

MINISTERS AND CHURCHES.

LET this notify all whom it may concern, that all communications on Home Mission work, within the bounds of the Whitby Presbytery, must be addressed to the Rev. H. Crozier, Presbytery's Mission Agent, Port Perry.

THE Rev. Dr. Mackay, from the Island of Formosa, occupied the pulpit of the Presbyterian church, at Thamesford, on the 8th of August, at eleven o'clock a.m., and gave a most interesting account of his work in that distant isle. The church was literally crowded. At the close of the service a collection was taken up to help to build a college in Formosa, which amounted to \$70. He also addressed the young people in the afternoon and preached at Kintore in the evening.

THE Presbytery of Owen Sound met on the 5th inst. to induct the Rev. A. McDiarmid into the pastoral charge of Burns' Church, Rocky Saugeen, now united with Latona congregation. Rev. Mr. Cameron, Chatsworth, was appointed to preside, and preached a most excellent sermon from Heb. xi. 10: "He looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God," which was discussed most thoroughly by shewing the blessed hope which the Christian entertains in reference to the future, in opposition to the belief of those who say there is no God, no future state of being, that man is only like the beasts that perish. Rev. Mr. Currie, of Keady, addressed the minister in very suitable terms, choosing as basis for his remarks, "Feed the flock of God." Rev. Mr. McKenzie, of Kilsyth, gave an excellent address to the congregation, taking the words of Paul to the Corinthians as the thread of his address: "Now if Timothy come, see that he may be with you without fear." The very interesting and well attended meeting was brought to a close, after which the pastor received a hearty welcome at the door as the congregation dispersed to their homes.

ON Sabbath, August 1st, the dedicatory services of the new Presbyterian church, at Cumberland, Ont., were conducted by the Rev. Principal McVicar, LL.D., who preached two able and eloquent discourses to large and attentive congregations—in the morning from Psalm xxii. 6: "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem; they shall prosper that love Thee;" in the evening from Romans x. 13: "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." The collection amounted to \$82.48. A social meeting was held on Monday, the 2nd of August, when the church was again crowded. Addresses were delivered by Mr. McClelland, of Duncanville, and Mr. McLaren, Presbyterian student, of Bearbrooke, and the pastor. The sum of \$60 dollars was taken up on behalf of the building fund. The church is a substantial and very commodious brick edifice with stone foundation and well-proportioned tower. It is pleasantly situated in the centre of the village; free of debt; and reflects much credit upon the energy and liberality of pastor and people. Since the settlement of the present pastor, the Rev. Robert Hughes, an *alumnus* of the Presbyterian College, Montreal, the congregation has enjoyed very marked prosperity. The Sabbath school is large and well organized, and the pastor's Bible class has an average attendance of over thirty. Several prayer meetings are vigorously sustained by the elders and others, and one hundred members were added to the church during the last fifteen months. The union of 1875 has been followed by the happiest results in Cumberland, and now the fullest harmony prevails. At the close of the morning service Principal McVicar commended the people for their zealous and successful efforts in providing for their own spiritual comfort and growth in grace. He urged them to aid with equal readiness and liberality in the great mission work of the Church at large, and especially in that of French Evangelization, in which he was glad to learn they were deeply interested. Owing to the great extension of this work recently, and to the purchase of the schools at Pointe-aux-Trembles, a very decided increase of liberality in sustaining it would be required.

PRESBYTERY OF STRATFORD.—This Presbytery met at Stratford on the 4th and 5th inst. The attendance was not full. Much of the time was taken up by an appeal case from Biddulph, which had been before Presbytery at last meeting, and which still remains undisposed of. Knox Church, Stratford, having been

declared vacant, Mr. McLeod's name was removed from the roll. Mr. William Shearer, having been transferred from the Presbytery of Montreal, was licensed to preach the gospel after de'voting his trials, which were sustained as very satisfactory. An *ad interim* session was appointed for Tavis-tock. Mr. David Mann resigned his charge of Biddulph. The congregation by commission and document expressed strong attachment to him and grief at the causes which had rendered his resignation advisable and had seriously interfered with the welfare of the congregation. His resignation was accepted and Mr. Wilson appointed Moderator of session *ad interim*.

UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

Many who, because the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland adopted at the Synodical meeting of 1879 a Declaratory Act in reference to the subordinate standards, have been of opinion that that Church had very materially shifted its doctrinal ground, may perhaps somewhat modify their opinion by a careful perusal of the Act in question, which is as follows:

Whereas the formula in which the Subordinate Standards of this Church are accepted required assent to them as an exhibition of the sense in which the Scriptures are understood; Whereas these Standards, being of human composition, are necessarily imperfect, and the Church has already allowed exception to be taken to their teaching or supposed teaching on one important subject; And whereas there are other subjects in regard to which it has been found desirable to set forth more fully and clearly the view which the Synod takes of the teaching of holy Scripture; Therefore, the Synod hereby declares as follows:

1. That in regard to the doctrine of Redemption as taught in the Standards, and in consistency therewith, the love of God to all mankind, His gift of His Son to be the propitiation for the sins of the whole world, and the free offer of salvation to men without distinction on the ground of Christ's perfect sacrifice, are matters which have been and continue to be regarded by this Church as vital in the system of Gospel truth, and to which due prominence ought ever to be given.

2. That the doctrine of the Divine Decrees, including the doctrine of Election to Eternal Life, is held in connection and harmony with the truth that God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance, and that he has provided a salvation sufficient for all, adapted to all, and offered to all in the Gospel; and also with the responsibility of every man for his dealing with the free and unrestricted offer of eternal life.

3. That the doctrine of Man's Total Depravity, and of his loss of "all ability of will to any spiritual good accompanying salvation," is not held as implying such a condition of man's nature as would affect his responsibility under the law of God and the Gospel of Christ, or that he does not experience the strivings and restraining influences of the Spirit of God, or that he cannot perform actions in any sense good; although actions which do not spring from a renewed heart are not spiritually good or holy—such as accompany salvation.

4. That while none are saved except through the mediation of Christ, and by the grace of His holy Spirit, who worketh when, and where, and how it pleaseth Him; while the duty of sending the Gospel to the heathen, who were sunk in ignorance, sin, and misery, is clear and imperative; and while the outward and ordinary means of salvation for those capable of being called by the Word are the ordinances of the Gospel; in accepting the Standards, it is not required to be held that any who die in infancy are lost, or that God may not extend His grace to any who are without the pale of ordinary means, as it may seem good in His sight.

5. That in regard to the doctrine of the Civil Magistrate, and his authority and duty in the sphere of religion, as taught in the Standards, this Church holds that the Lord Jesus Christ is the only King and Head of the Church, and "head over all things to the Church which is His body;" disapproves of all compulsory or persecuting and intolerant principles in religion; and declares, as hitherto, that she does not require approval of anything in her Standards that teaches, or may be supposed to teach, such principles.

6. That Christ has laid it as a permanent and universal obligation upon His Church, at once to maintain her own ordinances, and to "preach the Gospel to every creature;" and has ordained that His people provide by their free will offerings for the fulfilment of this obligation.

7. That, in accordance with the practice hitherto observed in this Church, liberty of opinion is allowed on such points in the Standards, not entering into the substance of the faith, as the interpretation of the "six days" in the Mosaic account of the creation; the Church guarding against the abuse of this liberty to the injury of its unity and peace.

In connection with the Declaratory Act, the second question of the Formula shall henceforth be read as follows: "Do you acknowledge the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Larger and Shorter Catechisms as an exhibition of the sense in which you understand the Holy Scriptures, this acknowledgement being made in view of the explanations contained in the Declaratory Act of Synod thereanent?"

THE DISCOVERY OF AN ANCIENT MANUSCRIPT OF THE GOSPELS.

The general feeling of scholars in regard to manuscripts of ancient writers, is that almost all has been discovered that there is any hope of discovering. This feeling, however, has been happily disappointed in several cases. The recent find of a manuscript of Clemens Romanus and other early ecclesiastical writers in Constantinople, gave an agreeable surprise to students of Church history. In no department have such discoveries been more surprising and more valuable than those in connection with the New Testament. Tischendorf in his wanderings among libraries in all parts of the world, came upon many leaves of old New Testament manuscripts, and crowned his investigations by unearthing in the Sinaitic monastery the most complete manuscript of the New Testament in existence belonging to an early date. The issuing of a trustworthy edition of the "Codex Vaticanus" in our age may also be deemed a real discovery. In this way the two manuscripts which will be held in future as most valuable in determining the text of the New Testament, have become known to scholars only within the last twenty years.

We have now to record the discovery of another manuscript of a portion of the New Testament, written at a very early period. The merit of the discovery is due to two German scholars, Oscar V. Gebhardt and Adolf Harnach, whose edition of the Apostolic Fathers has deservedly received the warmest commendation. These scholars were enabled, through the munificence of the German Government and an endowment attached to Leipzig University, to make a journey in March of this year to Southern Italy and Sicily, in which places they resolved to search for manuscripts. Their attention was specially directed to notices of a monastery at Rossano, near the Gulf of Tarentum, in which important manuscripts were said once to have been. They could find no traces of the monastery, but they heard that there was a very old book preserved in the palace of the Archbishop of Rossano. Accordingly, they asked permission to see it, and to their great joy found that it was a very valuable manuscript of the gospels of St. Matthew and St. Mark. They now issue an account of it in a volume just published—*Evangeliorum Codex Græcus Purpureus Rossanensis Litteris Argenteis sexto ut videtur sæculo scriptus picturisque ornatus, seine Entdeckung, sein wissenschaftlicher und künstlerischer Werth dargestellt von Oscar V. Gebhardt und Adolf Harnach.* (Leipzig: Giesecke & Devrient.)

The leaves of this manuscript are made of purple parchment, and the material used throughout in writing is silver, except in the first three lines of each gospel, where the letters are golden. There is only one other manuscript of this kind in existence, containing any portion of the New Testament, and it is in a mutilated condition, four of its leaves being in London, six in Rome, two in Vienna, and thirty-three have been more recently discovered in the Island of Patmos. The present volume, on the other hand, consists of one hundred and eighty-eight leaves, and contains the whole of the gospel of St. Matthew and the gospel of St. Mark down to the middle of the fourteenth verse of the sixteenth chapter. All the criteria used in judging of manuscripts indicate the end of the fifth or the beginning of the sixth century as the date of this. The manuscript is written in uncial charac-