

Our Contributors.

THE CROAKER FAMILY ON THANKSGIVING DAY.

BY KNOXONIAN.

The Croaker family held a convention on Thanksgiving Day, and gave vent to their pent-up feelings of ingratitude. The connection was well represented, one feature of the meeting being the presence of a large number of ladies, who graced the proceedings by their presence and sweet persuasive voices. Another and most notable feature of the convention was the entire unanimity with which the convention concluded that there is nothing in this country to be thankful for.

Jeremiah Croaker, Esq., was called to the chair (Jeremiah is one of the principal members of the Croaker family), and in opening the convention said they would dispense with devotional exercises as he could not conscientiously ask any one to pray in a country like this. Canada was past praying for. They had nothing to give thanks for, and as for confession, everybody knew that the members of the Croaker connection had nothing to confess, because they never did anything wrong. There were many people in the country who were deplorably wicked—in fact Canadians were all bad except the Croakers. The members of the Croaker connection were just like Lot in Sodom. They were the only righteous people in the land. He would not detain them long with his opening remarks, but he must be allowed to say that everything in Canada was rapidly going to the bad. Business is depressed, the morals of the people are bad, public men are corrupt, our schools are in a wretched state, the churches are crammed with hypocrites, the judges take bribes, the clergy are fattening on the hard earnings of the people, the country is mortgaged, blue ruin reigns triumphant, and Mowat won't go.

This fine peroration was well received by the convention. The members were evidently happy to think that the country is in such a bad condition. It might be remarked in this connection that Jeremiah Croaker has been seeking an office from every Government—Grit and Tory—for the last twenty years, but did not get anything. Of course this has no connection with his speech. It is also known that several other members of the Croaker family always keep their dish held out, so that if anything falls their way they may catch it. They are patriotic people, the Croakers, and most of them would like to sacrifice themselves on the altar of their country by taking a good office.

Mr. Ahitophel Croaker then addressed the convention. He said he knew that the public men of Canada were hopelessly corrupt. He had given counsel to both parties, counsel which, he regretted to say, had not been accepted as it should have been. He did not believe there was an honest politician in Canada. How could they give thanks in a country governed by such bad men? Members of Parliament, municipal councillors, in fact, public men of all kinds were sucking the life-blood out of the country. It was a well-known fact that when a man serves the public for a time in any capacity he always becomes rich. Even municipal men become millionaires. Canada was the worst governed country in the world, and he could not conscientiously give thanks in any such country as this.

In justice to Mr. Ahitophel Croaker it should be stated that at last election he offered himself to both parties as a candidate for any safe constituency. Had his counsel and his person been accepted and a seat given him, the parties would no doubt be better.

Mr. Rusticus Croaker said he wished to call the special attention of the convention to the destitution that prevails in the rural districts. He referred pathetically to the sufferings of farmers in such localities as North and East York, South Ontario, Peel, Halton, Brant, Oxford, Middlesex, Elgin, Waterloo and other counties where destitution prevailed. He doubted much if there was a farmer in all these counties who could afford to pay more than \$200 or \$300 for a carriage horse. The people were reduced to such extremities that it was a rare thing to hear of a farmer's wife paying more than \$20 for a bonnet or \$50 for a silk dress. If any one wished to see the miserable condition of our farmers, let him visit Canada's great fair in Toronto and see the poverty-stricken, ill-clad, hungry crowd that gathers there in search of a soup kitchen and free lunches. The speaker closed a most effective address by drawing a tear-compelling picture of an Ontario farmer who became so reduced in circumstances that he was compelled to sell a thoroughbred calf for \$100.

Mr. Urbane Croaker dwelt chiefly on the sufferings of business men. He frankly admitted all that had been said about the sufferings of farmers but he thought business men suffered more acutely than any other class. Merchants were great sufferers, and he had no language sufficiently strong to paint the agony of the manufacturers who nurse the "infant industries." Look at Galt, look at Woodstock, look at Brantford, look at Hamilton, look at the Montreal mountain and weep.

Mr. J. Prig Croaker said the reason he could not give thanks was because there was no culture in this country. The people were deplorably vulgar and ignorant.

Mr. Dude Croaker said there was no society in this country, and therefore he would not keep Thanksgiving Day.

Mrs. Jeremiah Croaker claimed the privilege of saying a word on behalf of the down-trodden sisterhood of Canada. The married women were slaves and had nothing to be thankful for.

Miss Croaker said she disliked the country because the young men in it were a poor lot. Not that she cared anything for young men of any kind, for she would not take any body, but she thought the young men did not amount to much.

The convention unanimously resolved not to feel thankful.

CANADIAN PRESBYTERIAN HISTORY.

BY H. S. MCCOLLUM, OF ST. CATHARINES.

NIAGARA PRESBYTERY OF UPPER CANADA.

After the death of Rev. Lewis Williams, which occurred September 25, 1822, Rev. D. W. Eastman was again left absolutely alone as a Presbyterian minister in all the Niagara Peninsula, except that Rev. D. H. Goodwillie and Dr. John Russell represented the Associate Reform Synod of North America at Stamford and Port Robinson, and Rev. Thomas Fraser, formerly minister of a Relief congregation at Dalkeith, Scotland, officiated at Niagara, "through three temporary engagements of six months each," and Rev. Robert McGill planted the standard of the Church of Scotland there after July 15, 1829. In 1830 Rev. A. K. Buell came from the Presbytery of Tioga, New York, to St. Catharines, where he organized a church, January 7, 1831, and Rev. Edwards Marsh, also from the State of New York, organized a church at Hamilton, December 25 of the same year. About the same time Rev. Samuel Sessions, who was sent as a missionary to Canada by a society of ladies in Syracuse, N. Y., and Rev. J. W. Goodell, brother of the missionary to Turkey, came upon the field. These four earnest and faithful ministers, in full sympathy with Mr. Eastman, entered into active labours with him for the advancement of Presbyterianism in the large field which he had so long and so faithfully cultivated alone. Early in 1832 Rev. George McClatchey, who had been ordained in the Secession Church of Ireland, also arrived, and commenced work under the same supervision. A letter from Mr. Goodell, under date of January 29, 1833, informs the Rev. Mr. Marsh of the following arrangement for the then current year, viz.: That he (Mr. Goodell) would preach at Gainsborough and Chippewa, that "Mr. Eastman takes the Louth and Pelham Churches," and Mr. McClatchey, the churches at Clinton and Forty-Mile Creek, near Grimsby. This made a force of six ministers, having charge of as many churches, and numerous preaching stations; and the outlook was encouraging.

Naturally, the propriety of the organization of a Presbytery soon began to be discussed, the alternative being to join the Presbytery of York, of the United Synod of Upper Canada, of which Mr. Eastman was a member, and with which Mr. McClatchey united, November 21, 1832. This body was to hold a regular quarterly meeting at Clinton on the third Wednesday of February, 1833, and for some time before that date frequent conferences were held, usually at Clinton, resulting in a decision in which the whole six concurred, that Mr. Buell and Mr. Marsh (Mr. Goodell and Mr. Sessions not having received their transfer certificates) should apply for admission to that Presbytery at the February meeting. The programme was carried out, and the applicants were rejected. The discussion on the application took a wide range, covering all points of real or imaginary differences, including psalmody, revival work, Hopkinsianism, and the propriety of a Presbytery examining ministers who had been ordained by, and presented regular transfer certificates from other Presbyteries. At the close of the debate it was painfully evident that the American ministers could work more successfully in a Presbytery by themselves, and after the rejection of Messrs. Buell and Marsh, Mr. Eastman withdrew from the Presbytery of York, and Mr. McClatchey, though an Irishman, was expected to go out with him, but failed to do so.

May 23, 1824, he was installed by the Presbytery of York at Clinton, and at the next session of the United Synod, June 16 following, "a memorial was drawn up in the name of the Synod, praying for an augmentation of the Government allowance, and that Rev. George McClatchey, of Clinton, and Rev. James Rogers, of Demorestville, may participate in the same."

THE PRESBYTERY ORGANIZED.

In the month of May, 1883, the Presbytery was organized at St. Catharines, presumably at the residence of Elder Oliver Phelps, and was composed of three ministers, viz., Rev. Edward Marsh, of Hamilton; Rev. A. K. Buell, of St. Catharines, and Rev. D. W. Eastman, who was then supplying Louth and Pelham. Mr. Goodell, though having completed a full theological course, had not yet been licensed or ordained, and he and Mr. Sessions were yet without their transfer certificates. Mr. Phelps and probably two or three others were at the organization, as representative elders. Rev. A. K. Buell was the first Moderator, and Rev. Edwards Marsh the first "stated Clerk." The name adopted was the "Niagara Presbytery of Upper Canada," a name suggestive, first, that the new Presbyterian court was to be a Canadian body, although a majority of its ministers must necessarily, for some years at least, come from the United States; and second, that the new Presbytery was not to be organically connected with the "American Presbyterian Church," that body then, as now, having a Presbytery of Niagara of its own just across the Niagara River. It is not strange that many people have had a different impression, but the facts are in harmony with the foregoing suggestions, and a further fact may be added, viz., that Messrs. Buell, Marsh, Sessions and their associates came from "the States" as emigrants "to stay," their purpose being thwarted only by poverty and the disasters of war.

THE SYNOD OF THE MARITIME PROVINCES AND THE JESUIT QUESTION.

MR. EDITOR,—In reading the report of the Synod of the Maritime Provinces I was very much interested in the deliberations of this body on the much-discussed question of the Jesuit Incorporation and Jesuits' Estates Acts. It is not my intention to take up this question, as it has been very profusely sifted through your columns by persons capable of dealing with it. I merely wish to call your attention to some resolutions and amendments proposed at this meeting. As to the one proposed by Dr. Burns, of Halifax, I would say that in my opinion it was the thoughts of a good Presbyterian and also a good Protestant. It was an expression of disapproval on his part of the passage of the Jesuits' Estates Act, and also the incorporating of a society which in my opinion, as in the opinion of many others, bears a name which would be more appropriate to one having in the past a cleaner record than the so-called Society of Jesus.

I wished to speak particularly of the amendment of the Rev. Mr. Sedgwick,—an amendment which I do not think could have been put by a good Presbyterian and a good Protestant. I agree with some of the ministers that the resolution of Dr. Burns was a little late, and would have been better before the passage of the Estates' Act and after the incorporation of the Society. But it was more Presbyterianlike and Protestantlike than the one which was proposed by Mr. Sedgwick. The text of the latter gentleman's amendment was that he considered the claim of the Jesuits a just one, and wondered what the Society had done in the past fifty years that they should be denied incorporation and the privilege of being endowed with public money. In the first place, as there is a law in the Statute Book of the British Empire which forbids any people calling themselves Jesuits to exist in any part of the British domains, and as such a society has not, till two or three years ago, been known since the death of the last "original" Jesuits, how could they have done much—right or wrong—in the last fifty years?

Can a provincial law override a national law so as to incorporate a body which the law of the empire forbids? As to the Pope being a "mere arbitrator," there would be no dispute on that point if the other questions were built upon a firm and just foundation, which I do not think they are. Therefore the parts of Mr. Sedgwick's amendment in regard to the justice of the Jesuit claims and their good character seems to bespeak rather little knowledge of the question, and I think, not a very good Protestant spirit for a minister of his ability. I should like to be enlightened as to their good deeds and just claims if such exist.

H. MARTIN.

Toronto, Oct. 18, 1889.

THE INDORE COLLEGE.

MR. EDITOR,—It is to be hoped that your timely editorial in the issue of September 25th on Higher Education in Central India will not be fruitless. The special request which Mr. Wilkie makes for friends to erect suitable buildings for the college at Indore deserves a little more attention than it seems to be getting. It is to be remembered that the General Assembly has indorsed the movement in the following minute:

"The General Assembly recommends to the liberality of the Church the high school and college work committed to Mr. Wilkie, and trusts that all necessary aid will be given him in his endeavours to raise funds to enable him to procure buildings requisite for the efficient carrying on of his work."

It is to be remembered that this fund is to be raised solely by special subscription, and that the ordinary Foreign Mission Fund is not to be affected by this effort. Hence the appeal must be made specially to the sympathy of individuals whom God has blessed with means. Would it be too much to expect some one or two of our members or one of our wealthy congregations to undertake this responsibility by contributing the amount required, and thereby not only relieve Mr. Wilkie of further anxiety about this matter, but send him back to his field with a light heart and strengthened hands.

Although Mr. Wilkie has been a considerable time in the country, yet it is only since the meeting of Assembly last June that he has felt at liberty to solicit from the Church money for this work. This places him at a great disadvantage now as in a few weeks he must take his departure for his field of labour.

I believe that there is the money required in the possession of our wealthy and liberal members, and also the heart to bestow it if there were only a little thoughtful consideration given to the scheme. Whenever Formosa called for special help for the erection of chapels or colleges, the heart of the Church responded at once. When the appeal comes from Indore, apparently not less urgent, surely we should not be silent. One thing the Church may be assured of, and that is this, that although Mr. Wilkie may be too modest to say much about himself and what he has done, she has no more devoted, earnest, self-denying and energetic servant in the field than he. He has all the faith of a wise enthusiast in higher education on Christian lines as a means at this crisis of reforming India. It will be a shame if through his own retiring modesty the Church fails to respond handsomely to this the only special request of any importance, if I mistake not, that he has made.

A. HENDERSON.

October, 1889.