

use of as a sort of introduction to the forthcoming sketches :

"The subject to which I propose to confine myself is a review of the past. I believe I am the last survivor of a generation now entirely passed away. So far as I know and believe there is no Baptist minister now living in Canada who was in the field when I entered it, or who came upon the stage within several years later. You, dear sir, and your readers, accustomed to contemplate the state of things as they are—the numerous, prosperous churches of intelligent christians, substantial and even elegant church fabrics, a learned and active ministry, Sabbath schools, mission and benevolent societies—neither you nor your readers, can have clear ideas of things as they were,—of the shape of the work the *pioneers* were engaged in: fifty years ago.

The very deep interest which I feel in returning in memory, as I frequently do, to those early days, and living over again those early scenes in company with the beloved, simple-hearted brethren, with whom I was then associated, nearly all of whom are now in heaven, may mislead me with regard to the views your readers would take of a rehearsal of them. From the higher level of the intellectual, social and even religious life of the present day, these things may appear weak and contemptible; yet they were the germs of the present status; and genes, though in comparison with the fully developed organisms they are necessarily obscure and low, are nevertheless generally considered worthy of careful study and attention.

But after all, whether or not your readers will take an interest in this subject will depend upon the manner of treatment. On this account I could wish the work were in abler hands. Nevertheless, for reasons before mentioned, if it is to be done, it must be done by me, as nobody else remains to do it. As to the manner, I do not propose to trouble your readers with dry statistics, or dull detail; but shall endeavor to lead them along the most pleasant paths that can be found through the bush of fifty years ago, and so up to more recent times. I may find it convenient to introduce fictitious names, and possibly on occasions to throw a little fiction into events and scenery, but whatever there may be fictitious, I promise there shall be nothing false. My sole object shall be to draw a picture true to nature—to produce a true image of the times—nothing to extenuate, nor set aught down in malice."

**TORONTO WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION.**—The fourth annual meeting of this Association was held in Shaftesbury Hall on Monday, p.m., the 4th inst, and was in every way a success. Interesting reports were presented of the work in the Boarding House for young women, and of the Hospital, House of Industry, Gaol, and the Mission and Relief Committees.

We can confidently recommend the Boarding House, 19 Duke Street, to any young women coming to the city. It is

under good management, is homelike, clean and comfortable. The Lady Superintendent is kind, and a devoted Christian.

If any of our pastors knowing Baptist young women who purpose coming to Toronto will give them a note to Mrs. R. W. Laird, Miss Buchan, or Miss Mary McCord,—all of whom are Baptists, and active members of the managing committee,—they will be specially cared for by them.

## Correspondence.

A Word for the "Helper," etc.

DEAR EDITOR.—I acknowledge the receipt of No. 1 of the CHRISTIAN HELPER, with which I am well pleased. Its Salutatory breathes the right spirit, and is well written, as all the editorial articles are. The selections are unexceptionally good, and the entire make-up of the Monthly does credit to its managers. I wish it a prosperous career.

The appearance of the HELPER bodes no evil to the *Baptist*. Why should it? You need not be envious of the *Baptist's* success, nor need the *Baptist* be jealous of you. The Canadian field is wide enough for both, and there need be no clashing. Both are working in the same good cause; and as a vessel of lighter draught can sail up streams where vessels of heavier tonnage cannot make any headway, your dollar-paper can, and will, find an entrance where a two-dollar paper could not. Work along in harmony together, and be fellow-helpers of each other in every good word and work. This is my greeting to the CHRISTIAN HELPER, which, I trust, will prove a *helper indeed* to me in my work.

For the kind words you have spoken already I offer you my sincerest thanks. I am just on the eve of starting for the front, and hope ere I return to attend the Western, Elgin, Grand River, Toronto, and Midland Counties Associations. My first tour will be a lengthened and laborious one, but I hope I may have strength given me, equal to my day. That there is need of such a work as I am called to do, admits of no reasonable doubt. Let me give you a few facts, gleaned from the financial returns of 1876, relative to Home Missions. The Western Association last year gave us from 20 churches, \$225.20, while three of the strongest churches with a total membership of 410 gave *nothing* to the cause of Home Missions whatever! The churches in the Elgin Association gave \$238.80, but five of the churches with a total membership of 259, gave *nothing*. In the Grand River Association 28 churches gave \$482.21, while 13 churches with a total membership of 906 persons gave *nothing*! In the Niagara Association, 10 churches gave \$541, and of this sum two of them gave \$435, and the other eight in all \$106, while ten of the churches did *not give one cent*! I have taken my data from the returns of the Treasurer as per Year Book of 1877, and so I might go on; but let this suffice for the pre-

sent. O when will our churches wake up to realise as fully as they should their obligations to Christ and a perishing world, so as lead them to come forward in their might, to sustain our various denominational societies!

Yours faithfully,

THOS. L. DAVIDSON.

GUELPH, May 16, 1877.

## Essay.

### THE IMPORTANCE AND UTILITY OF SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE.

A paper read by the Rev. D. McNeill, Paisley, before the Alumni Society of the Canadian Literary Institute, Woodstock, April, 16th, 1877.

(Continued from page 7.)

The origin of creation implies a number of very important scientific questions. One is the eternity of matter. Is matter eternal? or had it a beginning, and an author? Aristotle, one of the advocates of this theory said, that matter was eternal, but being pressed very strongly by the sentiment of the first verse in Genesis, he admitted that God was the author of it, but that it was co-existent with God. According to this theory, God and matter always existed, but the former caused the latter to come. Just imagine the locomotive, and the railroad to have always existed; but the locomotive causing the railroad which always existed to exist. That theory defeats itself.

The next question is, when was our world created? The old and first position was, that God at the time the Mosaic history begins, created the heavens and the earth in six days, and peopled the earth with creatures, and with men. According to this interpretation of the first chapter of Genesis, neither the earth nor any creature upon it existed until about six thousand years ago. The recent revelations of geological science conflict with this interpretation, and prove by evident marks of the foot-prints of the Creator in the rocks, that the rocks themselves, and also creatures whose fossils are found therein, existed thousands of ages previous to that time. What then will be our next position? Science has already driven us from our first. We must remember that the Bible did not change its relation to science, it is its interpretation that had to shift its ground. Thus, according to the heading of our paper, we see the importance of a more thorough scientific study.

Some, in giving up the first interpretation, have assumed a second which is, that at the beginning the heavens and the earth were created as in the first verse; then an