

merman was killed in the Des Jardins Canal accident, and after his death, his estate was unexpectedly found to be embarrassed. Had we chosen Fonthill therefore, we should have lost at least \$10,000 of the \$18,000 promised. About the same time, the church edifice of the Brantford Baptist Church was consumed by fire; and nearly all the subscribers on the list which they offered us would have been necessarily withdrawn in order to rebuild a chapel which they *must* have. The Institute buildings therefore would have had to be postponed for years, if not altogether.

Difficulties in the Way.

But deciding where to build the Institute did not end our difficulties, by any means. It rather increased them. We obtained our guarantee of \$16,000 just as the flush times of 1855-56 began to ebb; and the latter part of 1857 and 1858-9 were very hard indeed. The main Institute building, whose foundations were laid in the early part of 1858, was not completed for more than two years—in fact it was never quite completed.

From the early part of 1857 till June, 1860, I had little to do with the affairs of the Institute, being sufficiently occupied with my work in Toronto. I then had little expectation, and no wish to be made Principal of the School.

The Executive Committee at Woodstock struggled and toiled on through those dark years. To show how some of this Executive Committee felt during those days, when the Institute had no money, and scarcely any friends, the late deacon Archibald Burch, who was for some time treasurer, *carried off his own dwelling house in order to carry on the work.* I question whether another man in the denomination would, at that time, when so few had faith in the enterprise, have done so much. This is something to be held in remembrance. In the Spring of 1860 the parties most closely connected with this latest phase of our educational work thought I must give up my pastoral charge and devote my whole time and strength to this new undertaking. This was not what I coveted for myself. After much thought and prayer I accepted the position. At that time I did not expect to take up a permanent residence at Woodstock. I supposed, that in a comparatively few years the theological department would be moved to Toronto, and that I should be moved with it. To this somewhat vague expectation I shall refer more fully at another stage of the historical sketch I am now giving.

The School Opened.

In June, 1860 I moved to Woodstock, and we opened the School the 4th of July following. At that time the building was incomplete. We had only one flat of dormitories finished. Our first beginning was a half term, six weeks. At the end of this short term we had forty pupils on the roll. During the vacation that followed the first term I went out and raised nearly money enough to finish another flat of dormitories. In the Autumn term, up till the Christmas vacation, we had on the teaching staff, Miss Brighton, Miss Vining, Mr. (now Dr.) Stewart and the late Mr. Hankinson, besides myself. There seemed to be a growing interest in the school, and the promise of a large attendance at the beginning of January 1861. We closed the

term in pretty good spirits and looked hopefully to the future. And yet we had no endowment and very few friends.

A Terrible Disaster!

I often think that it is well we cannot see the future. On the eighth of January 1861, (the very day when our new scholars were coming up for examination and classification) our Institute building with nearly all that was in it was reduced to ashes and piles of brick!

How the burning of the Institute still throws its lurid glare over the horizon of the past! Some thought it was a judgment upon us, which would quiet Baptist ambition for ever. Had the Baptists not failed twice, and this was the third and last time;—but God meant for us good, and not evil. On the evening of the day on which the Institute edifice was burned, eighty students came in to join the School. They were billeted in Woodstock families, (who showed much sympathy with us) till the Committee should be able to decide what to do. Hamilton offered us the use of a building, and so did Brantford if we would move. After long and earnest effort, "Woodstock Hotel," (rent free for two years) with all its furniture, was procured for us by citizens of Woodstock, though we had to pay part of the price at which the hotel furniture was valued. It was proposed to assess the town for \$600, for our benefit, but this we refused, and paid the money ourselves. The Institute building was burned on Tuesday, and classes were reciting on Friday in the old Hotel!

Still there was not a ray of light showing us where we were to get another building. After paying out the whole insurance we had on the building, we were more than \$6,000 in debt.

How the Fire Warned the Denomination.

Before the end of the week on which the fire occurred, the Hon. W. McMaster wrote saying that he would contribute \$4,000 toward a new building. This clearly pointed out to the Trustees that they should make a vigorous effort to build again. From all quarters expressions of sympathy poured in. One minister, now in a better world, rode up on the day after the calamity, and told us, "To be of good cheer; he was sure we were destined to have a good School here, else the Devil would not be so mad at us!" The Trustees met, and resolved to raise \$20,000, in the form of promissory notes, the notes to be binding, only on condition that the whole \$20,000 were actually pledged before July following. I was appointed chief solicitor, along the main thoroughfares, (for I could not be spared from my classes) and Mr., now Dr. Peddie, who was then a student in Madison University was engaged to canvass the churches off the chief lines of travel. For the love he bore to his native land, (and I think he still loves Canada) he was willing to undertake this arduous, and not over pleasant work. He raised about \$4,000 in the country churches. The rest of the canvassing was done by myself and volunteers. In about fourteen weeks from the commencement of our agitation, we had \$21,600 pledged. The fire had warmed up the whole country! Canadian Baptists before the fire, and Canadian Baptists after the fire, were entirely different people! While the new building, larger and better than the one which

was consumed is in process of erection, it may be proper to mention some other features in our educational plan.

Straitened Circumstances.

When we commenced in Woodstock, we not only had no endowment, but the Institute was in debt. We not only had scarcely any books, but we had scarcely any educational facilities of any kind. Everything had to be procured—the most essential books of reference, black boards, maps, &c., &c. In the Theological department, my own library was the constant and almost only resource of the students. This being our condition, we could scarcely ask for money to procure such necessary implements of our work, and money to pay the salary of the Theological teacher, and to aid poor students besides. Again, we did not expect that for the first three or four years, before the School became known and appreciated, that the mere tuition fees would pay the salaries of the teachers. To tide over this somewhat unpromising period, a scheme of scholarships, which was adopted with the first plan of the school, was carried into effect. Over one hundred and twenty-five scholarships, at \$80 each, which promised four years instruction in the Institute, and which were payable in four annual instalments, of \$20, were sold. This gave us about \$10,000 to use for teachers' salaries and the like. Then, when we were collecting the money for the new building, we could not very successfully appeal to the churches for money for ministerial education. So that during the first four or five years of the existence of the School, comparatively little was given by the churches for ministerial education; it is since that time that our claims for this object have been more and more pressed upon the churches. Thus for a number of years the theological department leaned chiefly upon the other departments of the Institution.

Our Beneficiary System.

There is another feature of our work which deserves separate and close attention; that is our beneficiary work. In all theological schools, I believe, of every denomination, aid is rendered to poor but deserving students for the ministry. This aid varies both in amount, and in the principle on which it is distributed. In some schools so much money is given yearly, \$100, \$200, or \$250 per annum to each student, and if he requires any more, he must get it in some other way. In other schools they take in students and furnish everything—tuition, books, board, and sometimes even clothing. This beneficiary system has, in the last thirty years, become, especially in the United States, a source of very great perplexity and anxiety. So much money has been given for the education of men who have either left the ministry, or have proved themselves inefficient, that very great dissatisfaction is felt. Many are threatening to give up the practice of aiding students for the ministry at all; but they see that this would be tantamount to giving up the work of education for the ministry altogether. At least, a large majority of those who now devote themselves to the ministry—many of whom turn out to be among our best men—would have to give up the idea of devoting their lives exclusively to preaching Christ.

With us, during the last twelve or thirteen years, our students for the ministry, in all stages of preparation, have averaged from fifty to sixty. At the present time we have seventy-three. Had we aided all who need help as they aid them in