

BOOK NOTICES.

"The Story of My Life." By the late EGERTON RYERSON, D.D., LL.D. Being Reminiscences of Sixty Years' Public Service in Canada. Edited by J. GEORGE HODGINS, Esq., LL.D. 8vo., pp. 614. Toronto: Wm. Briggs. Price \$3.

This book is one of the most important contributions ever made to the religious and political history of Upper Canada. To write the life of Dr. Ryerson is largely to write that history. No man in Canada ever fought such brave battles for civil and religious liberty as did he; and no man ever played a more prominent part in securing for us the rights and privileges which we now enjoy. No such noble character—both as Christian and patriot—has yet blessed with his life and labours this land.

This volume is a worthy memorial of this noble life. In great part it is an autobiography. Dr. Ryerson has taken us into his confidence, and, as a man with his intimate friends, has told the story of his life. He has told it very simply, with an honest frankness, with a rare humility. It was our fortune to examine with much care the whole series of his diaries, kept during half a century. The very first we opened described his coming to the town of York sixty years ago, and expressed his sense of inability to preach to such an intellectual people as the York Methodists of that day. This was the key to the character of the man. No one of his great abilities, we think, ever had so humble an opinion of himself.

What the reader will prize most of all in this volume is the glimpse we get into the heart of the writer,—the revelation of his filial piety, his firm friendships, his lowliness of spirit before God. Some of these glimpses

are quite *naïve* and touching. The story of his conversion and early religious life are of exceeding interest. "I thenceforth," he says, "had new views, new feelings, new joys, and new strength. I truly delighted in the law of the Lord, and

'Jesus, all the day long, was my joy and my song.'

He thenceforth became a diligent student—toiling, he says, from dawn of day till near eleven at night, so that he had "not even a moment to play the flute." At the same time, he "generally closed the labours of the day by writing a short essay on some religious subject." He had many providential escapes from imminent danger, which are recorded with devout gratitude to God. When appointed a missionary among the Indians at the Credit, he says:—"I became head carpenter, head farmer, as well as Missionary among these interesting people, during the first year of their civilized life. In one of their bark-covered and brush-enclosed wigwams, I ate and slept for some weeks; my bed consisting of a plank, a mat, and a blanket, and a blanket also for my covering; yet I was never more comfortable and happy:—God, the Lord, was the strength of my heart. Maintaining my dignity as a minister, I showed the Indians that I could work and live as they worked and lived."

"On my arrival at the Mission," writes his brother William, describing a visit to the Credit, "I found Egerton about half a mile from the village, stripped to the shirt and pantaloons, clearing land with between twelve and twenty of the little Indian boys, who were all engaged in chopping and picking up the brush."

The following episode of deep interest is mentioned:—"June 7th, 1826.—The first quarterly conference