnfield and the Rev. David Y. Ross. A choice selection of music was at intervals rendered by the choir, Mrs. Webster presiding at the organ. On account of the occasion of the meeting pleasant recollections of it will remain. The people have expressed the warmth of their feelings to their new pastor and his amiable partner by many kindly deeds as well as words. That the Lord may prosper him in his work is the prayer of many.

THE annual meeting held in connection with the Sabbath-school of Haynes' avenue Presbyterian Church, St. Catharines, on the evening of Dec. 28th, was one of unusual interest. The house was filled to the door, there not being sufficient sitting room to accommodate all, as a number were present from the various congregations in the city. The programme was varied and interesting throughout. The first part of the programme consisted of singing, readings, etc., by the Sabbath school children. Tea was then served, and after singing a hymn, the Rev. George Burson, of Knox Church, and the Rev. Mr. Schuelor, of Hamilton, addressed the meeting with much acceptance. At this stage of the meeting the superintendent presented Mr. C. E. Hamilton with an illuminated address, on behalf of the Haynes' avenue and Merriton congregations, expressive of their regard and appreciation of services rendered by Mr. Hamilton. To

this Mr. Hamilton suitably replied, and was followed by short addresses from Mr. Aiken, of Winnipeg, Mr. Hamilton's future partner, Mr. A. T. Fotheringham, of Merriton, and Mr. Alex. Urquhart. In Mr. Hamilton's departure from this city the churches lose one of their most active workers, and his loss is much regretted by all, having become a general favourite with all denominations, his labours having been abundant, and not confined to any one denomination. The report read by the superintendent in connection with the school was very encouraging. The school has contributed this year to the schemes of the Church over \$40.

THE past two Sabbaths witnessed a new stage in the history of Presbyterianism, in the township of Hope. The old church at Perrytown, which had been erected about thirty five years ago was vacated, in order to enter the new building which the congregation has just erected in Garden Hill. It was decided to open the new and handsome edifice and to dedicate it to the worship of God on the last day of the old year and, to continue dedication services on the first day of the new year, in order that the year (1881) might mark the inauguration of the church. Hence, the congregation made efforts to secure Sabbath supply for these two Sabbaths, and success crowned their efforts by the services of four Presbyterian ministers having been secured. Rev. W. Armstrong, M.A., of Ottawa, preached the first sermon in the new church, to a very large audience. The text was Luke vi. 5, "For He loveth our nation and hath built us a synagogue." This was followed in the afternoon by Rev. R. J. Beattie, of Port Hope, who preached from Luke xv. 10, and by Rev. R. F. Beattie, M.A., of Baltimore, in the evening, from Hebrews ii. 3. On January 2nd, the Rev. Mr. Hunter, of Parkdale (Toronto), preached two appropriate sermons. The church was crowded at all the services, and the discourses were listened to with rapt attention. The soiree on the evening of Christmas day was very largely attended, many being unable to gain admittance. About \$300 was realized by the soiree and collection. The new church cost about \$4,000.

SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHER.

INTERNATIONAL LESSONS

LESSON III.

Jan. 16. } THE PROPHECY OF ZACHARIAS. { Luke i. 1881. } 67-79.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"The dayspring from on high hath visited us."—Luke i. 78.

HOME READINGS.

M. Luke i. 56-66. The Birth of John.
Tu. Luke i. 67-69. The Prophecy of Zacharias.
W. Gen. xvii. 1-14. Circumcision.
Th. Ps. lxxxix. 1-24. The Horn Exalted.
F. Ps. cxi. 1-10. The Fear of the Lord.
S. Gen. xxii. 1-18. God's Oath to Abraham.
Sab. Mal. iii. 1-10. The Forerunner Foretold.

HELPS TO STUDY.

Zacharias, receiving the prediction of the angel (see Lesson I.) with incredulity, was struck dumb, and continued in that condition until that prediction was partly fulfilled in the birth of his son.

The episode of Mary's visit to Elisabeth intervenes, with the hymn of pain which formed the subject of Lesson II.

Luke, in his opening chapters presents us with three remarkable Christian songs: (1) The Song of Mary (*Magnificat*), (2) The Song of Zacharias (*Benedictus*), (3) The Song of Simeon (*Anc Dimittis*). Praise to God for the coming of Christ, and for the great salvation which He came to work out, forms the burden of all three.

It is with the second of these that we have to do in our present lesson. It was the first utterance of Zacharias after the restoration of his speech, and it consists of two sentences—the first (vers. 68-75) having reference directly and entirely to the Saviour's advent; the second (vers. 76-79) beginning with a direct address to his own child, and containing a prediction of that child's destined office, but recurring irresistibly to the great subject which occupied the mind of the venerable priest, the manifestation of Him whose shoe-latchet John the Baptist should not be worthy to unloose.

Under the following headings the lesson may be pretty thoroughly analyzed: (1) *The Promise of Salvation*, (2) *The Nature of Salvation*, (3) *The Announcement of Salvation*, (4) *The Dawn of Salvation*, (5) *The Effect of Salvation*.

I. THE PROMISE OF SALVATION.—vers. 67-73. Most of the expressions used by Zacharias in this hymn can be traced to the Old Testament. He repeats the words of the ancient prophets, with probably a clearer understanding of their meaning than these prophets themselves possessed. Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost. If so, then his words were inspired. See Num. xi. 25; 2 Sam. xxiii. 2; Joel ii. 28.

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel. The same form of words may be found in several places in the Old Testament, such as 1 Kings i. 48; 1 Chron. xxix. 10; Ps. xli. 13, etc. The word "blessed" translated into Latin gives

to the hymn the name *Benedictus*, by which it was known to the early Christian Church.

For He hath visited and redeemed His people. God can speak of the things that are to be as if they already were, and so can a prophet speaking in God's name and by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Even as far back as Psalm cxi. 9 we find redemption spoken of in the past tense. God's promise is as sure as actual possession. It is thus that Old Testament believers were saved.

And hath raised up a horn of salvation. Those animals that have horns have them for purposes of defence and attack. On this account the horn was used figuratively by the Hebrews as a symbol of power or strength. See Psalm cxxxii. 17; 1 Sam. ii. 10; 2 Sam. xxii. 3.

House of His servant David. See 2 Sam. vii. 26; Isaiah xi. 1; Amos ix. 11; Jer. xxiii. 5.

As He spake by the mouth of His holy prophets. Compare Acts iii. 21; 1 Pet. i. 10. There are many intimations of the coming salvation to be found in the Old Testament, from Gen. iii. 15 to Mal. iii. 1-3. Zacharias may be regarded as the representative of Old Testament priests and prophets rejoicing over the anticipation of the speedy fulfilment of the expectation of centuries.

That we should be saved from our enemies. Compare Psalm cvi. 10, 47. No doubt most of the Jews of that day expected merely such a deliverance as their ancestors had experienced from the hands of the Egyptians, Assyrians, etc. The domination of the Romans and the petty tyranny of Herod were most galling to them; and they eagerly looked for the Messiah, but they regarded Him merely as one who was to bring about a political revolution and secure to them the exercise of civil liberty. But when we contemplate the character and intelligence of such men as Zacharias and Simeon—their piety, their retired life, their apparent indifference to political matters, combined with the enthusiasm expressed in the language which they used in speaking of the coming deliverance—the conclusion is almost irresistible that they understood something of the true character of Christ's kingdom and of the nature of the salvation which He was to bring.

The mercy promised to our fathers. See Gen. xxi. 4; xxviii. 14; Deut. vii. 12; Psalm cv. 8; cvi. 45.

1. THE NATURE OF THE SALVATION.—vers. 74-75. The enemies mentioned in verse 74 are evidently those enemies that hinder us from serving God. These may be temporal, but they are much more likely to be spiritual. The salvation which Christ brings enables us to serve God without fear of hindrance from without, and also without any slavish dread or terror of the God whom we love and worship (See Isaiah xxxv. 10; Rom. viii. 15; 2 Tim. i. 17; Heb. ii. 15). But of this we may be assured, that we cannot serve God without being saved from our own sins, which are our worst enemies and our greatest hindrances.

In holiness and righteousness. The first of these two words, in the New Testament, refers to a person's purity of character, and the second to his standing as regards God's law. Christ bestows "righteousness" upon the believer, and he is then said to be *justified*; the Holy Spirit works "holiness" in the believer, and when the work is completed he is said to be *sanctified*. But in this place "righteousness," as well as "holiness," is applied to the conduct, or walk; and when used in that way "righteousness" means uprightness, or just dealing with others, while "holiness" indicates more especially personal purity.

III. THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF SALVATION.—vers. 76, 77. Here, for a moment, the seer turns to his own child and predicts his mission as the Saviour's herald, acting a subordinate but important part in preparing for the great deliverance.

To prepare His ways. See Isaiah xl. 3; Mal. iii. 1. The burden of John's preaching was "Repent ye for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." That was the preparation.

To give knowledge of salvation. John could not give salvation, but he could give the knowledge of it, he could point men to Jesus; and when we read his history we find that he did so, telling them to "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world."

IV. THE DAWN OF SALVATION.—ver. 78. The following extract is from the "S. S. Times": "In describing the revelation of Christ as the Redeemer of men, Zacharias says, the dayspring from on high hath visited us. This splendid figure of speech is taken from the dawn of the morning on the night. And in order to understand fully the force of the rhetoric, we must bear in mind one of the natural phenomena of those eastern regions. So pure is the atmosphere there, so far south, that clouds in the sky are not usual save in the rainy season. There seems really nothing to hinder the sun's going down, nothing to get in the way of his rising again. When he sets, he goes abruptly behind the adjacent hill; when he rises he comes up unannounced, and in a quick moment is altogether on hand for his daily work. That is to say, there is positively no twilight, as we describe it, in those latitudes. The instant the day reaches its natural close, the sun appears to slide down the sky without any leave-taking. Just so when the dawn starts. When yesterday's monarch dismisses himself, and it is time for to-day's to succeed him, there he is, unheralded and serenely unharried, calmly seated in his shining pavilion of clear air. Nothing surprises a tourist more than this sudden change. Zacharias seizes this astonishing figure, and turns it to account. For four centuries it had been dark—dark with sin, dark with ignorance, dark with oppression—and now in one excited instant of disclosure the Sun of Righteousness had risen with healing in His wings. No wonder his heart was full; no wonder that his dumbness gave way, and his glad voice lifted such a song!"

V. THE EFFECT OF SALVATION.—ver. 79. There is no more common figure in any language than the putting of light for knowledge and darkness for ignorance. In darkness we can neither see the dangers by which we are surrounded, nor the way in which we ought to proceed; it is so also in our natural condition of ignorance regarding the dangers of sin, the claims of God's law, the direction of the path of duty; but the Gospel comes to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.