

Bracebridge Mission.

Bracebridge is a rising town in Muskoka, with a scattered population of nearly 1,000 souls, boasting of six dry goods and grocery stores, and a brick block of dwelling houses. It is in the pastoral charge of the Rev. W. Cole, who travels 22 and 24 miles on alternate Sundays, with his horse and gig, over roads which in wet weather are well nigh impassable. He has two out-stations, Gravenhurst and Draper, at each of which places is a log church and a fair congregation of bush farmers and backwoods' settlers. At Bracebridge the church is a frame building with eight small windows and one large one; it is seated with stained wooden benches to accommodate about 125 persons, has a plain pine desk and pulpit and an organ, but no font or communion service. The average congregation is 80 in summer, 30 in winter. The Sunday School is held in the church, and has an attendance of from 50 to 100 scholars; it is greatly in want of a Sunday School library.

In these backwoods' settlements the coming of the winter snow is hailed with pleasure; then there is an end to ploughing one's buggy wheels through the deep mud, or sticking in holes, or bumping over a corduroy road; all is smooth and white, and the sleigh bells jingle, and the rough-coated pony bounds along, and thick furs and buffalo robes keep out the cold; the farmer takes his grain to the grist mill, the lumber merchant hauls his heavy sticks of timber to the saw mill, friends visit friends, and not least among the benefited is the clergyman who, with a stout little pony and a cutter, can now accomplish double the work that he could do in the summer. Mr. Cole speaks of this, and talks of holding more services in "the sleighing time" than he does at present. He thinks also that there are several good openings for extending our work around,—