

Obituary Notices.

THE LATE MR. JOHN CRICHTON.

Mr. John Crichton, of Sydenham, died on the 23rd of last December, in the 78th year of his age. He was the son of the late Mr. Thomas Crichton, of Paisley, in Scotland. His father, who occupied a highly respectable position in society, was a man of extensive reading, and of considerable literary taste. He was a member of the Session of the Middle Kirk, under Dr. Rankin, and Session clerk of the High Kirk, of which Dr. Finlay—of whom he published an interesting biography—was pastor. He was also a special favorite of Dr. Burns. The esteem in which the Dr. held him was pleasingly evinced by the affectionate interest which he took in those of his children, whom he met in this country.

The subject of this notice came to Canada in 1820, in company with several families that emigrated from the neighborhood of Paisley. On their arrival they resolved to keep together that they might be mutually a comfort and help to one another. After the usual enquiries and consultations as to whither they should direct their steps, they were led—no doubt by Him “who appoints for us the bounds of our habitation”—to fix upon Caledon as the scene of their future labor and hopes. And as that section of the country was then almost an unbroken wilderness, they had no difficulty in securing lots of land in immediate proximity to each other.

It was an arduous task for a young man like Mr. Crichton, accustomed from his childhood to city life, to face the wilderness of Canada. But Mr. Crichton with much child-like simplicity was endowed with a good share of firmness and fortitude. He felt that he was committed to the undertaking, and well did he go through with it. For though he never became a model farmer, yet by dint of perseverance and hard labor he worked his way to an easy competence, and it seemed to be a luxury to him to share the comforts of his house, with the wayfarer that came in his way. The ministers of the Gospel specially were thrice welcome to his hospitable home. And his piety and intelligence made him so agreeable a companion that those of them who once enjoyed his hospitality, felt inclined when they could to visit him again.

When Mr. Crichton came to Canada, Presbyterian ministers were few and far between, perhaps half a dozen made up of all sorts that could be found in the whole country, west of Kingston. This was felt by our little group of settlers, to be the greatest privation which they experienced. Not that they were not persons going about even in those days calling themselves ministers of the Gospel, but they were alien to the feeling and to all the religious associations of a people who were nursed in the lap of a Church, distinguished for its order and for the general soundness of its teaching. When therefore they noticed the gross errors taught by some of this class, who made them an early visit, it had the effect not of relieving but of deepening the gloom of their spiritual destitution. They resolved however as the best they could do in the circumstances to meet together on Sabbath,—sing the praises of God in the good old Psalms—read the Bible and other good books, and present their supplications to the Hearer of Prayer.

Mr. Crichton took a leading part in these social meetings, for as he was in advance of the rest in point of education and had a supply of suitable books, and was withal a good singer, the chief burden—if burden it can be