

Our Contributors.

THE LOST TRIBES.

BY KNOWNIAN.

We do not mean the lost tribes of Israel. Dr. Wild and other specialists are looking after them. We mean the missing Presbyterians that the census enumerators find in the Dominion, but who are not found by the Presbyterian Church.

There are about two hundred thousand of them—not two hundred thousand tribes, but two hundred thousand individual Presbyterians.

The exact figures are 220,000. In round numbers say 230,000.

Allowance must be made for Presbyterians who are not connected with the Presbyterian Church in Canada. American Presbyterians, Kirk men, who did not come into the Union, Covenanters and various other members of the Presbyterian family.

How many are of these? It has been suggested that there may be thirty thousand. We doubt very much if half that number can be found. Probably ten thousand would be a generous estimate, but let the number go at thirty thousand. When the Pan-Presbyterian people are extolling our United Presbyterianism in Toronto next month, no Canadian delegate will care to rise and say that there are thirty thousand Presbyterians in the Dominion who have not come into the United Church. As a matter of fact there is no such number.

But supposing there are thirty thousand Presbyterians in the Dominion outside of the United Church, the question still remains, where are the two hundred thousand that the census enumerators find, but that the Church gives no account of in our statistical returns?

It will not do to say the Government figures are incorrect. They are much more likely to be correct than the Church figures. Dr. Torrance, our highest authority on statistics, says there is every reason to believe that the enumerators are correct. Dr. Cochrane is of the same opinion. Principal Grant alluded to the discrepancy in a speech in the General Assembly, which he certainly would not have done had he considered the census returns untrustworthy. There is nothing to be gained and a good deal may be lost by the ostrich policy of sticking our heads in the sand and ignoring the discrepancy. A much better way is to go down to the roots of the matter and try to remedy the defects in our system of working that permits such a discrepancy to exist. Congregations are made up of people, and two hundred thousand people represent a large number of large congregations. Toronto is an important city, but the number of Presbyterians in the Dominion we know nothing of, or at all events have not counted, is larger by about twenty-five thousand than the entire population of Toronto. It is almost as large as the population of Montreal, our largest city.

Where are the missing two hundred thousand?

Various theories have been sent us to account for the discrepancy. One is that "in all our towns and cities there are very many families that have not, so far, been found by the pastors and office-bearers of our Churches. Presbyterians coming from Britain and other countries are exceedingly slow in many cases in presenting their certificates. They need to be excavated or dug out, as Dr. Chalmers said. The regular pastors are not to blame for this state of affairs. It is simply impossible for them to undertake more than they are doing." The remedy suggested is to have an assistant pastor or Home Missionary connected with such congregations whose principal duty shall be house to house visitation.

This theory no doubt accounts for part of the missing two hundred thousand, and the remedy is practical.

Another theory is that the two hundred thousand is largely composed of single persons who float about our city and town congregations, but are not counted in any. If this theory is correct there is ample work for the Christian Endeavour Society. But is it not part of the duty of Sessions to look after young people? Must the Church confess that its own machinery has broken down, and that part of its work has to be delegated to a society or left undone?

A third explanation is that in many country districts there are "groups" of Presbyterians that neither the Presbyteries nor the Home Mission Committee reaches mainly for the lack of funds. Dr. Robertson and Mr. Findlay should know how much this explanation explains in regard to the Home Mission fields under their care. Surely the number of such groups in our older Presbyteries is few. Can it be possible that Presbyteries meet half-a-dozen times a year and discuss all manner of questions, but never take a survey of their field to see if there are groups of Presbyterians destitute of Gospel ordinances? We rather incline to the opinion that there is not much in the group theory, at least so far as the great Home Mission Presbyteries are concerned. The Home Mission Committee is one of the best business committees in the Church, the mission superintendents know every corner of their districts, and if there were many destitute groups the Church would have heard of them long ago. Of course the Home Mission field reaches from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and census enumerators paid by the Government may go where even Home Missionaries are not to be found, but there are no groups containing Presbyterians equal in number to the population of Montreal. The Home Mission Committee has done its work too well for that.

There is too much reason to fear that the great majority

of the two hundred thousand are lapsed or semi-lapsed Presbyterians, and that they are to be found in nearly every city, town, village and township in the Dominion. They tell the census enumerators that they are Presbyterians, but the Church authorities say: "Oh, they don't belong to us," and hence the discrepancy.

Is there no remedy for this state of things? There is no remedy that will entirely remove the evil, but there is one that might lessen it to a great extent. The remedy is PERSONAL DEALING. Let the minister, the elders, the active workers in the congregation, the Christian Endeavour Society go systematically to work and try to bring lapsed and semi-lapsed Presbyterians to hear the Gospel. One tap root of the difficulty is too much dependence on meetings. The class that the enumerators find, but that the Church does not reach, give meetings a wide berth.

This branch of the question will stand some further discussion.

REMINISCENCES OF STUDENT LIFE IN CANADA FIFTY YEARS AGO, AND THE ORIGIN OF TWO PRESBYTERIAN COLLEGES.

I. QUEEN'S COLLEGE

From the year 1830 the Presbyterian Church several times discussed in its Synod the need of a theological institution in Canada for the training of young men for the Gospel ministry. At the Synod held in July, 1840, instructions were given to Presbyteries to collect funds for the endowment of Queen's College, Kingston. Meantime several young men brought up in Canada had devoted themselves to the service of the Lord in the work of the ministry. Rev. Angus McColl, of Chatham, began his studies in 1835, under the care of the Presbytery of Hamilton, with Dr. Rae, Principal of the Grammar School, a teacher eminent for scholarship and urbanity. Dr. Rae had been appointed by the Synod to take charge of such young men as might wish to study for the ministry. In February, 1838, Mr. McColl was joined by the writer, and in September, 1838, by John McKinnon, late of Carleton Place. Then followed Balmer and Durno, George Bell (now Dr. Bell, Bursar of Queen's College), and Lachlan McPherson, late of Williams. Dr. Tassie, the famous teacher of the High School, Galt, was assistant to Dr. Rae.

There was then but one small Presbyterian Church at Hamilton, St. Andrews, of which Rev. Alexander Gale was pastor. Mr. Gale was a scholarly man and an excellent preacher, but, above all, a most devoted and able pastor. He held several district prayer meetings besides the weekly meeting in the Church, and he got the students to assist him in conducting these. The students also taught in the Sabbath school, under the able superintendency of Mr. James Walker, who has just passed away to his home above. Each teacher had to take his turn in opening the school by prayer. The writer found that a formidable undertaking the first time, being only seventeen; but he resolved to do his duty, however difficult.

The students also divided the city into districts and visited every family in their district, distributing tracts, praying with the sick, and enquiring whether there were children who did not attend any Sabbath school, and, if so, inviting them to attend St. Andrews Sabbath school, or the school of the Church to which the family belonged. The result was that we doubled our Sabbath school in one season, and it thus kept on increasing from year to year. The writer often spoke to boys playing on the streets on Sabbath and invited them to come to the Sabbath school, and gave them tracts. After three years at Hamilton, the writer studied during 1841 under the care of Rev. Wm. Rintoul, of Streetsville, and the teacher of the Grammar School, Mr. Adam Simpson, following up his classical studies. The writer had the great privilege of several times accompanying Mr. Rintoul in his visits to the sick and others, and thus learned to sympathize with people in their trials, and to cheer and guide them to the great Friend of man. He did also similar work to that done at Hamilton. While at Hamilton, the Presbytery regularly held examinations of the students. Towards the end of February, 1842, the writer travelled during thirty-six hours, by open stage, from Toronto to Kingston. The mud roads were frozen, and the wheels of the waggon stuck several times in the deep ruts, and Sir George Simpson, Governor of the Hudson Bay Company, was generally the first to run to the fence to get a rail to pry up the wheels. We travelled on, day and night. I was almost frozen, so that I could scarcely eat, my jaws were so affected by the frost. Such was travelling then in Canada. On 7th March, 1842, Queen's College was opened, the professors being: Principal, Rev. Thomas Liddell, D.D., and Rev. P. C. Campbell, M.A., Professor of Classical Literature, etc. The college began with the following theological students: Angus McColl, John McKinnon, George Bell, Robert Wallace, Thomas Wardrope, William Bain, and John Corbett, the three last not having studied at Hamilton. Then followed Patrick Gray, the late esteemed pastor of Chalmers Church, Kingston; Alexander Wallace, of Huntingdon, Quebec; and Lachlan McPherson. Most of these continued together for three sessions, until the end of April, 1844. This little band of praying students formed a happy brotherhood, very much attached to each other and to their profession, applying themselves closely to their studies, seldom having relaxation, save for a walk together on a Saturday afternoon, more rarely a row in a boat or a drive with a friend. Some times they met for an hour or two of a Friday evening at the

house of some friend for music and genial intercourse, a promotive of elasticity of spirits, health, and happiness. The writer enjoyed very much the interchange of thoughts and feelings on literary, social, and religious topics, and felt that he derived much benefit from them. Young men, during their course of study, need relaxation, and nothing tends more to their education, in the broader sense, than the enjoyment of good, select society, such as will give elevation and expansion to their views, and ease and grace to their manners. The leading families of our Church would confer a great boon on the rising ministry and on the Church and country, if they would kindly and prudently open their houses to at least such students as may be properly introduced to them, and thus assist them in becoming acquainted with cultivated society and with its customs and privileges, as ministers ought, from their education, to be fitted for easy intercourse with all classes of society. Two of the students (George Bell and the writer) established union Sabbath schools, the one on Point Henry, the other at Portsmouth, west of the present penitentiary. The latter, superintended by the writer, was carried on till lately by Professor Mowat.

We also formed and carried on a prayer meeting and distributed religious tracts, and, in short, did very much the same kind of work that is now done by the Y. M. C. A. We also often talked with young men and others about their spiritual interests. Indeed, of all the reminiscences of college life, none are so delightful as those connected with efforts to advance the cause of the Redeemer and the salvation of souls. Such efforts always brought an immediate reward, and left no sense of uneasiness lest precious time had been wasted or not employed as profitably as it might have been. Students might do much good by speaking tenderly and faithfully to their friends, companions, and others whom they meet about the value of the soul, and the nature and necessity of an interest in Christ. Some things pain us in the recollection, this gives unalloyed satisfaction. Young men can often obtain readier access to the minds of others than ministers of the Gospel, their professional character acting as a hindrance in the way. The professors of Queen's College invited the students occasionally to breakfast, dinner, or tea, and endeavoured to combine instruction with recreation. Geological and other cabinets, thrown open at such a time, might be made highly conducive to the profit of the students. Principal Liddell was a kind, genial, fatherly man, to whom the students were much attached. He held frequent examinations on the lectures, and also required essays by the students on the subjects they had gone over. Prof. Campbell was very familiar with the Greek poets, Homer, Æschylus, Euripides, Demosthenes, etc. He examined us in Brown's "Mental Philosophy," Blair's lectures on "Belles Lettres," and we had to write out an epitome of the lectures for examination. Dr. Liddell himself gave us occasional lectures on elocution, especially on reading the Scriptures. He also gave us a course of lectures on "Natural Science," using chiefly "Arnott's Elements of Physics," a subject which the writer found exceedingly interesting. These subjects were in addition to his lectures in theology. Professor Williamson was appointed Professor of Mathematics and Natural Science by the second session. He was both able and amiable, but the writer never studied under him. The writer was appointed successor to Thomas Wardrope (now Dr. Wardrope) to assist Wm. Bain (afterwards Dr. Bain) as teacher of the preparatory school of Queen's College, taking charge of classes in both Classics and English branches, having under their care youths from various Protestant Churches, and from his experience then he has ever been in favour of united education in colleges and public institutions.

Thus, quietly and profitably, did that little band that formed the first class of theological students at Queen's follow up their studies until near the end of April, 1844, when, owing to the disruption of the Church of Scotland in 1843, the relation of most of them to their "Alma Mater" was changed. Six of the seven theological students then attending Queen's College joined the Free Church. But, though constrained by conscience to be "one of the six," the writer never had a personal quarrel with those who differed from him. It seemed to him a matter between himself and the great Head of the Church, and his personal friendship with those who remained continued unbroken, and he was right glad when he was able to shake hands with his old friends over the union so happily effected in 1875.

II.—KNOX COLLEGE

At the end of April, 1844, six of the seven theological students then at Kingston joined the Free Church, which led to the immediate formation of Knox College, Toronto. The event which occasioned this was the disruption of the Church of Scotland on the 18th of May, 1843, an event which has told upon vital Christianity to the ends of the earth. No event since the expulsion of the 2,000 Puritan ministers from the Church of England has been so important in its character and so marked in its influence as that movement, springing, as it did, from the deepest convictions of many of the ablest and most earnest ministers of Scotland that the purity and spirituality of the Church were of more importance than the favour of men, or worldly ease and comfort; yea, that duty to Christ in upholding His crown rights as the only King and Head of His Church, and therefore the purity of the Church and its independence of all state control or interference in its spiritual affairs, is of paramount importance. The self-sacrifice of those ministers who formed the Free Church of Scotland has been owned by the King of Zion, who has