

THE CRAFTSMAN;

AND

CANADIAN MASONIC RECORD.

Bro. J. J. MASON,
Publisher

}

'The Queen and the Craft.'

}

\$1.50 Per Annum,
in advance.

VOL. VI.

HAMILTON, ONT., JUNE, 1872.

No. 9.

THE DOCTOR'S STORY.

It was a little past a stormy midnight in December, 184—, that I retired, after some forty hours of arduous professional toil. An epidemic of the most fearful character was devastating the beautiful village of K—, where I then resided. The tender child, the delicate woman, the robust man—it seemed to make little difference who were attacked by the subtle disease; a few hours and all was over.

The history of that terrible pestilence, I gave to the professional world soon after it had ceased its ravages. For a long time seeming to baffle all medical skill, those who were attended and those who were not, alike passed into the silent land amid suffering unutterable. We were almost happy to see even our own loved ones die to escape the agonies of "the spotted death," as it was shudderingly called. Anon—the disease lost its terrible energy—a few were saved or spared; then many, then all recovered. But to this day, few then living in K— can speak of the dark hours of that December, without a whitened lip and trembling voice.

Benumbed with cold, and harrassed with both mental and physical fatigue, I sought my bed for a few hours' repose. But within an hour after, came the dreaded "alarm at the door," and wearily and with many maledictions at my own choice of a profession which exposed me to such hardships, I went out again into the storm. Miles and miles away, through forest and over prairie where the wind swept coldly and remorselessly, I followed my conductor until we finally arrived at his home; and such a home! A log house, in the middle of a clearing of some fifteen or twenty acres from the heavy timber; without a floor; the roof of poles, bark, and straw; the interstices between the logs roughly chinked with chips and mud; upon the ground a pile of straw, and a few coarse blankets; a fireplace with its crane, and a few of the simplest cooking utensils; no crockery, or chairs or tables, save rough blocks cut from the neighboring trees. Suffice it to say, that in all my experience in new country, I had never seen such evidence of utter destitution. And yet, here and there were little relics which convinced me that culture, refinement, and "better days" had been known.— Everything was scrupulously neat; the very arrangement of the blocks