

McLeod in the prescribed subjects and would recommend that his examinations be sustained as highly satisfactory. On motion of Dr. Bell, seconded by Mr. Straith, it was resolved: "That taking a conjunct view of all Mr. McLeod's trials, they be sustained as satisfactory, and that the Presbytery proceed to license him at this meeting, and that a special meeting of Presbytery be held in Knox's Church, Paisley, on Tuesday next, at 7 o'clock p.m., for his ordination, and to make arrangements for the formation of a session in the congregation at Sault Ste. Marie. Dr. Bell was appointed to preach and preside at the ordination, and Mr. Straith to address the minister." It was agreed to appoint Mr. Straith to open the new church at Sault Ste. Marie, and spend three weeks between that field and St. Joseph's Island. His pulpit to be supplied by the Presbytery. Mr. McKeracher was then heard in relation to his field of labour, and St. Joseph's Island and the necessity there is that a church edifice be erected at once at Fort William; that the people there had subscribed \$800 towards the building fund, and would probably be able to raise the amount to \$1,000; but that it would take \$2,000 in order to erect a suitable building, and asking the Presbytery to aid him in raising funds for that object. On motion of Dr. Bell, it was resolved as follows: "The Presbytery fully realizing the importance of that mission field and the necessity of a suitable church edifice erected at Fort William, request Mr. McKeracher to make an appeal to the congregations of the Church, and warmly recommend him to their Christian liberality." Mr. Bethune having tendered his resignation of his pastoral charge of Chesley on account of ill health, and having cited his congregation to appear for their interests, and the congregation having appeared by commissioners—the Presbytery, notwithstanding the irregularity, proceeded to consider his resignation. A resolution of the congregation of Chesley duly transmitted was read, and commissioners heard, setting forth that owing to Mr. Bethune's failing health they would offer no objection to his resignation being accepted by the Presbytery. On motion of Mr. Straith, it was resolved: "That Mr. Bethune's resignation of his pastoral charge of Chesley be accepted, and that his connection with the congregation cease on and after the 7th day of July next, and that Mr. Blain be appointed to preach and declare the church vacant on Sabbath, 14th July; further, that Mr. Blain be moderator of the Kirk session." The Presbytery adopted the following minute, anent Mr. Bethune's resignation, namely: "In parting with their brother, Mr. Bethune, the Presbytery record their best wishes for his prosperity and success, and their prayer to the God of all grace that his health may be improved, and that in the good providence of God he may be guided to some position of usefulness in the Master's work." Mr. Tolmie and Mr. Bell were appointed a committee to prepare a plan for the Presbytery to pursue in view of the readjustment of the Presbyteries, to be submitted at next meeting. Mr. McLeod was then licensed to preach the gospel. The next meeting of Presbytery was appointed to be held in Knox's Church, Kincardine, on the last Tuesday of September, (24th), at 2.30 p.m. It was agreed to hold a Presbyterial Sabbath School Convention in Knox's Church, Kincardine, to occupy the afternoon and evening of the Wednesday, (25th), after the meeting of Presbytery. The Presbytery adjourned to meet in Knox's Church, Kincardine, on the 11th July, at 2 o'clock.

THE "Catholic Review" records another "Papal aggression" that will meet with universal approval, and that is the decision of Russia to substitute the Gregorian calendar in the place of the old style of computation, to which she has hitherto stubbornly adhered.

CONSUMPTION CURED.

An old physician, retired from practice, having had placed in his hands by an East Indian missionary the formula of a simple vegetable remedy, for the speedy and permanent cure for consumption, bronchitis, catarrh, asthma, and all throat and lung affections, also a positive and radical cure for nervous debility and all nervous complaints, after having tested its wonderful curative powers in thousands of cases, has felt it his duty to make it known to his suffering fellows. Actuated by this motive, and a desire to relieve human suffering, I will send, free of charge, to all who desire it, this recipe, with full directions for preparing and using, in German, French, or English. Sent by mail by addressing with stamp, naming this paper, W. W. Sherar, 149 Power's Block, Rochester, N. Y.

PRAYER is the slender nerve that moves Omnipotence.

SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHER.

INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

LESSON XXXII.

Aug. 11, } THE CENTURION'S FAITH. { Luke vii. 1-10.
1878.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"According to your faith be it unto you."—Matt. ix. 29.

HOME STUDIES.

- M. John iv. 43-54. The nobleman's son.
- T. John v. 1-16. The pool of Bethesda.
- W. Matt. xiii. 1-14. The withered hand restored.
- Th. Luke vi. 17-49. Healing virtue.
- F. Luke vii. 1-10. The centurion's faith.
- S. Matt. ix. 27-38. The blind men's faith.
- S. Matt. xv. 21-28. The Syro-Phœnician's faith.

HELPS TO STUDY.

What kind of people are the most easily surprised? Is it not ignorant people? The more we know, the fewer new things to be surprised at. What wonderful things those that could make Christ "marvel"! Twice we read of His "marvelling"—what could it be at? Once at *unbelief* (Mark vi. 6); once at *faith*. Were these such strange things? Unbelief strange, when He saw so much of it? Faith strange, when the wonder rather why so few believed? How great the unbelief, how great the faith, that could surprise Jesus!

I. WHERE THE "GREAT FAITH" WAS FOUND.
In a learned Rabbi, knowing prophecies, so recognizing Jesus as the Messiah? In a strict Pharisee, with his regular prayers, alms, fastings? Would not be such "great faith" in these—ought to have known—yet did not. *Not in a Jew at all—in a Gentile—and in one of the hated Roman conquerors.*

Three uncommon things about him:—
(a) *His slave [Note 3] was dear unto him.* Roman masters often very cruel to slaves—had bought them with money, or taken them in war—their own property—could do as they liked with them—never thought of *loving* them. So this centurion [Note 1] good and kind like few others.

(b) *He loved the Jews.* Romans despised Jews—disliked them because so troublesome, would not submit quietly like other conquered nations of empire (see Acts v. 36, 37; xvi. 20; xviii. 14-16). What could have made this centurion different?—must have come to feel that Jews knew true God—perhaps, like the other centurion, Cornelius (Acts x. 2), was "devout," "feared God," "prayed to God always." What had he done for Capernaum? ver. 5—that synagogue where Jesus so often taught, *his gift [Note 2].*

(c) *The Jews loved him—loved commander of troops stationed there to keep them in subjection!—what were their chief men ready to do for him?—and that even when the sick one only his slave.*

But a more uncommon thing about him yet—the "great faith" Jesus marvelled at.

II. HOW THE "GREAT FAITH" WAS SHEWN.
(1) Here is the greatest man in Capernaum seeking help of a humble carpenter—a prophet, certainly, but not acknowledged even by his own nation. Is it just because he is so great—thinks Jesus sure to do His best for him? No, the very reverse. Does not think himself great—"not worthy" to receive Jesus at his house (ver. 6)—not even worthy to go to Him (ver. 7)—gets Jewish elders to go instead. Why this? Very likely had heard scribes teach in that synagogue—knew they expected great King from heaven—but He to be king of the Jews—should drive away Romans—no blessings for them (unless they became Jews). Might well feel he was *outside* the "kingdom"—no use his asking for miracle. *And yet he did.*

(2) What did the elders ask Jesus to do? ver. 3 ("to come and heal"). So the nobleman we read of (John iv. 49). But look at the centurion's message when he heard Jesus was coming, ver. 6-8. What meant? He thinks, "Why should He come? Is not His word enough wherever He is? I give orders myself—get immediate obedience—my soldiers and my slave go here and there as I tell them—I, too, obey my superior officer 'under authority,' and He is captain of a greater army—not a hundred men, but ten thousand angels—all things in heaven and earth—surely diseases under His control—can He not speak the word only, at any distance, and command the disease to leave my poor slave?" [comp. Ps. cvii. 20—"He sent His word and healed them"].

What he thought of Jesus we know not, but we see he believed with all his heart (1) *in His all-embracing love*, reaching even to a Gentile soldier's slave—(2) *in His supreme authority*, governing all things. Which of the Jews, of the disciples even, had 'great faith' like that?—'no, not in Israel.' No wonder Jesus marvelled.

III. HOW THE "GREAT FAITH" SHOULD BE REWARDED.

By the request being granted? Yes; but more than that—see how.

The elders, perhaps, thought, if Jesus healed the slave, it would be because they asked (just as, if they wanted something of Roman Emperor, would try and get some one at court to ask for them). Jesus had been going about proclaiming "the kingdom at hand"—well, true or not, *this* (they thought) certain:—When that "kingdom" did come, it should be for Abraham and his children for *their nation*—they should be like guests at a feast (Isa. xxv. 6), in light and gladness—and others, the Gentile "dogs," in the darkness outside; they the favored ones at court, though the King might, perhaps, if they asked Him, grant a few crumbs to any poor outcast they cared for.

Now what does Jesus say? [Read Matt. viii. 11, 12.]

(a) Yes, the kingdom shall be like a feast—rest, enjoyment, provision for all want. Yes, Abraham shall be there—plenty of guests, too—but who? where from? from whence Israel's enemies came, Babylonians from East, Romans from West. When brought in? who preached

over Roman empire? *we*, too, in the West. And East—some had come then (Magi)—even now, Hindoos, Chinese, etc. *But outside?* Yes, there is "outer darkness"—who there? Some of those very children of Abraham to whom God first gave the kingdom—who would not *now* eat with Gentiles—*should not then*—think of their bitter despair—"gnashing of teeth!"

(b) But should *all* the Gentiles be *in*—*all* the Jews *out*? Where the real difference?—what would give right of entry? *What the centurion had so much of—FAITH.* But what faith? The same as the centurion's—faith in Jesus Himself—in the despised Nazarene—in His all-embracing love—in His supreme authority—that would admit *any one*, Jew or Gentile, to God's banquet—nothing else would admit either.

Can we not see the faces of the elders as they heard *that*!

OUTSIDE OR INSIDE—*which shall we be?* Do you say, "I go to church, etc.—pretty good boy at home and school—God very kind—it will be all right?" That will not do. Sin—any sin—shuts out; but Christ died to take sin away, and the question is, Have we come to Him, taken Him as our Saviour, Friend, King? do we love Him? trust in Him? *have we faith?* (John iii. 16, 36.) Many boys and girls who thought well of themselves will see some they have despised (poorer than themselves—or foreigners, negroes, etc.) at the feast with Abraham, with the King Himself—and themselves shut out!

4. For I am a man under authority, etc. Commentators have disputed as to whether the centurion thought of *diseases* as being among the "hosts" at Christ's command, or the *angels* who should be the ministers of His power in driving away diseases. Probably he thought of neither specially, but only derived a general idea of Christ's supremacy from the character of his own, which, though in so limited a sphere, was absolute. "The Lord appears to him as the true *Cæsar* and *Imperator*." "He was the unseen, clothed in the vividness of material substance. Health and sickness, ease and pain, gladness and sorrow, life and death, were to him as one great army, and He to whom he was speaking the Lord of Hosts. They marched at His bidding."

5. He marvelled. Difficult as this expression is, as applied to Christ, it is our plain duty to accept it as "He rejoiced" or "was sorrowful."

6. Many shall come from the east and the west, etc. This solemn utterance of Christ's stands in remarkable contrast to a Rabbinical utterance. "In the world to come, saith God, I will spread a vast table for you, which the Gentiles shall see and be confounded." So, by their tradition, the scribes "made of none effect" the promises of the Old Testament to the Gentiles. They were willing to receive proselytes to Judaism; but the admission of the Gentiles, as such, to the covenant, was a "mystery" (Eph. iii. 3-6) that even the Apostles were slow to believe. How little the elders of Capernaum understood Jesus is shewn by their pleading for their friend on the ground of his loving "our nation," as if that might overcome Christ's presumed unwillingness. The cure being wrought at a distance would fitly symbolise the proclamation of the Gospel to them "that are afar off"—the Gentile world. The phrase "children of the kingdom," as applied to the Jews, is explained by Matt. xxi. 43. "They were children of the typical kingdom, the theocracy"—(Lange).

The "kingdom" is frequently described in the Bible as a feast; see Ps. xxii. 26-29; Isa. xvi. 6; Matt. xxii. 1-13, xxvi. 29; Luke xiv. 15-24; Rev. xix. 9. It must not be understood as referring directly to heaven; the "kingdom" is the Gospel dispensation; but of this heaven is the consummation, the blessings of the "kingdom" on earth being only an earnest of what are yet in the future.

Outer darkness, etc. Comp. Ps. cxii. 10; Isa. lxxv. 14, lxxvi. 24; Matt. xiii. 42, 50, xxii. 13, xxiv. 51, xxv. 10, 30; Luke xiii. 28; Rev. xxii. 15 ("without").

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. "A centurion," in the Roman army, was commander of a *centuria*, or company of infantry, the number varying with the size of the legion, of which the *centuria* was the sixtieth part.
2. "He hath built us a synagogue—*lit.*, Himself (i.e., at his own expense), built our synagogue (i.e. the synagogue of Capernaum).
3. The servant is called by Luke, a slave (*doulos*). Matthew calls him a boy (*pais*)—a word often used in the sense of a servant, like *puer* in Latin and *garçon* in French.

MEETINGS OF PRESBYTERY.

- BRUCE.—In Knox Church, Kincardine, on last Tuesday of September, at 2.30 p.m.
- HURON.—Presbytery of Huron will meet at Wingham, on 2nd Tuesday of October, at 11 a.m.
- BARRIE.—At Barrie, first Tuesday of August, at 11 a.m.
- OTTAWA.—In Knox Church, Ottawa, on Tuesday, the 6th day of August, at 2 p.m.
- PETERBORO'.—At Cobourg, on the last Tuesday of September, at 11 o'clock a.m.
- TORONTO.—In the usual place, on the first Tuesday of September, at 11 a.m.
- WHITBY.—At Whitby, on the 3rd September, at 11 o'clock a.m.
- CHATHAM.—The Presbytery of Chatham meets at Thamesville on Tuesday, the 17th Sept., at 1 o'clock p.m.
- PARIS.—Presbytery of Paris meets in Zion Church, Brantford, on Tuesday, 17th September, at 2 p.m.
- KINGSTON.—Next quarterly meeting of this Presbytery will be held in St. Andrew's Hall, Kingston, on Tuesday, 24th September, at 3 p.m.
- LONDON.—An adjourned meeting will be held on 1st Tuesday in August, in Knox Church, Parkhill, at 2 p.m.—Next regular meeting in St. Andrew's, Sarnia, on last Tuesday in September, at 7 p.m.