

stituted a motley congregation—some had come in carts, some in lumber waggons, some on saddleless horses, and not a few by the mode of travel still more primitive than these. Then, noting their styles of dress and equipage, one would almost suspect that they had been handed down from Moses' day. I never could boast of a taste for pictures, but I would value a true photographic representation of that and some other congregations I met in those days—could it be obtained—much more highly than I would some of the modern parlour ornaments.

But, however those people were clad or equipped, they had souls which were worth saving, and many of them were then just beginning to learn it.

*Going farther into the Province.*

During the time spent in Stanstead, just upon the border, I learned of great destitution of the ministrations of the Gospel in the regions beyond. Townships stretching more than sixty miles to the north, branching to the east and the west, were people with New England inhabitants, among them many Congregational families, without a minister of our denomination, and few Christian ministers of any denomination.

Visiting, as I did in a hasty tour of exploration, some eight or ten of these townships, averaging, perhaps, 1,500 inhabitants each, witnessing their destitution, and the desire of many for the ministry and ordinances of God's word, I could not refrain from giving myself to the work in this field, to try what could be done. Never before had I so fully realized that I had a "call." I knew of no missionary society which had adopted or would adopt this region as a field of missions, nor had I any idea what society, if any, might be induced to enter here. My call was not a call from men, nor from churches, for at that period there was not a Congregational church in Canada, save the three feeble bands at Stanstead, Potton and Missisquoi Bay, each within half a league of Vermont, on whose milk they were occasionally nursed. "There was a great door and effectual opened to me," and I might finish the quotation, "and there were many adversaries."

I have said that I knew of no missionary society working or purposing to work in this field, and moreover, I knew of no friend in the land of my birth who would give any hearty approval of my decision to enter such a field, so distant, foreign as this. Still I was prepared to say, "O God, my heart is fixed," though a mission to the Sandwich Islands, or to China, would have secured a vastly greater amount of sympathy.

With a purpose not to be changed, I took my horse and rode to Vermont to tell what I had found, and to declare my intention to return. As I neared the Village of Burlington, I met the then Secretary of the Vermont Domestic Missionary Society (Rev. Reuben Smith), who inquired, with a kindly interest, where I had been for the last few months. I sat in my saddle and told him my story. He sprang from his buggy and came and laid his hand on my shoulder, and said, "You are the very man we wish to see. We have a communication from a missionary society in Canada, reporting that there is a section of their Province called the Eastern Townships, settled largely by New England inhabitants, very destitute of Gospel privileges, and asking, 'Can you select and introduce to us some men for this field, not far from your own border.' Now," said Mr. S., "we know almost nothing of this field, but *you* have been in it, and to it you *must* return."

A meeting of the directors of the society was immediately summoned, a favourable introduction to the new sister society was voted in my behalf, and I was soon on my way; and, on presentation to the Committee in Montreal, was accepted, and appointed the first missionary of the "Canada Education and Home Missionary Society." It had been moved and organized by the sainted Rev. Mr. Christmas, Pastor of the American Presbyterian Church, Montreal, who had then (January 7th, 1829) just gone away to die.