

III.

Notes and Reminiscences

From the names on the map of 1848 described in the previous chapter, it would appear that Bon Accord comprised an oblong block of about 3000 acres, being lots 7 to 16 of concessions XI., XII. and XIII. A few farms adjoining this block may have been properly included. The term is now often loosely applied to the whole western two-thirds of Upper Nichol, but strictly it should be used only of that section settled by those who came out under the leadership of Mr. Elmslie, chiefly from the neighborhood of Aberdeen.

The name Bon Accord was given to the settlement by the pioneers because that is the motto of Aberdeen. It is found on the armorial bearings of the city. It was an appropriate name of good omen, too, for such a new community, for it signifies, "agreement" "harmony," "good accord." As a French term adopted in Scotland, it is an interesting reminder of the historic fact that France and Scotland were for centuries on very friendly terms, drawn together by hatred of England, their common foe. Many broad Scotch expressions derived from the French remain to us as souvenirs of that long continued intimacy, for example: 'braw,' 'certy,' 'douce,' 'dour,' 'fasb,' 'haggis,' 'pough,' 'tassie,' 'kimmer.'

It was not long before a log school-house was built on Mr Elmslie's land, and he installed as teacher. The task of teaching a few young children was not a congenial one to a man better fitted by temper and attainments for the work of instructing more advanced pupils. Accordingly after a short time he became master successively of Ancaster, Hamilton and Guelph Grammar Schools. While teaching in the Bon Accord School it was not unusual for him to fall asleep, and to slumber on till some of the scholars would rouse him with the request that he would bear their lessons and let them go home.

A circulating library was early formed with gifts of books from those who had brought a good supply with them, a few new ones being added yearly to the extent that the funds permitted. It is safe to say that the proportion of books of fiction was very small. This library was a great boon to the young people, and a debating club, kept up for many years, was an incentive to study. As some of the members were college bred men, the others had to read diligently in order to be able to hold up the side of the argument they happened to be upon. As a result the community had a reputation for intelligence far above that of most similar settlements, a reputation that was well deserved.

One winter much amusement was caused by a series of clever