

Pages Missing

The Presbyterian Review.

Vol. XIII.—No. 33

TORONTO, FEBRUARY 18, 1897.

\$1.50 per Annum

"Some lives there are to angels' seem akin,
Dwelling on Earth, yet keeping ever near
The golden city gates, so they may hear
The harmony before they enter in.
Through all the discords of this world of Sin
They hear the voice of God and feel no fear;
They look above and see with vision clear
The purer life, the happy walls within.
They live as on a space of holy ground
By some invisible defence hedged round,
So near to evil, and yet so far away
So close to God, waiting the welcome day
It may be early, or it may be late,
When He shall take them in within the gate."

OVER LAND AND SEA.

The Dundee Free Presbytery had under discussion at its last meeting, the temperance question. The Rev. Dr. Patrick, of that city, referred to the degradation existing in Dundee in consequence of the drink traffic. He held that drunkenness should be treated as a specific offence, and that any man seen on the streets under the influence of drink, and proved to be incapable, ought to be dealt with as a criminal and treated as such. But Mr. Henry M'Intosh, a worthy elder, went further to the root of the matter when he asked the Presbytery if it was consistent to have men in the eldership of the Church, as session-clerks, and superintendents of Sabbath schools, who sold whisky and other liquors. Until they took a stand against this, he did not think they would be doing their duty as a Church.

Nevada has disgraced herself. The bill legalizing prize-fighting has been signed by the Chief Executive, and it is now a law. Prize-fight licenses may be obtained for one thousand dollars. We may expect bull fights and lotteries next, and the sporting fraternity have a general invitation to the State. Bruisers, ruffians, thieves have by this infamous law been tendered a welcome. While other States are drawing the lines more closely around lawless men and striving to purge society of everything that tends to bring down the standard of public morals, this exceptional State is throwing her doors wide open to crime and criminals.

The Japanese spare no pains in converting Formosa into a loyal province of their empire, and not, it seems, without some success. In the Pescadores, too, the natives are being transformed into Japanese. "There is," says *The China Mail*, "a flourishing Japanese school in which Chinese lads get from \$3 to \$4.50 to come and learn Japanese. A few of the Chinese have cut off their queues and adopted foreign dress."

All the Christian churches in Japan together have 111,588 members. There are in the country 858 missionaries, 331 native ministers, and 981 catechists. Of the church-members the Roman Catholics have 50,302 (including all baptized children), the Greek Church has 22,576, the Protestant churches have 38,710.

The "Christian era" was suggested or devised by Dionysius Exiguus, a Roman monk, who in 527 began its use and proposed that all public documents should be dated "in the year of our Lord." It did not come into general use in France until the eighth century, nor

in England until July, 816; in Spain it was not adopted until the eleventh century; in Portugal it was made legal in 1415; in the Empire of the East it was established by royal edict in 1453, a few weeks before the fall of Constantinople.

The Westminster Shorter Catechism is nearly 250 years old. The Assembly met on July 1, 1643, and sent up to Parliament the Directory for Public Worship, November 21st and 27th, 1644; the Confession of Faith on December 4th, 1646, and April 29th, 1647; the Shorter Catechism, November 25th, 1647, and April 14th, 1648; the Larger Catechism, October 15th, 1647 and April 14th, 1648; and held its last meeting, March 25th 1652. Thursday, November 25th, 1897, is the anniversary of the completion of the Shorter Catechism, and it is becoming that throughout the whole Presbyterian world the fact should have proper recognition. No one can compute the value that this remarkable compend of Scriptural truth has been to those who have made themselves acquainted with its contents.

An unknown ruined city, covering a space larger than New York City, with two temples and two great pyramids, has just been discovered in the mountains in the State of Guerrero, Mexico, by William Niven, the well known mineralogist of New York. He has just returned from a ten weeks' trip into that country, and brought back more than 300 photographs of the ruins. So says a Mexico special.

A very interesting late discovery is the nearly complete account, on a Greco-Egyptian papyrus, of a suit brought before the Emperor Claudius against Herod Agrippa, king of the Jews, mentioned in the book of the Acts, by the two leading anti-Semites of Alexandria, Insidorus and Lampo. These two men, who had been condemned to death under Caligula for their misdeeds, attempted to gain time by bringing a charge against Agrippa; but the emperor confirmed the judgment against them, and ordered their execution. The papyrus contains an official account of the trial.

In order to commemorate the great International Exposition, to be held at Brussels, in 1897, the Government of Belgium has followed the example of the United States with the Columbian stamps by adopting special designs of postage stamps during the year of the exposition. They are all of beautiful designs, symbolical of the arts and sciences, and very elaborate in the details of engraving.

In the seventy-three years of its existence the American Sunday-school Union, has founded 100,000 schools, from which 6,000 churches have sprung. Last year alone it started 1,800 Sunday-schools, and during that time 108 churches developed from schools which previously had been opened. The greater part of this work is being done in Minnesota, the Dakotas, Montana, Idaho, Texas, Kansas, Indian Territory, Oklahoma, and the mountain regions of the Virginias, Tennessee, the Carolinas, and Georgia. It costs \$100,000 a year to carry on these missionary efforts, and most of the money is used for actual expenses, the salaries cutting a small figure.

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Issued EVERY THURSDAY, from the office of the Publishers, Rooms No. 20, 21, 22, 23, 25 Aberdeen Block, South-East corner Adelaide and Victoria Streets, Toronto.

TERMS, \$1.50 per annum.

All communications for either Business or Editorial Departments should be addressed PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW, Drawer 2464, Toronto, Ont.

ADVERTISING RATES.—Under 3 months, 15 cents per line per insertion; 3 months, \$1.00 per line; 6 months, \$1.75 per line; 1 year, \$3.00. No advertisement charged at less than five lines. None others than unobjectionable advertisements taken.

Toronto, Feb. 18, 1897.

SOCIAL QUESTIONS.

A SIGNIFICANT sign of the times is the deepening interest which professing Christians, among them ministers of religion, manifest in social questions. This tendency has called forth remonstrance and acknowledgement. At conferences of clergymen papers are read on such topics, and at public meetings where the social relations are discussed, ministers attend and take part in the discussion. That the church is profoundly interested in social movements and in questions now being pressed to the front, may be taken for granted. The interests of truth and of justice as between man and man, must ever be of interest to the church. True, the great mission of the church is to preach the Gospel, and to preach it to every creature, that is the gospel of grace, the salvation of sinners. That great object must not be obscured, by any other work, however necessary and good; and it is also true that at the root of all real reform, social, and otherwise lies Christ's message to a world of sinners. But the church can do much in carefully guiding enlightened opinion in movements for the public good, and in dispelling intangible delusions. Within her pale exists a variety of ideas on the problems of the hour, and it need not be expected that on a question so intricate and much debated, as, for instance, the nationalization of industries, or the distribution of wealth, a unanimous deliverance can be obtained, but discussions such as those at Knox and Queen's Conferences can scarcely fail in doing good.

WHEN THE HEART IS RIGHT, ETC.

No more courteous opponent could be desired, in a controversy, than our esteemed contemporary, the *Christian Guardian*, of this city, but although the guage has been gently thrown down, it is unnecessary for us to take up the gauntlet. Last week the *Guardian* takes exception to certain statements in our article on the status of the secular press, our chief fault consisting in placing the press on a lower plane than the pulpit, or, at any rate, on too low a plane. The secular press, we may, in a word, repeat, (and a remonstrance from the shades of George Brown or Horace Greely, would not alter the fact), is managed on a commercial basis, and caters to the public taste on just the same lines as does any of the large retail dry-goods houses of Toronto. Hence the force of our contention that on the church rests the main responsibility for an elevated public taste. The pulpit is the great instrument of the church, but there are also the pastoral work, the prayer meetings, the Sabbath schools, and the religious periodicals. The church must bring these agencies to bear, with all her might, on the public mind. When spiritual regeneration leavens a community the standard of the secular press, aye, and the standard of living, the standard of doing business, and of society

generally, will rise, and not until then. The secular press has a most important function to perform, and its power is great, but we cannot compare it to the power of the Gospel. Does the *Guardian* wish to know the quickest and best way by which to secure a satisfactory alliance between the church and the secular press? We answer again, "Regenerate the community."

DEAL LIBERALLY.

The liberal response to the Indian Famine Fund has evoked the remark that equal readiness ought to be shown in responding to the appeals of the church for her needy missions and schemes. There is great force in the remark. The church has a duty to fulfil, and the means with which to carry on her own work efficiently is a first charge on her resources. The voluntarily assumed obligation is doubly an obligation, and no member of the church can escape from its claims. In the abundance, therefore, of our sympathy and liberality in the cases of Armenia and India, let not this obligation be forgotten, but let the Home and Foreign Mission, and the Aged and Infirm Ministers', and other funds of the church be the recipients of liberal donations. And let the home poor not be forgotten. There are many suffering ones at home, whose bitter cry is heard by God alone. Remember our poor. We do not wish you to curtail your bounty, but to enlarge it, to embrace as many as you can within its scope. There are many outlets for your means, and if we were only candid we would admit that there is wealth enough in the world for every need.

SEPARATE CHURCH SCHOOLS.

A Committee of the Anglican Church are considering a scheme whereby it is hoped a system of voluntary Church schools may be established in Ontario, on the English plan. The other day the whole question was gone into by the learned gentlemen, forming the Committee, and it is believed a favorable report will be adopted and sent on to the next meeting of the Toronto Synod. Some years ago Rev. Dr. Langtry mooted the subject of Separate Anglican Schools, and there have been advocates of such schools, in the Anglican Communion at all times, who have kept the question alive. It is not likely that the Committee will let the matter drop without a strenuous effort to accomplish something tangible.

The importance of the Church supervising the education of the young appeals to the Anglican more than it does to the average Presbyterian. The Church of England is wedded to the principle of state connection and regards education as part of its special service to the state. But in addition to that, Anglicans contend, with truth, that Anglican children taught in their own Church schools grow up more attached to their Church than they would if taught in the public school. No doubt they are right. Presbyterians, as a rule, take a broader view, giving the State charge of the education on the public ground that the State owes a fair education to every child within the commonwealth. The Church of England has not failed to note the hold which the Church of Rome has kept on her people by the Separate School; and is unwilling to forego any similar advantage for herself. Hence she is preparing for the time when a demand will be made on the Ontario Legislature to embody her claim in the law of the land.

Among the reasons why Church control of the schools is demanded, the strongest is that of religious teaching. The thoughtful educationist will readily relinquish religious teaching in the public schools,—not as an empty form, but in reality, and because every

legitimate opportunity should be taken advantage of to give the young a knowledge of the Scriptures. To have religious ideas instilled into the minds of the children, by the school-master, and a reverence for sacred things cherished, would be most desirable. The pity is, that religious instruction in the schools is becoming a superficial exercise, and in so many cases a mere form. But whether Church schools would be the proper and best remedy is more than doubtful, and although the uncertainties of politics are so proverbial that it would be unwise to prophecy what is contained in the alembic of the future for the Church of England in Ontario, still we believe the solution of the religious instruction problem must be sought for elsewhere than in Separate Church schools.

PHILIP MELANCHTHON.

Tuesday last, the 16th instant, was the four-hundredth anniversary of the famous reformer, Philip Melancthon, a date to be held in loving memory by the Protestant world. Inalienably associated with Luther's is his name, and Protestants derive their own general name from a document prepared by him. The champion of Luther's views, he prepared the Protest of the Evangelical Minority at the Diet of Spires in 1529 and from it arose the term Protestant. He was noted for his gentle spirit, his profound learning, his skill in dialectics and his gift of systematizing, which amounted to genius.

He was born at Bretten Feb. 16, 1497. His grandmother was a sister of the celebrated scholar, Reuchlin. He studied at the Universities of Heidelberg and Tubingen. In his 17th year he began to lecture at Tubingen, and published an edition of Terence and a Greek grammar. In 1518 he was elected professor of Greek at Wittenberg and held the position until his death. He lectured on rhetoric, philosophy, and classical literature, and soon was recognized as the foremost teacher of Germany.

His services to the cause of the Reformation were distinguished and although his position was bitterly attacked during the latter part of his life, by the strict Lutherans he was the successor to Luther in the leadership of the Reformed Church.

Throughout the Protestant world the 400th Anniversary was more or less observed as was most fitting, occasion being taken to place before the people the loving Christian character of the man, and the great work which it was his privilege to accomplish.

A DESPAIRING CRY.

We commend to the serious attention of the reader, who yearns for worldly success and distinction, this deplorably sad picture of Europe's "great man"—great from the world's stand-point—Prince Bismarck:

"I feel weak and languid, but not ill. My illness is want of the joys of life. My existence is no longer of any use; I have no official duties, and what I see as an onlooker gives me no pleasure. Should I live longer it will still be the case. I feel lonely. I have lost my wife, and as regards my sons, they have their business. With growing age I have also lost interest in agriculture and forestry. I rarely visit the fields and woods, since I can no longer ride and shoot and move about as I like. Little by little politics begin to tire me."

Truly does the *Independent* remark: "The faculty of retiring gracefully from active labor and responsibility when years become a burden and others can do the work better, is one Bismarck has not learned. He has no such resource as Gladstone has in other interests than statecraft. He finds nothing to do but

to meddle and complain. The knowledge that he created a strong empire gives him little comfort, for he has not faith that anybody but himself can keep it strong. When Milton was old, and had for "twice seven years" lost the sight of his eyes, he could say:

"What supports me, thou dost ask.
The conscience to have lost them overbilled
In Liberty's defence, my noble task."

But liberty is a better work than empire."

But what of the religious faith and comfort that should crown a useful life? Alas, too seldom does the world's great ones enjoy the sweet consolation, in the evening of life, for which life is alone worth living. How unlike Bismarck's cry was Melancthon's last words: "My illness does not disturb me; I have no anxiety or care but one—that the Churches may be at peace in Christ Jesus." He frequently before his death repeated the Saviour's prayer, 'That they may be one in us,' and the words of St. Paul, 'Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.'

THE YOUNG CHRISTIAN'S DUTY.

The Prominence of Mr. Edward W. Bok as an adviser of youth invests his utterances with importance. Usually he is sound and sensible, and has wielded much influence over the young Christian readers of the United States and Canada. A much quoted article came lately from his pen which has met with praise and blame in the religious press. It concerns the popularity of a young man of religious convictions. "Are young men who cannot from convictions play cards, dance, or attend the theatre, apt to be popular with young women of refinement and education who do indulge in such amusements?" Such is the question, and the answer is "Why certainly: Why not?" Then Mr. Bok cites a case:—"One of the most popular and delightful fellows I know in New York has never been inside a theatre, although he is thirty-five years of age. Nor has he ever danced or played cards. He was a personal friend for ten years before I knew that his religious principles precluded his indulgence in these amusements. His secret is that he does not carry his conviction on his sleeve for everybody to rub against. And of his popularity with women, young and mature, I can assure you absolutely. He reads about the new plays and can, therefore, talk about them if they come up in conversation. If asked if he has seen a certain actor or play he merely replies in the negative. Never does he 'force his convictions' upon others. A young man's popularity with either sex rests upon something more than his forms of amusement: amiability of manner, kindness, a pleasant address, a manly outlook on life, honourable principles—all these go far toward insuring popularity." We have to join in the chorus of dissent with which this case has been received. To begin with, the effect of religious conviction upon one's popularity should not be studied at all. The applause of the world should not be allowed to weigh against religious duty. The man with religious convictions, that is, every converted man, must rise above the idea of popularity. Moreover he must carry his convictions openly—not offensively—but there must be no mistake where he stands. Christ must be confessed before men, and the scoff of the world whether it be of its young women or old men must not be allowed to blight the life within. Mr. Bok's position is exceedingly weak and young people ought to look to a higher and more heroic ideal than that furnished them in his paragraph.

HOW TO SPEND THE DAY OF REST.

"The Sabbath was made for man," and it is instructive to observe, at the outset, how admirably the means are suited to the end, even from a theoretical point of view. The dual nature of man, as both physical and spiritual, has been fully consulted in providing rest for the body and quickening for the soul. This twofold adaptation of the Sabbath has been sinned against on both of its sides, but far oftener on the one which bears a religious aspect. So-called friends of the working man have catered for him in this matter as if he were a creature that possessed a body without a soul; and all this through a professed allegiance to the Scripture principle which asserts that "the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." As Hugh Miller well observed, "Their expert but unscientific gunnery take no account of the parabolic curve of man's spiritual nature." Both of these facts must be included in their full significance if the holy day is to be spent in conformity with the design of its Divine Author and the highest benefit of His rational creatures. The body and the soul are so intimately linked together that an injustice done to the one speedily reacts injuriously on the other. The physical organization stands in urgent need of rest after the laborious routine of the six days' work has come to an end. This necessity has not been left to man's own judgment to be dealt with on the principle of expediency, but it has been enjoined upon him with all the authority of a command from heaven, "Six days shall work be done; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of rest, an holy convocation; ye shall do no work therein." This is the letter of the law, but it is over-ruled by the spirit in exceptional cases which would operate oppressively on man, for whose advantage the Day of Rest was instituted. The first of these abatements contemplated works of piety. The Sabbath-day was the busiest of the seven in the Temple at Jerusalem, whence arose the saying that there was "no Sabbath in holy things." To be active after this manner, is to fulfil the end of the institution far better than when one rests according to the letter of the commandment. Works of necessity are also provided for in the fullest extent, so long as it is honestly borne in mind that these works are such as cannot be performed before the Sabbath arrives, nor postponed till after its close. Furthermore, the most ample allowance is made for works of mercy; and very especially, on the authority and example of our Lord Himself, is this permission extended to works of healing diseases and restoring the sick. Under one or other of these three classifications every work which is legitimate on the Sabbath-day will certainly fail, and what will not is as much prohibited to us as it was to the ancient Jews. One day in seven as a day of rest is highly necessary to man in his physical capacity, and whenever this arrangement has been tampered with, as in the case of the French Revolutionists who, in their folly, substituted a tenth instead of a seventh portion of time, the consequence has been to exalt the wisdom of God at the expense of the folly of man.

Not less is this purpose of rest frustrated when the seventh part of time is devoted to so-called physical recreation—the latest phase of which is to spend it toiling on a bicycle. Those who will not rest on the Sabbath-day according to the commandment are not at all the persons to observe it in its higher religious aspects, where the blessing peculiarly resides. Even those who strictly observe the Sabbath as a day of rest, and nothing more, lose its main advantage. Great as the need of rest may be, the necessity of spiritual quickening is still more urgent. This is the day on which the concerns of eternity are especially to be cared for. The spiritual exercises of the holy Sabbath are of a public and a private character. The former, as pertaining to the sanctuary service, legitimate themselves with Scriptural authority and example by a more direct lineage than is popularly supposed. Meetings for public worship have descended from "the holy convocation" which was enjoined on the Israelites; the psalms of David which were chanted in the Temple are still sung in our assemblies, and not least the ninety-second, which is entitled "a psalm or song for the Sabbath-day." To the same place men went up to

offer prayer to God, as is witnessed in the parable of the Pharisee and the publican. Reading and exposition of Scripture, as well as the more formal act of preaching, were exemplified under the authority of apostolic practice in the synagogues. These exercises, therefore, are not the enactments of human expediency, instituted for the purpose of arousing and sustaining the spiritual instinct in man, but have been laid on the Christian conscience as matters of Divine obligation. Nor do the duties—or rather let it be said the spiritual privileges—of the holy Sabbath end here. There are private as well as public observances which are characteristic of the day. Retirement from all other engagements, meditation in solitude on the duty events commemorated by the Sabbath, are not to be omitted by those who value growth in grace and seek to cherish a pious frame of mind. The works of God in creation—of which the Sabbath was first appointed to be a memorial—and the still more glorious work of redemption which the change from the seventh to the first day of the week was designed to commemorate—should hold a foremost place in the thoughts of the mind on this holy day. Those who have given themselves the most completely to these duties have been the foremost to testify to their blessed effects on their spiritual progress. The distinguished Judge Hale affirmed that he had ever found comfort, happiness and success attend him through the week in proportion as he had sanctified the Sabbath-day. By way of practical conclusion to this notice, it will not be out of place to append the eight rules which the great moralist, Dr. Samuel Johnson, prescribed to himself for his own guidance in the matter of Sabbath observance:—(1) That he would rise early on the Sabbath, and to that end would retire early on Saturday night. (2) That he would engage in some unusual devotion in the morning. (3) That he would examine the tenor of his life during the week that was gone, and mark his advancing in religion, or recession from it. (4) That he would read the Scriptures methodically, with such helps as were at hand. (5) That he would go to church twice. (6) That he would read books of divinity, either speculative or practical. (7) That he would instruct his family. (8) That he would wear off by meditation the worldly soil contracted during the week.

WHY I AM A PRESBYTERIAN.

BY REV. H. P. CARSON, D.D.

Being urged, not long since, to give before a large congregation in a sister church my reasons for being a Presbyterian, I consented to do so in the interests of true church unity and a broader Christian charity. After introductory remarks, I proceeded, limiting myself, however, to ten reasons, which were in outline, as follows:

1. Because I was born and grew up within the Presbyterian Church, my father being a ruling elder in the church. Birth, education and environment very largely determine church as well as political relations.

2. Because the Presbyterian Church by her provisions for the formal consecration of children in infant baptism, family worship and parental training in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, both secured me to her service and impressed me with her efficiency in securing the religious welfare of children.

3. Because the Presbyterian Church has helped and continues to help me to hear Christ only as my Saviour and Lord. Not but that other Churches may do likewise, for such is the true test of the worth of any Church, but the test of fitness for membership in the Presbyterian Church is only loyalty to Christ, as Saviour and Lord; not subscription to a creed but devotion to Christ according to His word.

4. Because the Presbyterian Church fosters an intelligent faith in Christ, urging each individual to think and decide for himself as she appeals to his reason and conscience. She provides amply for the better education of the membership, and requires that her ministers shall have completed a classical course in college and an approved course in theological training before being inducted into the ministry. She seeks to move men by intelligent conviction.

5. Because the Presbyterian Church clings so tena-

ciously to, and is so jealous for the supremacy of the Word of God, as the only infallible rule of life.

6. Because the Presbyterian Church suffers no man to lord it over the conscience of the individual, she having always stood for civil and religious liberty, even at the cost of blood and treasure.

7. Because the Presbyterian Church so emphasizes the very comforting doctrine of the sovereignty of God, while always acknowledging also the free agency of man.

8. Because the government of the Presbyterian Church seems to me both Scriptural and wise, affording the largest liberty consistent with efficiency, protecting the rights of the individual and able to exercise discipline effectively. Only her officers are required to subscribe to her Confession of Faith, and to that only as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Scriptures.

9. Because the Presbyterian Church exercises broad charity, showing great facility of adaptation in her work as well as constant readiness to co-operate with all other evangelical churches in Gospel work. She accepts their baptism and ordination as valid.

10. Because the Presbyterian Church is eminently a missionary Church, growing more and more in earnest to carry out the Lord's command to preach the Gospel to every creature.

RELIEF FOR INDIA.

Rev. Dr. Warden of Toronto, treasurer of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, acknowledges the receipt of \$1,400.03 from Rev. R. Johnston, B.D., being a contribution from St. Andrew's Church (Presbyterian) of London, Ont., on behalf of the sufferers from the famine in India. Dr. Warden cabled this amount yesterday to Rev. Dr. Smith, treasurer of the Presbyterian Missions in Central India, asking him to use it immediately for the relief of those standing most in need of it.

Dr. Warden also received \$29.05 from the Presbyterian congregation of Appin and South Ekfrid, and \$25.50 from the Presbyterian congregation of Point Edward, also \$18.85 from the Presbyterian congregation of Essex for the relief of the famine-stricken.

Besides these amounts, the sum of 50 cents was received by him from an aged Presbyterian, who writes: "I am sorry I cannot give any more, as I am old and broken down in health; lost my family and all I have in this world except Christ." This small sum was much appreciated by Dr. Warden, for the fine spirit which it evinced.

In connection with the mission of the Presbyterian Church of Canada in India, homes have been established for the reception of children who have been abandoned by their parents, or whose parents have died. In these homes the children are cared for, fed and educated, and this is considered by many of the Presbyterian congregations one of the most effective ways in which to extend permanent relief to our brethren in India.

All contributions received by Dr. Warden, Confederation Life Building, Richmond street east, will be acknowledged and immediately forwarded.

HERBERT SPENCER'S LAST WORD.

Beyond all expectation, Mr. Spencer has completed his immense task. The concluding volume of his system of philosophy is now published, and shows no loss of intellectual clearness and no change of opinion. The energy and industry in the old man are wonderful. We turn to see what he says on the great themes of God and religion. He still maintains that there is a Power behind nature. The conclusions of science, he says, do not destroy the object matter of religion, but only transfigure it. Of this power behind nature he writes—"One truth must grow ever clearer, the truth that there is an inscrutable existence everywhere manifested to which we can neither find nor conceive beginning or end. Amid the mysteries which become the more mysterious the more they are thought about there will remain the one absolute certainty, that we are ever in presence of an Infinite and Eternal Energy, from which all things proceed." This sounds not unlike the catechism's definition of God. Yet this existence Mr. Spencer still holds is unknowable by us, utterly inscrutable, and of course not demonstrable.

Yet he believes this unknown god can be worshipped, and will continue to be worshipped increasingly by men. This is one of the strongest conclusions and predictions of any thinking man. The key to it is the structure of his mind. Mr. Spencer says the ever-new discoveries of science will keep religion alive by stimulating wonder. This was the root mistake of his system from the first, that religion has its origin in wonder. It is not originated by wonder merely, still less will it be kept alive by wonder. Religion springs from conscience, the sense of sin, and from sorrow, the need of succour and help from above. There is a spiritual element wanting in Mr. Spencer, else he could never suppose that the belief in God and the soul arises from animism and dreams, or that Religious worship springs from remembrance of ancestors. Touching Church life and Ministry Mr. Spencer concludes that sects will multiply more and more owing to the growth of individual opinions, and in this way Ministry will completely cease. As if each sect will ultimately consist of one man, and he will be his own priest. This enormous system of Philosophy has occupied Mr. Spencer a long life. In Psychology it is masterly, in Sociology it is strong against Collective Socialism. In Theology it amounts to the elements we have outlined, namely there is an Ultimate Reality, a Power behind nature, that power is unknowable, yet it will be worshipped with the worship of wonder, the Church will be disintegrated and cease to be, and all human priesthood or ministry come to an end. — *Belfast Witness*.

VALUABLE BIBLES.

The three most valuable Bibles in the world are said to be in the British Museum, the National Library in Paris, and the cloister of Belem, Lisbon. The first is in manuscript, written by Alcuin and his pupils, and in the year 800 was presented to Charlemagne on the day of his coronation. In the thirties of the present century it was in the possession of a private gentleman in Basel, who offered it to the French Government for 42,000 francs. Afterwards it was sold to the British Museum for the comparatively small sum of £750. The book is written in fine, small characters, and is decorated throughout with exquisite vignettes and arabesques. The chapter headings, as also the name of Jesus, are everywhere written in gold. The Paris Bible was published in 1527, printed by order of Cardinal Ximenes, and dedicated to Leo X. One of the three copies, printed on vellum paper, was, in 1789, sold to England for 12,000 francs. This copy was afterwards presented to Louis Philippe, and in this way was placed in the National Library. The third, or Belem Bible, consists of nine folio volumes, and is written on parchment. It was stolen by Junot in 1807, and taken to Paris, Madame Junot, when Portugal wanted to buy the Bible back, asked 150,000 francs for it. Louis XVIII., however, made the Portuguese Government a present of the precious volume.

THE OLD TESTAMENT AND THE NEW MUST BE STUDIED TOGETHER.

This unity of Israel's life is a fact of no little importance in itself, and its recognition is indispensable to any large and true view of biblical history and biblical revelation. The division of the biblical department in our theological schools into the two separate departments of the Old Testament and the New Testament was probably an economic necessity. But it would be nothing less than a disaster if it should lead to the feeling on the part of students of the Bible that the Old Testament and the New are two separate books belonging to two quite distinct periods of history and having but a loose connection one with the other. Not only must the teacher of the Old Testament know the New Testament, and the teacher of the New Testament know the Old Testament, but both of them, and every student of the Bible, ought to recognize the continuity of the history, the record of which begins in the one volume and is carried forward in the other. What we need alike as students of history and as theologians is not a fragmentary and disconnected knowledge of the Bible, nor even a knowledge of it in all its parts, but a knowledge of it as a whole, and in its true unity.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S UNION. OF THE PRESBYTERY OF TORONTO.

(Continued from last week.)

HOW TO RAISE THE STANDARD OF SPIRITUAL LIFE IN OUR SOCIETIES AND WORK.

BY REV. DR. McTAVISH.

There are not many conferences at the present time in which this question does not come up in some form or other. It indicates



REV. DR. McTAVISH.

that in the experience of most Christians the spiritual life is not what it ought to be, and it also suggests that if the spiritual standard is to be raised in any society or congregation it must be by leading individual believers into a higher, or deeper, or larger Christian experience.

I. The necessity for a higher Spiritual Life. It is useless to discuss this subject with self-satisfied Christians. It is like offering water to a man who is not thirsty, or offering advice to one who thinks he knows more than anybody else. This is the condition of Israel in the days of Malachi. So when the

prophet comes with reproof and correction they ask "Wherein?"—"Wherein have we despised thy name?" "Wherein have we wearied Him?" "Wherein have we robbed thee?" But the attitude of most of our young people, and many of our older people too, is one of intense yearning for higher and better things. But what is the actual experience? There has been many an honest effort to live a God-honoring Christian life—a regular use of the Word of God and the ordinances and means of Grace—many a resolve to be more devoted to the work of Christ, and yet what has been the result? In regard to sin it has been defeat rather than victory. The old habits of sin have reasserted themselves and have had the mastery. In regard to service it has been failure rather than success, and the soul has often asked the question those perplexed disciples asked at the foot of the Mount of Transfiguration, "Why could not we cast him out?" In regard to Christian growth there is still the milk fed childhood where there ought to be strong manhood, and in regard to Christlikeness there is only the dimmest outline where there ought to be a clear unmistakable reproduction. Many an honest, longing heart will say—that is just my condition—is there any way out of it? Is there any higher and better life for me at present?

II. The possibility of a Higher Spiritual Life.—There may be a necessity without a possibility. A traveller may be perishing in the desert from lack of water. The water is a necessity if he is to live but it may not be a possibility. Let this be clearly understood for there are many tired, weary, disappointed Christians who do not believe that a life of victory, and peace, and faithfulness is a possibility to them. We have only to turn to the words of Christ to see clearly the possibility as implied in the provision "I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly." Jno. x. 10. It is easy to see in the natural sphere the difference between life and abundant life. Here is one man in the last stage of consumption. His blood is thin and impoverished—his body is reduced to a mere skeleton. To him every physical effort is a weariness and he is at the mercy of all changes of temperature and outward condition. He has life but it is a very feeble life. There is another with strong frame, iron muscles and rich blood. He is overflowing with animal spirits and exertion is a delight to him. Why? Because he has abundance of life. Apply this to the spiritual life and you have in the provision of Christ unlimited possibility. Then follow this out in detail in other Scriptures and the possibility becomes even more evident. (1) As to sin, Rom. vi. 14. "Sin shall not have dominion over you." It can not keep you in bondage for its lordship or dominion is broken by Christ. (2) Fitness for service is promised, Acts i. 8. "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you and ye shall be witness unto me." (3) Is it fruitfulness in life and service we seek. "Ye did not choose me but I chose you and appointed you that ye should go and bear fruit and that your fruit

should abide," Jno. x. 16. (4) Christian growth is also a glorious possibility, for the Apostle Paul writing to the Thessalonian Christians says, "We are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren, even as it is meet, for your faith *groweth exceedingly* and the love of each one of you all toward one another *aboundeth*." Then too the majority of Christians have seen and heard persons or heard or read of them who conspicuously possessed a higher or larger Christian life. Why should this be exceptional? Simply because it is not thought possible for them. One says I have a very peculiar temperament. Another gives as an excuse that his circumstances are of such a nature that a higher life is not possible to him. Another still is the victim of some habit to which he is being brought into bondage. There are differences of gifts and differences in the service to which believers are called, but the "more abundant" life of which Christ speaks is the heritage of every Child of God. It is sad indeed to see necessity without possibility, but it is almost sadder to see both necessity and possibility, and yet the needy ones are not availing themselves of the abundant provision made for them. There is no more pathetic picture in the Old Testament than that of Hagar and Ishmael in the wilderness of Beersheba. The scanty supply of water is soon spent. Then the mother, when she can bear the cries no longer, lays the lad under a shrub and goes off as it were a bowshot, to try and get a little relief from her trouble and in her utter helplessness lifts up her voice and weeps. There you have the picture of many a distressed and discouraged Christian who has laid aside some Christian service and has gone away in despair. Then Hagar heard God's voice saying "What aileth thee Hagar?" Who might have said my child was dying in my hands and I could not bear it. You have said the work was dying in my hands and I gave it up in discouragement. Then God says "Fear not for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is." It is not the weeping of the discouraged mother but the cry of the dying child God hears. God has not forgotten or forsaken our work, if we have, He hears the cry of need. Then came the command "Arise, lift up the lad and hold him in thine hand." Go back and take up the service you have laid aside. When Hagar had done this God opened her eyes and she saw *right beside her* a well of water and she procured it and gave the lad a drink and he lived. Think of that lad dying with thirst and that mother weeping out her sorrow and despair and all within a stone's throw of an abundant supply of water. O, that the blind eyes of discouraged, weary, thirsty Christians might be opened to see that Christ is that fountain of living water.

III. The method by which the believer obtains this "more abundant" or higher Christian life. Of Christ it was said "In Him was life" and again "He that hath the Son hath the life." We must clearly recognize that Christ is the exhaustless fountain of life and blessing. It is the office of the Holy Spirit to make real to the Christian experience all the privileges that are his in Christ Jesus. As Rev. Andrew Murray expresses it "The Holy Spirit is the conveyancer who makes over to the believer all the possessions and privileges that are procured for him in Christ Jesus."

There is a practical heresy of which many Christians are guilty, and which is more injurious to the believer's life than even many of the doctrinal heresies. It is that we must be saved by Christ and we cannot get the pardon of our sins except through Him. But once saved we must live the Christian life by our own effort:—of course getting help from the Lord now and again. The believer will not enter the "more abundant" life until he sees that he is as absolutely dependent on Christ for sanctification as for justification for Christian growth as for a new nature, for fitness for service here as for God's presence hereafter. Christ in everything must be "all in all."

(1) This is true in regard to victory over sin. In Rom. viii. 2, "The Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and death." It is this law of sin and death in the believer that is bringing defeat. How is it to be overcome? By self effort? This is like a man trying to lift himself up by tugging at his boot tops. It is the Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus that brings us to the place of victory. We can see this in a familiar illustration. Suppose I wished to get to the upper story of one of our high buildings and there is no stairway. I try to leap up, but there is a law of nature that has hold of me and draws me down again—that is the law of gravitation. Sometimes I may leap a little higher but this law is too strong for me. Must I give up in despair? Is not that the conclusion of many Christians. This law of sin and death is too strong for me, and I must wait till I reach heaven and get forever beyond its power, to obtain victory. But that is not what one would do in the case we suppose, for here in one corner is an elevator, I step into it—a new law is set in operation and in a few seconds I am where I wished to be. Did the law of gravitation cease when I went into

that elevator? By no means. It was just as powerful as before but the law of mechanics operating in that elevator is stronger than the law of gravitation and victory is the result. So with the believer we do not get rid of the law of sin, or the presence of sin, or the principal of sin, but in Christ Jesus we have the victory over it. So with every relation of the Christian life. (2) Is it success in service we long for. Phil. iv. 13, "I can do all things in Him that strengtheneth me." But remember it must be in Him. (3) Is it growth in the likeness of Christ. 2 Cor. iii. 18, "But we all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord are changed into the same image from glory to glory even as by the Spirit of the Lord." We won't become Christlike by looking into our own hearts but by looking away to Christ and seeing in Him all we desire to be. What are the conditions on the part of the believer for the obtainment of this "more abundant life." 1. There must be an absolute surrender to Christ. In the illustration of the elevator, already used, it is essential that the person wishing to be helped by it should commit himself absolutely to it. If you are to know the blessedness of victory in Christ you must commit yourself without reserve to Him. This is a difficult thing to do as there is such a strong natural tendency to keep in reserve at least a little dependence upon self. As some one has said—our greatest struggle is not with trial or with temptations but with the will of God—to lay our wills alongside of His and say from the heart in everything "Nevertheless not as I will but as thou wilt."

2. Continuous dependence upon Christ—It is very important to recognize that the trust in Christ must be continuous. It is not trusting in the morning for the rest of the day but it is trusting hour by hour and moment by moment. This dependence must begin as an act of the will but by and by the repeated acts of the will become the habit or attitude of the soul toward God. Very many fail here. In the incident in Peter's life when he walked on the water you see this whole truth acted out. At Christ's invitation he surrendered himself utterly to the water and so long as he looked to Christ he walked over the water in triumph. But the very moment he took his eyes off Christ and began to look at his circumstances and saw the wind boisterous he began to sink. No doubt for a moment he fell back on self effort and tried without avail to keep himself above water. Then he looked away again to Christ and cried "Lord save me"—his faith and dependence on Christ were renewed and through the power of Christ victory came again. Meet every difficulty and trial—undertake every work to which you are called of God and face every temptation in utter dependence upon that Almighty Christ who will "never fail nor be discouraged."

3. Implicit obedience to Christ—The rule of life will not henceforth be what we like but what Christ commands or wishes. We may get to the point where we distrust self . . . but we must also come to the place where we are ready to obey the will of God however difficult the task seems to which He is calling us. Moses tried to bring help to his suffering brethren in Egypt by his own strength—he smote the Egyptian—but it ended in complete failure. Before the Burning Bush Moses had learned his own utter helplessness; but instead of making his own weakness a reason for entire dependence upon God he made it an excuse for disobeying God's call. "Who am I that I should go." He persisted in his excuses and disobedience until he almost missed the great blessing of his life. You may have an entire distrust of yourself and yet you are receiving no blessing simply because you are not willing implicitly to trust God and go forward in unquestioning obedience to His call. Surrender, trust and obey and the life "more abundant" is yours. Not yours by feeling or emotion but yours by faith and you place yourself in that relation to Christ in which the Spirit of Christ takes possession of your life fills and controls it. Will it be so?

"CHRISTIAN OPPORTUNITY."

SYNOPSIS OF REV. PROF. G. L. ROBINSON'S ADDRESS.

In his introduction Prof. Robinson gave a few of the details which are contained in the beautiful story of Esther, and after describing the great mission of the queen in daring to appear before the King and request the life of her people, he called attention to the following points:



REV. PROF. GEORGE L. ROBINSON, PH.D.

created it. From these observations Prof. Robinson drew the following lessons.

- (1) Esther's opportunity was an opportunity fraught with great possibilities.—The sparing of her nation.
- (2) Delay was dangerous.—The lot had been cast, and the massacre was set for the 13th day of the 12th month.
- (3) Esther's opportunity was a doubtful opportunity.—The King might not receive her graciously.
- (4) Esther's opportunity was in reality no opportunity at all.—She

- (1) Every Christian has a mission.—Crises of greater or lesser moment come to all. You may be called of God to save some one.
- (2) Don't hesitate to approach men.—They are often more approachable than you think. Make opportunity as Esther did. Don't wait for visions before you begin. "A wise man will make more opportunities than he finds," says Bacon.
- (3) But do as Esther and her friends—pray first. Fasting and prayer are closely related.
- (4) Do it at the risk of your reputation, your social standing, your lives.—Be willing to suffer with Christ.
- (5) Finally, remember that it is not bodies but souls you can save, through Jesus Christ the King.

HOW OUR SOCIETIES BEST REACH THE YOUNG MEN OF OUR CONGREGATIONS?

BY THE REV. J. CAMPBELL TIBB.

This question is one of the most perplexing of the pastor's and one of the deepest importance. To endeavor to suggest a partial solution thereof as the result of a somewhat varied pastorate is all I can attempt to do.



REV. J. CAMPBELL TIBB.

There is no doubt, but that the devil will seize everything we do not claim for God, and he is specially busy ear-marking between the ages of 10 and 25. He may develop his claim afterwards but if he can secure a good title to it between these ages, he allows it to develop itself. If we would be successful therefore, we must contest his pretensions every step of the way and make our title good at as early a date as possible. By so doing we prevent

waste of power and concentrate it for the highest purposes of living.

Now he who goes a fishing must know something of the fish he is seeking or he will often come home with an empty basket. So must any spiritual angler know those whom he desires to capture for Christ and the Church, or sociologically speaking those whom he would have impressed with Christ for the good of the world at large, and also for their own highest development and final happiness. Between the ages of 10 and 18 he is rather an unknowable subject to the ordinary city pastor and not too familiar to the town and country one, although the latter has many more opportunities if he cares to exercise and cultivate them. Yet it is at this age when most good can be done.

There is need that the four most interested should be specially fitted to deal with and gain the confidence of the young lad at this age, viz., his Pastor, his District Elder, his Sunday school Superintendent and the Endeavor Lookout Committee or its equivalent. He can furnish them all with work and still have some time on his hands. My paper to-day only deals with the last of these. Now the boy if he has been trained in a good home is not irreligious or badly disposed at this period of his life. Practically I have found them more devout at this age than ten years later. But they are full of animal life and impatience of restraint springing therefrom. At this age we must go with them in their amusements and see that they are properly safeguarded. A boy between 10 and 18 has more interest in a Lacrosse or Football match, in a game of Baseball, a Skating Carnival, a Bicycle or Boat Race than in the best sermon ever preached that did not take some of these in. If we are going to have pure moral and spiritual minded young men we must see to it that their recreations are free from the four taints which largely destroy the enjoyment of them to the honest, upright man, viz., Betting, Gambling, Drinking and Profanity.

That Lookout Committee does not need to be composed of sleepy saints, but they should be thoroughly up to date young men and women whose hearts are firmly stayed on Christ and who are willing and eager to be of service to these young boys. Do not forget that boys have a fair sense of their own dignity and importance which it will not do to unduly wound. We ourselves carry some of the sorest memories of our life from those early days. Cultivate the man within the boy, by trusting him. Give him something to do and let him do it his own way. When he fails do not wound his keen susceptibilities by sharp jests but shutting your eyes to many practical failures give him credit for the intention lying behind them and encourage him to further effort. If this be done the young man of whom I have now to speak will not be such a difficult subject to deal with. There are different varieties of him and I propose to class them under three heads.

- I. THE DRIFTER. II. THE SIFTER. III. THE LIFTER.

and consider them in the order named.

I. THE DRIFTER.
His appearance in his early days is the best of him but finally his appearance and character co-incide. He is found in all classes of society and wherever found merits his name. He has three traits of character by which he may be distinguished. He is essentially lazy. He hates work and keeps as far from it as possible. He believes that the world owes him a living and acts accordingly. He is not only physically lazy but he is mentally

indolent. He dreams either on the sunny side of the street while he props up some house wall, or lies prone on the lounge in a comfortable library with the book closed. Not only is he mentally and physically indolent but he is pliable and vain and so becomes an easy tool for the designing knave. He never gets a chance because he never deserves one, and would let the best go by if he had it. Not having sufficient stamina to lead he is content to follow and the animal in him generally leads him to follow the worst, so, if it were possible, he deteriorates, and finally contributes a large quota to our poor-houses, insane-asylums, and prisons. What can we do for him? I know he does not want us but he needs us, and we want him; for we are the only ones who can do him good. There is no power that can touch this human drift wood vitalizingly but the regenerative power of the New-Birth. No human effort can rouse him from his deadly inertia but the awakening of a new manhood in Jesus Christ, and we must try and surround him with such pressing influences that he may drift our way and then pray him into the kingdom. Our motive makes us strong and our love makes us wise while our help is omnipotence. The only help of the Drifter is in Christ let us then try and gather him in.

II. THE SIFTER.

The next class of young men for lack of a better term I shall call sifters. Like the former class the marks of their character may be early discovered. They are not a loveable class but they are a go-ahead one. They are boys, who are at the front when there is anything to get, and out of sight when there is anything to do. They will do more for the gift than they will do for the giver. When they grow older they believe in Missions beginning in Jerusalem and staying there. They are suspicious, critical and selfish. Their idea of other peoples goodness is based on their own, and to them all generosity means a prudent investment. They freely criticize and readily condemn. If they are moral it is because it pays and not because it is right, and they are comparatively honest from the same standpoint. Have they any good qualities? Yes, as a rule they are intelligently industrious. They pay their debts, and soon have a balance at the saving bank. Convince them that any project will pay and they will determinately advocate it and they are as free from offensive as they are from distinguishing virtues.

What can we do for them? Everything that they need most. We can allay their suspicions, for Christianity has nothing to conceal. We can restrain their critical spirit by living a consistent life and we only can cure their selfishness by bringing them into contact with Christ. If the Drifter is the mouldable clay the Sifter is the granite column. The one must be pressed and the other chiselled into shape. The latter requires most labor but the marks of labor endure the longest on the latter. Without us the sifter only gathers the chaff and stones, and sticks out of grain but gathers no grain himself. With us he sifts the dross from the grain and carries it on to the hopper. We can use him, for truth needs no bush to hide in, and the more light cast upon it the clearer it becomes, so does the grain often winnowed become the purer thereby. Put the sweetest and purest of your Lookout Committee on his trail or it will be hopeless to gather in the Sifter.

III. THE LIFTER.

He is not an angel but he has the best human chance of becoming one. I have termed him the Lifter from the time he lifts the baby out of the cradle to lighten his mother's cares until the time the bearers carry him to the grave he has been a burden-bearer. Again the Lifter like his confreres is to be found everywhere. Amid the news-boys on the street, the gutter-snipe of the slums, the dux of the college class or the Little Lord Fauntelroy of the Castle, in all he is in evidence and we are thankful. I find three characteristics of him shining out everywhere. He is willing to learn, willing to help, and willing to obey. He is his mother's "little man," his sister's chum, and his father's boy, when he grows up he is a sportsman but not a sport, a student, but not a recluse, a woman-lover but not a rake, a prudent business man but not a skinflint. If we can gather him in; and we should not miss one of them, for they are our natural allies, he is a treasure. The willingness, unselfishness, and true manliness which characterized him in the world will follow him into the Church and make him one of our most useful members. He is my hero this morning perhaps—

Not with a beautiful face or form
But a beautiful soul within
With a heart that is good and brave and true
And has conquered hateful sin.

The first two classes need us most, but we most need the latter. We can do the most for the first and the latter can do most for us. We hate to leave the comfort of the warm fireside, and good fellowship and face the biting blast and most the bitter

friction of the daily battle of life in the world. But I would earnestly remind my fellow-workers that while the Drifter may become a Lifter, it is possible that the Lifter, by an opposite but analogous process, may become a Drifter. Life is not easy to live; duty is not always pleasant to perform, nor is the reward always in sight. The next step upward may be found in the ward of a tenement house and not in the soft cushions of the church pew. If we would sweeten the tongue of the Sifter, lay loving hands on the Drifter, and link the Lifter more closely to us etc., if we are out on search for the young man whoever he is, and wherever he is to be found; if we are unselfishly seeking his good, he is to be had, and he may be garnered in if we not only seek him for the Master, but seek him in the Master's way and in the Master's spirit.

"And this my daily prayer shall be
That thou wilt show thyself to me
That thou in me may more abide
That I in thee myself may hide,"

for the hiding of self is not only the finding of the Master, but also those whom the Master seeks, including the young men of our congregations.

HOW TO OBTAIN A MORE THOROUGH KNOWLEDGE OF OUR OWN CHURCH LIFE AND WORK.

BY REV. R. D. FRASER M. A., DOWMANVILLE.

"How to obtain a more thorough Knowledge of our own Church Life and Work." That such a knowledge ought to be obtained might be taken for granted. It would prove an inspiration. The deepest source of inspiration was the Bible itself, its doctrine studied at first hand, and its unequalled examples of labor and suffering. Next to this was our own beloved Church, which the speaker held to be closest to Scripture in her doctrine and polity. Her creed was an inspiration, its chief glory being the place it gives to God. The great truth of the sovereignty of God, for which the Calvinistic system peculiarly stands, was the very spine of all the evangelical creeds. By throwing men directly upon Almighty God, it made stalwart Christians. As to the polity of Presbyterianism, such principles as these were at the basis of it—the Church counts of the people—the only King and head of the Church is the Lord Jesus Himself, allegiance being due to Him alone—the only term of membership is acceptance of Christ as Saviour. It was not to be wondered at that such a polity developed on the one hand a love of liberty and on the other hand a broad and Christlike charity. The history of the Presbyterian Church was itself an inspiration. Its giant heroes, such as Calvin and Knox and Cooke, and the Hodges, and Duff, and Geddie, its fierce and often bloody battles for truth and freedom, its mission work,—according to Professor Ramsay, of Glasgow, one fourth of all the missionary work of Protestantism, a knowledge of these could not but create enthusiasm.

A thorough knowledge of their own Church was also necessary to the most efficient work. The Christian Endeavor movement emphasized this in its motto "For Christ and the Church." One's own Church was truly the avenue to readiest service, the most convenient channel for effort, the best strategic position in the battle with evil, the most promising field of labor, the most effective engine for the destruction of the kingdom of Satan.

The speaker next discussed the question how such thorough knowledge might be obtained. He held that a most important element was the atmosphere in which the young were trained and urged strongly that the Church and its concerns should have a larger place in the family life. He also held that Presbyterian organizations, by providing the young people with a larger outlook on Church life and work, aided in increasing their knowledge of it. Systematic study was another and most important means. This, the General Assembly had recognized in its "Plan of Study," now before the Church and which although only in its second month, had been received with marked favor. Mr. Fraser outlived the Plan, which provides for weekly study of doctrine through the Shorter Catechism and one meeting a month devoted wholly to some topic appertaining to Church life or work. Several of the most distinguished men in the Church were writing "helps" for these topics and in addition to the discussion of the first topic "Why I am a Presbyterian" in the Societies, it had already been made the subject of a Sabbath sermon or a week night lecture by a large number of the ministers. The "Plan of Study" had been heartily endorsed by Endeavorers generally and the *Endeavor Herald* and the *Golden Rule* organs of the Society. A third method of increasing one's knowledge of the Church's life and work was by taking an active part in it, which the young people were doing to the manifest advantage of the Church, whose future depended largely on how she gained and held their affection and co-operation.

MISSION FIELD.

LETTER FROM FORMOSA.

TAMSUI, FORMOSA, Oct. 1st, 1890.

REV. R. P. MACKAY, SECRETARY F.M.O.

My Dear Brother:—Koa Kau and I are back from a trip of twenty-days. During that time we made one flying visit here, at the urgent request of Mr. Layard, H. B. M. Consul. The first Lord's day was given to Khu-a', a hamlet situated near the table-land, three miles from Lam-knam. Before going to Canada several believers there desired a station in their midst. Last month they secured a building, and presented it to the mission. I preached to a packed house, and after singing several songs of Zion, left, reflecting on the self-propagating spirit of Christianity. The second Sabbath was spent at Kelung. In the forenoon 100 were present, including a dozen Japanese soldiers. In the evening, service was disturbed by several Japanese civilians, who had indulged too freely in Saki, (liquor). I sent word to an official and Police promptly took the offenders in charge. We renovated the church, and mostly with native contributions. All the "graining" was done by Koa-Kau, and the painting by himself and another young preacher. We worked several nights after worship till 10 p.m. An aged Christian woman died the week before, and now a son, who resigned his position as Evangelist, on account of ill-health, was called home. His remains were carried by mourners to the side of a tea-plantation, and there laid "dust to dust," near his mother's grave. There, standing on a lovely morning, with green clad hills around, all sang with fervor "1 to the hills will lift mine eyes."

When at Kelung, I got word of the death of Lim Qiet, who was one of the first five baptised in North Formosa, Feb. 9th, 1873. For twenty long years he labored faithfully in the Gospel of Jesus, and is now with his Master. He was a carpenter in Tamsui when I landed here first. He passed away in Kap-tau-lau.

On the third Sabbath we were in Sa-kak-sug, which had been burned by Japanese soldiers. Grass and weeds were growing where eighteen months ago villagers had flourishing business shops. The chapel site was bare ground, for some one dug and carried away earth and refuse. A small table was placed in the centre, and, followers of Christ stood around us whilst the heathen pressed near them. I proclaimed life, eternal life, through a crucified Redeemer. The little company of tried disciples seemed overcome with joy. One held a hymn book in a hand deformed by shot from a Japanese gun. Marvelous the escape! Throughout all the troubles not one man deserted the Christian ranks. One of them is giving his house, in the meantime, to the brethren for Divine service.

At Kam-hng, a hamlet several miles away, a Christian family of many years standing, made exertions and secured a building for mission work. I addressed a crowd, under a spreading Banyan near by, and the hearers looked pleased.

The 27th ult., was our fourth Sabbath away. I preached in Pang-kio and Sin-tang, then proceeded to Bang-kah, to administer the rite of Baptism. Mr. K. Mawai, Japanese Evangelist, brought two converts, one called Akiyama Keishi, officer in the Post Office, and the other a soldier named Shibata Banjiro, and at the close of our religious exercises, I baptised them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. These are the first Japanese ever baptised in North Formosa. May they be the first fruits of a glorious harvest.

I do not state all our travelling and laboring during week days; but notice that we cannot remain long in the country at a time. Converts and letters come from all points of the mission in a continuous train, and can neither be put aside nor delayed. God is with us, and we "Go forward" in His name.

I am, yours sincerely,
G. L. MACKAY.

"What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?" What do you think would be a fitting return? No one will be able to make a full and complete recompense. We shall be debtors to God at the close of the year as we are at the beginning. But we may do those things that are fitting and appropriate from the recipients of so great benefactions. We may love Him with all our hearts. We may extol Him in the presence of our friends. We may do always those things which please Him. We may devote our thought and time and money to the extension of His kingdom on earth. The grateful heart should seek during all this year, not to please itself, for "even Christ pleased not himself," but to serve Him who fills all the years with goodness.

LOOKS INTO BOOKS.

CHRIST IN THE NEW TESTAMENT. Popular Lectures on Biblical Criticism. By the Rev. Thomas A. Tidball, D.D. 12mo, pp. 337, paper covers, 60 cents. New York, Thomas Whittaker.

It is with great heartiness that we commend this intensely interesting and helpful book to all thoughtful readers. Ministers will find it very useful, also Sunday school teachers. To the general reader, however, it will be the most valuable—the reader who has not devoted much time, if any, to the consideration of the subjects treated, and yet who feels the need of proper instruction.

We feel sure that no one, with any earnestness, can fail to have his faith strengthened, and his interest in the New Testament greatly quickened by the reading of those admirable pages. It is well worth our while to avail ourselves of helps like this, for the very children are asking us questions we find it hard to answer.

THE BREATH OF GOD: A Sketch of the Doctrine of Inspiration. By the Rev. Frank Hallam. 12mo, cloth, 75cts. New York, Thomas Whittaker.

The "Higher Criticism" controversy has already developed an extensive literature, and has opened for fresh investigation the whole question of inspiration. In the volume before us, "The Breath of God," by the Rev. Frank Hallam, we have a scholarly and remarkably eloquent work, giving an historical and critical review of this doctrine. In terse and forcible language, the author sketches the formation of the canon of Scripture, the gradual formulation of the various "theories of inspiration," and the rise of the "higher criticism." These different theories he reduces to two: the traditional and the inductive.

We do not know where a fairer or more intelligible statement of the present attitude of the Christian world toward the vexed problem of inspiration can be found.

The *Homiletic Review* is undoubtedly one of the leading preacher's magazines in the world, and its various departments are conducted with conspicuous ability. The February number is fully up to the high standard it has made for itself. Apart from homiletical material there are articles by such men as Dr. Warfield, Dr. Cunningham Geikie, Dr. Burr, Archdeacon Sinclair of London, and Dr. Payne, all on live subjects. Dr. McCurdy continues his series of papers on the results of recent discoveries as illustrating the Bible. Funk and Wagnalls Co., Toronto, New York, London. \$3.00 per year.

The *Truth* for February expends its main strength in berating the Higher Critics and theological professors generally, including Prin. Grant of Queen's College. These obnoxious parties, no doubt, do sometimes give occasion for criticism, and if criticism were given in the right spirit they might be willing to profit by it; but the manner in which they are here abused rather begets sympathy with them in the minds of unprejudiced people. The ark of God's truth has little need of such defenders as usually contribute to this magazine, and in the end will owe little to their advocacy. Fleming H. Revell Co. \$1.00 per annum.

The *Critical Review* for January begins the seventh year of publication for this valuable periodical, and the editor, Prof. Salmond, announces that hereafter each number will be increased by sixteen pages. This number is full of the usual excellent notices written by the most competent authorities in Britain of all the leading works in theology and philosophy which have appeared during the quarter either in English or in other languages. The moderate price at which this magazine is published enables only one who really cares to do so to keep abreast of the theological literature of the day. T. and T. Clark, Edinburgh. Quarterly price 1/6.

Sunday Hours for February just to hand contains many interesting features, among them the prize texts for illustrating for which the publishers offer prizes in order to encourage the artistic taste among the colonial children. The various departments are well sustained. The story commenced in the January number, "Bob and Bill," the story of two friends in need increased in interest from chapter to chapter.

The *Biblical World* for January gives an illustrated article on the "Ideal Childhood in non-Christian Religions" by Prof. Goodspeed, one on "Theological Training for the Times" by Prof. Foster, "the Zacharias" of Matt. xxiii. 35 by the Rev. John McPherson besides the usual studies in the Bible. But probably most readers will be specially interested in the article on "the Recently Discovered Israel Tablet" with the accompanying out of the stone on which it is found. The article however is neither generous to Prof. Sayce nor fair to the Bible. The writer seems to hold a brief against the historical character of the Pentateuch, which makes one distrust his guidance. University of Chicago Press \$2.00 a year.

THE BIBLE CLASS.

THE CONVERSION OF SAUL.

(Acts ix. 1-19.—For Feb. 28th.)

BY REV. PHILIP A. NORDELL, D. D.

Judged by his temper and training no man would have appeared less likely to become the foremost champion of Christianity than Saul of Tarsus. A pride of birth that looked with contempt on the patricians of Rome, a rigid rabbinical training that intensified every instinct of national and religious exclusiveness, an elaborate self-righteousness that attempted to scale the heavens, a zeal for Judaism that tolerated no rival faith were not promising traits out of which to shape a humble Christian dependent on a crucified Messiah for divine favor, and the most enthusiastic Apostle of a faith hitherto abhorred and persecuted by him. Not without reason has the Church regarded the conversion of Saul as the most important event in her history subsequent to the Day of Pentecost.

SAUL'S CONVERSION A FACT OF UNIVERSAL INTEREST.

Saul always looked upon his conversion as a fact that concerned others as well as himself. Visions he had in abundance, in some of which he is caught up into the third heaven. But he never appeals to these as the basis for his faith. Only once (2 Cor. xii. 1-9) is he tempted to refer to them as evidences of divine approval of his apostleship. But he checks himself almost before he has begun. These visions concerned only himself and God. But his conversion was a fact that belonged to the whole world. It was entirely outside the category of his visions, not for a moment to be classified with them as some modern skeptics have done. Hence Paul constantly appealed to it alike in his public addresses and written Epistles. In the book of Acts we reader is presented with three detailed reports. In the Epistles four references to it occur. No other event, aside from the death and resurrection of Christ, receives so much notice in the New Testament. And well it may. Considered merely in its apologetic aspects it is, next to the resurrection, one of the most important events in the history of the Church.

SAUL'S CONVERSION A PROOF OF CHRISTIANITY.

The importance of Saul's conversion lay not merely in the immense services which he afterwards rendered to Christianity both as a missionary and as a thinker, but in the fact that it forms one of the immovable buttresses of Christianity. It presents a psychological problem that criticism has attacked times without number, but had never solved; and this, for the simple reason that it never can be satisfactorily solved except by an admission of those supernatural premises on which Christianity rests its claims. For this reason Paul himself appealed to it as a fact which transcendantly surpassed the experiences included in the most startling of other conversions. In a proper and true sense every conversion may be spoken of as a miracle of grace, the communication of spiritual life to a soul through the mysterious touch of the Spirit of God. Saul's conversion included this and more. It was accompanied by the visible appearance and audible voice of the Lord Jesus Christ. This was the astounding revelation that in an instant broke down the hatred, fury and malignity of the Jewish persecutor who supposed that he was rendering the highest possible service to God in exterminating the followers of this Jesus crucified as an impostor. Instantly it transformed him into a docile and unwearied slave of Jesus—a slave who bore no fetters but those of love, and who in the most self-denying service to his Master realized his own highest liberty and independence. If Saul's conversion was due, as he maintained, to the personal appearance to himself of Jesus Christ, then Christ had risen from the dead. He was the living Messiah. He had proved Himself to be the Son of God. Though enthroned in heavenly glory, He was still present with His Church and operated through it for the accomplishment of His redemptive work. Saul's conversion proved the resurrection of Christ, and the resurrection was the corner-stone of Christianity.

THE APPEARANCE OF CHRIST TO SAUL NOT AN ILLUSION.

In order to evade this conclusion hostile criticism has endeavored in one way or another to explain this experience in the way to Damascus as a natural phenomenon. Saul, it is said, "had a natural tendency to ecstasy; his physiological, no less than his spiritual, constitution predisposed him to it. He had a nervous disposition easily over-wrought, a sanguino-billions temperament; and was very delicate, subject probably to epileptic attacks (2 Cor. ii. 7)." The fancied appearance of Christ at his conversion was only one of his ecstatic hallucinations. That Paul sharply

distinguished this appearance from his subsequent visions is clearly proved by his reticence in speaking of the latter, and his unwearied emphasis on the former. But look for a moment on another set of facts. Paul bequeathed to the world a series of Epistles from which it is possible to form an accurate estimate of his intellectual and moral character. These place him by common consent on the pinnacle of intellectual power, and as a moral teacher next to Jesus Himself. They prove him to have been one of the keenest, most penetrating, and discriminating men that ever lived, as well as one of the noblest and sincerest. While complaisant in non-essentials, in essentials he clung to his convictions with unyielding tenacity. This man, passionately attached to a creed which turned with unspeakable abhorrence from acknowledging the crucified Jesus as the God-given Messiah, instantly became the life-long servant and martyr of Jesus. Did Paul know the cause of his conversion, or has that knowledge been reserved for skeptics in later ages? Did he invent a lie, or was he self-deceived? The former conclusion is rejected by every thinking man. If the latter is true, no human experience can ever constitute a sufficient basis of knowledge. Moreover for such a life and such an influence to have originated in delusion and falsehood, whether deliberate or unconscious, is simply unthinkable. This would necessitate a moral miracle greater even than the physical miracle of the resurrection of Christ. Such an effect from such a cause would overturn the moral foundations of the universe. There is no satisfactory explanation of Saul's conversion but the truthfulness of the explanation given by himself.

FOR THE SABBATH SCHOOL

International S. S. Lesson.

LESSON IX.—THE DISCIPLES DISPERSED.—FEBRUARY 28.

(Acts viii. 1-17.)

GOLDEN TEXT :—"They that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the Word."—Acts viii. 4.

TIME AND PLACE.—A. D. 37. Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria.

INTRODUCTION.—Our last lesson closed with the death of Stephen, the first martyr. We are told that the witnesses, who were by the law of Moses required to be foremost in the execution of such as were condemned by their testimony, laid down their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul, and our lesson to-day tells us of a fierce persecution of the church under Saul's leadership, which followed immediately upon Stephen's death.

VERSE BY VERSE.—1. "Saul"—Afterwards Paul, the apostle. He was born in Tarsus, and was a learned Jew. "Was consenting."—He sanctioned it and gave help to it. By some it was supposed that he was a member of the council that condemned Stephen. "The church."—The disciples of Jesus. "Scattered abroad."—Driven away from Jerusalem. "Judea."—The southern province of Palestine. "Except the apostles."—The reason for their remaining is not clear, unless they interpreted Christ's command as requiring them to remain.

V. 2. "Devout men."—This probably refers not to the disciples, but to good men among the Jews.

V. 3. "Havoc."—Laying it waste by his fierce persecution. "Haling men, etc."—Seizing and dragging away.

V. 4. "Went everywhere preaching."—Wherever they went they preached the gospel. The persecution was thus the means of spreading the truth.

V. 5. "Philip."—He was one of the seven deacons who had been chosen to have the care of the funds of the church. "The city."—Rather "a city."

V. 6. "Great joy."—In part from the relief experienced by many from the miracles of Philip, in part from the spiritual blessings revealed to them.

V. 7. "Simon."—He is commonly called Simon Magus. He was a sorcerer, practicing all the arts of magic known to that day.

V. 8. "Were baptized."—They received the ordinance of baptism upon their profession of faith in Christ.

V. 9. "Simon . . . believed also."—From what followed we know that this was a false profession, having for its object the gaining of a power greater than the magic which he practiced. "Wondered."—He knew that his own arts were deceptive, and he wondered at the power displayed in the miracles of Philip.

V. 10. "Sent unto them Peter and John."—Who would represent the church. "Prayed . . . that they might receive the Holy Ghost."—That they might have the same gifts of the Spirit which were bestowed upon the disciples at the day of Pentecost.

V. 11. "Laid their hands on them."—The laying on of hands was a symbolic act.

THOUGHTS.—Persecution is one of Satan's instruments for destroying the work of God. In some cases he may seem to have

¹An Exposition of Lesson 8 in *The Bible Study Union Sunday School Lessons* on "The Three Great Apostles."

gained single victory. When the disciples scattered in different directions from Jerusalem, it might have seemed that the church was destroyed. Saul was an open enemy to the church. He had official sanction upon his proceedings. He went to the full extent of law. He was zealous in the extreme. He had no respect for age or sex in his work. He made the subjects feel the full force of excited fury. He interfered with their rights of conscience. He disregarded their rights of choice in religion. He declared their doctrines false, and, therefore, declared them blasphemers. He took upon himself the right to use his own method to bring these people to what he might consider justice. He concluded he had been faithful and successful when the disciples sought refuge in other lands, and their company disbanded. Satan works rashly and persistently until he makes a stir, but he cannot cut off the source of power, when he has sent men from one locality to another.

Deception is a forcible weapon which Satan engages against the welfare of mankind. In this case he operated by means of the bigoted Simon. Men involuntarily yield to the will of one whom they consider great. For want of knowledge of truth, the Samaritans were led to accept the magic arts which Simon for years urged upon them. He had held the right of way for some time. There was none to exceed or dispute him. He grew pompous in his position, until he exultantly proclaimed himself great, and willingly accepted the applause of the people when they declared him "the great power of God."

Enlightenment is the work of God. Through his faithful servants the light of truth was shed upon the darkened minds of the once despised race of the Samaritans. Truth makes error vanish as the day scatters night. Real miracles, bringing practical benefit to unclean minds and afflicted bodies, gained the attention and good will of the benighted half heathen, and made way for the preaching of Christ. The messengers did not call attention to themselves, but to the Christ of God, whose power they all might prove for their own eternal happiness. Such preaching commended itself to those who had been so deceived by human wit, and the contrast was clear, and their choice was easily made. This offered grace secured unto them all the blessings which the apostles had received, taking away entirely all lines of distinction with reference to grace, or position, making them joint heirs with Jesus Christ.

Brotherly love is a chief characteristic among the followers of Christ. Nationality, color, or achievements, have no weight with a disciple who is in possession of the gift of the Holy Spirit.

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR.

DAILY READINGS.

First Day—Persecution Foretold—Matt. x. 16-42.
 Second Day—Saul the Persecutor—Acts ix. 1-22.
 Third Day—The Disciples Dispersed—Acts viii. 1-17.
 Fourth Day—Whither They Went—Acts xi. 19-30.
 Fifth Day—Miraculous Powers Promised—Mark xvi. 14-20.
 Sixth Day—The Sorcerer's Covetousness Reproved—Acts viii. 13-25.

PRAYER MEETING TOPIC, Feb. 28.—"From what does Christ save men?"—Titus iii. 1-7.

CHRIST SAVES HIS PEOPLE FROM

The Power of Satan.—Acts xxvi. 15. Ps. cxxiv. 7.
 The Dominion of Sin.—Rom. vi. 14.
 Spiritual Death.—Eph. ii. 1.
 The Horrible Pit.—Ps. xi. 2; xxxii. 5.
 The Unrest of the Wicked.—Isa. lviii. 20.
 The Fear of Death.—Heb. ii. 15.
 The Wrath to Come.—1 Thess. i. 10.
 All Evil.—Gen. xiviii. 16.
 The Fear of Man.—Prov. xxix. 25.
 The Love of Money.—1 Tim. vi. 10, 11.
 Out of Trouble.—Ps. ltv. 7.
 Anxious Care.—Phil. iv. 6.

WHAT CHRIST IS ABLE TO DO.

Heb. vii. 25. Heb. ii. 18. 2 Tim. i. 12. Rom. iv. 21. 2 Cor. ix. 8. Eph. iii. 20. Jude 24.

CHRIST MIGHTY TO SAVE.

Our Lord Jesus Christ was able and willing to save from the beginning. From the first promise to our fallen parents to the present day, has the seed of the woman been bruising the serpent's head. He appeared able to save when he dwelt on earth in a Tabernacle of clay. Still he mingled the dignity and power of a God, with the abasement and infirmities of a mortal man, asserting

to himself the divine prerogative of forgiving sins; speaking of a glorious resurrection and eternal life as His gift, representing Himself as the head stone of the corner, on whom was fixed all the stress of man's eternal interest; and as the awful judge, before whose tribunal the greatest of the children of men should stand; and from whom all should receive that decisive sentence, which should fix them in final happiness or despair. Nay, even in his deepest humiliation on the cursed tree, a ray of divine glory broke through the dark cloud of infamy with which he was then surrounded. And amidst all the scorn and rage of insulting enemies, who were reproaching him as abandoned by God and man, He spoke from the cross as from the throne; and, as the King of heaven, takes upon him to dispose of seats in Paradise. If He were thus able to save, when He dwelt in so humble a form; how much more so is He amidst all the magnificence of His exaltation in the highest heaven; whither He has ascended, as a glorious conqueror, having led captivity captive; and received gifts for men! Can we believe that His arm has less power to save, or that His ear is heavy, and cannot hear? No! we may assure ourselves, that He is at this moment as able to exert an almighty power for the salvation of His people, as He was on that illustrious day, when He poured out the Spirit on His disciples, at the Feast of Pentecost, or when He appeared to Paul on the way to Damascus with the glories of heaven new upon Him! Still is our Redeemer able to save, and shall continue to be so. When we and all other laborers in the Master's service have passed from time into eternity. And to the very end of time, one generation shall rise, and declare His righteousness to another; and that righteousness shall be the same.

This foundation of God shall stand sure; though rocks moulder into dust, and the mountains be removed out of their place. Yes, when the sun shall fade away in its orb, and all the golden lamps of these lower heavens shall be extinguished, the Sun of Glory shall shine forth with undiminished radiancy. Still His victorious energy shall continue the same; and it shall be as true of His power, as of His grace; that Jesus Christ is able and willing to save His people from their sins, and is the same Yesterday Today and Forever.

OUR YOUNG PEOPLE.

This department is conducted by a member of the General Assembly's Committee on Young People's Societies. Correspondence is invited from all Young People's Societies, and Presbyterial and Synodical Committee. Address: "Our Young People," PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW, Drawer 2465, Toronto, Ont.

"THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED."

A great cathedral was being built.

The most beautiful marble, exquisitely carved, made its walls. Its woodwork was like satin, and of delicate colors. The windows were like rich paintings, telling the wonderful stories of Christ's life.

The workmen had come from far and near; the most skilful only having been chosen.

For months hammers and chisels rang, till at last all but one window was finished. It was a south window, not large, where rich sunlight fell early and late.

"Strange it should have been forgotten," said the master workman. "The bishop comes to-morrow, and all should be finished."

A little, bent man, with a shrewd, but kindly face, limped up. Doffing his cap, he said:

"Sir, I have made a window for that space from bits of the other windows. Pray you, let it go up."

"It is the best we can do," said the master.

"Put it up for to-morrow, man, but after that it must come down."

The next day the church was crowded.

Just as the old bishop turned to preach the sermon, the sun burst out. It came through the south window, touching his white hair with a halo.

Every one turned to look. The stranger's window was a flashing jewel. Though it was made of bits, the colors were so blended that it seemed like one. The sunlight glittered and broke into a thousand rays.

The bishop knew about the forgotten window, and the strange way one had been made. He had written a stately sermon, but he put it away, and preached the thought the beautiful window gave: "The rejected stone being the head of the corner."

People who heard it, and saw the windows, never forgot. So shall we feel, little and big, when we see that some of our little efforts which many thought worthless, shall be counted by Jesus worthy of all recognition.

THE LITTLE FOLK.

THE BOY.

When you hear a fearful racket,
Like a miniature cyclone,
With some sounds so strange that surely
Their like was never known,
While the mother listens calmly,
Even with a smiling face,
You may know that it is nothing
But the boy about the place.

When there's famine in the cupboard
And the milk pail soon runs dry,
And you can't keep pies or cookies,
No matter how you try;
When you vainly seek for apples
That have gone and left no trace,
Hard times is not the trouble—
There's a boy about the place.

When there's sawdust on the carpet
And some shavings on the beds,
When the rugs are tossed in corners
And your chairs stand on their heads,
While, if a tool you're needing, you
All round the house must race,
You may know he's making something,
Is the boy about the place.

When the house is full of sunshine
On the darkest kind of day,
And you have to laugh at seeing
Some outlandish, boyish play,
And when eyes so bright and loving
Oft are raised to meet your face,
You will pray, I know, "God bless him,
Bless our boy about the place."

Pacific Coast Endeavorer.

THE OLD PASTOR'S FAITH.

BY MARY BEED.

Several years have passed since we left the wounded enemy to partake of Pastor Saville's hospitality. Again it is winter. A dark, stormy night; the wind howled through the pines, and drifted the snow, which fell in feathery flakes, deep in the glens.

Pastor Saville and Margaret drew close to the cheerful blaze in the old, old-fashioned fireplace. Margaret sat on the ground at her grandfather's feet reading the precious Bible which she held in her hand. The blazing log on the hearth afforded sufficient light; so the rush-wick candle on the rude, home-made dresser had not been lighted.

"Hark! child, I hear a footfall," exclaimed the old man, placing his hand behind his ear in an attitude of listening. Then came a loud knock at the door.

"Strike a light, child," said the old man, rising quickly.

Margaret sprang to the dresser, and, taking down the flint and tongs, struck them together over the candle-wick. The old man took the candle from the girl's hand and hurried to open the door. Holding the flaming light above his head, he peered out into the darkness. There stood a man wrapped in a large cloak.

"Peace, Father Saville!" exclaimed the man, springing through the open door; "put out the light and bar the door; no one must see me in your house."

The old man recognized him at once as the man whose life he had saved.

"You bring me evil tidings," said he, with a quaver of apprehension in his voice.

"I do indeed," was the reply; "perhaps I do wrong in coming; but my conscience warns me that I promised you when you rescued me from death to recompense you if ever the opportunity could be found. So I came to warn you. Early to-morrow morning two officers with a squadron of eighty dragoons will be here to search the town. Now, save yourselves by flight." With these words the messenger thrust a roll of money into the hand of the astonished old man, and, muffling himself in his huge cloak, was gone.

Margaret flung her arm around her grandfather's neck and laid one trembling hand on his arm.

"Child, be brave; fear not; what did'st thou read?" said the old man, drawing the frightened girl close to him, and kissing away her tears. "Dost thou remember, dear?"

"When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee," repeated Margaret.

"Aye, child, and he will fulfill his promise. Horry, Margaret, we must pack our belongings, and flee."

"But our people."

"Aye, child, they will go with us. I will go and warn them."
"Not you, grandfather; let me go; I can run faster," said Margaret, snatching her cloak, and darting out into the stormy darkness.

Then the old pastor quickly and silently gathered such of their belongings as they could carry, and tied them, together with their provisions, in little bundles. Then, with a murmured prayer of thankfulness, the faithful old servant of God went out and closed the door of the little mountain home for the last time.

Half an hour later pastor and people were hurrying silently along the border of the sleeping town. The fast-falling snow, like an angel of mercy, quickly covered the tracks of the fugitives, and many miles were covered ere the faint streaks of dawn began to pencil the east with light. Through the deep drifts in a narrow glen the little band pressed on. A ledge of rocks walled the steep bank on one side, while the other was screened by a thick growth of trees and shrubbery. A narrow boulder had fallen from the rock, and one of the men, mounting a rounded ledge below peered over. The faint morning light dimly revealed the joy expressed on his face; but his voice—the first voice raised above a whisper—filled the company with courage. Clinging with one hand to the boulder, he raised the other toward heaven and cried in a tone of exultation; "God defends the right!"

The company rushed forward, and saw a warm, dry cave. By replacing the fallen boulder they would be safe in comfortable quarters. As they entered their rocky retreat the dragoons marched into the deserted village, and quickly surrounded all the Protestant houses that no heretic might escape. At a signal from their leader they rushed into the deserted houses. Three days they searched up and down the mountains. The little congregation, safe in their rocky retreat, could hear the clatter of the hoofs and the shouts of their enraged enemies. From every tongue old enough to lip a prayer ascended a cry to God for help. The prayers were heard and answered. The soldiers, confounded by this divine interference with their plan, gave up in despair. The scattered troops gathered at a signal and quickly retired.

When the shades began to gather on the fourth night the little band came forth from the friendly shelter of the cave, and, trusting in God, they renewed their weary journey. Hiding by day in caves or bushes, they slowly made their way to Germany.

Time had been moving with them, and it was Christmas morning when they crossed the Rhine, and gathered in a cold, hungry group at the foot of a mountain. Only a few dry crusts remained of their provisions, and starvation stared them in the face.

In perfect faith the old pastor, leaning for succor on the breast of Christ, gathered his people around him, and offered a fervent petition for help. Sweet were the promises of which the old pastor reminded his God. When the prayer was ended they lifted their voices, so long quiet, and the deep forest reverberated with the sweet psalm of praise which they sang.

"Hark! What sweet music! Man, whence comes it?" exclaimed a German Prince as he reined his steed and listened.

"From yonder forest," answered his companion after a moment of listening, as he pointed down the highway.

"True enough. I wot there are gypsies encamped there. We will run down the highway, cross the forest, and rout them."

The prince and his friend had started out unattended, that morning to join the chase, and had just entered the highway when the ringing notes of the sweet old psalm fell upon their ears.

Over the creaking snow, followed by their dogs, flew the mounted riders, and came upon the little assembled congregation just as the faithful old pastor was telling the beautiful story of the Babe of Bethlehem. With a gesture of impatience, the prince demanded in a tone of authority: "What is going on here?"

The old pastor approached the horseman, with tottering footsteps, to tell their story, when the prince's companion sprang from his saddle, and grasped the old man's hand, exclaiming: "Pastor Saville, thank God! We are your friends."

The old pastor's eyes were dim, but he was not slow in recognizing the man whose life he had saved, and who in return had saved his own.

Explanations were made by both parties. The good Protestant prince apologized for his gruffness, and, handing the old man a roll of money, directed him to take his congregation to an inn, and hastily wrote a note to the proprietor, bidding him shelter and feed them.

A few years after this the old pastor died. One lovely winter day the beautiful Margaret became the wife of the generous young prince. When the merry wedding bells had ceased to ring out joy and good wishes; when the crescent moon reflected her light on the waves of the Rhine, the lovely bride led her husband across the snowy plain, and together they knelt and thanked God for His preserving care.

Church News

[All communications to this column ought to be sent to the Editor immediately after the occurrences to which they refer have taken place.]

MONTREAL NOTES.

The ninth annual Convention of the Provincial S. S. Union was held last week in the town of Granby one of the most enterprising places in the Eastern Townships. The people of the town throw themselves heartily into the work of making the necessary arrangements, and attended in large numbers. There was also a good attendance of representative S. S. workers from Montreal and other places. The report given by the Secretary of the Union showed that the past year had been one of unusual activity in promoting local organizations throughout the Province and in holding Local Conventions for the instruction and encouragement of workers. It also revealed that there remained a very considerable amount to be done before it could be said that the work was on a satisfactory basis. The statistics showed that for every hundred children of Protestant parents in the schools there were seventy-five not there as yet. The difficulty was due largely to the fact that the two hundred thousand Protestants in the Province were widely scattered over a district nearly six hundred miles long. In view of the situation special prominence has been given to the Home Department, and satisfactory progress has been made in organizing these important appendages to the schools. The principal speakers at the Convention were Mr. G. H. Archibald, the energetic and efficient Secretary of the Union, Mr. Alfred Day, Secretary of the Ontario Union, and Mr. G. W. Pease, of Springfield, Mass. After the Convention was over these two last speakers addressed meetings in Montreal with much acceptance.

The pulpit of Calvin Church has been supplied for the past two Sundays by the Rev. Dr. Whittier, of Picton, N.S. On Tuesday evening he gave a lecture in the same church for the benefit of the Library Fund of the S. S., on Australia, where he has spent several years. He goes directly from Montreal to Trinidad where he is to supply the church at Port of Spain which has recently been resigned by the Rev. E. A. McCurdy. Dr. Whittier is an effective, popular speaker, and was well received in Montreal.

Principal MacVicar arrived home from Britain on Friday, the 5th inst., having come over on the Canada by way of Boston. He is looking well after his prolonged holiday and is in the best of spirits. On Monday evening a welcome supper was given by the students of the College attended by all the professors, at which a warmly worded address was presented by Mr. M. H. McIntosh on behalf of the whole body of students. In reply the Principal gave an interesting account of his travels abroad with appropriate reflections on what he had seen. His observations on educational matters are especially valuable and it is to be hoped that they may take shape in some more permanent form. Dr. Barclay who has been conducting the class in Systematic Theology will continue to do so, until the end of the season, but the manifold duties which fall to the lot of the Principal will be resumed by him at once. Prominent among these are the Chairmanship of the Board of French Evangelization and of the Protestant Board of School Commissioners for the City of Montreal.

On Thursday evening last the Rev. Dr. Barclay delivered his lecture on Savonarola to a good audience in Melville Church, Westmount.

The Rev. J. Myles Crombie has resigned the charge of Cote des Neiges and Norwood. The matter has not yet come before the Presbytery, but in all probability the resignation will be accepted. The charge is one that is likely to grow in importance in the near future owing to the fact that all parts of the district have been brought into easy communication with the city by lines of electric railway.

GENERAL

The Presbyterian church at Fitzroy has contributed \$33 to the India Famine Fund.

Rev. A. McNab, of Meaford, has accepted a call to the Presbyterian Church at Newmarket.

St. Peter's Presbyterian church, Madoc, have forwarded \$40 to the Indian Relief Fund Committee.

Knox College Students Missionary Society will hold the 25th public meeting in Convocation Hall, Friday Feb. 19th.

The Rev. Dr. Milligan Toronto delivered an interesting lecture on "How to Brighten Life," at the Collegiate Institute Napanee on Feb. 12.

The anniversary services at the Elmvale Presbyterian church on Sunday and Monday were well attended. The total collections were \$194.65.

At a meeting of the members of the Watford and Knox Presbyterian Churches held on Feb. 2nd, a unanimous call was extended to the Rev. Robert Haddow, late of Milton.

At a meeting of the congregation of the Carlisle N. S. Presbyterian church Feb. 3rd to consider a call extended to their pastor, Rev. James Burgess, by the Picton Presbyterian church, addresses were made by several members of the congregation extolling Rev. Mr. Burgess and expressing the hope that he would remain with them. Messrs. John Sleeth, James Scott and D. McQueen were appointed a committee to report to Presbytery and offer Mr. Burgess \$100 increase in salary to remain.

A meeting of the organization committee of the Waterloo street South Presbyterian Mission was held Feb. 9th, when a conference took place between the committee and representatives of the First Presbyterian and Knox Presbyterian churches, London, Ont. Matters have so far advanced as to present a guarantee of between \$300 and \$400, and many more will unite with the congregation when organization is completed. The matter will be brought before the Presbytery, which meets next month.

Rev. Andrew Boyd, formerly of Fairville, was inducted pastor of the Pizarro Presbyterian church, N.B., on Feb. 2nd. Rev. Mr. Fraser, of St. Stephen's church, conducted public service and preached an appropriate sermon, after which Rev. W. W. Rainnie as Moderator of the Session presided at the induction. Rev. Mr. Burgess addressed the new minister, and Rev. Mr. Rainnie the people, on their respective privileges and duties. The new pastor received a hearty welcome from the people.

At the last Communion Sunday in the Toronto Junction Presbyterian church when the pastor, Rev. J. W. Rae, was assisted by Rev. Wm. MacMillan, an interesting feature being the reception of fifty-six new communicants, twenty of whom join by certificates and thirty-six by profession of faith. The increase of the membership since the induction of Mr. Rae last May has been marvellous. Since that date, 142 new members have been received and in the same period only about ten members have been lost by removal, deaths or other causes, so that the net gain in membership is about 130. The mention of the figures above does not convey an adequate idea of the substantial character of the growth of the congregation.

A very successful tea meeting was held at Knox Church Berrie Feb. 9th tea was served in the hall. Audience room in the church was crowded to its utmost capacity. Seven ministers gave short, pithy and interesting addresses which were replete with entertainment and instruction. There were interspersed with singing and music by the choir, which was well rendered and reflected much credit. Major Stoneman & Son of Hamilton gave solos, readings, and recitations making a rare treat. Miss Maggie Henderson presided at the organ. \$90 was the proceeds. The greatest harmony abounds in every branch of the congregation and success is written on every department. The pastor of this charge is entering upon the 8th year and every year received numerous tokens of their love and affection towards him.

The members of Knox Church, Milton, last week revived an old-fashioned custom. Instead of the usual single preparatory service, three were held on consecutive evenings. This was done not to imitate an

old custom but to accomplish the object of that custom viz., to deepen the spiritual life of the members, and, as a consequence, increase their appreciation of the sacred ordinance. On Wednesday evening Rev. J. H. W. Milne B.A., of Manswood gave a most admirable and telling discourse on 1 Cor. x. 31. On the following two evenings Rev. J. A. Morrison B.A., of East Presbyterian Church, Toronto was the preacher. After hearing and knowing Mr. Morrison one ceases to wonder at the marvellous growth of the congregation over which he presides. Deep interest was manifested in these special meetings, and at the close quite a number of new members were received.

An organ recital was given in the Presbyterian church Napanee on Feb. 9th last, and was pronounced one of the best musical entertainments ever given in our town. The new organ was carefully tested, and all seemed to be delighted with its rich tones, compass and workmanship. The elegantly re-arranged edifice was seated to its full capacity. Prof. Doward, of Toronto, brought out to perfection the many tones and combinations of the beautiful instrument. A number of recitations and songs were well rendered and added much to making the entertainment a success. The ladies of the church are to be congratulated upon the success of their efforts in providing a high-class entertainment in connection with the opening of the new organ, and the congregation upon the addition to their equipment of such a fine instrument. After paying all expenses, the ladies were able to add to their treasury \$67.00. Mr. Geo. E. Maybee presided.

A very large representation of the Toronto Presbytery attended the induction of Mr. G. R. Faskin, B.A., of Owen Sound, which took place in St. Paul's Presbyterian Church Toronto, Feb. 9th. They were: Rev. Drs. Caven, Warden, McLaren, Parsons, McTavish, Greig; Messrs Patterson Burns, Gilray, Tibb, Brown, Frizzell, Cerruthers, Loxie, W. G. Wallace, S. Wallace, Harris, Turnbull, Nicol and Elders, and Prof. Robinson. Dr. Middlemiss, Elora, former pastor of the congregation with which Mr. Faskin, the pastor elect of St. Paul's was connected, and Rev. Mr. Martin, the former pastor of St. Paul's were also present. The church was crowded to the doors, every available space being occupied. The public service was conducted by Rev. Prof. Ballantyne, who read Psalm cxxi, and preached a sermon from 1 Cor. xiii. Rev. Mr. Martin led the singing. After the sermon the Moderator, Rev. Wm. Patterson, gave an account of the steps taken in the matter and called Mr. Faskin, to whom the questions in order were presented and duly answered, whereupon the Moderator, with the usual ordination prayer and the laying on of hands of the Presbytery, inducted him into the office of St. Paul's. Rev. Principal Caven then gave a fitting address to the new pastor upon the work of preaching the Gospel. This was followed with an address to the congregation by Rev. J. A. Brown of Agincourt, upon their duties to their new pastor. The name of Rev. G. R. Faskin was then added to the roll of the Presbytery as a member. Rev. Mr. Martin and Dr. Caven introduced Mr. Faskin to the members and congregation as they left the church.

On Sabbath, Jan. 24th, though the thermometer was struggling with Jack Frost down between forty and fifty below, about two hundred turned out to the opening services in the new Presbyterian Church in Emerson, Man. The church is a neat cosy building, a *fac similes* of St. Andrew's Winnipeg, 48x48 feet furnished with circular seats and will accommodate about 350 people. The pews have white ash backs with seats of elm. The services were conducted by Rev. Dr. Bryce and the pastor of the congregation, Rev. D. Robertson. In the morning Dr. Bryce reviewed the history of the church referring to the self sacrifice and devotion of the Rev. John Scott the first pastor of the congregation. In the afternoon Mr. Robertson spoke to the Sabbath school, upon the great journey of life. Comparing life to a journey in the car. In the evening Dr. Bryce preached to a large congrega-

ation from Gal. vi. 1-2, which was listened to with great interest. In connection with the opening a very pleasant time was spent on Monday evening. Dinner was served by the Ladies' Aid in the basement and so complete were the arrangements that over 400 people were served in little less than two hours. After satisfying the natural craving, all repaired to the church where a very pleasant time was spent. Addresses were delivered by Rev. J. Lawrence of Stony Mountain the former pastor of the congregation, Revs. Mr. McBeth of Winnipeg, Johnston of Pembina, McHaffie Emerson, Hollingshead Emerson, Mr. Hartley, Gretna, Mr. Shepherd, Dominion. Music being furnished by the church choir and other local talent. One thing was very gratifying the absence of light and frivolous talk. The ladies realized about \$120. On Jan. 29th the annual meeting of the congregation was held, the pastor Rev. D. Robertson in the chair. The reports from the various branches were read and showed all to be in a healthy and active state—especially the report of the managers. That notwithstanding the hard year, in which the crops were in many cases a failure, they were practically able to meet all obligations. The total receipts for the general fund, \$1,433.50; The total receipts for the schemes of the Church, \$125.; The total receipts for Building fund, \$1,610 The total receipts for Sunday school, \$12 The total receipts for choir, \$158.; The total receipts for Y.P.S.O.E., \$29. Total \$3,088.

PRESBYTERY OF GUELPH.

The Presbytery of Guelph met 19th January in St. Andrew's Church. There was a large attendance. In the absence of the Moderator, through sickness, Mr. Glassford, occupied the chair. Attention was called to the return of Mr. Atkinson, who had been to Britain, and the Presbytery agreed to record its gratification at seeing him again among them.

A report was presented from the Committee appointed to visit Baden, which had applied to be taken under the charge of the Guelph Presbytery, and in terms of the recommendation of the Committee it was agreed to receive it subject to the sanction of the Synod of Hamilton and London. An interim session was appointed, with Mr. Atkinson as Moderator, and Drs. Wardrop and Torrance as members. All arrangements as to supply and other matters affecting its welfare were left in their hands.

A statement was made by Mr. Mullan on the affairs of the Manitoba College, showing its wants, and asking that these be brought by ministers before their congregations.

Mr. Strachan reported from the Committee on Young People's Societies, and submitted a programme which was discussed and approved of, the conference to be held in Guelph on the 29th of January.

Mr. McVicar brought before the Presbytery the state of the Widows' and Orphans' Fund, and ministers were urged to give it to their more liberal support.

The following minute was adopted on the illness of the stated Moderator: "The Presbytery, having heard of the serious illness of the Moderator, would express its condolence with him, and trust that he may be speedily restored to his wonted health, and that, while laid aside, he may enjoy the gracious presence of the Master with him."

The request of the congregation of Eden Mills for the continuance of the services of Mr. Strachan was cordially granted.

Mr. Smith reported from the committee appointed to ascertain the regulations under which the Home Mission Committee made its grants, the report was adopted.

Dr. Torrance reported a draft minute on the death of the late Dr. Smellie, and the same was adopted and ordered to be recorded in the minutes, and a copy sent to the family of the deceased.

The greater part of the selerants in both the forenoon and afternoon was spent on certain papers which had been lodged by members connected with Knox church, Galt. One of these papers was ruled out on the ground that

it had not been regularly transmitted, and instructions were given to those by whom it had been presented as to the proper way of reaching the court.

Two others were taken up and read and discussed in a thorough manner. All parties interested had the fullest opportunity of laying the case before the Presbytery, which by questions put elicited all the information necessary. The decision, after careful deliberation, was that there did not appear to be any ground to proceed in the matter. On being asked if they acquiesced in this finding, all parties signified their consent; one stated that she "submitted." A committee was appointed to prepare a resolution in terms of the decision, and report at next meeting.

This was appointed to be held in Chalmers church, Elora, on the third Tuesday of March, at nine o'clock forenoon, conference to be held in the same place on Monday evening previous at 8 o'clock.

WHITBY PRESBYTERIAL W. F. M. S.

The Whitby Presbyterial of the Women's Foreign Missionary Society held its annual meeting in Oshawa, Jan'y 19th, in the Presbyterian church. The attendance was good, and the interest taken in the meeting showed that the addresses and discussions were greatly appreciated, the most important of the day being a paper on mission bands by Miss Panton, of Oshawa, and an account of the International Council of the Presbyterian Women's Societies, held in Glasgow last summer, by Mrs. Ball, of Toronto. The Presbyterial president, Mrs. McAuley, of Pickering, had charge of the forenoon and afternoon meetings, and gave a very interesting report. Reports were also given by Miss Galbraith, of Bowmanville; the recording secretary, Miss C. Thomson, corresponding secretary, of Whitby; Miss Bassett, of Bowmanville, of the Literature Committee; and Miss Stewart of Whitby, of the Committee on Supplies, giving the following figures:—There are 6 mission bands, with a membership of 92; a decrease of 48; 17 auxiliaries, with 303 members; \$927.04 were contributed by the auxiliaries, an increase of \$6.31; \$41.05 by the mission bands, a decrease of \$72.86, making a decrease of \$66.55 on the whole amount as compared with last year.

GUELPH PRESBYTERIAN Y. P. S.

A meeting was held in Chalmers' Church, Jan'y 29, for the purpose of forming a Presbyterian Young People's Society in the Guelph Presbytery. There were some 60 or 70 delegates present, in the absence of the Moderator, Rev. Wm. Robertson of Morrison, Rev. D. Strachan of Hespeler occupied the chair. It was decided that a Presbyterian society be formed. The following officers were elected:—Honorary President, the Moderator of the Presbytery; President, Dr. Rodgers, Fergus; Vice-Presidents, Rev. J. Atkinson, Berlin, and Miss Millar, Guelph; Recording Secretary, Miss F. Snodgrass, Hespeler; Corresponding Secretary, Mr. M. Kennedy, Fergus; Treasurer, Mr. R. H. Brydon, Guelph; Committee, Mr. Wm. Argo, Eden Mills; Rev. H. A. McPherson, Acton; Miss McPhael, Campbellville, Mr. Cunningham, Preston; Miss Howie, Waterlo. Very interesting sessions were held in the afternoon and evening. Those who took part were Rev. John McInnis, Rev. H. McPherson, Rev. R. J. M. Glassford, Mr. Geo. M. Anderson, Dr. Rogers, Rev. H. F. Thomas, Miss M. Scott, Miss Erika, Rev. H. R. House, Mrs. Alex. Howie, Rev. A. Blair, Rev. R. Atkinson, Mr. J. Strachan and Rev. W. A. J. Martin.

OTTAWA PRESBYTERIAL W.F.M.S.

At the afternoon meeting of the Ottawa Presbyterial Women's Foreign Missionary Society, Feb. 2, Mrs. Thorburn delivered her farewell address as president. Mrs. Thorburn reviewed her past ten years' work, and strongly urged harder work and greater devotion to the Master.

Mrs. Tytler, of India, also gave a short, interesting address.

An able paper on personal responsibility was read by Mrs. Alexander. An interesting feature of the programme was the question drawer conducted by Mrs. Gardner, of Alymer.

At the close of the meeting Mrs. Thorburn was presented with an illuminated address, and a beautifully bound Oxford Bible.

Mrs. Thorburn made a suitable reply, and thanked the society for the splendid token of esteem which she prized very highly.

Rev. Dr. Campbell presided at the evening meeting which was a union one between the Missionary Society and the Presbytery. The report of the society showed it to have 277 members, with six branches, which has raised \$710.60 during the year. There are six unmission lands, having a membership of 518. The funds raised by these last year amounted to \$1,447.30.

The report was adopted.

STRATFORD PRESBYTERIAL W. F. M. S.

The annual meeting of the Stratford Presbyterial W. F. M. Society was held Jan. 25th in Knox church. The morning and part of the afternoon meetings were entirely devoted to business. The treasurer's report showed a balance after all expenses were paid of \$1,200.93. Mrs. McKenzie, wife of one of the Presbyterial missionaries in Honan, China, gave an interesting address, speaking of the customs of the country and appealing strongly to the hearts of Christian women in behalf of their dark, benighted suffering sisters. Rev. Mr. McKenzie addressed the public meeting in the evening. The officers elected for the coming year are: President, Mrs. Grant, of St. Marys; vice-presidents, Mrs. Leitch, Mrs. Hislop, Mrs. Hoessack, Mrs. Panton; corresponding secretary, Miss Hamilton, of Motherwell, recording secretary, Miss McPherson, treasurer, Mrs. Gibb, of St. Marys.

HURON PRESBYTERIAL SOCIETY.

The twelfth annual meeting of the Huron Presbyterial Society held on Tuesday Jan. 21st, in Blyth, was a very pleasant and profitable gathering. There was a good attendance of delegates and members of the society at both the morning and afternoon meetings. The morning session was presided over by the President, Mrs. (Rev.) Colin Fletcher.

The reports of the various secretaries were very encouraging. During 1896 two new auxiliaries have been welcomed to our ranks—one in Leeburn, the other in Goderich township. The past year has been marked by advancement in every department, and has been the most successful financially in the history of our society.

The Huron Presbyterial now comprises sixteen auxiliaries, with a total membership of 383. Of these, 39 are members of the general society, and eight mission bands with a membership of 489 and 15 members of the general society; also about 58 scattered helpers, contributing \$27.30. The auxiliaries raised \$1,183.25 for missionary purposes, and the mission bands \$283.07, making a total of \$1,466.32, which with the interest accruing from deposits is \$129 in advance of last year. Sixteen hundred and twenty-five pounds of comfortable clothing largely new material were forwarded to a school on the Mistawasis reserve; also a box of dolls from the Sunshine mission band. The mission band also sent a box of toys to the Northwest and another to Indore, India. Our expense fund is liberally sustained.

Touching reference was made to the loss sustained by the removal of our first President, Mrs. Thomas Fair, of Clinton. After receiving reports from the various auxiliaries the election of officers was proceeded with, and resulted as follows: President, Mrs. (Rev.) Colin Fletcher, Thames Road; First Vice President Mrs. (Rev.) Jas. Hamilton Leeburn; Second Vice President, Mrs. James Carlisle, Hensall; Secretary, Mrs. R. Irwin, Clinton; Treasurer, Mrs. Archd. Scott, Seaforth; Secretary of Supplies, Miss K. McTaggart, Clinton; Letter Secretary, Mrs. J. G. Wilson, Seaforth.

The meeting was closed with prayer by Mrs. (Rev.) A. D. McDonald Seaforth. The following is a statement of the contributions of the various Auxiliaries and Mission Bands: Auxiliaries—Brucefield, \$66.22; Clinton, \$163.80; Seaforth, \$251.36; Smith's Hill,

\$31.33; Manchester, \$42.50; Egmondville, \$93; Blake, \$20.25; Bayfield Road, \$9.50; Honkall, \$132.20; Goderich, \$113; Kirkton, \$31.50; Thames Road, \$91.50; Blyth, \$86.09; Londresboro, \$39; Leeburn, \$13; Goderich Township, \$6—\$1,193.25. Mission Bands—Seaford, \$29.22; Brucefield, \$17; Exeter, \$30; Goderich, \$76; Honkall, \$27; Thames Road, \$27.35; Bayfield, \$37.50; Kippen, \$39—\$289.07. Total contributions by both \$1,482.32. At the afternoon and evening sessions some earnest, stirring and practical papers and addresses were given.

Annual Meetings.

MEAFORD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

The annual meeting of the Meaford Presbyterian church was held on Wednesday evening, January 27th. Reports of a favorable nature were read from the Session, Board of Managers, Ladies' Aid Society, Sabbath School, Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor, Woman's Foreign Missionary Society and the Mission Band. The Treasurer's statement showed a balance on hand after paying all expenses of the year as well as about \$300 spent on painting and papering the church and building a new shed. The mortgage debt was reduced by a payment of \$60 in April last and now stands at \$940. About \$150 was also given for missionary and other benevolent purposes during the year.

PRESTON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

The annual congregational meeting of the Presbyterian church was held recently. The attendance was large, and aside from business matters was interesting. Various reports showing work of the past year were submitted and all were satisfactory, especially the treasurer's, which showed a surplus in the treasury. The following officers were also elected: Chairman, W. D. Hepburn, re-elected; treasurer, Z. A. Hall; secretary, Thos. Hepburn; Managers—J. D. Webster, W. L. Wood, and Henry Gimbel, three years term. Auditors—James Gillies and G. A. Roos.

ZION CHURCH, PARRY SOUND.

The congregation of Zion church held their annual meeting on Jan. 12, which was well attended.

The financial report was very satisfactory, showing receipts during the year of \$1151.71 and expenditure of \$1163, with a balance on manse building of \$225. Quite a large sum had been expended in church and manse improvements, and the schemes of the church have not been forgotten. The following managers were elected: D. Macfarlane, R. J. Lee, and R. Ard.

ST. ANDREWS, THAMESFORD.

The annual meeting of St. Andrew's Church was held on the 14th. Reports from the various committees were very encouraging. There was 69 communicants added to the roll during the past year, and 12 removed by death and by certificate. There were 128 names on the Sabbath School roll. The W.F.M.S. showed a membership of 57, contributions about \$157. Ladies' Aid showed total receipts of \$419.18, with an expenditure of \$406.36. Auditors' report showed a balance on hand of \$401.60, besides a sum of \$564.00, as the nucleus of a fund with which to build a new manse.

ST. PAUL'S CHURCH.

The annual meeting of St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, Prince Albert, N.W.T., was held in the church on Wednesday 27th Jan. the pastor Rev. A. Lee, B.A. presiding. The meeting was opened by praise, reading of scripture and prayer. The report of the session was presented by the Clerk Mr. J. M. Taggart. The report showed 104 members on the roll. There were eight new members added during the year, but twenty seven removals chiefly through members having left Prince Albert to reside elsewhere. The congregation is well organized. It has two Sunday schools, a Y.P.S.C.E., and Ladies' Aid Society. Ordinances are well attended on the Sabbath, and peace and harmony prevail. The pastor reported sixteen baptisms, four deaths and six marriages.

The Ladies' Aid Society's report showed that the ladies had raised for work in the congregation \$244 during the year. A vote of thanks was given to the ladies, for their valuable services. The report of the Managers was presented by Mr. Howard, Secretary-Treasurer. The year past was in some respects a trying one to many of our people, yet the finances are fairly satisfactory. The prospects for the present year are good. Expenses of the year for congregational purposes amounted to \$1,755, and contributions for missions and benevolent schemes \$86. A vote of thanks was passed to Miss Lee and the members of the choir for their valuable services during the year. Messrs. Montgomery, Cassie, Nivens and Stovel were elected as managers to serve for two years and Messrs. Goodfellow and Stewart to act for one year. It was decided that the financial statement of the Managers be printed for circulation among the members of the congregation. The congregation, after a few words from the pastor congratulating them on the work done, joined in singing the doxology and the benediction closed the meeting.

KNOX CHURCH, GUELPH.

The annual business meeting of the congregation was held Jan. 20th. Reports from all organizations showed that good work had been done during the past year. The session reported 91 names added to the communion roll, 50 on profession of faith. Five were removed by death, and twenty-four by dismissal, leaving the membership at present 508. Eleven adults and five infants had been baptised. The report of the managing board showed receipts for current expenditure about \$2,700; the debt of the congregation has been reduced by over \$300 and an effort is being made to clear off the total indebtedness during 1897. Receipts from all sources for mission work amounted to nearly \$700, while upwards of \$200 had been raised for benevolent purposes. The congregation was brought under the form of constitution suggested in a book of forms and procedure authorized by the general assembly. Under this constitution the following were elected managers for three years: Messrs. A. W. Alexander, A. Hales, Jas. Miller and Thos. Johnson; for two years, Messrs. Robt. Miller, J. A. Lillie, J. H. Cardy and A. Whitelaw; for one year, Messrs. R. Gordon, J. A. Scott, Geo. Steele and Henry Weatherston. J. A. Lillie was re-elected treasurer and J. H. Cardy assistant treasurer. Miss Lamont was re-appointed organist.

DEATH OF REV. G. PORTEOUS.

The following resolution was passed by the members of the Presbytery of Kingston, assembled for the funeral of the late Rev. Geo. Porteous, at Kingston, on January 29th, 1897:

"On motion, duly seconded, it was resolved:—That the members of the Presbytery of Kingston, assembled for the funeral of their late co-presbyter—the Rev. George Porteous, would hereby give expression to their humble and reverent submission to the will of God in removing from the work of the Church on earth one who was for so many years privileged to labour in the cause of the Master—and did labour successfully in several different portions of the field.

"To the bereaved widow and children of their deceased brother they extend condolence, and commend them to the tender compassion of a sympathizing Saviour in this, their day of sore affliction."

Rev. Mr. Porteous was born in Quebec province in 1832. He studied at Queen's and graduated in 1854. In 1860 he was called to the pastorate of the Presbyterian church on Wolfe Island, where he remained for several years. During his first year in charge of the Wolfe Island congregation he was married to Miss Gunn, second sister of Alexander Gunn, of Kingston. From Wolfe Island he was called to Iroquois and afterwards was stationed successively at Toledo, Ont., Harrowsmith, and lastly at L'Amable. For twelve months past his health has been very poor and last autumn he was compelled, reluctantly, to resign his pastorate in consequence. He went on a trip to England in hope that the sea voyage would benefit him, but the

hope was vain. It was then plainly apparent that it would be only a matter of time until his complaint would terminate fatally.

Deceased is survived by his widow and a family of six sons and two daughters, all of whom are grown up. He was most popular and sincerely beloved by the members of each of the congregations to which he ministered, and by hosts of friends of all denominations, and in all parts of the country. Faithful in performing the duties of his office, charitable, gentle and forbearing to a degree, he won the esteem and affection of all with whom he came in contact, and his death is deeply mourned by hundreds who had known and loved him. He was in the sixty-fifth year of his age.

A MINISTER'S STORY.

The Painful Experience of Rev. C. H. Backhus.

For Five Months he was Helpless and Endured Agonizing Pains—Could neither Rise Up Nor Sit Down Without Aid—He Tells How He Found a Cure.

From the Tilsonburg Observer.

The Rev. C. H. Backhus is a resident of Bayham township, Elgin county, Ont., and there is probably no person in the county who is better known or more highly esteemed. He is a minister of the United Brethren Church. He also farms quite extensively, superintending the work and doing quite a share of it himself despite his advanced age. But he was not always able to exert himself as he can to-day, as a few years ago he underwent an illness that many feared would terminate his life. To a reporter who recently had a conversation with him the rev. gentleman gave the particulars of his illness and cure, with permission to make the statement public. The story as told by the Rev. Mr. Backhus is substantially as follows:—About three years ago he was taken ill and the doctor who was called in pronounced his trouble an attack of la grippe. He did not appear to get any better and a second doctor was called in, but with no more satisfactory results, so far as a renewal of health was concerned. Following the grippe, pains of an excruciating nature located themselves in his body. He grew weaker and weaker until at last he was perfectly helpless. He could not sit down nor rise from a sitting posture without assistance and when with this assistance he gained his feet he could hobble but a few steps when he was obliged to be put in a chair again. For five months these agonizing pains were endured. But at last relief so long delayed came. A friend urged him to try Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. He yielded to the advice and had not been taking them long when the longed for relief was noticed coming. He could move more easily, and the stiffness and pains began to leave his joints. He continued the use of the pills for some time longer and the cure was complete. Seeing Mr. Backhus now it would be difficult to think of him as the crippled and helpless man of those painful days. Mr. Backhus is now past his 80th year, but as he said, "by the aid of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills I am as able as those ten years younger. You can readily judge of this when I tell you I laid forty rods of rail fence this year. I am glad to add my testimony in favor of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills."

Dr. Williams' Pink Pills strike at the root of the disease, driving it from the system and restoring the patient to health and strength. In cases of paralysis, spinal troubles, locomotor ataxia, sciatica, rheumatism, erysipelas, scrofulous troubles, etc., these pills are superior to all other treatment. They are also a specific for the troubles which make the lives of so many women a burden, and speedily restore the rich glow of health to pale and sallow cheeks. Men broken down by overwork, worry or excesses, will find in Pink Pills a certain cure. Sold by all dealers or sent by mail postpaid, at 50c. a box, or six boxes for \$2.50, by addressing the Dr. Williams' Medicine Company, Brookville, Ont., or Schenectady, N. Y. Beware of imitations and substitutes alleged to be "just as good."

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PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH FLESHERTON.

The annual business meeting of the Presbyterian congregation was held on January 14th, Mr. Jas. McMullen in the chair. There was a good attendance and harmony prevailed. Minutes of previous meetings read and sustained and encouraging reports from the various branches of the church were presented and adopted. The following are the Board of Managers for the current year: Jas. McMullen, A. E. VanDusen, Arch. Cairns, Frank Cairns, Chas. Stewart, I. R. McKenzie, John Chard, W. L. Wright, A. Gilchrist, Auditor, A. M. Gibson.

KNOX CHURCH LONDESBORO

The annual congregational meeting was held on January 14th. During the year 1896 there were raised for all purposes \$460, of this sum \$314 was expended on strictly congregational objects, and \$126 for missions and for other benevolent and religious purposes. The mission band, contributed \$15 for home missions, and the auxiliary of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society, \$21, in addition to clothing sent to In-

Rich, Red Blood

Is absolutely essential to health. It is impossible to get it from so-called "nerve tonics" and opiate compounds. They have temporary, sleeping effects, but do not CURE. To have pure blood and good health, take Hood's Sarsaparilla, which has first, last, and all the time, been advertised as just what it is—the best medicine for the blood ever produced. In fact,

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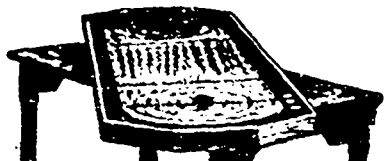
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J. K. CRANSTON, Galt

or our agents, No. 4 Brunswick Ave., Toronto, Mention Presbyterian Review.

The Presbyterian Review.

dian missions. Mr. R. Adams was chosen secretary and treasurer for the ensuing year. Mr. William Weymouth and Mr. Isaac Barr take the place of the two retiring managers. The congregation expressed their willingness to pay one-third of whatever might be required for the maintenance of the manse.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, AILSA CRAIG.

The annual congregational business meeting of Ailsa Craig, was held recently, the pastor, the Rev. D. I. Dewar, presiding. Encouraging reports from the various branches of the church were presented and adopted. The financial statement was very satisfactory, the receipts meeting all current expenses, and leaving a balance of \$70.40 in the treasurer's hands. Following is the Board of Management:— Messrs. J. Alexander, G. Morton, M. Lockhart, J. Gunn, G. Hindmarsh, D. McKellar, J. D. Drummond, Organist, Miss. A. Avorbolt.

COOK'S CHURCH, KINGSTON.

The congregational meeting of Cook's church was held Jan 13. The annual report included reports of the session for 1896, Ladies' Aid Society, Christian Endeavor, Willing Workers, Olive Mission Band and Y.M. L.S.

The question of changing the name of the church to St. Colombo was discussed, and it was decided not to make any change. The church has ended the first fifty years of its existence, not only without debt, but with a considerable balance on hand, and is probably the only church in the city with such a record.

The management committee elected consists of E. Anderson, J. Lemmon, H. Newman, M. Claxton, R. Diack, A. Vanorder and T. Donnelly. D. A. Shaw and J. Orr were appointed auditors for 1897.

A cordial vote of thanks was tendered to C. Livingston and Prof. Marshall for their work in connection with raising funds to clear the church of debt.

Another Invention.

Mr. J. K. Cranston, of Galt, is to be congratulated on having secured Canadian protection for his new invention of the most complete and handy hingeless folding table that has ever been thought of. Six screw nails is all the hardware required to make this handsome piece of furniture. The folding legs work in a wooden pivot, and there is combined in this new patent, strength, utility, neatness, cheapness and adaptability to any size or style of table desired. Many thousands of this new table will be sold as parlor, card and game tables, and it is also suitable for the kitchen, restaurant and lawn in sizes required, and as it folds up so closely it will be a favorite for storing or moving. Price,—20x32 in., \$2.25; 25x25 in., \$2.25; 30x40 in., \$3.00.

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