

CHURCH
WORK

Ministers and Churches

NEWS
LETTERS

BROCKVILLE PRESBYTERIAL.

The twenty-third annual meeting of this Presbyterial met in Lyn on Monday and Tuesday, May 25th and 26th.

The evening session on Monday was a devotional one, the exercises being led by Mrs. Beach, of Lyn. The address of welcome was delivered by Mrs. Cummings in a few well chosen words, and replied to by Mrs. McLennan, of Brockville. After listening to the reports of the various auxiliaries and bands, which were most encouraging, each embodying a vein of hope, a solo by Miss McNish, of Lyn, was heard with pleasure.

On Tuesday morning, after the devotional exercises and hearing the report of the last meeting, the election of officers for the ensuing year was proceeded with, resulting as follows:

President, Mrs. J. Dowsley, Prescott; vice pres., Mrs. McLennan, Brockville; Mrs. J. H. Merkley, North Williamsburg; Mrs. McShane, South Mountain; Mrs. Beach, Lyn; Mrs. Sinclair, Lyndhurst; treasurer, Mrs. M. C. Gibson, Morrisburg; corresponding secretary, Mrs. Fleming, Prescott; recording secretary, Miss Ralphia Stitt, Spencerville.

A very cordial invitation was extended by Mrs. Gilmore, from First church, Brockville, for the next meeting of the Presbyterial. This was accepted.

Tuesday afternoon's session was opened with a responsive service led by Mrs. McJarrell, of Brockville. Miss Craig, General Secretary of Indian and Chinese missions, was introduced to the Presbyterial and tendered a most hearty reception by the ladies. Her opening words were taken from Psalm 110: "Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power," showing how these words increased our opportunities and power. She talked most interestingly of the work among the Jews, which is practically a new work for the W. F. M. S. Her description of the work among the Chinese in Western Canada was full of interest and information to all her hearers. In closing she asked if now, that doors of opportunity are opened, are we willing to do our part, saying with Mordecai of old, "Who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this." Mrs. McShane, of South Mountain, gave an excellent report of the annual meeting of the general society held in Toronto, May 5th, 6th and 7th. Mrs. McDougall, of Spencerville, read a paper in which the present need of mission work was fully portrayed. The question drawer was ably handled by Mrs. Hyndman. A pleasing mission band exercise was a bright and agreeable feature. The money, \$1,500, was dedicated in prayer by Mrs. Walton, Brockville. The president's closing words were full of helpful hints and words of encouragement. A resume of the year's work was given and the progress noted and commended.

The closing session on Tuesday evening was most interesting. The devotional exercises were conducted by Rev. Pocock, of Lyn. A brief congratulatory address was delivered by Rev. Ferguson, of South Mountain, who was present as representative of the Brockville Presbyterial. The keynote of his address was perseverance in the face of difficulties, this being his solution for the success of the W.F.M.S. The feature of the Presbyterial was a most interesting address on the Northwest Missions by Miss Craig. This was illustrated by views and all came away more familiar with this important part of missionary work. The national anthem closed a most inspiring Presbyterial.

GO AND DO THOU LIKEWISE.

BY REV. E. W. WATSON.

The parable of the good Samaritan is one of the best known of all the parables. It comes so natural to us to call the Samaritan good that I suppose we have scarcely ever stopped to ask ourselves why we do so.

The Jews hated the Samaritan so much that the lawyer to whom Jesus spoke this parable would not say that the Samaritan was the true neighbor of the man who fell among the robbers, but said in a roundabout way—He that showed mercy on him. And it is worthy of notice that our Lord, who might have told the story differently (if it was only a story and not a reference to something that had occurred and which was known to most of the people there) and made the Priest or Levite prove a true neighbor—chose a Samaritan.

It is right to call the Samaritan good, because Jesus told the lawyer to go and imitate him. The good man in the Old Testament days was the one who did no evil. The law condemned the man who had sinned, who had done something forbidden. "The soul that sinneth it shall die."

The sinner whom Christ condemns is the man who has done no good. It is the priest, and the Levite in this parable who passed by and left the man to die. It is the rich man who left Lazarus to die at his gate and did nothing to save his life. It is the servant who hid his Master's money and did not use it in his Master's interest.

There are many in the present day who say they have done no evil, but it will condemn them at last because they have done no good. Now, no man can be called or considered good, whether he is a Christian in name or not, who does not in some way show his love for men by doing them good. The new law which Christ gave to His disciples is the law of love: "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one to another. A new commandment give I unto you that ye love one another as I have loved you." And so St. Paul wrote that "Love is the fulfilling of the law," and St. John tells us that if anyone loveth not his brother whom he hath seen cannot love God, and that such an one is not a child of God. Therefore love is the supreme thing in life and life is given to us that we may learn to know the love of Christ and to love Him in return and keep His commandments. We know that to love Him is to obey Him, for we remember His words: "If ye love Me, keep my commandments," and when we love Him we shall learn to love all for whom He died. From this parable we learn how our love is to express itself in deeds of mercy. Christ bids His disciples to give alms and he assured them that their acceptance at last would depend on the zeal they had shown in feeding the hungry, visiting the sick and welcoming the stranger.

The first errand on which our Lord sent his disciples was to heal the sick. No rule of life can be more certain than this, that we are bound to relieve the sufferings of men and we are sure that he who can look on suffering unmoved and do nothing to relieve it (if it is possible to do so) is not humane.

Even the heathen would do this in a case of special distress, but ordinary sufferings were treated as part of the natural order of things and the sufferers were neither pitied nor helped.

But in the Christian hearts, pity is not an occasional visitor, but a familiar companion.

Philanthropy—the loving service of man—is not to be a kind of amusement, but one of the regular occupations of our lives. In the time of our Lord, Christians had to content themselves with helping those who were the victims of cruelty and wrong, as the good Samaritan did; but now the Spirit of Christ teaches us to go farther and to use the power we have to put an end to oppression and cruelty, to keep the highways clear from robbers, to close the saloons where men are robbers of their manhood as well as of their money.

Prevention is better than cure. It is better to have a good fence at the top of a precipice than a hospital at the bottom.

We must do all we can to help and save victims but we must take care to prevent any more falling into the depths of crime and misery.

Christian love will hurry most eagerly to remedy the evil which we feel ought not to have happened.

But when the sick have been relieved and everything has been done that science and loving care can do for them—then love will lead us to seek out the cause of the sickness that it may be prevented in future so that others may be saved from suffering.

The command to care for the sick and suffering is as divine as ever and must always be obeyed but that is an elementary lesson—easily learned and not sufficient to satisfy the hearts and minds of Christians today. As the early Christians learned that it was not enough to do no harm, but that they were bound to do good to feed the hungry and clothe the poor, we have learnt that we ought not only to do these things but to prevent the pains of hunger and the misery of poverty from ever being felt. The first Christians could not do this for many of them were slaves and had no power to change the customs of the time. All that they could do was to relieve the victims, to rescue as many as possible and to mourn over the dead. Of the power of politics the early Christians had no control, they had no influence. But this power is now in the hands of all and the lives of Wilberforce and Lord Shaftesbury show us how it can be used to put an end to wrong and misery. It enables us to ascend the stream and cut off great evils at their sources.

So as Christians we cannot be content simply to do our best for the victims of oppression, but we must do our utmost to put an end to oppression itself.

Now, we are our own rulers and it is in our power to alter the laws and we ought as Christian men to do all we can to secure that God's will shall be done, that poverty and suffering may be prevented as far as possible. If the Christian Church were only to unite to fight the evil of intemperance it would be able to prevent a great deal of crime and poverty and when the Christians of Canada and the States have determined that it is an evil thing to license men to sell to others that which poisons their blood and rots them of health and leads them to ruin in this world and the next—then that evil will cease and surely it is time that it did so.

If we are to imitate the good Samaritan therefore we must as Christian men and women use all the means in our power to educate public opinion so that great reforms may be carried out and that evildoers may not only be punished for doing wrong but saved from doing it. The Lord commanded His disciples to heal the sick first and to give alms, but