

to work in foreign lands by showing that as far as the language and climate were concerned they need have no fear. The Doctor has been a missionary himself, and therefore knows whereof he speaks. The annual sermon to the convention was delivered by Dr. Jackson, and those representatives who didn't hear it missed a treat. On the evening of the Sunday following the sessions of the convention the farewell meeting was held in the convocation hall of Queen's College. A three-minute address was given by a delegate from each of the nine colleges represented, in which reference was made to the missionary operations of each college, and to the impressions received from the convention. After a farewell address had been read to Mr. and Mrs. Goforth and Mr. Smith, who are about to go out to China, Mr. Goforth replied in a thoroughly characteristic address, and then the meeting was brought to a close by the students joining hands and singing "Blest be the tie that binds." The next meeting takes place in Cobourg, in November, 1888. Copies of the report of this convention will soon be distributed, and may be obtained at a trifling cost from Mr. Hilton Pedley, at the college.

REMINISCENCES OF HOME MISSIONARY EFFORTS IN CANADA IN THE EARLY TIMES.

Many of the pages that follow were not at first written for the press, but to be read by the writer at an association meeting which he was prevented by circumstances from attending.

There are perhaps few, if any, now amongst us, acquainted with the facts we record, or who possess the facilities for gathering them up.

The writer had not the honour of being connected with our Home Missionary Society from its incipency. His personal knowledge dates back no farther than 1842, and he has documentary statements no further back than 1849. From that time, about thirty-eight years' memory can be refreshed and facts verified by published reports. For the seven years previous to that time he is indebted to his memory, to reflections made in the reports now in his possession, and to conversations held with brethren long since passed away.

The first church of our order that was organized in Ontario was that of Frome, then called *Southwold* after the name of the township. Its history in brief is this: In 1817 Mr. Joseph Silcox, a member of Zion Church, Frome, Somersetshire, England, then under the care of Rev. Timothy East, emigrated to Canada and settled with others in the dense forest about seven miles west of what is now the city of St. Thomas and seventeen miles south of the village of the Forks-of-the-Thames, now the city of London,

which at that time boasted of but *one* log house where whiskey was sold and lodging kept for man and beast. by one McGregor, if ever a stray traveller should find his way so far into the forest. Mr. Silcox with amazing energy attacked the forest, "roughing it in the bush," sleeping for a while on the bark of a tree. His education, however, being in advance of the other settlers, he was employed for some six months as school teacher, boarding among the people who were composed of families of different religious views—American Presbyterians, Dutch Reformed, Baptists and others. About the year 1819 Mr. Silcox succeeded in reconciling these elements and inducing them to form themselves into a church, which they did under the singular name of the "Congregational, Presbyterian, Prince of Peace Society," the first term denoting their independent form of government, the second that it was Calvinistic, like the Presbyterians, whose doctrines were well known and loved, the third term denoted their allegiance to Jesus Christ.

Mr. Silcox, having evinced ability for speaking, was called to take oversight of this church, for church it was. He was set apart to the work by a Mr. Philips and a Mr. Calver, who assisted in forming the society. Under Mr. Silcox's teaching the society grew, and God bore testimony to His own Word. He had preaching stations in three townships—Dunwich, now Iona, Southwold, near to Port Stanley, and Westminster, beside the present locality now called Frome. In 1819, sixty-six years ago, Mr. Silcox preached about this region in log houses and barns, for regular meeting houses there were none—in Dunwich, Southwold, St. Thomas, Dorchester, Westminster, and in Oxford in the house of Squire Ingersoll. The church was composed of fifty-two members, among whom, Mr. Silcox stated, great affection was manifested when they came together. In the latter part of 1821 Mr. Silcox returned to England for his wife and family, after four years' stay in these backwoods, expecting to bring them to the home he had provided in Canada. He remained, however, in England about seven years, securing the education of his elder children, following his vocation as a painter, glazier, etc., and preaching on Sundays in his native village of Corsley.

It was not to be expected that his flock in Canada, thus left without a shepherd, would fail to fall a prey and be scattered. Mr. Silcox who was in correspondence with this church in the wilderness, finally arranged his affairs to return to it, which he did in 1829, bringing with him his wife and family, among which was his boy *William*, then in his fourteenth year, now the aged father of the Rev. E. D. Silcox, of Embro, and Rev. J. B. Silcox, of Winnipeg. Rev. Joseph Silcox found the church at Southwold on return from England much broken up and divided,