

Reminiscences of Septuagenarian.

1854—Then and Now—1900.

IN HARNESS.

Early in the prosecution of my duties I had two experiences that were of service to me in my future official life.

The first was in connection with the death of Christina, one of the Livingston family with whom I was boarding.

She was seized with a sudden illness with soon developed into brain fever, and terminated fatally in a few days. Though young, she was a ripe Christian; and her diary found after her decease, revealed a literary taste, and deep spiritual insight and experience. The calm, submissive obedience to the Master's call, by the beloved patient; and the ready concurrence of the entire family to the divine will, kissing the rod and Him that had appointed it, was a lesson to sympathizing neighbors and friend; their demeanor during the distressing sickness and after the bereavement, was an uplifting example how to carry ourselves in season of heavy affliction and deep sorrow. There you could see the "happiness of those whom God chasteneth" and "the blessedness of the man whom the Lord correcteth," though there were sobbings and tears.

My second experience was in Perth on a flying visit to the manse. As in the occasion of my first visit, the minister was preparing to go out, not to the post office, but on pastoral duty. He said "I am in trouble and I wish you would come with me."

A township treasurer had intimated his loss of public funds, which in coming to deliver in town he had dropped on the way. Some were silent, others not content, with a doubtful shaking of the head, wagged their tongues, not only in intimation of a doubt, but of discrediting the story of the loss.

My friend, in connection with this, told me that lately he had lost his church of ficer by death, and that out of respect for his memory and in consideration of the poverty and helplessness of the family, the congregation had agreed to continue the widow in the position. Rumors were afloat, and evidences were not wanting of the free use of money by the family and especially by the oldest boy, and suspicion began to be aroused in connection with the treasurer's loss.

Mr. Duncan was in great trouble on hearing that the treasurer and a constable were at the widow's house with a search warrant, and we proceeded thither just to find the men leaving after a fruitless search though confirmed in the belief that their suspicions were well founded.

I can remember the distressed look of the minister as he tried to address the widow, who was swaying and rocking in her chair in great grief. I was not impressed with the manifestations as was my friend. I could not see the aptness of her ejaculations. Coming away, he said with an element of indignation, "I believe they are perfectly innocent of the charge," and emergin from the house he pointed across the street and said, "there is the boy." It occurred to me that the lad looked no more kindly on the minister's visit than he did on that of the law officers. So without the formality of an introduction, I took the liberty of stating the position of things and in two minutes he said, "the money is in the wood."

Returning to the house, Mr. Duncan told the mother of the confession. She arose from her chair, and with firm step conducted her boy into the bed-room from which they soon emerged with the confession that they had the money. She was not then in a particularly humble frame of mind.

The boy put on his cap, and with his sister followed us out of the town and away to the woods, where from under a huge fallen tree they brought a bag, which gave evidence of having been in the flour barrel and various queer places, seeking in vain for a resting place previous to this, its last resort for concealment.

There we sat down in the beautiful leafy shade of the forest, surrounded by singing birds and playful squirrels and kindred denizens of the woods, with evident wondering curiosity regarding our business; and there in the light of the noonday sun we counted out some four hundred dollars—in more senses than one *fitly* *lure*.

Over fifty dollars were gone—and on enquiry, in scarcely a single instance was it expended on the purchase of a useful article. The foolish mother from time to time had let her boy have about ten dollars to squander in trifles.

The treasurer received the money with almost stoical indifference, only a shade of emotion when he said "The loss of the money did not disturb me much; but the suspicion that I was lying, and that my story was a deception was intolerable."

I think the outcome of the matter was the magistrate's sending them away from the town—so that an opportunity for a family to build up a character and establish themselves in the confidence of the public was thrown away. Had they honestly made known "the find" they would have been adequately remunerated, and their future secured, and thus gladdened, instead of grieving their friends who refused to believe in their guilt till it was forced upon them. Death and bereavement in the one case wrought joy; while ill-gotten money purchased shame and disaster in the other.

A pleasurable feature of my visit was an intimation from my friend to accompany him to Smith's Falls, where he was going to preach preparatory services for Rev. Wm. Aitken, and which renewed the memory of my first visit to this locality. To reach it before from Toro to I had spent about four days.

When residing at Smith's Falls a few days this summer I again was struck with the contrast—the journey can be made in about six hours. What a change the world has undergone in the capability of transit in the century by the invention of steam power!

An aged traveller who, for the transaction of business had to reach a town by stage—a journey that consumed eleven hours at one period of his life—took advantage of railway service, and filled with astonishment at the early announcement of his arrival there, indignantly demanded a rebate on the plea that he was accustomed to get a whole day's ride for less money.

Nor was this state of matters local; it accompanied the march of civilization and progress. A tall Yankee drew himself together after lounging in his seat in one of the fastest trains in the eastern states. Rubbing his eyes as if coming out of a reverie, he addressed his fellow travellers, informing them that he had just been "calkalatin that if steam power increased

as much in the next ten then years as it had in the past, and comparing it with former travel, a p-u-s-on will be in Bosting at least two hours before leaving Philmy-d-lyphy!! Setting geometrical gression aside, the charge is marvellous.

Smith's Falls shared in evidences of advance. From the individual well there arose a primitive system of sewerage and water distribution by small pipes on the surface of the ground. During this summer the corporation have undertaken a stupendous change in these systems at an enormous expense.

The town is situated on solid rock and at an average depth of ten or twelve feet is being placed a new and enlarged system of sewerage and water supply. In wrestling with this undertaking the contractors have to cut down and through by the use of dynamite; and these explosions in the prosecution of the work, occurring at frequent intervals, make even the most prosaic inhabitant to fancy one's self sharing the honors of beleaguered Mafeking.

When walking on the street one hears the warning call of "the whistle" and like everybody else, seeks the nearest shelter from the shower of falling stones that have been shot thirty feet into the air. On the occasion of a heavy discharge windows are shattered wholesale. After a peculiarly powerful explosion that shook the earth, springing from my seat I hurried to the scene, where with others I regained my complacency at the sight of the great rent "the blessed thing" had effected. After all has been endured and completed, Smith's Falls will have under its control, and for its use the vast body of water with which nature has favored it.

I had the honor of observing the 73rd anniversary of the laying of the foundation stone of the Rideau Canal Locks by sailing to Oliver's Ferry on a private launch and returning by the Queen.

NEMO G. D.

Good Temper a Duty.

When it comes to be recognized more generally, as it ought to be, that good temper cannot only be cultivated, but is a Christian duty, and that one has no moral right to inflict gloom and despondency upon the home members of the community, we shall doubtless see a marked change for the better. Doubtless a sunny disposition is natural to some and not to others. But all may acquire this as well as any other virtue, and its possession is one of the strong recommendations of one's religion. There is no reason why one member of the family—say the unselfish mother—should supply all the sunshine for the home.—Watchman.

Advice From High Sources.

The counsel of those who have been successful in life in some way or other ought to be worth much to those just starting out. Here is what some of our great men have said:

James T. Field: "If I were a boy again, I would practice perseverance oftener, and never give up a thing because it is hard or inconvenient to do it."

Dr. Johnson: "It is worth a thousand pounds a year to have the habit of looking on the bright side of things."

Dr. John Todd: "A man who wills can go anywhere and do what he determines to do. We must make ourselves or come to no thing."

Lord Clarendon: "No man is so insignificant as to be sure his example can do no good."