

branches, remain, spring extracts no bud from them, nor does summer clothe even a twig with foliage. All is a barren waste! The trees are not black now, but white, and bleached by sun and rain; and far to the horizon, round and round, nothing is discovered but one vast and apparently boundless forest of the white skeleton trunks of dead leafless trees! That immense tract is doomed to remain barren, perhaps, for ever,—at least for many long years to come. It is avoided by the emigrant,—nay, the very birds and wild beasts seem to have for ever deserted it.—The trees would not, in a country of forest, pay the expense of cutting them down for firewood, even were the chopping process of half-burnt trunks less difficult and disagreeable than it is; while the land has become so scourged by the exuberant crop of various plants which grow up in such soil, when cleared by a fire, as to be comparatively useless in a colony of countless acres yet untouched by the plough of the settler.

Though no such fire as that which devastated Miramichi ever visited any of our colonies before or since, yet partial fires are very common. I saw a very respectable Scotch emigrant in Prince Edward's Island, whose house was suddenly caught by one of those dreadful visitations, and two interesting daughters were burnt alive, before their father, who escaped, could warn them of their danger.

It is impossible to dwell upon such scenes without the thought being suggested to the mind of that last conflagration which is to destroy the world (and thereby, perhaps, to usher in a new heaven and a new earth), even as the old world was destroyed by water. This fact in the future history of our world is very clearly revealed: "The world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished; but the heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire, against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." And again, "The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up!" Many people scoff at this. The coming fire is disbelieved now, as much as the coming

flood was disbelieved in the day of Noah; and so St. Peter foretold when he said, "There shall come scoffers in the last days, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of His coming? or, Where is His promised coming?" But God kept His word to the old world, and all perished save one family.—And equally certain it is, that "the heavens and the earth, by the same word, are kept in store for the perdition of ungodly men." It is true, that centuries may pass without any signs of so awful a judgment, and unbelievers begin to think that God "hath forgotten." But "a day with the Lord is as a thousand years!" and "the Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance?" Let us take advantage of our Lord's goodness! If we repent not, it shall be with us as with the old world,—"we shall all likewise perish. How dreadful is a house on fire!—but we may escape to the house of a neighbour. How dreadful is a city on fire!—but we may flee from it to the mountains, and be safe.—How dreadful is a whole country on fire!—but some river, or the ocean, may afford a place of safety. But a world on fire! the elements melting with fervent heat! the earth and the works therein burned up!—whither shall the impenitent and unbelieving fly? To God? Hear, O sinner, His warnings in time!—"When your fear cometh as a desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you; then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me: for that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord: they would none of my counsel; they despised all my reproof: therefore they shall eat the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices!"—(Prov. i. 27–31.) Shall they fly to Jesus? He also tells them what must be His sentence: "I know you not; depart from me, ye that work iniquity!"

There can be no hope for the impenitent then, but there is hope now. "Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation." "To-day, if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts!" Beware