

Footprints in the Snow.

We were once passing through the crowded streets of London, a few days after a heavy snowstorm. A thaw had set in and the result was huge piles of mud. The friend who was with us smilingly pointed to it with his cane, as he said, "Whiter than the snow." And this remark called up into our mind many thoughts which, if our readers will bear with us, we will endeavor to set before them.

1. *Humanity came into the world pure and white as the snow*, but, like the latter, had no sooner made its appearance on the earth, than influences so strong were brought to bear against it, that it speedily became defiled and fit only to be trampled under foot.

2. *But a few days before, under the influence of the severe cold, it had frozen as hard as though it were never intended to come apart again.* But, with a different state of atmosphere it had slowly dissolved and was now part running away. Just like our good resolutions. Acting under some noble impulse, we resolve upon a certain line of conduct, and so enthusiastic and so determined are we that we not only deceive others, but ourselves also into the belief that "the thing will stand." But, alas! different surroundings and the instability of our own natures, unaided by a higher power, soon show us that a thaw has set in, and slowly but surely our good resolutions fast melt away.

3. *What a change in the appearance of the earth is wrought by the snow in a night.* We retire to rest with the fields, trees and gardens bare and cold in their winter nakedness, we arise in the morning to find everything covered with snow—snow on everything, from the church tower to the bare sprigs on the bushes, on the lordly mansion and the humble cottage—nothing but snow. How did it all come! Why, just a speck or flake at a time.

So with the man or woman against whom some awful crime has been proved, and against whom the scornful finger of the world is pointed, and who now stands in the pillory brazen and defiant. Their true characters may have been discovered in a night, but they took many years to form, little by little, just a speck at a time, until finally the whole man was covered as with a leprosy—every virtue stunted and shrivelled, and every evil desire and inherent vice blossoming in sinful tropical luxuriance.

4. *And the effects of the snow is seen in opposite ways and results.* Working on the one hand incalculable mischief, stopping traffic by road and rail, swelling brooks into rivers, and rivers into mighty torrents, sweeping and rushing on, carrying everything before them, leaving nothing but ruin and desolation in their track. So does it on the other hand work for good, covering the earth as a blanket, nourishing and preserving the seed committed to its care, so that when the days of winter are past and the sun again asserts its power, the seed will germinate, the earth will yield her increase and food will be stored for future use, both for man and beast.

So little by little, where grace has been im-

planted in the heart, every providence and every experience, falling like snow-flakes during the years of our life, blown upon by the Divine breath and warmed by the Sun of Righteousness, slowly but surely do their work, and form under God's hands, the "man of God thoroughly furnished with every good work," and though the world may suddenly discover that a prophet is, or has been, in their midst, yet the time has been long and the providences many, that have at length fulfilled their mission and made the child of God what he or she is to-day.

5. *The footprints in the snow will show which way the traveller has gone.* And thus, day by day we, being dead, shall speak; the story of our lives shall be shown in the effects that will be visible long after we are dead. The history of some men is that of a hurricane; they pass through life blighting and tearing down and destroying all in their path, and leaving nothing behind but a desolate coast line, strewn with wreckage. While, on the other hand, it can truly be said "The memory of the just is blessed." They are a means of blessing to others from beginning to end, and when at last they are called to their reward, countless numbers can but feel that earth is poorer for their going and heaven the richer for their entry.

Two neighbors died within a short time of each other, of one it was said, "I never knew him do one kind or truly disinterested action in all his life;" and of the other, "She was always doing good, her motto was, I shall pass this way but once and must therefore do all the good I can while passing."

Certain it is that men will see the road we have travelled and point out the same to others and tell our good or evil deeds long after we are out of sight and hearing.

6. *And so whether the snow has marked for good or evil, the time comes when it must go.* "It is appointed unto all men once to die." Whatever our record here it will not alter the great fact that in due time we shall have to gather up our feet in the bed and depart. Childhood, youth, manhood and old age are but so many stages on life's journey, and as each are successively passed, the final resting-place for the body, the grave, comes nearer, and then the judgment, the great white throne and Him who sits upon it, from whose presence the heavens and earth shall flee away, then the sentence, "Come unto me, ye blessed," or "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels." The Lord solemnize our hearts while we meditate upon the awful verities of God's unchanging word, and flee to the shadow of a mighty rock for refuge ere the storm of divine wrath sweep in from earth to the abode of the damned, where there is weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth, and where in the presence of a black despair, the memory of a fatal choice shall mark us through the countless ages of eternity. FREDERICK T. SNEEL.

Our Danish brother, N. P. Gross, visited the recent Queens County quarterly meeting, at Upper Gagetown. He also held meetings at Jemseg, Mill Cove, 2nd Grand Lake and Newcastle. His tour among the churches has been productive of much good, deepening the interest of our people in the far northern districts of the province. When will we fully awaken to the great destitution there?

HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE CAUSES THAT HAVE LED TO THE FORMATION AND ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NEW BRUNSWICK CONVENTION.

(Published by request of the Home Mission Board.)

PART III.

It might be well, perhaps, now to review the varying positions taken by those who have opposed the formation of the New Brunswick convention to show the shifting policy that has been advanced from time to time to baffle our efforts.

When, in 1892, it was contended by us that a provincial organization was needed, in addition to other things, to properly develop our home mission work, it was claimed in opposition that the maritime board was all that was wanted. A memorable defence was set up in its behalf. It was maintained that it had laid out more money in New Brunswick every year than the churches of this province had themselves contributed for home missions. We were the recipients of the bounty of Nova Scotia to a large extent. We would therefore lose by the proposed change, and there would be less money laid out on our fields.

Now what are the facts to-day, after four years of New Brunswick convention history? During the year ending September 1st, 1896, the home mission expenditure in this province was \$2,494.82; for the year ending September 1st, 1897, \$3,213.63, and for the year ending September, 1898, \$2,413.73.

We pass these figures to our maritime friends to produce anything surpassing our work, even in the palmiest days of the Maritime board. Then, too, we have not to include in this expenditure our share of the \$1,000 salary formerly paid the maritime secretary. The work of our board, both of secretary and treasurer, has been done without charge. Thousands of letters have been written, full and lengthy reports given, and current accounts kept of all our work, without any mention of salary in connection with it. It is notorious that wherever a Maritime convention official touches work, "the salary" must accompany it. Even our trust funds in their hands have to be billed for services rendered them.

We published in last year's Annual a comparative statement of home mission giving since 1890, with the additions each year to the churches. Not in a spirit of boastfulness, but in the interests of truth alone, we now ask that the best years of maritime home mission control be produced for comparison along this line. Let the solid evidence of facts answer the claim set up five years ago that our home missions would suffer loss by the withdrawal of Nova Scotia's aid.

It was also urged that the churches which would stand aloof from the New Brunswick convention with their pastors—and we were told they were the strong churches presided over by the intelligence of the denomination—would contribute more than those in favor of it, thus showing after all that a majority of the real strength of our people was against the new convention. The very opposite of this has been the case. From the first a majority of the churches contributing to home missions have sent their money to our treasurer; each year the funds contributed to our board have been in excess of those contributed to the maritime treasurer. Let the figures again corroborates this statement.

(To be continued.)