

Contributed and Selected Articles.

REV. WILLIAM PROUDFOOT.

PROFESSOR OF THEOLOGY ETC., TO THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

Mr. Proudfoot arrived at Quebec, August 27th, 1832, accompanied by Mr. Robertson, to be soon followed by Mr. Christie. These were the first missionaries sent abroad by the United Secession, now the United Presbyterian Church. Previously to this, the Church had undertaken no foreign mission, although ministers had gone abroad on their own responsibility, relying mainly on their own resources, and with the approval of their respective Presbyteries,—those coming to Canada constituting the United Synod of Canada. The year was memorable on account of the alarming prevalence of Asiatic cholera, to which Mr. Robertson fell a victim shortly after reaching Montreal; on account of intense political excitement connected with the Reform Bill in Britain; and on account of the great emigration of industrious, self-reliant, and able men to Canada.

Mr. Proudfoot was by ability, learning, and experience well-qualified to be a pioneer and founder of a mission. He received his education in Arts at the University of Edinburgh, studied Theology under Dr. Lawson, and was licensed by the Presbytery of Edinburgh, in 1812. Being soon called to Leith and to Patrodée, and being willing to go to the more destitute place, he was ordained at Patrodée the following year. There he laboured with so much success and comfort that he declined invitations to more important spheres. Having a good deal of leisure, he opened a private

Classical and Mathematical Academy, which was attended chiefly by the sons of landed proprietors and of military officers. This not only fully occupied his time and enabled him to retain and increase his literary acquirements, but it became an important source of revenue, yielding about £500 sterling per annum. Nineteen years of indefatigable study, preaching, pastoral work, and academic teaching matured his judgment, enriched his mind, and thus qualified him for his special work in Canada. His services were of very great value at a time when nearly all the missionaries were young and inexperienced, and when the mission had to be founded on sound principles amidst the active elements of political and ecclesiastical contention. He could scarcely fail, however, to be an object of jealousy, which is the bane of the Presbyterian Ministry, while it is unknown in the Episcopal Church where graduates of rank are constitutionally fixed, or in the Methodist Church in which the gifts and acquirements of individuals are viewed as common property to be valued and utilized for the good of the whole.

Mr. Proudfoot, first alone and subsequently with Mr. Christie, made a thorough survey of the settled parts of Upper Canada. They found a large and scattered Presbyterian population full of hope and struggling nobly with the difficulties incident to settlement in a new country. This