

the character of the land has led to the raising of live stock and the produce of the dairy, rather than extensive sowing of grain. There are several factories, as well as mills, throughout the country, and, indeed, the little town of Sherbrooke, with its population of 3000, can boast as great a variety of establishments, if not on as great a scale, as any place of the same size in either province. It would, perhaps, be too much to say, that the Townships, as a whole, are a wealthy district of country: yet, towards the south, the term may be justly applied. There is not much money in circulation, but all the essentials of real wealth, and every comfort of life, are supplied abundantly. The Country, too, is now being further opened up by railroads, which, furnishing, as they do, a ready way of communication with Montreal and Quebec, on one side, and the ocean on the other, cannot fail to increase the available resources of the country.

"Society is still in a backward state, though in many places it may be found of a superior character. Schools are in general provided, in number sufficient to the demand, but the teachers are not of the class that would be required.—The establishment of a Normal School in Montreal would tend much to raise the character of the country teachers. The influence of French Canadian legislation is still felt, and the withering effects of Popish domination are still apparent. In many places, however, there is a marked progression, and the time, we trust, is not far distant, when an enlightened and accomplished society will be found in every township.

"The inhabitants of the Townships cannot fall much short of 100,000; or about one-eighth of the population of Lower Canada. They are of course a mixed population, but less so than that of Upper Canada. The substratum of the whole, if we may so speak, is of American extraction, the descendants of those who, within the last fifty years, have moved into Canada from the States of Maine, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Vermont. The French Canadians bear a small proportion to the whole, and, generally speaking, are confined to distinct localities.—Some few are engaged as labourers with the English-speaking farmers, and a few more are settled around some of the country villages; but usually they are to be found closely clustered together in some back township, under the watchful surveillance of their priests, and carefully protected from all Protestant influence. Immigrants from Britain have, in some places, purchased the cleared farms from the first settlers, and in such instances a British population predominates.

"The character of the people partakes much of the American. In many respects, American habits are well adapted to a new country, and whilst those who came into the country with these habits, still retain them, old country settlers have insensibly, and often unavoidably, adopted them. The enterprising, calculating policy of the New Englander has, however, often been frustrated, and the most adventurous speculators have sought other spheres where their peculiar pushing dispositions might have greater scope for exercise, than it can find in the peaceful woodland retreats of Canada East. The prevalence of British immigration has, however, in many places, given a different shade to the character of the people, and in such places as Inverness, Melbourne and Lingwick, there is still a strong resemblance between the character of the inhabitants and that of their forefathers.

"It is, however, in a spiritual point of view that these townships must appear the most interesting to us; and in this respect I do not know of any field for missionary enterprise more hopeful, yet less known. When we look back on the French seigniories, we recal to mind, with melancholy feelings, the great structures raised for the service of the Man of Sin, and the worship of a woman. We pity the degraded Canadian kept in ignorance and misery, to feed a greedy priesthood. We think of the thousands wander-

ing after the beast, and bowing on the roadside before the black-cross, and feel gratitude to Him who has still left some light to burn that we may see the darkness; and has prevented the same state of natural and moral desolation from spreading over the whole land. Yet even in the Townships may the great cross and stupendous temple be seen, and all along their confines the effect is but too sadly known: the intelligent observer is either led to reject all religion as superstitious and vain, or giving way to his interest and passions, to bow also, and adore what he inwardly despises and abhors.

"The destitution in regard to the means of grace is very great. From the last census we learn, that in the whole district called the Eastern Townships, there are only twenty Episcopal clergymen, including the teachers at Lennoxville. There is one Presbyterian minister, and he is in connection with our Church; six Methodist, seven Congregational, and five Baptist ministers, making in all 39 (say 40) ministers of the Gospel for a population of 100,000; or one man in every 2,500 souls, and those scattered over a wide field of country. It does seem that the stations occupied by the Methodists are not accurately stated; but even allowing that they are three times as numerous as represented, the destitution is still distressing.

"These Townships present a fine field for true missionary labours. The ignorance, on religious subjects, of the native Canadian, whether of American or British origin, with few exceptions, is truly deplorable. There is but little open infidelity. Most acknowledge a God of creation and of providence; but many live as though there were none. There are very many, however, whose doubts about the truth of Christianity are not few in number, nor carefully concealed; and still a larger class is to be found who allow Scripture in general to be true, and yet deny verbal or even any direct inspiration; and associated with them are those who would explain away every reference to a future state of woe, and hold the universal salvation of man. Intimately connected with these universalist and restorationist views is fatalism, a doctrine which many more daring minds have fully embraced. These erroneous views have widely spread, and though not rightly understood, even by those who hold them, have a mighty effect in all departments of life. Attending this sad state of unbelief, or rather as contrasting with it, we often meet with that gross superstition which is the genuine offspring of ignorance. If we were not aware of the tendency natural to the human mind to fix on some system of religion, we could not find any reasonable account for the speed with which the most extravagant opinions spread through the country and find their blinded devotees.

"If these Townships are ever to be brought in (and that, it is certain, will be accomplished) the Church of Christ must act first. Men must go and preach, before the people will believe; and converts must be multiplied before churches can be formed. Any one, then, who might be employed in this field, would find much to encourage and much to discourage him. A ready reception, but not a cordial one. Opposition from many, while others would look on and mock; yet, still a fine opportunity to make the truth known. A minister to succeed well in such a work, would require entire consecration to God, and self-denial in no ordinary degree. He would need, too, great energy and activity, with much love and kindness to those with whom he must come in contact. He would need to be armed and fully equipped against all the shafts of open or disguised infidelity, and "ready to render a reason" for his faith and his hope, and to defend the truth of revelation against all the artful insinuations of the sceptic. The Popish controversy, also, should be fully mastered. There should be a complete knowledge of Church-government, and the questions connected with it.—Next, however, to being able to meet the objec-

tions of infidelity, we would desiderate a clear understanding of the peculiar doctrines of Christianity—salvation by grace, through faith in Christ Jesus—and not only a clear understanding of them, but ability to answer gainsayers, and an aptitude to instruct others in them. For this purpose we must study the word of God. To be mighty in the Scriptures is the best means of serving God in the Gospel, for without the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, the most extensive knowledge of theology as a science, and the most learned dissertations about Christianity, will be utterly unavailing to silence the cavils of the ungolly, or refute the superstitious ignorance of well-meaning but mistaken men."

It was on Wednesday, November 17, I went by steamer to St. Nicholas, a port on the south side of the St. Lawrence, and about ten miles above Quebec. It was in the afternoon we embarked, and of course a few miles only of the land journey could be over-taken that night. My guide was a worthy son of Erin, who, with his sleigh, had been sent down some fifty miles expressly for me, and without any notice of the wishes or expectation of the people, farther than just an order to "bring me up." This is always to me the best proof of a desire to obtain the services of a missionary; and when at all practicable I make it a rule always to comply with hints so broad and so intelligible, and I never yet had cause to repent doing so. We stayed all night at a house of refreshment, nine miles up the country, where the privilege of evening and morning domestic worship was enjoyed. In the surrounding district, however, only three Presbyterian families are to be found, and these at considerable distances from each other. Passing on next day southward, we soon got beyond the range of French Popery, and in the Township of St. Sylvester came into contact with about twenty families, mostly from the north of Ireland. In the house of one of these families (Mr. Woodside's) we made our arrangements for preaching; my guide going on before me to give the due notices as fully and effectively as in the circumstances was practicable. After partaking of the kind hospitality of the worthy family, I was conveyed two miles further to the church of St. Sylvester, and adjoining to which is the house of Mr. and Mrs. Heddle, and their family, originally from Shapinshay in Shetland, but for many years resident partly in Quebec and partly in St. Sylvester.

With this worthy christian family I stopped for the night, and in the afternoon notices were sent round for sermon next day (Friday) at 12. A congregation of about fifty assembled—as large a number as, in the circumstances, could have been expected. The usual services were gone through—a sermon preached, and a congregational meeting for conference thereafter. On Saturday, a similar meeting was held at Mr. Ross's seven or eight miles further on, and in the township of Leeds, and here the number of hearers was about the same. Of the probable amount of a regular congregation in such places, however, it would be wrong to judge from an occasional and transient visit, not duly announced. There is no doubt whatever, that were an acceptable pastor settled in Leeds and St. Sylvester, these two stations would produce good congregations on the Lord's Day, when the pastor could, with perfect ease, supply both. Mr. Ross is father-in-law to our excellent friend Mr. Swinton now at St. Louis de Gonzague, but formerly the catechist and missionary in Leeds, where his labours are remembered with much affection.

My Sabbath services were divided betwixt the two stations in Leeds, one at Lambie's Mills, and the other seven miles distant, and in a school-house at Mr. Reid's. The substantial place of worship at the former was well filled by an attentive and serious looking congregation, of probably more than 200; and from 80 to 100 were assembled in the other place. These four stations of Leeds and St. Sylvester