

OUR CONTRIBUTORS.

A TRIP ON THE NORTH HASTINGS ROAD.

BY THE REV. D. MITCHELL, PREBYTERIAN.

(Continued.)

There was no service at Mayo as had been intended, and this I am sorry to say was on account of a severe epidemic that had carried away nine children in a day or two, and that was threatening others. Mr. Young left us for his own field, after seeing me mounted on a palfrey which Mr. Grant and I rode in turn. As one had to walk our progress was slow, but the change from heat and dust to decided coolness was most agreeable. The road was good, the scenery grand, and the talk such as students enjoy. I could have gone thus all night without fatigue, but as the shades of evening fell, we arrived at the farm of Mr. James Wilson, at Carlow. I was now exactly one hundred miles from Belleville, and had I been in the Alpine passes I could not have had a deeper feeling of isolation. Oh! how delicious a sweet bedroom after being tossed about on the mountains! I found myself in a comfortable home, and when next morning I looked out, was surprised to discover myself in the midst of a beautiful and fertile region. I could not believe my eyes. There were a fine garden, a cosy house, substantial barns, fields well tilled and that had just been cleared of their rich crops. We held a preparatory meeting in the forenoon, and judge of my surprise when we entered a substantial church, surrounded by twenty-six acres of good ground set apart for a glebe, and waiting the minister, as the people put it, to get the manse up. There was a large attendance of respectable people; but what astonished me most was the number of children I had to baptize. The parents, upwards of thirty in number, formed like a semicircle around the pulpit, and impressive was the spectacle of dedicating no fewer than seventeen children, which, with two others I baptized in private, gave me nineteen baptisms during the one visit. I felt there was no fear of Presbyterianism dying in such a place. After the service several friends joined me in a stroll through the woods. We soon came to a good sized lake with a beautiful island standing out of the waters, on one of the loftiest trees of which, and at the very top thereof, we saw an eagle's nest. At a farm-house near the lake I had a strange fracas with a bonnie wee black spotted pig. Piggie took such a fancy to me that it followed me everywhere like a dog. When we started out on the water in a boat, it took to the water, and we had to take it aboard to rescue it, as we thought, from drowning. I was rowing, and for the rest of the voyage piggie sat between my legs, so that whenever I wanted to disturb the echoes with music, somewhat resembling the bagpipes when badly played, I had only to squeeze its head with my legs. We landed on the opposite shore, and still piggie kept at my heels. Growing interested, I walked far into the woods, and he would surprise me by coming up from amid the tall grass at the very spot where I was. Then I went in for a bath, and there was piggie right after me. It followed me afterwards through an extensive wood, over several fields, up to a farm-house where I was to meet some friends, and you may judge of the amusement created amongst those waiting for me at seeing Grumphy still following my steps. It went back to the boat in the same fashion, and when we had safely delivered it to its proper owners, I could not help repeating the verse of an old pastoral, beginning,

"What will I do gin my piggie dee?
My joy, my pride, my huggie."

Sabbath the 23rd was a most lovely day, albeit somewhat warm. But oh! it was so peaceful! corresponding to the feeling of calm begotten in the prospect of a communion season. When we entered church I was astonished to find the building crowded. The father of Mr. James Wilson, old Mr. Wilson, as he is called, being a man of some eighty-three years, led the psalmody. Though stricken in years, the voice is perfectly sweet and full, and the rendering of some of the old familiar tunes carried me back to other days, thus described:

"They chant their artless notes in simple guise;
They tune their hearts, by far the noblest aim.
Perhaps Dundee's wild, warbling measures rise,
Or plaintive martyrs' wailing of the name.
Or noble Elgin beats the heavenward flame."

Sixty five persons communicated. It was a day that will live in my memory till the latest moments. My only regret is that there is no pastor occupying this important field. There is an intelligent, appreciative congregation. It is not unlikely the country may be opened up by a railway. Iron deposits that are known, and others yet to be discovered, will develop an activity like that in and near Madoc. It is not unlikely that gold will be found, though the precious metals rather induce an unhealthy feverish speculation that demoralizes a community. Then there are the lumbermen in winter, who would appreciate and are willing to pay for ministerial services. Once the manse is erected, and the twenty-six acres of glebe under cultivation, I am sure a sweeter spot could not be found.

In the afternoon I returned to Mayo and again dispensed the Lord's supper, only fifteen persons partaking. Probably twenty five were kept back on account of the prevailing diphtheria. This place, although ten miles off, would naturally join with Carlow, and also Long Lake, seventeen miles distant. As it is Mr. Grant has, with much acceptance, kept up services at these places, though on nearly every occasion he has to travel the distance on foot. The journey to L'Amable was made that same night, giving me a day of as hard labour as I ever experienced. But it was a day of "heaven upon earth" to me; and the old familiar words were thrilling my heart all the way:

"'Twas on that night when doomed to know
The eager rage of every foe," etc.

The only incident of interest that occurred on the way was waking up parents who were promised baptism for their children, but who never dreamed of my coming so late. With Mr. Grant, my "Jehu," I arrived at Mr. Tait's residence after midnight, and we had to arouse our friends, as it was evident we were not expected. I spent two delightful days at L'Amable with the Tait family, and my student friends Messrs. Young and Grant. We repaired to the lake and enjoyed boating and bathing to our hearts' content. There are three lovely islands in the lake called England, Scotland and Ireland, which are visited with an interest corresponding to that one would feel on going to the actual countries. At night we awoke the echoes of the mountains with songs and laughter, and I felt at the close of my two days that I had received much benefit from my laborious furlough. I may mention that I was shewn a specimen of almost pure gold which had been extracted by Asa Long, from a piece of rock no larger than three inches square. There is abundance of this quartz in the neighbourhood. I started on Wednesday for Thanet, and on Thursday reached Eldorado, about five miles from Madoc, where the missionary, Mr. John A. Ross, a student of the University of Toronto, who has laboured with very great acceptance at St. Paul and St. Columba, met me with a team. I was quickly transferred from the stage to the waggon of Mr. Brown, elder, and borne to the residence of Mr. More. They had got up a honey festival at St. Paul, and when we arrived there the church was well filled. Mr. Ross occupied the chair, and addresses were delivered by Rev. Messrs. Downs and Mitchell, and by elders John Brown of St. Paul, and A. F. Wood of Madoc. The addresses of the elders were excellent. Mr. Brown is a fine specimen of a blacksmith, tall, massive and energetic, and every word causes the sparks to fly as from his anvil, while Mr. Wood, as a public official and merchant in Madoc, commands the love and respect of his fellow-citizens. The latter gave some valuable advice to farmers and their sons, as to magnifying their occupation and making it the stepping-stone to higher things, such as a seat in Parliament, rather than thinking of law and commerce as the only professions worthy of gentlemen. I was taken by surprise at the close of the festival by Mr. Ross presenting me in the name of the ladies with a beautiful iced cake, as expressive of their gratitude for services rendered from time to time. The excellent music, which was much enjoyed, was supplied by the choir of the Presbyterian church of Madoc.

I cannot close without referring in terms of admiration to the life-long labours of my friend, Rev. D. Wishart. I had heard much of his work, but now, for the first time, I knew his labours and could appreciate them, at least in part. Through his exertions and forethought here are four splendid fields awaiting labourers. There are upwards of two

hundred communicants to be found over this wide district. There are church lands to the extent of nearly fifty acres, all secured and set apart. Had Mr. Wishart's original design been carried out there would have been a church every six miles, and the whole country would have been Presbyterian. As it is there are these great fields ready for workers. Let us not forget these places near at hand in our enthusiasm for the great West, and India and China. If the Church has shewn her wisdom in setting apart a superintendent for the North-West, would it not be well for the Presbytery of Kingston to begin by appointing a missionary for this northern region, who would do his best to hold the people, and gradually prepare for the time when several pastors would be regularly ordained over these congregations?

Belleville, 9th Sept., 1881.

P.S.—I regret very much as I am mailing this to receive a letter from Mr. Grant, missionary at Carlow, stating that when he returned after leaving me, it was to find the barns and crop of Mr. James Wilson all destroyed by fire. No insurance. Fortunately the dwelling house is saved.—D. M.

MISSIONARY TOUR—BRACEBRIDGE TO NORTH SHORE OF LAKE NIPISSING.

BY REV. ROBERT MOODIE.

While many of the readers of THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN were leisurely enjoying their August holiday, it was my lot to spend the month in a laborious tour among some of the mission stations in the Mu-koka and Parry Sound Districts. A brief statement of experiences and impressions may interest your readers, and may serve to make our work in these districts better known. The Presbytery of Barrie had appointed a deputation, consisting of the Rev. Messrs. Leiper, Findlay, and myself, to visit one of the mission groups for a special purpose, and the opportunity was taken by Mr. Findlay to induce his co-deputies to extend their journey, and accompany him in his annual visit of superintendence to other stations farther north. His desire was chiefly to make his co-Presbyters more fully aware of the importance of the mission field, and no doubt also to receive some assistance in administering ordinances. Mr. Leiper joined us at Maganetawan on August 12th, and left at Nipissing on the 23rd. Brevity enjoins me to omit further mention of his share of the work, and besides I do not presume to describe the experiences of one so competent to do so for himself, if he only would. When I arrived at Bracebridge on August 2nd, Mr. Findlay was ready with a team harnessed to the buckboard. Our baggage was securely fastened behind lest it should be pitched out, and off we started on a journey of over 330 miles, made for the most part on the buckboard, and lasting till the 30th day of the month. Besides this, we travelled over eighty miles on Lake Nipissing. The distance to Nipissing from Bracebridge is 100 miles, but our deviations from the direct line of travel, together with the return, lengthened the journey to the number of miles above stated. Even on the leading roads the travelling was not always easy, but when we turned aside from them it was slow, difficult, and not unattended with danger. Between some of the stations the buckboard could not be used, and resort was made to horseback. The track took us through woods at times, through clearing and crops, up hills, down steep and rocky descents, over frequent corduroys, sometimes in bad repair, covered with water and concealing treacherous mud-holes. At times the track led us over boulders from the interspaces of which the rains had washed out the soil, and tree-roots prominent from the same cause. That the horses could pull through, that the vehicle and harness could bear the strain, was to me a cause of wonder, to say nothing of the endurance of the human frame as regards jolting and pitching. I shall not particularize the stumbling of the horses, whereby one rider was landed in a mud-hole, and another on the sand, more frightened than hurt by the animal falling upon him; nor yet upon the plight of the fine mare getting into a miry spot, whereby it seemed for a time that the superintendent would be impoverished to the amount of \$150. It will be scarcely believed perhaps that on two several trips of seven or eight miles each, nearly three hours of exertion were required to go over the ground. These particulars about the roads are not given, as readers may imagine, to magnify our enterprise, but to shew something of the difficulties with which our missionaries are familiar.