

BOOKS RECEIVED.

THE OLD CONCESSION ROAD.—The little fifty page book with this title, by Thomas Laidlaw, contains the prose sketch that gives its name to the book,* and a dozen pieces of verse. The author is a well-known resident of Wellington County, who has often contributed to the press of Guelph during the last fifty or sixty years, and, indeed, his preface tells us that most of what is now reprinted appeared first in the local press. The prose sketch is "In Memory of the Early Settlers," and its description, while applying to one locality in particular, is truly styled typical of many farm "concessions" all over Ontario. Scenes and incident are pictured with faithfulness and with much feeling. Several tempting pages offer for quotation, but we have only room for one or two paragraphs: "In the concessions there is a raising-bee, a busy scene; men are here by the score," bass-wood skids in plenty; a yoke of oxen near. . . . "Jokes are passed and the laugh raised, questions discussed, even politics are introduced, and why not? Did not the settlers in the old concession resolve into a company and have two newspapers direct from Toronto, which were passed for a distance of two miles from one to the other, thumbed and soiled as newspapers read in that way only are; and in the same spirit of enterprise an Ohio grindstone was procured at a very early date," and placed in a common spot to grind the settlers' axes. . . . An eloquent passage on page 20 speaks of the speckled trout, as he appeared to boyhood's eyes: "None of your latter-day chubs that have crept into our waters in a way only known to themselves, were there surging in manorial soakage from cultivated fields, but trout of noble ancestry dating back from a time to which the landing of Jacques Cartier is but as yesterday."

The Canadian Almanac, always useful, appears this year more than usually interesting by reason of containing a paper on the Flag of the Dominion. The Copp, Clark Co., Toronto, are the publishers.

—The Ontario Loan and Debenture Company intends applying to Parliament next session for an Act which will authorize the company to carry on business in all the provinces and territories of Canada.

—The last ocean-going steamer to arrive at and leave the port of Montreal during the present season of navigation was the steamship "Tiber," with a cargo of Canadian iron from Nova Scotia. She arrived and cleared since our last.

—Our Halifax letter having arrived too late for the insertion in their proper place of corrected prices of Maritime shares, we here give a list: Bank of Nova Scotia, 170; Bank of B. N. A., 148; Merchants' Bank of Halifax, 140; Union Bank of Halifax, 121; People's Bank of Halifax, 116; Halifax Banking Company, 116; Bank of Yarmouth, 121; Exchange Bank of Yarmouth, 102½; Commercial Bank, Windsor, 108; the N. S. Telephone Co. is quoted November 21st at 105; the N. S. Steel and Forge Co. at par; the Halifax Gas Light Co. at 95, and the Acadia Sugar Refinery, preferred, at 75.

* Guelph: The "Mercury" Book and Job Press, 1892. Toronto: The Williamson Book Company.

"THE DEVIL, UNLIMITED."

"We are responsible, I beg to say, to the shareholders alone!"

—QUA-T-OFFICIAL UTTERANCE.

I.

The Devil's will is the Devil's still, wherever the Devil be.
He used to delight in the thick of the fight, whether on land or sea;
'Twas difficult then for mortal men to know what side he took,
When the wrath of the Lord from heaven was pour'd, and thrones and empires shook;
But for many a day the Devil's way was ever mighty and grand—
'Mid the sabre's flash and the cannon's crash he bravely took his stand;
Such perilous work he has learned to shirk, and quiet at home sits he,
Having turn'd himself, for the love of pelf, to a Charter'd Companie!

II.

"Ho! better far than the work of War, the storm and the stress of Strife,
'Tis to sit at home while white men roam!" he crieth to Sin, his wife;
"Tho' the fiends, my sons, make Maxim guns, they're Christians now to the core,
And they love the range of the Stock Exchange far better than battle-roar!
They are spared, in truth, much strife uncouth, and trouble by field and flood,
Since the work of Hell is done so well by creatures of flesh and blood;
"And I think, on the whole," says the grim old Soul, "'tis better for you and me
That I've turn'd myself, ere laid on the shelf, to a Charter'd Companie!"

III.

"The thin red line was doubtless fine, as it waver'd across the plain,
While the thick fire ran from the black Redan and broke it again and again,
But the hearts of men throbb'd bravely then, and their souls could do and dare,—
Mid the bloodiest fight, in my despatch, the Lord made Heroes there!
The Flag of England waved on high, as the thin red line crept on,
And I often found, as it waver'd by, my occupation gone:
O'er a warrior's soul I had small control in these old days," said he,
"But I've turn'd myself, ere laid on the shelf, to a Charter'd Companie!"

IV.

"Of Church and of State let others prate—let martyr'd thousands moan—
I'm responsible, I beg to state, to my Shareholders alone!
The Flag of Freedom may rot and fall, both Church and State may end,
Whatever befall I'm the Lord of all, if I pay a dividend!
And O, my dear, it is very clear that the thing is working well—
When they hunt the black men down like deer, we devils rejoice in Hell;
'Tis loot, loot, loot, as they stab and shoot out yonder across the sea,
Now I've turn'd myself, like a gamesome elf, to a Charter'd Companie?"

V.

"Just study, my dear, the record here of the mighty deeds we've done:
The hundreds *en masse* mow'd down like grass, to our English loss of one!
Then loot, loot, loot, as we stab and shoot, 'mid the shrieks of the naked foe,—
When Murder and Greed on the fallen feed, up, up, my stock must go!
And the best of the lark, you'll be pleased to mark, is the counterjumper's cry,
As he clutches his shares, and shrieks his prayers to the Jingo-god on high!
With Bible and gun the game is won, at home and over the sea,
Now I've turn'd myself, in the reign of the Guelph, to a Charter'd Companie!"

VI.

The Devil's will is the Devil's still, tho' wrought in a Christian land—
He chuckles low and he laughs his fill, with the latest news in hand;
Nor God nor man can defeat his plan, so long as the markets thrive—

Tho' our Flag be stain'd, and our creed profaned, he keepeth the game alive!
"The Flag of England may rot and fall, both Church and State may end,
I laugh aloud, I am Lord of all, if I pay a dividend!
Right gladly I dwell where I make my Hell, in the jobber's heart," saith he,
"Now I've turn'd myself, for the love of pelf, to a Charter'd Companie!"
ROBT. BUCHANAN IN *London Morning Chronicle*.

LIFE IN MEXICO.

The following extract is from a letter written by a Canadian mining engineer, who is at present sojourning in the interior of Mexico, Province of Sonora. He dates from San Antonio de la Huerta, and much that he says of the prospects of working venerable mines by modern methods is interesting. Still, the difficulty of getting modern machinery into districts hundreds of miles back from the Gulf of California on the one hand and the Gulf of Mexico on the other, where everything has to be carried on mule-back, great distances from any railway, is very serious. But the political and social conditions are most trying to a European or a North American. The Mr. Stanley spoken of is the only white person the writer had seen for months:

"We have just passed through a 'Mexican' experience which will amuse you. Fortunately I was in a position to be amused also, being at a stand still on account of a break in machinery, and having furnace men to provide for, in order to retain them. From the beginning, then. After the break in the machinery I told you of, I put the six indispensable men at work, one breaking lime, one iron, and four working on a 'prospect.' Then we took a trip into the mountains, for the purpose of looking at the rocks. Stanley and I, with a man Tomas to drive the burro [donkey], carrying our bedding—and as it turned out, to ride our horse most of the time. We took but one horse, and afterwards had cause to regret that. Our camp was on the ridge commanding both valleys, the Yaqui and the Teoripa, 4,100 feet by barometer above San Antonio. Returning, we lunched at the aforementioned prospect, and started out, I on foot, Stanley on horseback, and Tomas driving the burro. Near home a small boy overtook me and asked 'Where is your friend?' adding that he, Stanley, had left his horse, and that they were walking together, till he stopped awhile, and since then he had not been able to overtake him, and supposed he was lost. I expressed the opinion that he would hardly climb out of the canon to look for the driver, and continued my way. Five minutes later I was startled by a horse coming behind at full gallop, and turning round saw Tomas with a scared face, who said something rapidly in Spanish about *buscar genti*, which means 'look for men.' When I asked: 'Where is Mr. Stanley? what has happened?' he explained that he had met a friend on his way to hiding, who told him that there was a commissioner coming to look for men to fight the Yaqui Indians, and he, Tomas, wanted my permission to take to the woods, or more properly the mountains. He had left the burro to Mr. Stanley.

"This was on Thursday; next day there was not a man of all our six to be found, but on Sunday night they pounced on three and put them in gaol, with three armed men at the door. Next day I made it my business to see the President and his secretary, who told me that they only wanted the vagabonds, and that if I gave them a list of my men they would not be molested. I did so and contrived to see one of the men, told him what the Great Man had said, and persuaded him to return to his work, five miles from town. He came to the house for powder, but had evidently been watched, for ten minutes later he was in the clutches of the police. He appealed to me and I again saw the authorities, who said that they only meant that they would not send our men off as soldiers, but that they would have to serve as guard. I could not expect them personally to guard the prisoners, they said, and much more to the same effect. On Wednesday night two children