

Our Contributors.

THE GOOD TIMES AHEAD.

BY KNIXONIAN

Certain classes of people in this country are much in the habit of praising what they call the good old times. By the good old times most of them mean the early days when the settlers were few and poor, when there was little competition, and they themselves had things pretty much their own way. Almost any man thinks the times are good when he can do as he pleases. The following are fair representatives of the classes who often speak of the good old times and we may imagine each one of them indulging in a soliloquy.

THE SOLILOQUY OF THE REV. MR. LOVEPOWER.
In the good old times Dr. Dry as dust and I had things all our own way in this Presbytery. We did just as we pleased. We sent the probationers around as we thought proper, knocked the students from pillar to post, and no one dared to ask us any questions. We, that is, the Doctor and I, regulated the calling of ministers in these good old times. We told congregations the minister they should call, and if they did not call him we took good care they got no one else. By sending our own man at the right time, keeping others back, and various other innocent little expedients, we usually succeeded in getting our man settled. These were the good old times.

In these good old times a minister was a distinguished man whether he could preach or not. When the Doctor and I made a tour through the new settlements we made a sensation. The settlers stopped working to look at us, and their wives killed the spring chickens for our personal benefit. It was something to be a minister in these good old times.

Ah me, how everything has changed. Impertinent young men have come into the Presbytery from the colleges with their heads full of heresy about the parity of presbyters. We, that is, the Doctor and I, tried to put them on a back seat, but some of them would not go. We told them to tarry at Jericho until their beards grew but they would not tarry. And the people, too, have sadly changed for the worse. They actually insist now on having something to say about the selection of their ministers and the management of congregational affairs. In the good old times we asked them to do nothing but pay the money. In these degenerate days they insist on having something to say about how their money is spent. Worse than all, they clamour for good preaching. We, that is, the Doctor and I, never liked much talk about preaching. We always took the high ground that anything we said was good enough for the people. But ah me, how things have changed since the good old times when the Doctor and I were great men.

THE SOLILOQUY OF MR. LONGPRICE.

In the good old times the stores were far apart. The settlers had no money and we sold on credit at an advance of one hundred per cent. and sometimes even more. When you once got a settler fairly into your books then you had him and often had his farm. In these good old times it was a common thing to pay for a settler's crop in trade. There was no such thing allowed in these days as dodging round from one store to another. In the degenerate modern days the women have contracted an abominable habit called "shopping." They go about from store to store and buy just where they please. No such thing was known in the good old times. People in those happy days had to buy in one store. Competition has ruined the country and destroyed the people. Oh for the time when the people shall be compelled to buy all their stuff in one store, and that store—mine.

THE SOLILOQUY OF MR. TWENTY-PER-CENT.

In the good old days I was the only man in this township that had money to lend. Many of the settlers were poor and when their crops failed they had to come to me for money. I could get compound interest in those good old times. In these modern days a dozen men in the township lend money. Cheap money is the ruin of this country. Alas, alas, the good old days are gone.

THE SOLILOQUY OF J. BREADPILL, M.D.

In the good old days I was the only doctor in this part of the country. People came to me for many miles around and I treated them just as I pleased. I

had the whole practice of the country to myself. Now things have sadly changed. There is a doctor in every village and the people need not come to me unless they wish to do so. I wish there was some way of compelling the people to come to me. I don't like competition. Oh for a year of the good old times when all the sick people were compelled to come to me.

THE SOLILOQUY OF MR. BRIEFLESS.

Twenty-five years ago I was the only lawyer in this town. In these good old times I had all the business to myself and I did it just as I thought proper. No client dared to ask me questions. If a client took any liberties with me I threw up his case and there was no one else to take it. These were the days when it was a pleasure to practise. Now everything has changed. There are lawyers in every town ready to do business for reasonable fees. I sigh for the good old times when there was only one lawyer and I was that one.

TO THE ASSEMBLY AND BACK AGAIN.

BY ONE OF THEM.

I bought my ticket at Myrtle, Canadian Pacific Railway (Ontario and Quebec Division), four stations east of North Toronto, for \$32.50 to Halifax and return, General Assembly rate, via Newport, St. Johnsbury, Vanceboro', Portland (Me.) and St. John, N. B. We were three hours late in starting on account of a collision between a freight train and three cows. The result was sudden death to the cows, and the derailling of the freight train, and the tumbling down into deep embankments of some eight or ten large and heavy laden cars.

Passengers and baggage were then shipped, and we were then spinning along our iron way, rejoicing that the anticipated journey had fairly begun, and that we had before us a solid month of recreation and variety, with no sermons to prepare and nothing to do but enjoy ourselves to our heart's content amid the salubrious air and scenery of the Maritime Provinces. We "struck on" some nice company, too, in our train. We had the Rev. William Burns, of Knox College Endowment Fund fame, who had also a copy of *Knox College Monthly* with him, whose claims he was going to urge on the "old gran' " with whom he came in contact, and on the public generally, in which enterprise it is to be hoped he succeeded beyond his most sanguine expectations. Then we had also the well-known and indefatigable Superintendent of Missions in the North-West—the Rev. Dr. Robertson—who has lately entered the ranks of the D.D.'s, and well did he merit the title from his Alma Mater; for he has laboured with apostolic zeal in carrying the blue-banner of Presbyterianism into the most extreme limit of our great North-West. Then last, but not least, we had the Rev. A. H. Kippen, of Claremont, a gentleman of excellent reputation both in the pulpit as well as out of it. These, along with the writer's wife and three children, who were paying a visit to Aylmer, Quebec, made an interesting company, and time passed away so rapidly that we scarcely realised it until we heard "Smith's Falls Junction, change cars for Mattawa."

Here we had to say a hurried good-bye to dear ones and seek the best accommodation we could under the circumstances.

There were now two additional members of our party. The Rev. William Bennet, of Springville, had joined us at Peterboro'; and here the Rev. Mr. Nixon, of Smith's Falls, made his appearance.

Montreal was reached about ten p.m. All the brethren but the writer were going by the Quebec route, and as they had changed cars at St. Martin's Junction, we were left alone in our glory, and, being too late for the Portland express, had to remain over night in Montreal, where we sought the shelter of the Albion Hotel, and, after a refreshing sleep, were ready for the road next morning. There were three other delegates besides the writer who had selected the Portland route, Rev. Messrs. D. H. and Colin Fletcher and Mr. Percival, of Richmond Hill.

The weather was very favourable for sight-seeing, and, as the train spun along over stream and river, by green fields and sunny meadows, "mountain, loch and glen," one had just reason to be thankful for living in the wonderful nineteenth century, with its splendid discoveries in science and its marvellous advancement in travelling facilities. On the way we

crossed portions of three States of the Union, viz., Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine. We "take in" the wonderful scenery of the White Mountains in New Hampshire, which unfold themselves to the astonished gaze like a magnificent panorama.

Perhaps it may be safely said that, excepting the passes of the Rockies, there is no finer view of picturesque scenery on this continent than is to be seen here. These mountains have well been called "the Switzerland of America." They run west by south nearly across New Hampshire, and have some twenty bold peaks, with deep, narrow gorges, wild valleys, beautiful lakes, lofty cascades and torrents. This is a favourite resort for summer tourists who are found here from all parts of the Union. Here you find the celebrated Mount Washington, 6,285 feet high—the highest summit in New England—with an hotel and observatory on its summit, and a practicable carriage-road as well as railway up its steep declivity. These mountains furnish the headwaters of the Connecticut, Merrimac and Androscoggin rivers. The rocks are ancient metamorphic, with naked granite and gneiss. The Ammonoosack River falls 5,000 feet in thirty miles, which is certainly a natural wonder of no ordinary kind. More wonderful is it that the Androscoggin falls 200 feet in a mile. Bold, lofty and precipitous as these mountains are, they have been overcome by Anglo-Saxon energy and skill. Several lines of railway now traverse them. The Frankenstein trestle is a magnificent achievement of engineering ability, and can only be fully appreciated when one rides over it in a train of cars.

The City of Portland, Maine, is "beautiful for situation and the joy of the whole earth." The famous Old Orchard Beach, the Bonanza of salt-water enthusiasts, is quite contiguous. Portland, the seaport of Maine, is built on an arm of Casco Bay, 105 miles northeast of Boston. It has a very fine harbour, some twenty newspapers and a population of about 50,000 people.

The "spin" from Portland to St. John on the "Flying Yankee" is beautiful. Such cities as Bangor, with its theological seminary, Augusta, the residence of Mr. James G. Blaine, of Presidential fame, Waterville, Brunswick, are hurriedly passed.

For solid comfort, luxury, neatness and the best of taste, commend me to the cities of Maine. For the most exquisite forethought in regard to the comfort of travellers, the Maine Central Railroad, in its coaches waiting rooms, wash rooms, etc., is certainly very praiseworthy. Why do not our Canadian lines follow suit? There is a very necessary part of the station at Montreal that is simply a disgrace to civilization. For wash rooms, our Canadian lines do not provide them, and in this respect they are very far behind our neighbours across the lines.

The city of Halifax, where the General Assembly met, has one of the finest harbours in the world. It is entered from the south, extends sixteen miles north, and ends in Bedford Basin, which is spacious enough to accommodate the navy of England, and affords all the year round safe anchorage to vessels of any size. The city is about two miles long and three-quarters broad, and built on the slope of a hill. The streets are well laid and at right angles; and handsome granite and freestone have superseded wood. There is a dockyard covering fourteen acres, among the finest in the British colonies. The public parks and gardens are unequalled anywhere. The citadel commands a grand view of the harbour and ocean beyond.

The hospitality of the Haligonians is becoming almost proverbial. This year was only a repetition of ten years ago, but even on a larger scale. The good people of the city strove to emulate one another in their attention, both privately and publicly, to the delegates, who will cherish life-long remembrances of the many kindnesses received.

The Assembly was, on the whole, fairly well attended. Still there were many not there who should have been there. This was especially noticeable in the Presbytery of Toronto, who had a very small representation.

The debates were well conducted, lively, interesting and good natured.

Dr. Caven's speech on the Deceased Wife's Sister Question was a masterly array of telling facts, and, one would think, ought to shelve that subject for ever, but it did not, because some will not be convinced, no matter what is advanced. We wonder when this wearisome subject will be dropped?