

selves briskly—more especially the one that spoke out so strongly upon the whole question at a late meeting of its supreme court! Meanwhile, the September Record does indicate advance; but we are sorely behind, to our discredit as a Church.

SETTLEMENT IN THE NORTH WEST.

In taking account of the difficulties that hinder the upbuilding of strong congregations in the country parts of the North-West considerable prominence ought to be given to the sparseness of settlements. In many parts of the country half the land is reserved from homesteading by the Government, the colonization or railway companies; of the rest, each settler usually takes as much as the law allows him, viz., 320 acres for homestead and pre-emption. The adjoining odd-numbered section is necessarily vacant, and in this way there is only one settler to each 640 acres—a square mile—and when it is remembered that this settler is in half the cases a bachelor, the contrast is very apparent between what must be called a fully-settled country in the North-West and a fully-settled country in Ontario, for instance, where, as a rule, each 100 acres is represented by a family. In the ranching country of the South-West (High River, McLeod, Lethbridge, Maple Creek, etc.), settlement is still more sparse, and it has not even the regularity that marks the agricultural settlements of the north. This characteristic settlement over the whole country makes it physically impossible to gather together anything but small congregations in country places; and although horses suitable for riding and for light driving are plentiful, and miles are thought but little of, this difficulty must for years make small congregations the rule for the country parts of the West.

HOLIDAYS AMONG THE ISLANDS OF THE ST. LAWRENCE.

BY FIDELIS.

(Concluded.)

But though the canoe camp is only, literally, "a nine days' wonder," the attraction of the islands themselves lasts from early spring till the October gold heralds the dying year. If August can boast neither the tender and varied hues, and the lovely wild flowers that spring scatters in such profusion, or the gorgeous tints of autumn, it is a sort of combination of the deep rich green of midsummer and the first mellow autumnal hues. The late wild roses are occasionally to be seen gleaming out of a tangle of dark green vines on the gray rocks, and the rich masses of the golden rod contrast charmingly with the pale green grays of the lichen-crusts boulders. And the river is lovely at all times—in the misty gray of an August morning, when the islands loom dream-like through a haze, in the blue rippled breeziness of the forenoon, or the calm languor of an afternoon, such as that on which these lines are written, when the quiet waters, seen through the feathery foliage of interlacing sumachs, seem to sleep in a blue-gray haze, and only the solemn tap of the woodpecker, and the shrill hum of the cicada or the grasshopper breaks the murmurous stillness. On such a day, to loose your boat from its moorings, and go lazily drifting from island to island, now past masses of foliage that seem to grow out of the water and bend over again to kiss its limpid clearness, then through quiet bays full of reeds and water-lilies, with walls of the rich toned granitic rock overhanging their perfect calm, or past weather-beaten crags, whose storm-tossed pines, their crests all blown eastward, tell of the heavy western gales that dash the white waves up in sheets of foam on great dark boulders, is a pleasure impossible of anything like adequate expression. The charm of contrasts like these is one of the chief delights of the island scenery, notwithstanding a superficial resemblance. He who calls them monotonous has probably seen them only from the deck of a swiftly passing steamboat, which is not really seeing them at all, since all the beauty of detail is lost, and only the surface sameness attracts the attention. To "see them aright," you must live familiarly among them, and explore them day after day in all kinds of daylight—and moonlight, by all means, and more people do this every summer.

The "Thousand Island Park," at the western end of Wells Island, two or three miles below the canoe camp, is the most popular resort for holiday seekers. Its capacious dock is constantly crowded with the passengers disgorged from the numerous excursion steamers; and the population, just at present, is esti-

mated at about 7,000. Of course a large proportion are transient visitors, remaining a night or two in the handsome Norman Hotel, whose tower, seen afar, commands a magnificent view up and down the river. Others, who wish to make a longer sojourn, find accommodation in boarding houses, or perhaps a spare room in one of the summer cottages of the more permanent residents. These light summer abodes, and almost as comfortable tents, gleam pleasantly out amid the over-arching trees of the shady avenues, and both culinary operations and family meals are often conducted *à fresco* in a primitive patriarchal way, that is in itself a pleasant contrast to ordinary city life. The glimpses you catch of a family enjoying its mid-day or its evening meal under a tent or a spreading beach, of a baby slung in a hammock under the trees, or a sedate *paterfamilias* enjoying his siesta in the same luxurious fashion, are pleasantly suggestive of days of happy and healthful recreation in this pleasant spot. It is, however, rather too public and gregarious a life for those who seek, above all things, the quiet of undisturbed nature, while the more gay and fashionable tourists prefer the greater luxury and style of the large hotels at Alexandria Bay, some eight miles farther down the river. The "Crossman" and the "Thousand Island House" are usually crowded with guests, enjoying the charming views of river and islands from the wide piazzas, or the pleasant boating excursions they can make in the luxurious little skiffs temptingly exposed for hire along the edge of the dock. It is well worth the trouble to climb up to the top of the tall tower of the Thousand Island House, to enjoy the glorious panorama that lies at your feet, when you have surmounted it. Below you stretches the blue island-studded channel of the river, seen in its full width, dotted with little islets, as it flows eastward toward Brockville; while just opposite, the long wooded mass of Wells Island divides the channel, hiding the northern one, while the southern, thickly studded with islands of all shapes and sizes, winds up for miles between Wells Island and the mainland of New York State. Both this and the islands are profusely sprinkled with gaily-painted summer cottages, or country houses, all adorned with piazzas and turrets and boathouses, eminently adapted for the lotos-eating life of a land in which "it seemeth always afternoon." Many of them belong to professors, judges, journalists and manufacturers from New York and other States, some of the largest and handsomest being the summer retreats of wealthy Pennsylvania coal and iron men. The clusters of islands just above and below Alexandria Bay are particularly notable for handsome villas with trim, almost too trim, grounds, gay boathouses and airy bridges. In fact the scene—bridges, villas and pagodas—reminds one vividly of the willow-pattern plate, *minus* the loaded apple trees, and the two plump doves into which the hapless Chinese lovers were metamorphosed in the old story. Hapless lovers probably there are occasionally, even among these Arcadian bowers. As witness a tragic incident, which occurred two years ago, when a swift river steamer ran down a skiff containing a young man and his betrothed, she being instantly drowned, and he being rescued only to become hopelessly insane.

"Fairlyland" is the appropriate name given to one charming cluster of villas on an island, the grounds being so carefully kept and smoothed that it seems scarcely possible that the island could so recently have been a rugged tangle of rocks and vegetation like those which still remain in their primitive wildness. In fact, one gets tired of the perpetual repetition of smart villas in this channel, and it is a relief to sweep round Wells Island and quiet Westminster Park, and find oneself in the middle of "desert islands," as unspoiled in their wild beauty as when the Indian alone paddled his birch-bark canoe among their beechen and cedar water avenues. About Gananoque, near the western extremity of the islands, they are very numerous and richly wooded, and a few days may be very pleasantly spent here, in cruising about and pitching one's tent wherever one feels inclined, seeing some new beauty at every turn. A few homes of summer residents, some of them professors of some of our universities, are scattered among the islands; but they are unobtrusive, and do not mar the natural beauty, with the exception of one large overgrown boathouse, which makes itself unpleasantly conspicuous, breaking the contour of a very pretty island with its heavy rectangular masses,

and spoiling a good deal the otherwise picturesque views up the river from the vicinity of the village.

Summer residents, with the people of Gananoque, occasionally get up illuminations as picturesque and effective as those on the American channel. The last one, a few days ago, was magical in its effect; multitudes of lights gleaming out from island and headland, and village, while Chinese lanterns gleamed like coloured stars amid the dark foliage. Watching the beauty of the sparkling lights, sending streams of quivering light far over the dark river, one could almost have thought it a scene in fairyland, or, at the very least, a night in Venice.

THE WALDENSIAN ORPHANAGE AT TORRE PELICE, ITALY

"He loveth our nation, and he hath built us a synagogue (Luke vii. 5). This is what the elders of the Jews said to our Lord regarding a Gentile—a Roman centurion. The same is true of certain British Christians, and the subject of this article. Not the least active among those who began this good work were a few members of the Society of Friends. There are two societies in Britain—one of ladies and the other of gentlemen—whose object is the support of the Orphanage. In addition to what they have sent it every year, they have sent several sums to the Waldensian Board, which is the administrator of the Orphanage. These have been invested in Government Stocks (*fonds du royaume d'Italie*), and draw interest which covers nearly two-thirds of the expenses of the establishment. The societies referred to have also presented the Orphanage with the beautiful building in which there are now fifty poor orphan girls. Only girls are received. The Orphanage is in the territory of Luserno San Giovanni, about ten minutes' walk from Torre Pellice, on the way to the beautiful valley of Angrogna. The last place is only a few miles distant. As I stated in a former article, it is a famous one in the history of the persecuted Waldenses. The foundation stone of the building was laid in 1856, but the building was not fit for use till 1858.

From 1854 to 1858 may be called the infancy of the Orphanage. At the beginning there were only five or six orphans in it. The first matron was Mme. Negrin, one of Oberlin's spiritual children. Soon after, application was made to M. Germond, Superintendent of the Orphanage of St. Loup (Vaud), for one of his deaconesses. From that time, except during a short interval, the Orphanage was under the management of deaconesses till 1863. In the year just mentioned, Mlle. Sircoulon, from Montbeliard, France, the present matron, entered on the work. To her, under God, the prosperous state of the establishment is owing. When she came, only thirty or thirty-five orphans could be taken in. Since then, owing to gifts, especially that of Mr. Wilson, of the Society of Friends, fifty can be taken in. This is the largest number the house in its present state can accommodate.

Perhaps it would not be expedient to provide for any more at present, though there are always many applications for admission which cannot be granted. Exclusive of the Roman Catholics, the population of the Waldensian Valleys is about 22,000. Only in peculiar cases have children not belonging to the valleys, or those of the brethren in the work of evangelization, been received.

In addition to the fifty orphans there are in the house the matron and her helpers—three in number. The latter, the helpers, were themselves at one time supported in the establishment. The total cost for each is 220 francs and 35 centimes, about \$45. The cost of food alone is about 101 francs, or \$20.

Usually the children brought to the Orphanage are sickly on account of having been neglected when they were very young. The first years of their stay in it are years of restoration. Often children from ten to twelve years of age seem to be only seven or eight. Many would have died if they had not come to the Orphanage. It is only with very great care that they are at last brought into a healthy state. Their bodily, intellectual and moral growth is, therefore, very slow. In the Orphanage health has to be attended to before education.

The children are taught Scripture history, religious truth, French, Italian, elementary arithmetic, the elements of geography and sacred vocal music. A