

McMASTER UNIVERSITY MONTHLY

APRIL, 1900.

MR. AND MRS. BATES.

It is usual in writing a biographical sketch to trace the lineage of the subject as far back as possible, especially, in the case of Anglo-Saxons, if the line touches any of the so-called aristocratic families of Britain. The value of heredity in distinguished blood no one will deny; but there is another aristocracy which has affected the destinies of the world more profoundly, which has done more to make Britain what she is to-day than any other. I mean the aristocracy of godliness, the lineage of the sons of God. To be able to trace an ancestry through generations of honest, upright, God-fearing fathers, and intelligent, gentle, pious mothers, is better than to number lords and ladies in the family tree. It has been up out of such a subsoil of godliness that Britain's noblest men and women have ever come. Baptists especially will recall such men as Bunyan and Carey, Fuller and Knibb. John Bates came of just such stock as this. He was born in a very small village in Northamptonshire, went to London and entered into business at twenty-two, was converted two years later, began to preach almost immediately, and at twenty-eight years of age was appointed a missionary to the Roman Catholics of Ireland. There he spent seventeen years, married a wife, reared a young family, and displayed that patience, tact and kindness, which won him an abiding place in the hearts of gentle and simple, of Romanist and Protestant alike. His great activity on behalf of the famishing in Ireland during the