

Methodist missionary now in a distant field of the Great North-west churches as a precious relic of that first Methodist church in Canada a staff made from one of its timbers.

The little communities scattered through the far-spreading wilderness were cheered by the visits of that heroic band of missionaries who traversed the forests, and forded the streams, and slept oftentimes beneath the broad canopy of heaven. Here came the since famous Nathan Bangs, who records that when he reached the Niagara River to enter Canada, there were but two log-houses where the great city of Buffalo now stands. His written life recounts his strange adventures with enraged and drunken Indians, and still more desperate white traders, with back-slidden Christians in whom he often re-awoke conviction for sin, and with earnest souls to whom he broke with gladness the bread of life. It was a day of unconventional freedom of manners. If the preacher could obtain no lodging-place but the village tavern, he would warn the revellers whom he found there to repent, and flee from the wrath to come. When in a settler's shanty he preached the Word of Life, he was subject to the frequent interruption of some lounging at the door or window—"How know you that?" or the remonstrance from some conscience-stung soul—"What are you driving at me for?"

Here, too, came the venerable Bishop Asbury, then in age and feebleness extreme, but untiring in his zeal for the cause of God. "We crossed the St. Lawrence," writes his companion in travel, "in romantic style. We hired four Indians to paddle us over. They lashed three canoes together [they must have been wooden dug-outs] and put our horses in them—their fore feet in one, their hind feet in another. We were a long time in crossing; it was nearly three miles, and part of the way was rough, especially the rapids." As Mr. Asbury was leading his horse over a bridge of poles, its legs slipped between them, and sank into mud and water. "Away went the saddle-bags; the books and clothes were wet, and the horse was fast. We got a pole under him to pry him out. The roads through the woods, over rocks, down gullies, over stumps, and through the mud, were indescribable. They were enough to jolt a hale bishop to death, let alone a poor infirm old man near the grave. He was very lame from inflammatory rheumatism, but suffered like a martyr. The heat, too, was intolerable."

Yet the venerable bishop made light of his afflictions. "I was weak in body," he wrote, after preaching at the Heck Settlement, "but was greatly helped in speaking. Here is a decent, loving people; my soul is much united to them." After a twelve miles' ride before breakfast, he wrote, "This is one of the finest countries I have ever seen. The timber is of noble size; the crops abundant, on a most fruitful soil. Surely this is a land which God hath blessed."

Crossing from Kingston to Sackett's Harbour in an open boat they were nearly wrecked. "The wind was howling," writes his companion, "and the storm beating upon us. I fixed the canvas over the bishop like a tent to keep off the wind and rain. Then I lay down on the bottom of the boat on some stones placed there for ballast, which I covered with some hay I procured in

Kingston for the horses." They reached land "sick, sore, lame and weary, and hungry." Yet the old bishop set out in a thunder-storm to reach his appointment. Such was the heroic stuff of which the pioneer missionaries of Canada were made.

But we must return to the fortunes of the Heck family, from which we have digressed. Long before Asbury's visit to Canada, the pioneer Methodist, Paul Heck, died at his home at Augusta, in the faith of the Gospel, in his sixty-second year. His more retiring character shines with a milder radiance beside the more fervid zeal of his heroic wife. But his traditional virtues were perpetuated in the pious lives of his children and his children's children after him.

For twelve years longer his true and noble wife waited for the summons to join him in the skies—a "widow indeed," full of faith and good works. In the old homestead, and enjoying the filial love and care of her son, Samuel Heck, she passed the time of her sojourning in calmness and contentment of soul. To her children's children at her knee—a younger Katharine and Reginald Pemberton, a younger Paul and Barbara Heck, and to a younger Blanche and Darius Dunham—she read from her great German Bible the promises that had sustained her life, and never wearied of telling them the wondrous story of God's providence to her and her kinsfolk who had passed on before—how He had brought them across the sea, and kept them amid the perils of the city and the wilderness, and given them a goodly heritage in this fair and fertile land. But chiefly she loved, as she sat in her high-backed arm chair in the cheerful ingle-nook of the broad fire-place, to converse on the deep things of God with the itinerant Methodist missionaries who found beneath the hospitable roof a home in their wanderings, and to learn of the wondrous growth throughout all the frontier settlements of that system of Methodism of which she had providentially been the foundress in the two great countries which divide between them this North American Continent.

At length, like the sun calmly sinking, amid glories which seem like those of paradise, to his rest, so passed away this saint of God and true mother in Israel. She died at the residence of her son, Samuel Heck, in the year 1804, having completed the full tale of three-score years and ten. "Her death," writes Dr. Abel Stevens, in his noble eulogy upon her character; "was befitting her life; her old German Bible, the guide of her youth in Ireland, her resource during the falling away of her people in New York, her inseparable companion in all her wanderings in the wildernesses of Northern New York and Canada, was her oracle and comfort to the last. She was found sitting in her chair dead, with the well-used and endeared volume open on her lap. And thus passed away this devoted, obscure, and unpretentious woman, who so faithfully, yet unconsciously, laid the foundations of one of the grandest ecclesiastical structures of modern ages, and whose name shall shine with ever-increasing brightness as long as the sun and moon endure."

The "Old Blue Church Yard," near Prescott, takes its name from an ancient church, now demolished, which once wore a coat of blue paint. The forest trees which covered this now sacred scene were cleared away by the

hands which have long since ceased from their labour and been laid to rest in the quiet of these peaceful graves. Thither devout men, amid the tears of weeping neighbours and friends, bore the remains of Paul Heck and of Barbara his wife. Here, too, slumbers the dust of the once beautiful Catharine Switzer, who, in her early youth, gave her heart to God and her hand to Philip Embury, and for love's sweet sake braved the perils of the stormy deep and the privations of pioneer life in the New World. Here sleep also, till the resurrection trump awakes them, the bodies of several of the early Palatine Methodists and of many of their descendants, who by their patient toil, their earnest faith, their fervent zeal, have helped to make our country what it is to-day.

The following verses by James B. Kenyon are a fitting tribute to the spot.

Below the whispering pines she lies,
Safe from the busy world's loud roar;
Above her bend the North's pale skies,
The broad St. Lawrence sweeps before.

A humble woman, pure of heart,
She knew no dream of world-wide fame;
Yet in man's love she hath her part,
And countless thousands bless her name.

She sleeps the changeful years away;
Her couch its holy quiet keeps;
And many a pilgrim, day by day,
Turns thither from the world and weeps.

O plenteous tears of grateful love,
Keep green and fresh her lowly bed!
O minstrel birds that brood above,
Sing sweetly o'er the peaceful dead!

Amid the silent sleepers round
She sleeps, nor heeds time's wintry gust;
Tread softly, this is hallowed ground,
And mouldering here lies sacred dust.

Roll on, O world, your noisy way!
Go by, O years, with wrong and wreck!
But till the dawn of God's great day
Shall live the name of Barbara Heck.

As we contemplate the lowly life of this true mother in Israel, and the marvellous results of which she was providentially the initiating cause, we cannot help exclaiming, in devout wonder and thanksgiving, "What hath God wrought!" In the United States and Canada there is at this moment, as the outgrowth of the seed sown in weakness over a century ago, a great Church organization, like a vast banyan tree, overspreading the continent, beneath whose broad canopy ten millions of souls, as members or adherents, or one-fourth the entire population, enrol themselves by the name of Methodists. The solitary testimony of Philip Embury has been succeeded by that of a great army of fifteen thousand local preachers, and nearly as many ordained ministers. Over two hundred Methodist colleges and academies unite in hallowed wedlock the principles of sound learning and vital godliness. Nearly half a hundred newspapers, magazines, and other periodicals, together with a whole library of books of Methodist authorship, scatter broadcast throughout the land the religious teachings of which those lowly Palatines were the first representatives in the New World.

As we dwell with devout gratitude on these hallowed results, we should realize more than ever our obligations to those devout founders of empire and pioneers of religion, the Palatine Methodists of Canada. Reverently let us mention their names, lovingly let us cherish their memory, lightly let us tread their ashes. To them may we well apply the glowing words addressed

in patriotic verse* to the United Empire Loyalists who left their homes and estates, and fared forth into voluntary exile in the unknown wilderness of this then unexplored land—with which eloquent words we close our tale:

Dear were the homes where they were born,
Where slept their honoured dead;
And rich and wide, on every side,
Their fruitful acres spread;
But dearer to their faithful hearts,
Than home and gold and lands,
Were Britain's laws, and Britain's crown,
And Britain's flag of long renown,
And grip of British hands.

With high resolve they looked their last
On home and native land,
And sore they wept o'er those that slept
In honoured graves that must be kept
By grace of stranger's hand.
They looked their last and got them out
Into the wilderness;
The stern old wilderness,

All dark, and rude, and unsubdued.
The savage wilderness,
Where wild beasts howled, and Indians
prowled;

The lonely wilderness,
Where social joys must be forgot,
And budding childhood grow untaught,
Where hopeless hunger might assail
Should autumn's promised fruitage fall;
Where sickness, unrestrained by skill,
Might slay some dear one at its will;
Where they must lay their dead away
Without a man of God to say
The solemn words that Christian men
Have learned to love so well;—but then,
'Twas British wilderness!
Where they might sing "God save the King,"
And live protected by his laws
And loyally uphold his cause;
O, welcome wilderness!

These be thy heroes, Canada!
These men who stood when pressed,
Not in the fevered pulse of strife
When foeman thrusts at foeman's life,
But in that sterner test
When wrong on sumptuous fare is fed,
And right must toil for daily bread,
And men must choose between;
When wrong in lordly mansion lies,
And right must shelter 'neath the skies,
And men must choose between;
When wrong is cheered on every side,
And right is cursed and crucified,
And men must choose between.

"My Lads, Be Honest."

DR LIVINGSTONE, the famous explorer, was descended from the Highlanders; and he said that one of his ancestors one day called his family around him. He was dying; and he had his children around his death-bed. He said, "Now, lads, I have looked all through our history as far back as I can find it, and I have never found a dishonest man in all the line; and I wish you to understand you inherit good blood. You have no excuse for doing wrong. Be honest."

They Saved Themselves.

A SHIP at sea took fire, and it was not known until too late to put the fire out. The poor people saw nothing but to perish, either in the water or in the flames. But soon they saw another ship. They thought it would come and save them. But when it came near the captain saw there was danger of his own ship taking fire, so he sailed away, saved his own passengers, but left the others to perish.

How differently Jesus did. He saw others about to be covered with the floods of ruin. So He came and passed through the flood Himself that He might rescue us. Who should not trust and love Him with the whole heart!

* By the Rev. Leroy Hooker, in the *Canadian Methodist Magazine* for June, 1878.