

LONGEVITY IN CANADA — Our attention has been called to a remarkable fact in connection with the parochial work of the Rev. Robert Ker, rector of St. George's parish, St. Catharines. During the month between December 2nd, 1893, and January 2nd, 1894, Mr. Ker read the service for the burial of the dead over five persons whose combined ages amounted to 423 years, not one of whom was under eighty years of age. The St. Catharines *Star*, commenting upon the above facts, says that nine octogenarians were interred in the city cemetery during December, whose combined ages amounted to 762 years, making an average of 84¾ years. Two of the members reached the great age of ninety and ninety-one respectively. These returns speak volumes for the healthfulness of the Niagara district, which has been called the most favoured portion of North America.

We enjoy in Ontario a climate well adapted for the production of the highest type of the human family. Indeed, this may be said of our country as a whole. The Province of Quebec boasts of one of the most healthful of climates. Even where sanitary laws seem to be set at defiance, it is common to read of the deaths of those who have lived nearly a century. Nova Scotia possesses a climate which tends to preserve life to old age. The military records at Halifax show a smaller percentage of deaths than in any of the stations of the British Army in the world. A statistician noted in three years in Nova Scotia 29 cases of people over 100 years of age, the united ages being 3,004, or an average of over 103. A Truro physician reported the names of 97 people over 80 years within the limits of his own practice, 16 of whom were from 90 to over 100 years of age. Another writer gives a list of deaths, covering two townships, of 316 persons of 80 years

and over, and of these 64 were of ages ranging from 90 to 99 inclusive, and six were 100 and over. New Brunswick can give as wonderful returns. A reader of the obituary notices in four newspapers noted in two years, 1887-8, the names of 232 people over 80 years, of which number 55 were between the ages of 90 and 99 inclusive, and 22 were over 100. The Prince Edward Island papers in the same years chronicled the death notices of 223 persons dying at over 80 years, of whom 49 were between 90 and 99, and four were centenarians.

The reasons given for the influences at work which conduce to old age are interesting. One writer gives as factors coarse diet, outdoor exercise, bracing sea winds. Another thinks longevity is due to the even and uneventful lives of the people, the absence of mental or moral excitement, the non-use of stimulants, and the quiet of a Christian life. Another authority thinks the good results are due to the fact that the people came from hardy pioneer stock, and were not wealthy nor poor. "They were religious, and had implicit faith in the benevolence and goodness of God."

There are deep spiritual lessons in such statistics as these. Why are the old suffered to live beyond the term of usefulness, when they become a burden both to themselves and others? Surely, to awaken loving sympathy, and to give opportunity for filial care to the young. They are also given a long period of preparation for the world to come. They serve also, when mature Christians, to elevate the character, inspire the hope and strengthen the faith of others. — *Evangelical Churchman*.

First, I thought, almost despairing,

This must crush my spirit now;
Yet I bore it, and am bearing—

Only do not ask me how.

—*Heine, translated by George Mac Donald.*