

the Divine blessing upon the efforts of the Rev. J. Denovan during his collecting tour among the churches of Great Britain. Out of the total receipts of the Treasurer, amounting to \$10,000, more than one-half came through the hands of Bro. Denovan. The finances of the society are said to be at present in a more healthy state than they have ever been since the mission was started. The work of the society in the evangelization of the French-speaking Catholics of Quebec has been steadily carried on with encouraging results. The Roman Catholics are beginning to look with increasing favour upon their Protestant fellow-countrymen; a very good feeling exists; and many conversions have resulted. The committee of the society includes such sound Baptist brethren as Revs. J. L. Campbell and A. H. Munro, with brethren G. B. Muir, J. Coristine, J. Richards, D. K. McLaren, etc.

Contributed Articles.

EARLY MEMORIES.

CONVERSATION THIRD.

Oldham. Good evening good friends. I see you are prompt to keep your appointment, and I beg to proffer you a hearty welcome once more to our little trysting place.

Myself. For your kind welcome we give you hearty thanks, as we do also for the frank and generous manner in which you have hitherto entertained us with your "early memories." The interest we have felt in these narrations has been very great, and we are promising ourselves still greater pleasure from the account you have promised us of the infant churches of that new young land, for we can scarcely realize that it is the same we now inhabit; and the manner in which these institutions were planted and sustained in the midst of so much poverty and ignorance. We could scarcely fail therefore, to keep our appointment, and we are now here to claim that promise.

Student. For my own part, though I expect to be an attentive, and even a delighted hearer of what is to follow, yet I can scarcely promise myself any great increase of interest. Your account of the difficulties you had to meet in your efforts to acquire knowledge, laboring alone in the dark, without teachers, and almost without books, and surrounded by sordid ignorance on every side, has excited my sympathies about to the extent of their capacity; and when I contrast the privations of your youth with our present happy state,—I mean in respect to educational facilities—a state which you cannot but observe, and to which I believe you have contributed, with facilities which bring within easy reach of every lad in the land, who may desire it, and who has abilities for study, a

complete and finished education, I imagine you must feel constant and painful regrets that your lot had not been cast a little further forward upon the calendar of the ages.

Oldham. I thank you for your kind sympathy, for which, perhaps, after all, I have less occasion than you suppose. Perhaps you will be surprised when I assure you that my early memories, notwithstanding your contrast, bring back to me much more pleasant than pain. I must object to your term "sordid ignorance," because that adjective conveys an idea of baseness. There was ignorance enough it is true, but not that sort of ignorance which generally accompanies vice, or which produces it. It was an ignorance which was simply the consequence of the absence of acquired knowledge, but which was nevertheless consistent and consistent with a great amount of native intelligence and sound practical common sense. There was darkness also, in a certain sense, but not in the sense of degradation. No people, in my opinion, were ever inspired with a more noble sense of independence or a more generous self-respect. And as we respected ourselves, so we respected each other; and there was complete mutual confidence and trust. We never locked our front doors nor our stables, nor did our mothers lock their cupboards or their drawers. We had no fear from each other, and strangers seldom visited us. But when, on distant occasions they did so, they were received with a perfect hospitality, which met all their wants; and coming as strangers, they generally left us as friends. Nor was the ignorance of that generation of the kind that produces misery. But on the contrary, I have no doubt that the sum of real happiness enjoyed by those people, young and old, was fully equal, numbers considered, to that which falls to the lot of the present more favored generation. They led lives of toil it is true; but toil, if it is not excessive, is not only tolerable, but productive of happiness, especially when it returns every night laden with its own rewards, or is able to point to the future with a certain hope of improved circumstances and a competence for a peaceful old age. And then friendship, love, and social intercourse, pride, self-respect, and the love of approbation were as active then as now, and were as productive of their appropriate fruit.

The girls of that day, though robed in fabrics spun and dyed, and perhaps woven with their own hands from wool and flax produced from their father's farms, but *glorified* and fitted and trimmed with all the delicacy and taste so natural to women, were as lovely and fascinating in our eyes as the young ladies of the present day, though enveloped in silks and sparkling with jewels, are in yours. Nor were they less worthy; but the young man who was so fortunate as to get one of the best of them for a wife, was safe in the possession not only of a heart welling over with tenderness, purity, and love, but also of a pair of hands trained to useful arts, and a head well instructed in household affairs; in short a *help-meet* for him.

But you are waiting for an account of the religious side of this rude generation. Well, in order that the picture may be as complete as possible, I cannot do better than to pursue the same course I have hitherto followed—take you by the hand and lead you back through two generations, until we meet and

mingle with the people who then lived and acted—fall in with them, and not only observe their course, but also lend a generous sympathy to their objects, their efforts and their hopes. We have several able treatises upon "The Settlement of Upper Canada," and valuable treatises too. The authors have alluded to the religious institutions of the settlers, but only in a general way. We have, also, from time to time, had able communications through the local press upon the early churches and their ministers, but the writers have avoided, (and I have sometimes thought intentionally avoided,) any particular account of the interior life of those churches. There were undoubtedly among them several peculiarities which would now be considered weak, perhaps intolerable, and the last named writers seemed to fear that the mention of them to the enlightened Christians of this generation might reflect discredit upon the fathers, and so they suppressed them. I feel no such fear. I would, by no means, consent to the revival of those peculiarities, and was among the first, I believe, that labored to get them abolished or modified, yet I consider it not only safe, but proper, that they should be known. I hold that the honor of our fathers is perfectly safe. The New Englander is never tired of boasting of the institutions of the pilgrims, or of pointing to the results that have flowed from them. But the pilgrims entered the desert with Christian churches duly organized and well instructed. They brought with them a learned ministry and the means of perpetuating sacred, as well as secular learning. Our early population had been, as it were, by accident, collected together from widely separated places. They brought with them neither church organization, learning nor piety. We had no learned ministry, (indeed to commence with, no ministers at all,) and no means of acquiring learning; and yet I believe, in solid piety, and high Christian morality, a comparison of our fathers with the pilgrims of Plymouth and Salem, by an assessor capable of taking in all the circumstances, would not result unfavourably to the former.

As before mentioned, the old settlements of the province were at first supplied with the gospel and religious ordinances by the Methodists and Baptists only. As early as 1803 or 4, a Baptist church was formed in the township of Charlotteville, a few miles west of the present town of Simcoe.

Up to that time there was no ordained Baptist Minister in Upper Canada. But one of the settlers then just arrived was a young man by the name of Finch. He was a Baptist, and had been licensed to preach by the church in the States, from which he had emigrated. He immediately began to preach in the log houses and in the barns of his new neighbours; nor did he labor in vain in the Lord, since a number of believers, amounting to about thirty, were soon gathered around him. But this good brother, not being ordained, did not consider himself authorized to administer baptism, and a messenger was sent away to the State of Vermont to solicit aid from the brethren there. The Vermont Association promptly sent out two of their ministers in response to this call, viz. Elders L. Covell and O. Warren, who ordained Bro. Finch, assisted him in the organization of the church, and for a time helped him much in