

House, its principal object, did send out light, which guided weary and blinded travellers through the troublous waves of life.

It was somewhat of a shock to learn when at Whitby this summer, that the lovely ruins, still called St. Hilda's Abbey, were of a much later date; the wooden buildings, over which the Engle Princess ruled for three and twenty years so wisely and so beneficially, were destroyed by the Danes about 867.

Bede says: The Lady Hild, when thirteen years of age, was baptized by Paulinus (the companion of St. Augustine), and up to the age of thirty-three lived a quiet home life, though always known as "very devout." About this time she contemplated joining her widowed sister, Queen Hereswitha, in a nunnery at Chelles, Gaul. Bishop Aidan, being distressed at the idea of losing "so precious a jewel," persuaded her to stay in her own country and to work amongst the pagans in Northumbria, and the Celtic Church reaped the benefit.

After ruling the then first religious community in England—the Nunnery at Heraten, now Hartlepool—for a few years, St. Hild and her nuns moved to the monastery, which was built upon the cliff 300 feet high, overlooking the Esk running into the North sea. St. Hild's post meant hard work; men and women to be moulded for outlying work all around, buildings to be erected as inmates increased, revenues to be carefully handled, poor and sick to be tended, princes and prelates to be entertained in the guest house, and we hear of an important synod held in 664. King Oswin (St. Hild's relative) presided over this council; he had dedicated the land, in fulfilment of a vow, and he put his infant daughter Ælfleda under St. Hild's care, who was brought up in the abbey, and on the death of St. Hild succeeded her as abbess at the age of twenty-six.

Streoneshalch was the home of much learning. Cædmon, the great Engle monk-poet, was encouraged by "the mother," as the much loved abbess was called by her flock. St. Hild seems to have recognized Cædmon's great gift. His poems helped much in the evangelizing work in those days, when few could read and books were rare. He sang of the Incarnation, the Passion, the Resurrection, and the Ascension

of our Lord; also of the Day of Pentecost, of Heaven, of Hell, and the Judgment Day. Six of the monks who studied at Streoneshalch became bishops. The discipline exercised by the royal and stately abbess was renowned, the study of Holy Scripture was part of the daily routine and "the mother" did as the rest, for the apostle rule was followed—*they had all things common*. St. Hild died joyfully and peacefully in 680, aged sixty-six years.

Though thirteen centuries have passed, fossils dug out of Whitby cliffs, known to geologists as ammonites, are popularly called St. Hilda's snakes, and these stones speak of the efficacy of St. Hilda's prayers, for prayer must have been the secret of her strength and wisdom in her great work.

Sir Walter Scott has perpetuated the legend in words supposed to be a conversation between the nuns of Whitby and those of Lindisfarne:

"They told how in their convent cell
A Saxon princess once did dwell—
The lovely Edelred;
And how of thousand snakes, each one
Was changed into a coil of stone
When holy Hilda prayed;
Themselves within their holy bound,
Their stony folds had often found."

Snakes infested the monastery. The abbess bade all to pray and as she prayed herself the reptiles were turned into stone. The Whitby Town Arms are three of these ammonites.

The bell that announced St. Hilda's death is the earliest notice of the use of a bell in any of the churches in Britain.

Long centuries have rolled 'twixt us and thee,
But in unbroken continuity
Of life, and light, and love, and fellowship
Of saints, we meet to-day and bless His name
Whose kingdom us, like thee would fain extend,
Telling it out that CHRIST is KING.

L.M.K.

Gravenhurst Mission.

REV. W. A. J. BURT, LOCUM TENENS.

There is not a great deal to report from this mission, but what there is I cheerfully send. I entered upon my duties as *locum tenens* on October 1st last, at which date I took up quarters in Gravenhurst parsonage. Two weeks afterwards I moved my family and household effects, and by the end of two more weeks we were comfortably settled, and by November 1st I began my house-to-house visitations.

The following items of work, etc., may be interesting:

ST. JAMES', GRAVENHURST—Sixty-five visits, two baptisms, one funeral, one wedding; a visit from the editor of THE ALGOMA MISSIONARY NEWS, the Rev. Charles Piercy, who was present at our Thursday night service, and gave a very interesting address on the influence of the printing press in matters secular and religious. In the latter respect he very ably pointed out the good results of our diocesan monthly paper, THE ALGOMA MISSIONARY NEWS. Mr. Piercy made arrangements with the Messrs King to collect subscriptions for said paper and increase the number of subscribers where possible.

The Bishop and the Rev. Messrs. Allman and Chilcott have also visited the parsonage, and the last named gentleman was present and preached at our Thursday night service, and on the following Sunday officiated at all the services, while I took his duty at Port Carling. The Rev. Mr. Rounthwaite has also spent a Sunday here, preaching at the morning service.

The Woman's Auxiliary has got down to work, and is now preparing for a sleigh ride and social early in the new year.

A society has been formed and named the Church Girls' Guild. This consists of about fifteen young ladies, whose ages would average about eighteen.

These girls have had their first social. The night proved very unfavourable, as there was a drizzly rain all day and all night. However, considering such bad weather prevailed, the social was quite a success, the sum of \$19.50 being realized. The social was held at the residence of Mr. J. Passmore, two miles out of town. Messrs. King and White very kindly, and with considerable trouble, conveyed the people to and from the social.

ST. JOHN THE DIVINE, NORTHWOOD.—Twelve visits from house to house. Sunday services are maintained fortnightly at this station at three o'clock in the afternoon.

I address the children for half an hour preceding the service. So far the average congregation has been about forty. There are a number of children unbaptized, but the parents, not being Church people, are very careless and indifferent to this sacrament of initiation. Doubtless they look upon it as