

Our Contributors.

NOTES OF A WESTERN RAMBLE.

FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.

When I accepted your roving commission for the work in which I am now engaged, I confess I did so with some misgivings as to the result. It was to me like beginning a new life, entering upon a new sphere, or any other simile which comes handy. I think, if memory serves aright, it was the First Napoleon who said there was no such word as fail in his vocabulary. I admire Napoleon's determination, and would emulate it, if I could, but I also remember Waterloo. But again what a wonderful effect the free, fresh air of Heaven has upon the human frame and mind! I had not been three hours out of Toronto when I began again to feel the pleasure of confidence and of strength. The early morning train had deposited me at the pretty little village of

WESTON.

The day was one of "Old Probs'" best October specimens. There was a rural aspect of quiet and contentment to which for some time I had been comparatively a stranger. The ploughboy did not whistle harmonious melodies behind his moving team. That does not seem to be an acquirement of the Canadian agriculturist. Possibly it is because he never hears that rival of his old country compeer, the meadow lark, making Heaven's blue vault peal with thankful music, and attuning the heart and ear of the listener alike to thankfulness and song. But if I missed these charms, my eyes at least were gratified. The tiny cascades of the Humber glistened in the morning sun. Its banks were gorgeous in their leafy covering, or shimmered in emerald green. Nature seemed to have overgrown the modesty of youth, and was shining everywhere resplendent in a charming variety of adornment, even while the passing breeze gave constant reminders that of these she would soon be stripped, and rest a skeleton in her winter's death. Of the village itself there is not a great deal to be said. Were it not for the clang of the blacksmith's anvil, and the slight evidences of life around the corner groceries, it might pass for another "Deserted Village." From such places, it is difficult to find the way. There is nobody of whom the stranger might enquire. But on the other hand, the neat aspect of the houses belie the idea of desertion. Weeds do not find congenial soil in Weston, and everything is neat and trim. Around the outskirts of the village the farmer turns over the mellow soil, and 'is ruddy checked boys gather those excellent esculents which our French neighbours call "apples of the earth," and which we know as the humble potato.

In our peregrinations we pass

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,

a very handsome little edifice, of the Gothic style, erected some three years ago, at a cost of \$5,000. Since there are only five or six families in the village connected with the denomination, the edifice is presumptive evidence of their liberality, and also of the fact that there is a strong body of the faith in the township around. At present the congregation is without a regular pastor, and the flock are looking for a shepherd from among those sent to them each Sunday. The other denominations are well represented, and their places of worship are exceedingly creditable. The village also boasts of a very commodious council chamber and public hall. Impelled by the brief space of time which had elapsed since leaving the city, and forgetting the eight miles traversed,

A PROPHETIC VISION

arose before our eyes as we bade farewell to Weston. Its quiet retirement vanished; the beautiful green of the river banks became clouded with smoke and dust; the waving branches and the glory of the trees became a forest of masts, and tall chimneys vied with each other in destroying the fair beauty of the landscape. Locomotives rumbled here and there, and the jingle of the street car bells proclaimed that Weston had been transformed to west end, that the great city had stretched out her greedy arms and taken her fair little neighbour to herself. But the vision had barely passed when we were jolting over the muddy streets of

BRAMPTON,

and feeling as if we were back to urban life again. This stirring town of 4,000 inhabitants does not look as if it

would ever permit anything to swallow it up, unless it were darkness and mud, of which it has a large share. The latter, however, is but an evidence of its prosperity and the traffic which has made it what it is. We presume the citizens are rather proud of it in front of their stores, as the beautiful lawns, gardens and shrubberies attest the fact that they keep it where it belongs—to business. Outside of the principal business section, which has nothing particular to recommend it, and is disfigured by a dirty creek with a jaw-defying name, a prettier town than Brampton cannot be found. Sallying out, our steps take us past the Presbyterian Church, and we pause with emotions of surprise, admiration and amazement. A handsome Norman-Gothic edifice, built of pale grey stone, surrounded by an ample and well-cut lawn, stands before us. At first sight the building seems to be cruciform in shape, but walking around we find the cross has two ends and that it is built in the form of an **I**. Very commodious sheds for sheltering teams, kept as neat as a new pin, in no way disfigure the rear of the building.

While feasting our eyes, suddenly the deep tones of a powerful organ proclaim that there is an open door somewhere, and the temptation to enter is too strong to be resisted. Doing so, another familiar, if less musical sound, arrests us. The clatter of dishes, and the happy voices of a number of ladies, proclaim the near approach of a tea-meeting, in preparing for all which affairs the gentler sex seem to take so much delight. It did not require much persuasion to induce us to "take it all in." An anniversary tea-meeting in a beautiful church is a much more agreeable way of spending an evening than lounging round an hotel, the principal and attendants of which feel like unjustly condemned criminals, and that every *lectotal* stranger like myself is a self-appointed executioner. We return to the church and tea-meeting. Inside, the building is in keeping with its handsome exterior. The foot of the **I** forms a large Sabbath-school room, with several special class rooms. The seating arrangements and acoustic properties of the church proper are of the most modern construction and design. It has accommodation for nearly 1,000 worshippers. The decorations are modest and quiet, but the pews have been made very commodious and comfortable. Besides the class rooms mentioned, there is a large "kitchen," well supplied with stoves, delf, etc. In the basement, also, the gas is manufactured by which the building is lighted, and that it is well lighted was amply proved during the evening. The organ is a very handsome, two-manual instrument, and organist and choir proved themselves worthy of having such an aid to their services of song. The total cost of church, organ, sheds, etc., was only about \$26,000.

On the tea-meeting proper, time will not permit us to dwell. It was presided over by the venerable senior pastor, Rev. Mr. Pringle. The intellectual pabulum was furnished by Revs. J. M. Cameron, of your city, J. C. Smith, of Guelph, and J. B. Mullin, of Fergus. The latter gentleman furnished the "mustard"—with a good deal of meat too—to the bread of those between whom he was sandwiched. The audience was large and appreciative, and evidently took a warm interest in the whole proceedings. It should be mentioned that the Rev. Mr. Smith had preached the anniversary sermon on the previous day. Altogether the anniversary of Brampton Presbyterian Church was celebrated this year in a becoming and enjoyable manner. Over \$100 was added to the building fund.

Brampton, Oct. 7th.

T. A. A.

THE CHARACTER OF JOSEPH IN THE BOOK OF GENESIS.

MR. EDITOR,—Of all the beautiful characters described in the Bible, none in my opinion is more so than that of Joseph, the son of Jacob. There are some persons who are inclined to decry the value and truths contained in the Pentateuch—the five books of Moses—especially Genesis, which, although in the first chapters thereof, some things appear which are apparently inconsistent with science as now understood, and not easily explained according to our notions of things in the western civilized world, yet these books are full of the most thrilling and beautiful historic pictures—the deepest moral and spiritual truths—the most lovely instances of filial, parental and domestic family life—as well as some of the grandest instances of trust in a living God. To discard them,

or any of them, from that grand old book, our Bible, would be like blotting out of our planetary system some of the bright worlds that are seen in it. In this view I need only refer to the character of Enoch, in Genesis, who walked as a friend with God and was not, because God took him; to the pure and devotional character of Abel, slain by Cain; to the trustful and pious character of Noah, and the wickedness which teemed in the old world. As to the flood of Noah, we must believe that there was such an event, (whether all of its incidents be true or not) because Christ, our Redeemer, who could not speak an untruth, refers to such an event as having taken place. Then the Book of Genesis speaks of the noble character of Abraham—his patriarchal character—his separating himself from a heathen race and from his own friends, and asserting his faith and belief in that Great Jehovah whom we worship, who promised and made a covenant with him that in his seed should all mankind be blessed? We see in him a kind neighbour, a just man, and devoted friend of God, because he was willing at God's call and prepared to sacrifice his only beloved son Isaac, the heir of promise, the beloved of his aged mother and father. Where, in all the profane histories of the world—those of India, China, Persia, Greece or Rome can you find any such instance of a man willing to sacrifice on the funeral pile by fire, his dearly loved and only son? Then we see some noble traits of character in Isaac and Jacob—and the charming instances of their courtship and married life. Throughout the New and Old Testament it is said God spoke to Jacob in dreams.

Now I know it may be said and is said sneeringly, by those who discard these books and even all the Bible, that there are many blots in the characters of some of these great and good men, such as the conduct of Abraham to Abimelech about his wife; the weakness of Noah in yielding to excess in wine; the deceit, cunning and even treachery of Jacob toward Esau, aided by his mother, defects which we find in all men; yet we find in the characters of the Bible patriarchs the most beautiful redeeming features. We find great parental devotion, the worship of one God and the inculcation of moral principles as the rule of life. And then the noble impartiality of the books are seen in the fact that the bad as well as the good traits of the characters of these great men are given. We find no fulsome flattery of any man, no palliation for misconduct, nor falsification of history, but plain unvarnished truth, be it unfavourable or favourable, leaving all to draw their own inferences. Indeed this character pervades all the records of the Old and New Testaments, going so far as to condemn even Moses in some things, and particularly to hold up to condemnation the conduct of David and in his conduct to Uriah, and Solomon for his vanity and worldliness. Then the latter part of the Book of Genesis, where the account is given of the meeting of the aged Jacob with his long lost son Joseph, is the most touching and beautiful in incident and feeling of father and son and brothers contained in any history in the world. All is so natural, life-like and apparently truthful that none can doubt its truth or would wish to blot it out. Where in profane history can you find such words as these: "And Joseph fell upon his father's face and wept upon him and kissed him." All this from a man placed in the palace of the great Pharaoh, in the midst of princes, princesses, luxury and learning, the most so in that ancient world. Behold the noble filial feeling, the grand love of the parent, the gratitude of brothers! What, would I ask, in this heathen court, amid idolatry, kept the stolen Hebrew boy in the faith of his fathers, in the fear of a living God? What made him trample sin under his feet and scorn the tempter, and what made him lay hold of the promise to Abraham? What made him wish that his bones should be carried into the promised land? Can any one tell me this? Can history among heathens show such a thing? We can only account for it by following the finger of God in history. His spirit is seen, although invisible, in all this dealing with Joseph.

I have recently been reading an account in the travels of Sir Samuel Baker in Africa, and Abyssinia, where an account is given of the stealing of a poor Arab boy from his father by camel drivers or merchants of the desert, very much like that of the selling of Joseph by his brothers to the merchants who carried him into Egypt, and its similarity is so striking that I will here mention a few incidents I read in this traveller's book.

Saat was a boy that would do no evil. He was hon-