

addressed the people with peculiar appropriateness. After the Moderator had addressed the Session and managers on their official responsibilities, Mr. Manson was warmly welcomed by the congregation, and the interesting proceedings were brought to a close. In the evening a grand reception was given in the same place by the ladies of the congregation. It took the form of an old-fashioned tea social, and, as usual in Tiltbury, the spread was profuse. Rev. G. G. McRobbie, Ph.D., occupied the chair with great tact and ability. During the evening addresses of a very high order were delivered by Messrs. McLennan, Forrest, Gray and Manson. Suitable hymns from our own Hymnal were sung at intervals by the choir. The church was well filled. The settlement is a very harmonious one, and the prospects for successful work very encouraging.

PRESBYTERY OF STRATFORD.—A regular meeting of this Presbytery was held in the Presbyterian Church, Atwood, on Nov. 13, at a quarter to four p.m., the Moderator, Rev. J. A. Turnbull, LL.B., of St. Mary's, in the chair. Rev. Messrs. Turnbull and Wright were appointed to obtain information for Augmentation Committee in reference to matters affecting Brookside and Harington. A conference, at which the church was filled, was held in the evening, the Moderator reading a paper on "The minister, his position and work," and a general discussion following by members of Presbytery. The Moderator was requested to have his paper published. Resuming ordinary business, the Presbytery united Millbank and Crosshill, and Milverton and Wellesley. The committee on union between North Easthope and Hampstead, and Shakespeare, St. Andrews and Travistock was continued, awaiting any action towards union on the part of these congregations. Presbytery then adjourned till next morning. Presbytery met next morning in the same place, and, after being duly constituted, Mr. Hamilton was appointed to allocate to the various congregations within the Presbytery the sums required from this Presbytery by the Home Mission and Augmentation Committees of the General Assembly. A committee was appointed to examine changes in the Book of Forms and report at the meeting in January. Mr. Robert Stevenson was granted a presbyterial certificate. The Moderator reported that Mrs. Boyd's name had been duly enrolled as an annuitant on the Ministerial Widows' and Orphans' Fund. Session records of Alma Centre and Monkton were attested carefully and correctly kept, and, after passing a hearty vote of thanks to the congregation, and especially to the ladies of Atwood, for their hospitality and kindness, Presbytery adjourned to meet in L. towel on the third Tuesday of January next at half past two p.m.—ANDREW HENDERSON, *Pres. Clerk pro tem.*

PRESBYTERY OF HAMILTON.—This Presbytery met on Nov. 20. Deputations were appointed to wait on the members of Parliament for the several constituencies within the bounds of the Presbytery, urging their influence to prevent the desecration of the Sabbath by traffic on the Welland Canal on the Lord's Day. A call to Rev. R. H. Abraham, from St. John's Church, Hamilton, was sustained. It will be considered on December 18. The resignation of Rev. W. Robertson, of Waterdown, was accepted. Expression of sympathy was given with Mr. Robertson in the trying circumstances and severe sickness which occasioned the resignation; also of usefulness in Mr. Robertson as an efficient and successful minister, and of the good feeling shown by both pastor and people in this matter. It is to be hoped that, with restored health, Mr. Robertson will find another field of labour. The mission field at Fort Erie has in the meantime been closed. Mr. Ratcliffe was appointed to address the Presbyterian Women's Foreign Missionary Society on January 15. The death of Rev. Joseph Builder was reported. It was resolved not to proceed with the reception of Rev. W. McGregor, as he had renounced the doctrines of the Church on Baptism. A call from Ancaster and Alberton to Rev. A. H. Drumm was sustained. Rev. and Hon. Reynolds Moreton was received, on transference from the Presbytery of Halifax. Rev. W. M. Cruikshank was received as an applicant for admission to the Church, and received employment within the bounds. Mr. Ratcliffe was appointed to apportion among the congregations severally the amounts required for the Home Mission and Augmentation Funds. A Presbyterial conference was appointed in Hamilton for Monday, January 14, at three p.m., to consider the State of Religion, Sabbath Schools, &c.—J. LAING, *Pres. Clerk.*

PRESBYTERY OF GUELPH.—This Presbytery met in Chalmers' Church, Guelph, Rev. Henry Edmiston, M.A., Moderator. The Clerk reported a programme he had prepared, according to instructions, for the conferences on the State of Religion, Temperance and Sabbath Schools, which had been appointed to be held in Knox Church, Galt, beginning on the third Tuesday of January next, and the same was approved, with some modifications, and ordered to be printed for circulation. The committee on business requiring attention coming up from the proceedings of last General Assembly gave in their report, when it was resolved that the Presbytery re-affirm its adherence to the position taken last year, touching marriage with the sister of a deceased wife, namely, that no change be made in the body of the Confession of Faith on that subject, but that the questions of the formula be made to suit the position now taken by the Church; that the same committee that had charge of the proposed Book of Forms, be authorized to examine and report in the form in which it has been again sent down; that Messrs. Rae (Convener) Blair and Gardiner, with their representative elders, be a committee on Sabbath Observance; that the committee on Sabbath Schools be instructed to prepare some method of supervising Sabbath school work in the bounds, establish schools in neglected districts, and obtain reports from every school; and that Messrs. Torrance (Convener) Beattie, and Charles Davison, be a committee on the proposed fund for expenses of commissioners to the Supreme Court and proposed Scheme for vacancies and settlements. The protest and appeal by certain persons belonging to Knox Church, Galt, was taken up, and parties heard. After discussion, the fol-

lowing finding was arrived at: The Presbytery, having heard the protest and appeal, and also the statement of the Session in reply, regrets that it is not in possession of the necessary data for coming to a right decision in this case, and in order to receive all the necessary information regarding the views of the appellants, and also to give them the full benefit of what they consider the law of the Church, the Presbytery appoint the following brethren to act as assessors with the Sessions, to go, if thought necessary, over the whole ground again, and report to a meeting of Presbytery, namely, Messrs. W. A. Torrance and Middlemiss, Messrs. J. C. Smith and J. B. Mullan, ministers, and Professor Pantou and Mr. Charles Davidson, ruling elders. On being put to the vote the amendment was carried by a large majority. It was agreed that the Presbytery meet in Chalmers' Church, Guelph, on the 11th of December, to receive the report. The parties in the case were then recalled and the decision announced to them. A call from Knox Church, Galt, to Rev. Malcolm Leitch, Valleyfield, was reported, and the usual steps for its regular prosecution were taken. The call from Melville Church was not sustained on the ground of insufficiency of signatures. Mr. Mullan was authorized to moderate in another call as soon as the congregation were prepared. The Clerk presented a statement of the amounts required for the Schemes of the Church for the year now current, when he was instructed to inform each congregation by circular of the amount expected from it. A circular was read calling attention to the fact that the Common College Fund has been abolished, and presenting the claims of each college for support and the amount required for each. In response to an application from Drayton for sympathy and aid in the erection of a new church by the congregation there, it was agreed to recommend the object to the kindly interest and liberality of those connected with congregations in the bounds, and to authorize those at Drayton interesting themselves in the matter to approach them through correspondence and ask their aid by collections or otherwise. Mr. Beattie was appointed to attend to the interests in the bounds of the fund for Aged and Infirm Ministers. The next regular meeting was appointed to be held in Knox Church, Galt, on the Third Tuesday of January, 1889.

LAI D AT REST.

The *Hamilton Times* says: Rev. Joseph Builder, B.A., one of the most promising of the Canadian staff of missionaries to Central India, arrived in that country in December, 1883, and was stationed at Mhow, and subsequently was added to his care Ojsein, where he laboured most successfully until, through ill health, he was compelled to cease his work, which he had so much at heart. He was granted a furlough and returned to Canada during the summer of this year and spent part of his time visiting among his many friends in Toronto, Burlington and Hamilton. He left the residence of his brother-in-law, James White, M.D., on the 31st ult., to go South for the winter, thinking the change would be beneficial, but it was otherwise ordered. On Wednesday last, the 14th inst., he passed away peacefully, his wife and two children, together with his own brother—Mr. C. Builder, of Toronto—being with him when he breathed his last. The body was brought to Hamilton, and on Saturday morning at a quarter past eleven, the funeral was from the residence of his brother-in-law, Mr. R. J. Husband, 62 East Avenue, South, to the King Street station of the G. T. R. The following ministers from Hamilton Presbytery were present: Rev. Thomas G. L. Smith, Rev. John Laing, D.D., Rev. D. H. Fletcher, Rev. Samuel Lyle, B.D., Rev. R. J. Laing, LL.D., Rev. R. H. Abraham, Rev. W. J. Dey, M.A., and Rev. James Black. From the Presbytery of Guelph: Rev. Thomas Wardrope, D.D., Convener of the Foreign Missionary Committee. From the Presbytery of Toronto: Rev. William Caven, D.D., Principal of Knox College, and Mr. Robert Laurie.

Owing to the Rev. Mungo Fraser, M.A., D.D., being out of the city on his way to preach at the opening of a new church, he was unable to be present. At the house the Rev. Samuel Lyle, B.D., read a Psalm, after which Rev. Thomas Wardrope, D.D., gave a most feeling and impressive address, referring to the labours of the Rev. Mr. Builder in India, and while now dead his labour would not doubt bring forth much fruit. After this address Rev. R. J. Laing, LL.D., led in prayer and Rev. D. H. Fletcher pronounced the benediction. The ministers of the city, together with the Rev. Dr. Laing, acted as pallbearers, and then proceeded to the station. At the usual time the train left the station, and the following persons accompanied the sorrowing widow with her precious charge, viz: Mr. Charles Budder, Mr. and Mrs. R. J. Husband, Mr. and Mrs. R. O. Mackay, Mr. John White, Rev. William Caven, D.D., Rev. John Laing, D.D., Mr. Forrester, Mr. Robert Laurie, Mr. William Smith, Mr. W. H. McLaren and Alderman David McLellan. Arriving at Burlington, the following gentleman acted as pallbearers: Messrs. William Kerns, M.P.P., Robert Laurie, William Smith, W. H. McLaren, Alderman David McLellan, Dr. Richardson. The cortege then proceeded to Burlington Presbyterian Church, where the service was conducted as follows: Rev. Robert McIntyre of Nelson Church, read the Scripture, hymn was sung by the congregation present, after which the Rev. William Caven, D.D., gave a most appropriate and comforting address, referring to the beautiful and consistent life of the deceased from early boyhood all through his school, academic and theological courses, and urging all present to let his death make them more earnest in doing good while spared here. Rev. John Laing, D.D., of Dundas, spoke on behalf of the Hamilton Presbytery, and then the Rev. R. H. Abraham, Burlington, contributed, in eloquent language, his meed of praise to the life of his young brother while living in the village together this summer. The 281st Psalm was sung, and the pallbearers then took charge of the mortal remains and consigned them to mother earth.

Sabbath School Teacher.

INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

Dec. 16, 1888.

DEATH OF SAMSON.

Judges 19: 21-31.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Great men are not always wise.—Job xxxii. 9.

SHORTER CATECHISM.

Question 106.—The last question had to do with the forgiveness of sin; this relates to the preventing of sin. Temptation has a twofold meaning. Sometimes it simply means trial. Character is tried, tested as metals are tried. God in His providence permits us to be placed in circumstances where faith is tried. In that there is no sin. We do not need deliverance from such trial, but grace that we remain steadfast. Temptation, and this is in its general sense, is a solicitation to evil. To this kind of temptation we are constantly exposed. In our own hearts and in our circumstances temptation lurks. There are times and places when temptation is especially strong. Then are we in great danger and the best way on to overcome temptation is prayer. The Revised Version reads "the last part of the petition, 'Deliver us from the Evil One.'" He is the adversary of souls and it was he who tempted Christ. Just as He overcame so He is able to succour and deliver those that are tempted.

INTRODUCTORY.

The western border of Palestine was in the time of the Judges in possession of the Philistines, a warlike and aggressive race. They oppressed the Israelites, carrying off the produce of their fields, plundering them whenever they found opportunity, and imposing on them the cruellest restrictions. A little more than a century after Gideon's time a man of miraculous bodily strength and daring was raised up for the defence of the oppressed Israelites.

I. Sampson Captured by the Philistines.—A native of Zorah, in the tribe of Dan, Sampson was soon distinguished for his matchless courage and heroic deeds. He took the vows of the Nazarenes, not for a time, but as a perpetual obligation. That vow imposed upon him entire abstinence from all strong drink, and to have his hair uncut. Sampson's moral strength was not equal to his bodily prowess. He fell a prey to the temptations by which he was surrounded, and in a moment of weakness he was betrayed to his enemies. He told that his strength lay in his hair, and when that was shorn he became weak as other men. His long hair was not the cause of his strength, but the sign of his faithfulness to the vows he had made. It was the breaking of that vow that was the cause of his weakness. God, who had hitherto endowed him with more than mortal strength, left him to himself. He who had been invincible before is now conquered by his sins, and disaster follows. The captive was taken to Gaza, a very ancient city fifty miles south-west of Jerusalem, near the Mediterranean. To prevent the escape of prisoners and to render them harmless, it was no unusual custom to put out their eyes. Sampson was thus cruelly blinded, and his feet clogged with fetters of bronze, and set to what he must have felt to be one of the most degrading occupations possible, to grind at the mill. After a time Sampson's hair grew again. It is most likely that his bitter experiences had led him to repentance, and that God had renewed his strength.

II. Exultant Enemies.—The Philistines were idolaters. Their principal deity was Dagon, the fish god. To his power they ascribed the capture of Samson. They thought he was superior to Jehovah, and the people joined in thanksgiving to their idol. Samson now understood how deeply he had transgressed. The name of his God had been dishonoured through his unworthy conduct. It was no longer to him a matter of mere personal disgrace, but the cause of God that moved him most deeply. After the religious rites offered to Dagon, the Philistines were in a sportive mood. They thought this a fine opportunity to make a ridiculous spectacle of the captive giant. He was brought from the prison house into the great hall where they were assembled and every part of which was crowded. He made them sport, and no doubt they were highly delighted.

III. Triumphant in Death.—It has been suggested that as Gaza stood on hilly ground, the place where Samson's performance was witnessed was built on a declivity of one of these hills, and that the two main pillars near together were the chief support of the flat roof, which at the time was crowded with about 3,000 spectators, men and women. Inside the building the disconsolate people among the Philistines were gathered to enjoy Samson's sport. Having requested the lad that led him by the hand to place him in a position where he could feel the pillars Samson prayed to God for strength that he might be avenged for his sufferings. Then grasping the two middle pillars, he said, "Let me die with the Philistines," he bowed with all his might and all were whelmed in ruin and death. The slaughter was terrible. None of Samson's previous battles had numbered so many slain. His work was done; he had been the instrument of bringing deliverance to his oppressed people. His kinsmen honoured him with a public funeral. His remains were carried from Gaza and laid in the family burying place between his native town and the neighbouring village of Ecthal. He was judge in South-western Palestine for twenty years, half the time the Philistine oppression of the Israelites continued.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

God sometimes uses imperfect instruments in His service. The secret of Samson's strength lay in his consecration to God.

Faithlessness to his vow was the cause of Samson's loss of strength and the disasters that followed.

To achieve his final victory, Samson was prepared for the greatest possible self-sacrifice.