

Rev. J. Harvie, of Guelph, gave the charge to the pastor. The attendance was not large, but the meeting was excellent. A tea meeting was held in the same place on New Year's evening. The attendance was overflowing, and addresses were delivered by Revs. Carson (M.E.), Milligan and Gregg (Pres.), and J. Howie, Guelph. The pastor, Rev. J. R. Black, M.A., presided. Proceeds amounted to \$75.

ULVERTON. Ulverton is, and has been for some time, without a regular pastor. Meanwhile a vigorous Sabbath school has been maintained. This proves more or less a germ of life and hope to the church. On the Friday evening after Christmas, 25th Dec., a very successful Sabbath school entertainment and Christmas tree were held. The evening was fine and audience large. After the disposal of the good things provided by the ladies, a lengthy yet interesting programme began. Short, pithy, pointed addresses were given by the Rev. Messrs. McIntosh and M. Scot (C.M.) Good music was interspersed by the Sabbath school and friends from a distance. Of the latter, thanks are due to the Misses Dickson and the two Misses Stevens. Two handsomely laden Christmas trees were then stripped of their cheery fruit. Each scholar was more than remembered. The meeting was a hopeful one, and no pupil seemed less happy than another. Some \$30 were taken at the door. The students supply the pulpit of the church during the winter season.

MCINTYRE.—The Rev. Mr. McKay, Kingston, visited our place last February. A report of the good work that then took place was given in the INDEPENDENT. He organized a church (twelve members), and forty persons professed to have come to Christ. Mr. McKay's visit and eloquent sermons and inquiry meetings will not be forgotten by us. He could not remain longer than two weeks, as he had other appointments. After his departure, ministers of other denominations eagerly sought to draw the young converts to their communion, consequently several united with the Presbyterians and Baptists. Last June we invited the Rev. Mr. McKinnon, Manilla, to help us, who very kindly came and laboured for two weeks, holding services during the week evenings. On the last Sabbath of his visit he dispensed the ordinance of the Lord's supper, and baptized one young man, who, along with others, were received into fellowship, twelve members being added to the church. We have now a membership of twenty-four. Since then no minister of the Congregational Church has visited us. Others, without an invitation, have done so. We are still holding the fort, looking to Jesus as our Lord and Master, and holding the inspired volume as our only rule. Could not some man of God find it convenient to visit our little flock occasionally?

Religious News.

In Scotland the Cameronians are preparing to celebrate the bi-centennial of their church organization.

REV. C. CHINQUY left Queensland in the beginning of October, after a very successful visit. Everywhere he was received with enthusiasm.

A ROME correspondent announces that the Pope has summoned all the German bishops to Rome to confer upon the affairs of their respective dioceses.

In sixteen months the Rev. Wm. Taylor, the Methodist Evangelist, has sent forty-six missionaries to South America, and will soon send about twenty more. Most of these derive their support from their own labour.

The wife of one of the St. Johnsbury, Vt., pastors heard her husband preach last Sabbath for the first time in eleven and a half years. This was accomplished by means of a telephone connecting the pulpit of the South Church with the house of the pastor. The entire morning service was in this way transmitted; every word uttered was distinctly heard.

At the Vatican it is asserted that the Pope conceives himself to have reason to fear fresh disturbances in France and some other countries, and that, greatly exercised in his mind by the present condition of Europe, instructions are being sent to all bishops to do their utmost for the preservation of tranquility. Meantime a diversity of opinion among the members of the Sacred College, and the opposition of certain groups of Cardinals to the policy of the Pope, have been acquiring intensity. The Holy Father has pointed out to them "officially" the absolute necessity that, for the welfare of society, all should support him in his difficult task.

The Sunday School.

INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

LESSON V.

TRUE DISCIPLES.

John 1:1-12

Matt 9:1-16

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Ye are the light of the world."—Matt. v. 14.

HOME STUDIES.

M. John 1:29-51.....The First Disciples.
L. Matt. ix. 18-25.....Four Disciples Called.
W. Matt. ix. 1-10.....The Paralytic Cured.
Th. Matt. xii. 1-15.....The Twelve Chosen.
F. Ps. xviii. 24-35.....Merciful to the Merciful.
S. Ps. xxiv. 1-11.....Clean Hands and Pure Heart.
Sab. Matt. v. 1-16.....True Disciples.

HELPS TO STUDY.

The opening sentences of what has been called "The Sermon on the Mount" form the subject of our lesson.

At the time of the delivery of this address Christ had been for some time engaged in His public ministry. The miracles which He performed, and the strange doctrines which He taught, attracted much attention, and He was followed by multitudes.

The mountain from which he spoke is supposed to have been in the neighbourhood of Capernaum.

A disciple is *one who is being taught*. The term is relative, and always suggests its correlate, *master, or teacher*. The disciples mentioned in ver. 1 probably included not only "the twelve" (or as many of them as had then been called) but all present who accepted the doctrines of Christ and attended regularly upon His ministry.

Ver. 2 indicates the beginning of a long and important address.

The verses following contain what are called "the beatitudes," from the Latin, *beatitudo*, happy, or blessed.

With the foregoing introduction we may bring the lesson under two heads: (1) *Marks of True Disciples*, (2) *Mission of True Disciples*.

I. MARKS OF TRUE DISCIPLES.—Vers. 3-12. These verses describe, not different classes of people, but one class, viz.: those who believe in Christ. They alone are blessed, and the characteristics or marks enumerated here belong in a greater or less degree to all of them: They are (1) Consciously Destitute, (2) Acquainted with Grief, (3) Mild and Unassuming, (4) Anxious to be Holy, (5) Kind, (6) Actuated by Unselfish Motives, (7) Desirous of Peace, (8) Persecuted and Calumniated.

1. *Consciously Destitute.*—Ver. 3. Poverty, in the ordinary sense, is not a blessing; neither is meanness or niggardliness. The meaning is that the believer is humble before God, perceiving that he has nothing meritorious of his own. Instead of feeling, like the Laodicean Church, "rich and increased with goods," true disciples are poor in spirit; and instead of being, like that same church, actually "poor and blind and naked," they were very wealthy, for their's is the kingdom of heaven. How much more blessed it is to feel poor and be rich than to feel rich and be poor.

2. *Acquainted with Grief.*—Ver. 4. There is a "sorrow of the world that worketh death," but there is also a "Godly sorrow" that "worketh repentance to salvation" (2 Cor. viii. 10). The mourning of the believer is short; his comfort is eternal.

3. *Mild and Unassuming.*—Ver. 5. Perhaps in some future age, when the quarrelsome and the self-asserting shall have exterminated each other, the meek..... shall inherit the earth; but the word translated *earth* might have been rendered *land* and may mean "the land that is very far off."

4. *Anxious to be Holy.*—Ver. 6. The words, *hunger and thirst*, used here, express an earnest desire and longing. Justification is an instantaneous act, but sanctification, or the attainment of holiness, is a progressive work. The more the true disciple learns of his Master, and the further he advances in holiness, the more deformed and loathsome does his remaining sinfulness appear to him, and the more anxious he is to be conformed to the image of Christ. This anxiety shall have its reward. Even the ten commandments—the terror of the legalist—may, without losing any of their force as a rule of life, become to the believer so many gracious promises, to the complete fulfilment of which he looks forward with the most eager anticipation.

5. *Kind.*—Ver. 7. "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors." But true kindness may sometimes, necessarily, assume the aspect of severity, in rebuking evil or correcting error. The man who roughly hurries a half-awakened family out of a burning building will scarcely be accused of harshness.

6. *Actuated by Unselfish Motives.*—Ver. 8. The outward righteousness of the true disciple exceeds that of the Pharisee, who places his whole dependence upon it, and he is also—what the Pharisee is not—pure in heart. In so far as he is a true disciple, his words and actions are prompted by love to God and man.

7. *Desirous of Peace.*—Ver. 9. Is not the Master himself the great Peace-maker? Was it not to make peace between God and man that He came? And will not the disciples also be peace-makers? They shall be called the children of God for He is the "God of Peace" (Rom. xv. 33).

8. *Persecuted and Calumniated.*—Vers. 10, 11. It is necessary to pay particular attention to the words for righteousness' sake in ver. 10, and to the words falsely, for

my sake in ver. 11. Augustine says "it is the cause that makes the martyr."

II. MISSION OF TRUE DISCIPLES.—Vers. 13-16. No doubt God can sanctify people and bring them to heaven immediately after they believe in Christ, but this is not the rule. They have a mission to fulfil, a work to do, on earth, which our lesson presents in three aspects: (1) *To Preserve the World*, (2) *To Enlighten the World*, (3) *To Glorify God*.

1. *To Preserve the World.*—Ver. 13. When believers are told that they are the salt of the earth the meaning plainly is that were it not for their presence the world would soon perish in its own corruption. How necessary then is it for them to keep themselves free from that corruption, and also to employ themselves actively in arresting its progress around them.

2. *To Enlighten the World.*—Vers. 14-16. As the moon removes physical darkness by reflecting the light of the sun, so believers are the means of removing spiritual darkness, or ignorance, by reflecting the light of the "Sun of Righteousness." Not those alone who preach, or teach, or write, enlighten the world, but those who by their actions shew others what they ought to be. The good conduct of converted persons, who were formerly known to be wicked is an unanswerable argument for the truth of Christianity.

3. *To Glorify God.*—Ver. 16. By their holy life true disciples rebuke the evil practices of a world lying in wickedness, check immorality and vice, and "shew forth the praises of Him who called them out of darkness into His marvellous light." It is very often the admirable character of the true disciple that leads the worldling to know and to admire the character of the Master, become a disciple himself, and thus take his place among the blessed.

TRUSTING GOD.

How often do we hear good men bemoaning the fate of the country, as they contemplate the evil days on which we have fallen! How sadly do we frequently see the patriarchs of the Church shaking their heads over the degeneracy of the times! Now we would not constitute ourselves an apologist for whatever may be blameworthy, whether in Church or State. All we have to say, just here, is this. Groaning over it, and croaking about it, will be of no benefit to the subject of our despondency, and, least of all, to us.

When Whitlocke, in 1653, was about embarking for Sweden, it is said he was greatly distressed, as he rested at Harwich at night, while reflecting on the distracted state of affairs in England; so much so that he could not sleep. As he walked the floor in his excitement, his Christian servant said to him:

"Pray, sir, may I ask you a question?"

"Certainly," was the reply of the ambassador.

"Pray, sir, don't you think God governed the world very well, all the time before you came into it?"

"Undoubtedly," was the answer.

"And, sir, don't you think He will govern it just as well when you are gone out of it?"

"Certainly," said Whitlocke.

"Then, sir, don't you think you can trust Him to take care of it over night, and that it will be safe in His care, while you can go to sleep?"

It becomes us to realize that God rules, just as certainly as that He exists. Is there not enough in this to quiet our anxieties, and to banish all groundless and useless forebodings? After we have faithfully and humbly done our duty, may we not then leave ourselves, our families, our friends, the country, the Church—may we not leave all these with God, feeling, the while, that they are all safe in His hands? Why should we be bending double under our burdens, when it is written for our comfort and help: "Cast thy burden upon the Lord!"

REFINEMENT.

True refinement is not mere outside polish. It goes deeper, and penetrates to the foundations of character. A really refined person does not speak or think of what is coarse, or low or immodest. Her words are pure and her acts delicate. As sensitive as a flower, she does not like to associate with those who are not clean in life and behaviour.

We have seen perfect refinement in women whose education had been limited, whose opportunities had been few, and whose lives had been a struggle with poverty and care. Homely in manner, and not always grammatical in speech, the sweetness of a delicate nature was visible in all they did and said, shining as the flame of a lamp through an alabaster shade. And we have seen ladies arrayed in velvet and furs, ladies of great elegance of acquired art, who were still so coarse that one was reminded constantly of the jackdaw who borrowed the peacock's plumes. Along with true refinement go graceful ways of conferring favours, ready and pleasing tact in helpfulness, and gentleness, which is the crown of womanly beauty.

Births, Marriages and Deaths.

MARKED.

On Christmas day, by the Rev. M. S. Gray, Mr. William John Hughes, of Weston village, and Mary Elizabeth, second daughter of Mr. William Akins, of the township of Howick.

By the same, at Mount Pleasant, Caledon, Dec. 31, 1879, Mr. James T. Bunting of Orangeville, builder, and Miss Dora Eleanor, third daughter of Joseph Dodds, Esq.