

and knowing the energy and determination of its sons we predict for it a bright and prosperous career.

#### NORTH SIMCOE.

COUNTY SOCIETY.—Seventy-two members; amount of subscriptions, \$98.97; balance from 1858, \$56.92; deposited by township branches, \$430.75; special subscriptions, donations, &c. \$121 35; government grant, \$479.98; total receipts, \$1187.71. Paid township branches, \$718.74; premiums, \$302.02; expenses, \$145.82; balance in treasurer's hands, \$21.39.

#### *Extracts from Report.*

In the North Riding of the County of Simcoe, every variety of soil may be found, and in some localities every variety in the breadth of half a lot. Indeed, even within the precincts of the Town of Barrie—the county town of the County of Simcoe—clay fitable for brick-making, or sand fit for building, may be obtained in any quantity; and, singular as it may appear to persons residing at a distance, better land cannot be had in the Province of Canada for farming purposes, or worse than may be found within the limits of this Town. And if building is to be required, every description may be obtained here. If the builder delights in the mantle, it is at Barrie that he may be suited; or if he prefers to erect his mansion near the water, let him steer his course to the north shore of Lake Simcoe, where a beautiful sheet of water some twenty miles in extent greets the eye, and where the scenery is equalled, and, added to this, a more healthful spot cannot be found.

It was here that several half pay officers of the Army and Navy, who had been awarded grants of land, first settled some thirty years ago, and no doubt expended large sums of money in improving their properties. Those gentlemen improved first class cattle direct from England, of different breeds, the best of which may be seen in the stock of the present day. But, like all other enterprises, the first promoters very rarely enjoy the ultimate advantages; and from causes which it is material to notice here, they abandoned enterprise, and the property in most instances is now in other hands. True it is, they laboured under many disadvantages, which the present occupiers have no conception of; they were without roads, without schools, and without society. But all these great measure are privations of the past;

for no community has more cause to be proud of its facilities for the education of the rising generation than the inhabitants of Barrie, and very few have more enjoyments. To take a more extended glance at the soil of this Riding, we may refer to Nottawasaga as the extreme west, a township always famed for wheat and other grain; while Matchadash, the opposite extremity of the riding, is almost useless for farming purposes. Good and bad land will be found in all parts; and allowing four qualities of soil, the north riding of the county of Simcoe, may be considered to stand in the second class.

The northern position of the riding may be considered by many as a great disadvantage, and consequently objectionable. Be it so, nevertheless it has its advantages, for while the more southern districts have neither waggoning or sleighing, the settlers in the north have usually from three to four months good travelling on the snow; and when the rigour of winter is past the snow disappears as if by magic, and the soil is ready for the hand of the husbandman, without frost; the consequence is, spring work is commenced by the farmer in the north nearly as soon as by those settled in the more southern districts. It is only justice to the reader at a distance in a report like this, to state that a large portion of each township will require draining before it will be serviceable for agricultural purposes, but when drained will be the most valuable land. Very extensive tracts of this riding are high and dry, and the subsoil is of such a quality that water cannot be obtained by digging; but notwithstanding this, the land will produce an excellent quality of grain and roots. This situation is frequently chosen as a first residence by the humbler class of settlers, for the reason that every foot of land reclaimed from the forest is available for producing something for themselves and families; for were they in possession of wet land their means would not be adequate to its improvement, and, although superior in quality, it would, in consequence of its wetness, be worthless to them. And it should be borne in mind that the majority of our pioneers, or first settlers, are parties with slender means. But in many instances those persons have been successful, and have realized a very comfortable subsistence, and are enjoying, as working farmers, everything that is required to make a comfortable home.