

a report on the State of Religion, and resolutions adopted on each of the subjects that had been under consideration. The report was received, and the clerk was instructed to send the reports just named and the resolutions, to the conveners of the Synod's Committees on the subjects respectively. Session records were handed in and committees appointed to examine them. These committees reported at the afternoon sederunt and each record was ordered to be attested in terms of its report. A report was read from the finance committee, giving amongst other things, the names of congregations in arrears to the Presbytery Fund, and the clerk was directed to correspond with these and ask prompt payments of the amounts due. A petition was presented from certain persons in and around Linwood setting forth steps they had taken to provide themselves a place of worship in that village, and praying to be erected into a congregation. The Presbytery instructed their clerk to correspond with the Presbytery of Stratford, within whose bounds Linwood is, on the subject, and with the Session of Glenallan. The following Commissioners were appointed to the General Assembly. Messrs. J. C. Smith, Robert Fowle, D. Tait, J. A. R. Dickson, and H. Edmonson, ministers by rotation, and Messrs. Middlemiss and Torrance by election, and Messrs. Newton, Louttit, Small, Mowat and Davidson, ruling elders, by rotation, and Messrs. Ferrier, and Campbell, by election. Mr. J. K. Smith, A.M., of Knox Church, Galt, was nominated for the Moderatorship of the Assembly. The clerk was authorized to procure the services of a student for the Second Church, Garafraxa, during the summer. After long and careful consideration of the memorial which had been before the Presbytery at former meetings asking for the organization of a new congregation in West Garafraxa, the following resolution was adopted: "The Presbytery, sympathizing with the petitioners in their desire for the administration of Gospel ordinances in their neighbourhood, agree to the recognition of a mission station among them and to express the hope that some missionary, who may hereafter be sent to the Second Church, Garafraxa, may meet with success in preaching the Gospel in that new station, equal to that which attended the labours of his predecessor in the same field." Leave was granted for a moderation in a call to be held in Knox Church, Elora, on such a day as may be found most convenient. Leave of absence for three months was granted to Mr. MacKay, Eramosa, and Dr. Wardrope was appointed moderator of session *pro tem*. The state of contributions to the Synod Fund, and the fund for defraying expenses of Commissioners to the last General Assembly was brought by the clerk before the Presbytery. A report was submitted from the Committee on matters connected with Preston, whereupon it was agreed that legal steps be taken to secure the Presbytery's rights in the two lots which had been sold without their knowledge and sanction, that the church and lot adjoining be offered for sale and that an insurance for \$500 be effected on the building. The report also presented the financial position of the Presbytery to the property up to date. At their own request, and for reasons given, the Committee on Statistics, appointed in November last, was discharged. Some time was spent in considering the matter of canvassing congregations in the bounds for the Endowment Fund of Knox College, and the efforts made to bring congregations giving less than \$750 and a manse to their ministers up to this amount, and circulars from the conveners of committees on the Better Observance of the Sabbath and on Temperance. Next meeting was appointed to be held in Knox Church, Guelph, on the third Tuesday. May at ten o'clock in the forenoon. The roll was then called and the names of those present were marked, after which the proceedings were closed in the usual manner.—ROBERT TORRANCE, *Pres. Clerk*.

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LET not your field nor your minds lie fallow too long; they will produce a crop of weeds, and weeds are much readier to take root than to leave.

SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHER.

INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

April 20,
1884.

PAUL'S PREACHING.

[1 Cor. 1.
17-31.]

GOLDEN TEXT.—"We preach Christ crucified unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness."

TIME.—A.D. 57, early part.

PLACE.—Written from Ephesus (1 Cor. 16: 8) to the church at Corinth (see lesson 10: First Quarter)

INTRODUCTION.—We have already studied the formation of the Corinthian church during the year and six months' labour of the Apostle Paul. After his departure many abuses sprang up threatening to choke and destroy the spiritual life of the church: there were schisms in the body. The church appears to have been divided into four parties, those who had been converted by the apostles teaching and clung to his way of presenting the truth, saying, "I am of Paul;" a second, those converted through the instrumentality of Apollos, and calling themselves by his name; a third probably converted Jews, who had as yet failed to learn all the truths of God's love to the Gentiles, and so retained their exclusiveness which they thought best represented by Peter; and a fourth calling themselves specially by the name of Christ, who, in all likelihood depreciated apostolic authority claiming that they were amenable to Christ alone. In addition to these troubles there were other things in the church demanding severe rebuke; there was immoral conduct, unchecked by the church; the members were appealing to heathen judges to settle differences amongst themselves; those who had spiritual gifts used them in a disorderly manner; the women, contrary to the custom of the day, appeared in public unveiled, and there was a lack of brotherly love between the richer and poorer members. Tidings of these matters were brought to Ephesus by a Christian woman named Chloe, and in consequence Paul wrote this epistle.

Notes and Comments.—Verse, 17. "Not to baptize:" he had been referring to their divisions, and was thankful that he had baptised "but Crispus and Gaius, also the household of Stephanas," "lest any should say that I baptised in mine own name." Baptism has a place but not the place to which some would exalt it; it is the outward seal of our union with Christ, worse than valueless if we are not united to Him. Paul appears to have left the administration of the rite to subordinates. "Preach the gospel." a much greater thing. "Wisdom of words:" which those who called themselves by his name were claiming. "Cross of Christ:" here, as ever, the atoning sacrifice of Christ. "None effect." just what they were doing with their divisions.

Ver. 18. "Preaching of the cross:" its doctrine. "Perish foolishness—saved—the power of God." Rev. reads, "them that are perishing—are being saved." He who begins to listen to the gospel cannot be accounted either lost or saved, but is, as it were, at a point where two ways meet, and is either being lost or being saved. This is true of all your scholars, teacher.

Ver. 19. "Is written—" Isa., 29: 14, as in Septuagint, the reading of that passage and its context will help to an understanding of the meaning here. God will show how very foolish is human wisdom when it dares to enter the province of divine things.

Ver. 20. "Wise" Jew or Greek. "Scribe." man of letters. "Scriptural man:" a class of Jews devoted to the study of the scriptures. These two questions are answered at the close of the verse. "God made foolish:" by showing how powerless for the salvation of men. "Disputer:" Greek philosopher, likely, in whose teachings disputations had a large place.

Ver. 21. "In the wisdom of God:" the wise ordering of the Divine Providence. "By wisdom:" its much vaunted human wisdom. "Knew not God." it could not know Him, that was spiritual knowledge. Chap. 2: 14. "Foolishness:" so esteemed by Greeks, ver. 23. "Preaching." the cross.

Vers. 22, 23. Man's thoughts, God's method, and the results are in these two verses. "Jews—sign:" just as they did of the Saviour himself (Mark 8: 11), we do not find that Paul wrought any such at Corinth. "Greeks—wisdom:" human not divine, the wisdom of their philosophers. "Christ crucified:" the great central theme of all saving preaching, whether by apostles in the first, or teachers in the nineteenth century. "Jews—stumbling-block:" for they expected a victorious, all powerful, monarch Messiah. "Greeks foolishness:" telling them of the depravity and helplessness of man, and his need of a Saviour.

Ver. 24. "Them:" neither Jew or Gentile. "Called:" meaning, as the phrase always does from Paul, believers. As *Clement of Alexandria* has it: "While all men have been called they who were minded to obey received the name of 'called ones'." "Power" set against "sign," "wisdom" against "wisdom" of ver. 22, in other words, Christ crucified is a manifestation of the power of God and the wisdom of God for the salvation of the world.

Ver. 25. "Foolishness, weakness:" those which appear so to unbelieving man. "Wiser—stronger:" though men in their ignorance of God and themselves may think otherwise.

Vers. 26, 29. The apostle now uses a confirmatory argument from their own experience. "Your calling:" here conveying the idea of the general results of the calling, in which they were included. "Not many—wise—mighty—nobles:" then some of these had obeyed the heavenly voice, and were numbered with "the called ones," as *Lady Huntingdon* once said, "Thank God for the letter M; it was not 'not any,' but 'not many.'" "Foolish things:" the

simple truths of the gospel, so esteemed by the world. "Confound." same word is rendered "bring to naught," in ver. 28, and each is rendered in Rev. "put to shame." "Weak things:" poor men without temporal power, influence or riches. "Base:" low born, fishermen and such like, mean and despised in the eyes of the world. "Things that are not:" are considered as of little consequence as if they did not exist. "No flesh:" frail and helpless, Isa. 40: 6. "Glory:" we may not glory in ourselves as in the presence of God, but we may glory in Him, ver. 31.

Ver. 30. "Of Him:" ye are what ye are by the grace of God. "In Christ." Rom. 6: 11. "Wisdom:" fools before. "Righteousness:" here equivalent to justification. "The Lord our righteousness:" Jer. 23: 6, this is a part of a prophecy of Jesus. "Sanctification:" though before we were unholy and base. "Redemption:" the all-embracing climax, the eternal deliverance and restoration to his favour.

Ver. 31. "Is written:" Jer. 9: 24. "Glory in the Lord:" see note on ver. 29.

HINTS TO TEACHERS.

Topical Analysis.—(1) Paul's mission (ver. 17); (2) Paul's preaching (ver. 23); (3) Paul's hearers (ver. 22); (4) foolish and wise, strong and weak (ver. 18-21, 25-29).

First topic contains two things, (a) what the apostle was sent to do (baptize) and (b) what was his actual mission—to preach the gospel. The dissensions in the Corinthian church had forced from him an utterance of thankfulness, that save in one or two instances he had not personally administered the rite of baptism. He did not desire to belittle a duty commanded by the Master Himself, but he felt that it was quite a minor thing compared with the more important work that Christ had placed first, teaching—discipline—that was his work, the sealing rite he could leave to others; not to baptize but to preach the gospel, the grand truths of the gospel of Jesus. Here is a lesson on our work; baptism was right, so it is right to teach our scholars all the secondary truths of the Bible, its history, its geography, its chronology and so on, but the one great duty we have far beyond all others is to teach Christ, our scholars relation to Him, and His work of salvation; whatever else is untaught this must not be neglected.

Such, we find in the second topic, was Paul's preaching, a sentence of two words includes it all, it was "Christ crucified," a sentence full of meaning so vast that it would be in vain attempting to dwell upon it here, even if it were needed; but every teacher should know theoretically and experimentally what it means, and be able to tell his scholars out of a glad heart what Christ crucified is to him. This is the central truth of the N. T., the corner stone of the gospel:

"These the only words I see,
Jesus died upon the tree,
Christ was crucified for me."

On the third topic we may show that Paul's hearers were divided as the hearers of the gospel are to-day, into those who receive and those who reject. Of these latter the world-loving, self-seeking Jews represent one class, and the Greeks the so-called wise men, those who make everything subservient to their own wisdom, the other. On the one hand the lusts of the flesh, the desire of the eye, and the pride of life keep men from Christ, and on the other the pride of intellect and the wisdom of this world. Show how in the New Testament, both these classes are represented. All the Herods, Ananias, Felix, Demas and many others belonging to the one, while Agrippa, Gallio, the Epicureans, Stoics and such like, represent the other. But there were those who believed in Paul's day as now, and to them the cross was the wisdom of God and the power of God. Ask what Christ was to these and is to all who receive Him now, you have it in ver. 30. "Wisdom" divine wisdom, "the wisdom that cometh from above," only the soul that comes into communion with God, through Jesus can know the deep things of God. "Righteousness," here meaning His righteous obedience unto death for us, Rom. 5: 19. "Sanctification," how Christ in us, making us pure and holy, so that at the last he may present us without spot and blameless. "Redemption," final and complete, finishing for each in glory the work of Calvary.

We cannot dwell upon the fourth topic; but the gospel of salvation is to all eternity a monument of the wisdom of God, a gospel for all men, be they who they may, ignorant or educated, poor or rich, bond or free, for all nations, all ages; it makes the ignorant wise, the weak strong, the lowly exalted, and would, if it everywhere prevailed, bring back more than the long lost paradise. Is not this the very wisdom of God?

INCIDENTAL TRUTHS AND TEACHINGS.

Ordinances are not to be despised, but far beyond these is the preaching of Christ crucified.

The wisdom of God is folly to the foolishness of men.

But true wisdom is in the reception of the gospel.

The gospel, the great exhibition of the wisdom and power of God.

The world without a revelation could never find God.

Worldly men look for worldly religion.

The final results of the preached gospel will be to the eternal glory of God.

Main Lesson.—Christ crucified, the only way of salvation.—John 11: 50-52; Rom. 5: 6-8; 14: 9; 1 Cor. 15: 3; Gal. 1: 4; 3: 13; Eph. 5: 2-26; 1 Tim. 2: 6; Titus 2: 14; 1 Peter 1: 18-21; 2: 24, etc.

A RESOLUTION has been adopted by the Congregational church of Wallingford, Conn., forbidding the members "to drink liquor of any sort except hard cider."

ONE important result of the recent national temperance convention in Edinburgh will probably be to bring temperance legislation to the forefront as a test question at the next general election. There is certainly no social question of greater importance or urgency.