

Northern Messenger

VOLUME XXXIV., No. 35.

MONTREAL, SEPTEMBER 1, 1899.

30 Cts. Per An. Post-Paid.



KITTEN INEXPERIENCE RESULTING IN A CAT-ASTROPHY.

—'Band of Mercy.'

Rev. S. R. Brown, D.D.

(Rev. Thomas C. Winn, A.M., in the 'Japan Evangelist'.)

All who had the pleasure of an acquaintance with Dr. Brown were unanimous in their high regard for him. Those who knew him intimately loved him. The accounts which appeared in many papers on both sides of the Pacific when his decease was announced bear testimony to the unusual affection which many in both hemispheres had for him.

What better eulogy could be desired than that which was pronounced by the spontaneous lament which arose at the death of Dr. Brown! This good man was born June 16, 1810. A few days later (June 29) the formation of the 'American Board' took place. The mother of the new-born infant was a woman of fervent piety and had long prayed for the lands of the earth which were still in ignorance of the gospel. Learning that organized efforts were to be made

to send messengers of God to those nations, she rapturously took her babe in her arms, and then and there dedicated him to the work of a foreign missionary. Dr. Brown, whether as a boy informed of that dedication or not I do not know, has left on record this statement, which agrees with what the writer has frequently heard him say: 'Somehow I had always, from the time I was able to forecast the future, felt assured it was my destiny in life to acquire a liberal education, to study for the ministry of the gospel, and then to become a missionary to the heathen in some distant land. I contemplated no other course. I desired nothing else.' This decision on his part may have been the result of the influence over him of that mother, for of her he writes in unusual language: 'The memory of my mother has always cleaved to me as a power for good, stimulating to high endeavor and holding me to my work through life. If I have accomplished anything for the cause of God and man, I attribute it mainly to

the mother who bore me, so far as human instrumentality is concerned. She who loved to steal a while away

'From little ones and care,
And spend the hours of setting day
In humble, grateful prayer,'

has always seemed to be holding me by the hand and bidding me go forward in the path of duty with her own courageous and cheerful spirit.'

But as is often the case with boys of noble aspiration, it was most difficult for young Brown to get a start in his most useful career. He 'must go to college,' but how to obtain the means necessary thereto he knew not. His father, a carpenter and house-painter, was too poor to render him any assistance. Indeed, the son's labor along with his father's seemed needed for the humble maintenance of the family. His parents, determined to give their children the best advantages possible, had moved to Monson, Mass., where there was an excellent academy which fitted young men for college. After having finished that school, and being ready to enter college, young Brown was left behind by two or three successive classes, because he had no money to go any further with his education. All this time he talked for the first time with his mother about his future hopes, and received encouragement to try and go on to their highest fulfilment. His father, though desirous of seeing his son carry out his plans, discouraged him, as there seemed to be no way for him to do so. The son promised his father that if he would allow him to try, he would use his first earnings after graduation from college to pay off the mortgage on the little house occupied by the family. But the father thought that that would be a hard promise to keep; he would need all his earnings thereafter to pay his own debts incurred in getting through college! Thus hindered from pursuing his chosen course, he yet thought there was a more excellent way for him than to continue with his father at work as carpenter; so laying aside tools and paint-brush for part of the time, he taught school for two or three seasons. At the close of every such engagement he brought home and presented to his father every dollar of his earnings.

On returning from one of these places where he had been teaching school a glad surprise was awaiting him. A little while before his return his mother had devoted a day to prayer and fasting and spent it in the solitude of the forest. 'With Hannah's faith she made known her request to God. With strong crying and tears the devoted mother besought the Lord for her son, laid the whole case before him; told her poverty and the desire of her heart; and appealed to him whose is the silver and gold, for means to educate her only son, whom she had given to the Lord. Soon after, a letter came from an acquaintance whom she had not seen for many years, announcing that he had selected her son as one of the young men he desired to assist in their education!'

Having the way thus providentially opened before him, the young man went to college, having six and one-quarter cents in