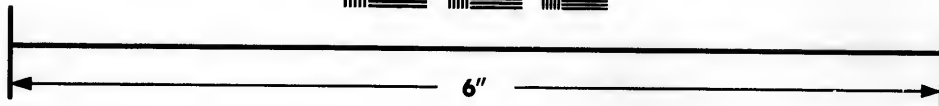
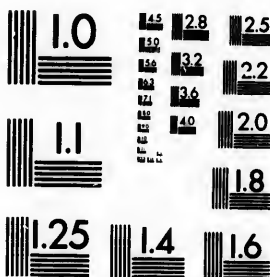


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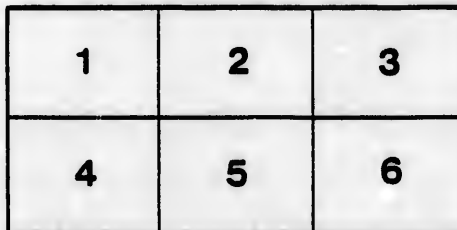
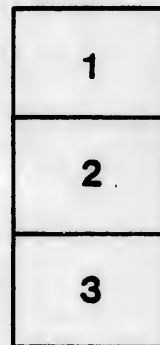
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THE
DOMINION OF CANADA ⁴

IN RELATION TO

THE MOTHER COUNTRY:

AND

THE SPECIAL ADVANTAGES IT PRESENTS

FOR

THE EMIGRATION OF ORPHAN AND OTHER
DESTITUTE CHILDREN.

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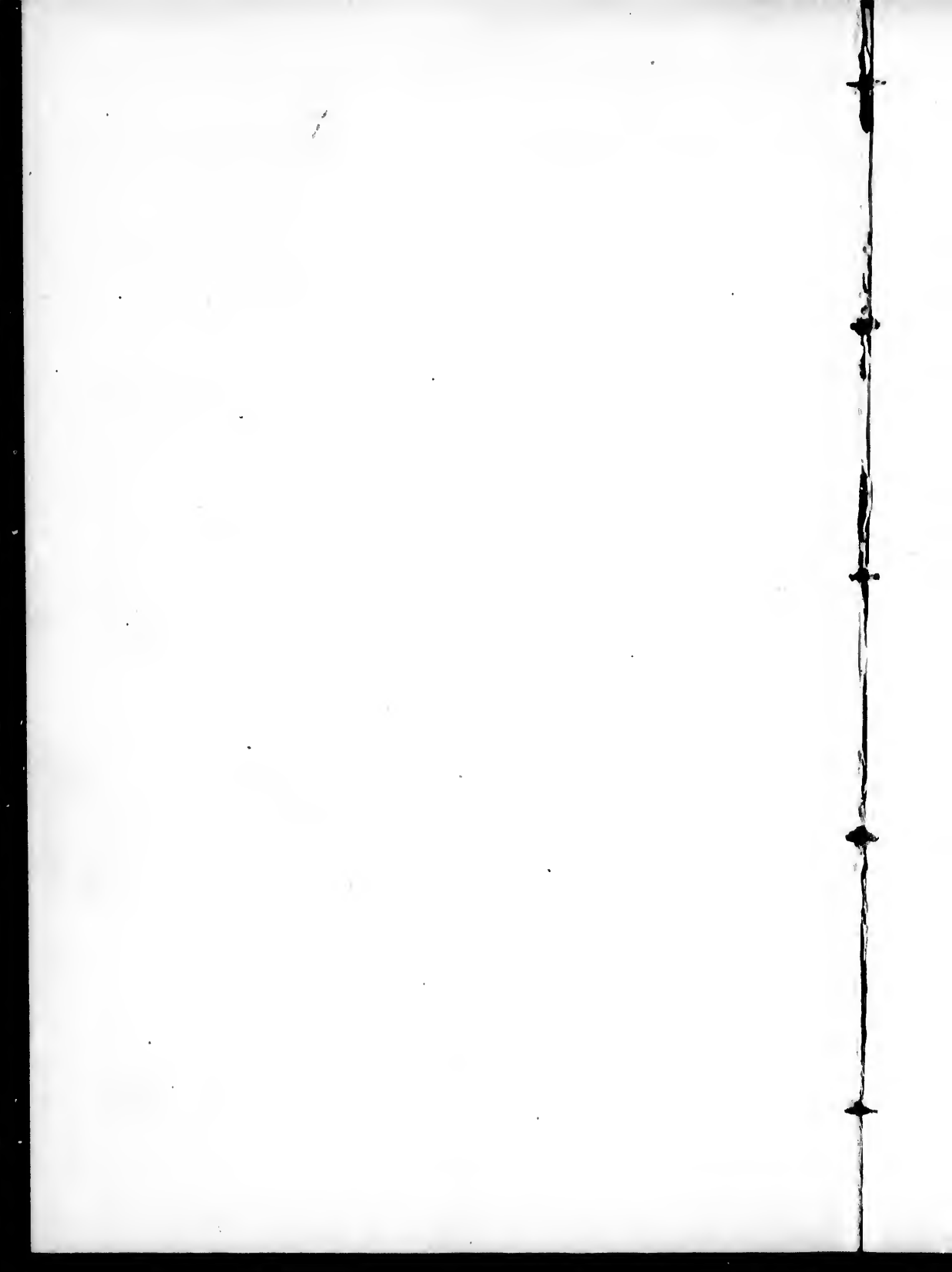
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1875.



THE DOMINION OF CANADA
IN RELATION TO THE MOTHER COUNTRY ;
AND THE
SPECIAL ADVANTAGES IT PRESENTS FOR THE EMIGRATION
OF
ORPHAN AND OTHER DESTITUTE CHILDREN.

At a time when the relations between labour and capital are in anything but a satisfactory state, as proved by the late frequent strikes and locks-out, and when—as stated as a fact by a late writer on the subject of our Pauper population—there are a million of our people at this moment actual Paupers, dependent as a matter of course on the Parish dole, or the misery of private alms, and as many more who are on the verge of pauperism, contriving only by incessant struggles to keep above it, public attention has been continually more and more directed to the growing value of our vast Colonial Empire as an outlet for our overcrowded labour market ; and to the importance of fostering and strengthening the bonds which connect our Colonies with the Mother Country. As an eminent Statesman observed on the occasion of the departure of Lord Dufferin for the Government of Canada, in allusion to the little dependence to be placed on Continental alliances ;—“ Our security lay, not in alliances with the nations of the Continent, honey-combed with secret intrigues, so much as in the free confederation of the English race in every part of the world.” This applies more especially to Canada, the most important of our Colonies in point

of extent, with a population for the most part English, and within little more than a week's sail from our shores.

Whatever may be its political state, Canada, of all our possessions—with the exception of India—must always be the one which will retain the deepest interest for the people of the Mother Country. Descended to us as an heritage from our ancestors at the cost of much blood and treasure, it has grown from a colony into a nation eminently English in feeling and interest, and loyal to the back-bone, destined, we may believe, in God's Providence, to become one of the foremost nations of the Earth. With its boundless capacities as an outlet for the over-population of the Mother land, Canada possesses circumstances exceptionally favourable for the healthy development of the Anglo-Saxon race, having a soil of great fertility, and a climate, upon the whole, perhaps the most healthy and invigorating in the world ; and is, besides, the cheapest and least taxed of any country,—advantages which must give it an importance that none of our minor dependencies can boast of. As a distinguished statesman, Earl Russell, once remarked in Parliament :—“ Canada ought to be the right arm of England,” and it is this feeling which must give Englishmen the deepest interest in whatever may strengthen the bond which connects this country with the Dominion.

That Canada is increasing in enterprise, and prosperity, there can be no doubt, for in every department of life and labour there are unmistakable evidences of growth, and an advance in all the elements of material wealth, while the Canadians are displaying a growing sentiment of nationality, a good omen of the future greatness of the Dominion. All that is wanted is increase of population, where there is “ ample room and verge enough” for hundreds of thousands of industrious hands, and inexhaustible material resources, scarcely yet developed. It will not afford any one a living without labour, but it will give, as it has given, to honest, earnest, persevering toil, a rich and permanent reward.

When, therefore, God has given us such a nation, with every circumstance, opportunity, and appliances for carrying out a

great and noble work (for we cannot suppose our magnificent Colonial Empire has been given us solely for our own aggrandisement), does it not seem like a dereliction of national duty to neglect any means of fulfilling the important mission entrusted to us ?

Emigration, it may be said, is a marked feature in the world's history ; all along the track of time we see traces of such movements—the wandering of families, of clans, and tribes, from one locality to another, creating new homes, and forming new nationalities,—and it would seem, in God's providence, to be the glorious destiny of our race to carry with us in our colonization over so large a portion of the earth, the energy of our free institutions, and our laws, and, above all, the civilizing and vitalizing power of our Protestant Religion ; for wherever Englishmen settle there is an open Bible in the hands of the people, the only security for good government, and civil and religious liberty,—and to which, as an eminent French Divine, Père Hyacinthe, said, England owes its glory, and its greatness.

Whether or not it be desirable that Government should assist in any scheme of emigration to our great Western Dominion, with a view to build up there a power favourable to her honour and interest, that policy has hitherto received little practical encouragement from the State, but is latterly commanding the earnest attention of several of the Colonies themselves.

That the Dominion is following in the footsteps of the Mother Country, and is rapidly becoming a great marine Power, so far at least as her mercantile shipping is concerned, is proved by the fact, stated by a writer on Canadian shipping, Mr. G. R. Kingsmill, that her seamen already number 90,000, and that in the course of a year or two she will only be exceeded by England in her Mercantile Marine. Should the necessity ever arise, England might find in the hardy Canadian fishermen and sailors ready and able defenders of her Wooden and Iron Walls.

It is not, however, the design of the writer to pursue this subject, which may some day be taken up by others better qualified to deal with it,—his chief object in these pages is to show that Canada needs only to be known as she really is, to become a

more favourite field for emigration to those who find it difficult to obtain remunerative employment in the Mother Country,—and that she offers especial advantages as a sure and permanent provision for those numerous destitute children, known as “Street Arabs,” who throng the streets of our great cities, and who are at once a reproach to our civilization, and, when grown men, almost to a certainty, furnish recruits to those “dangerous classes,” one of the most formidable social evils of the present day, for never were those classes more brutally violent than at present.

Among the philanthropic and Christian agencies at work for rescuing and saving as many as possible of these poor friendless, homeless, children, I wish to speak of one which I am sure only requires to be more widely known to receive the warm support it so well deserves. It differs from other agencies in its object and in its plan of operation, as it not only rescues from their degraded condition these poor social waifs, receiving them at once into comfortable homes, but secures them a fair prospect of future advancement in life.

I refer to an Institution, now known to many as the *Home of Industry*, in Commercial Street, Spitalfields, with two Industrial Homes at Hackney, one for boys, and the other for girls, under the management of Miss Macpherson, a name known and honoured by all interested in the cause, ably assisted hitherto by her two sisters and brother-in-law, and a voluntary band of lady workers. To those who have not yet known of the Institution, I would wish to say a few words in explanation of the work being carried on there.

The primary object of Miss Macpherson has been to rescue from their degraded, and perilous condition, those destitute children, wandering homeless, and, to our shame, hitherto so little cared for, in our streets,—to gather them into homes, where they are fed, clothed, and taught, and carefully trained for future life in Canada, provided always their parents, or relations (where they have any) consent to their emigration. The one great endeavour has been to raise them, morally, and socially, by cultivating their feelings, and forming their habits; and to those

who have not witnessed it, it would be difficult to believe the rapid change, not only in appearance, which is striking enough, but in character, and bearing, of these neglected children by the new life, and new influences brought to bear upon them. The prevailing element in the system pursued at the Home is the Scriptural principle of love, under the power of which, and patient womanly kindness, these wild untamed characters are softened and subdued, while they could not be forced into obedience.

This emigration mission, under the management of Miss Macpherson, and her sisters, was commenced in the early part of 1870, and up to the present time upwards of 2,400 of these Children of Neglect, have been carefully trained, and under the guidance of Miss Macpherson herself, or one of her sisters, have been emigrated to Canada, where they have been placed out with farmers, or in country Homes, and, with few exceptions, they are conducting themselves honestly and satisfactorily to their employers, with every prospect of becoming useful and respectable members of society; not a few have saved money, and honestly repaid their passage-money, to help to bring out others. Up to last year upwards of 1,000 dollars had thus been repaid. Several of the boys are already earning from £16 to £19 a-year, and one is preparing for examination for the bar.

With such evidences of the successful result of this work, whatever may be the opinion as to adult emigration as withdrawing labour from the country, no one, I imagine, who concerns himself ever so little with the welfare of these friendless children, will question the duty of stretching forth a helping hand to rescue them from the pauperism, vice, and misery, in which they are growing up, and whose future, at home, would be more likely to add to the crime-market, than to the labour-market of the country. By transplanting them to Canada, a two-fold advantage is gained,—benefit to the old country by relieving it of those whose career, if left to follow out their destiny, can have but one prospect in the future—the workhouse, or the prison—and a great advantage to our most loyal Colony, by the importation of well-trained, industrious young hands, where they become useful

members of society, destined, it may be hoped, to grow up a blessing to their adopted land.

To the young emigrants themselves the gain is unquestionable, both physically and morally. To use the words of an American report on the advantages of juvenile emigration:—"It transplants, so to speak, a slender sickly sapling from a foetid air, and poor stony soil, where it is crowded almost to death, to the fresh breezes, and rich bottoms of the prairies, where it cannot but grow strong and stalwart." In removing them from England it matters not at what distance they are located,—their removal breaks no ties that bind them to home—they suffer none of the distress of parting from everything dear to them, and leave nothing behind them to regret, as every one who has witnessed their happy faces, and joyous shouts on their departure for their Canadian home, can testify. On reaching Canada they are first received into distributing Homes, of which there are three in the Provinces of Quebec, and Ontario, whence they are placed in situations as suitable vacancies are found. But they are not then lost sight of, as they are afterwards visited in their respective situations, and correspondence is kept up with them, and if the conditions made with their employers have not been complied with, or the place otherwise not found suitable, they are taken back until a more suitable home is provided, in which there is no difficulty, as the demand for their services is far greater than the supply.

It would be unreasonable to expect that out of so many there should not be some failures among these young emigrants, the wonder is, considering what they have been, the percentage should be so small as it is. Nor can it be expected that trials and difficulties will not be met with. One of the evils complained of, is the temptation to the boys, when they become useful, and beginning to be of service, to change their situations by the offer of higher wages in the summer months, putting their employers to considerable inconvenience; but this is an evil difficult to guard against where labour is scarce, and the demand great, and the same would occur in any other country similarly circumstanced.

While fully appreciating the value of all the several organiza-

tions and agencies at work for reclaiming these poor wandering, neglected children, I believe that no more ready, practical, efficient, or economical means of effecting the object could be devised than that being carried out at the Institution under the management of Miss Macpherson and her sisters. These young emigrants are, in almost all cases, well cared for by the Canadian farmers,—the youngest they gladly adopt, and bring them up as if belonging to the family. By their early training, the boys gain an intimate knowledge of the peculiar habits, and necessities of Colonial life, which those who go out at a more advanced age, with fixed home-notions, and prejudices, are seldom found to acquire.

For the suppression of crime, and the support of the poor,* vast sums are now appropriated to the maintenance of prisons, reformatories, and workhouses, while it is proved by experience that restrictive laws, and vigilant surveillance, have failed to control, in any great degree, those classes devoted, by habit and profession, to habitual crime. Does it not seem, therefore, like beginning at the right end to cut off at its source the supply to those classes, by rescuing from their perilous condition the large number of vagrant children, not yet actually criminal, but hovering on the verge of criminality, and whom, having once embarked on a criminal course, there is so little hope of reclaiming?

But it will probably be said that, since the establishment of School Boards, the necessity of providing Homes of Refuge for those destitute Children of the Streets is no longer necessary, as they will have been swept into their Schools. The reply to this is, that, notwithstanding the compulsory powers of the School Boards, it would appear by their own admission, that with all their elaborate machinery, there still remains a large margin of

* Pauperism and crime cost England alone more than £15,000,000 every year,—a large percentage of the poor must be able-bodied men and women, and children. Would not some portion of the great sum required for their support be wisely expended in securing homes for them where, without much difficulty, they could support themselves, and increase, in time, the resources of the country they make their home, by their own industry?

these homeless children—the Arab classes—by their wandering habits, unreached by their system. Every one, indeed, who has visited much in the East of London, and observed the swarms of half-naked young creatures left to their own devices in those foul slums which are a disgrace to any civilized country, must be aware that the operations of School Boards, or other agencies—and there are not a few in the East of London—are inadequate to the requirements of the case.

That the necessity of caring for this long neglected class is being generally recognized by the State, is a hopeful sign of the times, and a step in the right direction for reaching the masses; and the new system of National Education, if it fulfils all that is expected of it, must at least reform the deplorable state of ignorance of this juvenile population, though whether the “general instruction,” as it is called, for which the rates are levied and paid, without something deeper and more elevating, and without some prospective hope for the future, will alter their habits and character, is more than questionable. It may make them sharper, and more wily, but not the less dangerous, or more disposed to a life of steady labour, than to a life of “loafing,” wandering, and begging, when turned out into the world at the most dangerous age (from eleven to twelve, as the children of the poorer classes cannot be kept at school beyond that age) free to seek their old haunts, and evil associations,—a cheerless prospect for the poor little Arab, unless some kind hands intervene to save him.

It may well be feared also, that unless something is done to improve the condition of their existence, all the benefits of the amount of education these children may receive in Board Schools, will soon be obliterated by the degrading influence of their home-life, herded (as thousands of families are) in single rooms, surrounded by dirt, drunkenness, and the lowest vice:—“A condition of affairs”—as James Greenwood, the well-known writer on the phases of pauper life, states—“so horrible, that to exaggerate it would be impossible.” The time has come when this gigantic evil must be taken up by Government, as private endeavours are quite unequal to deal with it.

Now, in conclusion, a few more words regarding the work being carried out by Miss Macpherson, and her fellow-labourers. Sound religious instruction, combined with moral training, are made the basis of all their operations; their object being to employ instruction, not as an *end*, but as a *means* of forming and disciplining character; and this is far more the work of Home, than the work of School, where the children of the poor must often be taught *en masse*, and individual training,—the weaning from what is bad, and instilling into them what is good,—the preparation, in fact, of the whole character, for time and eternity, to become either a blessing or a curse to society—is next to impossible. The effect of this Home training on the character of those poor little ones, is most remarkable; and no one can have visited the training Homes at Hackney without being struck with the sight of the happy-looking, obedient, and well-conducted boys, and girls, lately rescued from scenes of vice and misery—some of them the roughest of the rough—and who, in religious knowledge, as well as in ordinary secular teaching, would bear comparison, I venture to say, with children of like age, in many of our elementary schools. What a contrast to their late condition!—half-starved, ignorant, ragged, desolate.

One other important feature in the arrangement of this Institution, as well as in the distributing homes in Canada, is the economy and prudence with which they are conducted. They have no salaried secretary, or expensive staff, only such paid service as is actually necessary; the whole work done by the ladies by whom they are managed,—and most arduous and responsible work it is—being entirely gratuitous. Besides a Refuge for these friendless little ones, the Home in Spitalfields has been the resort of the poor and destitute of every kind, and it would be difficult to name any form of human misery and need which has not been relieved and blessed there.

If, as I trust, I have shown in these pages the great usefulness of this work, and that it would be difficult to point out one more practical, more feasible, and that has been attended with greater success, I venture to hope that all who have at heart the moral and social elevation of these long neglected children, and who

desire to help them to the good homes waiting to receive them on the other side of the Atlantic, will give their hearty sympathy and support to those ladies who, with unflagging zeal, and earnest personal disinterestedness, have been quietly and unostentatiously pursuing the work that has been opened before them—a work truly “of faith and labour of love.”

When it is known that £10 will fit out and pay the passage of one of these Children to Canada, with such a fair start in life as could not be hoped for at home, one is tempted to wish that the means of extending this great and good work could be increased tenfold.

The Homes are always open to inspection, where every information regarding the work may be obtained. Any assistance should be sent to Miss Annie Macpherson, Home of Industry, Commercial Street, Spitalfields.

H. M. BLAIR.

11, Stanhope Place,

March, 1875

APPENDIX.

WHILE the foregoing sheets were passing through the Press, a Report has been addressed to the President of the Local Government Board by Mr. Andrew Doyle, Local Government Inspector, as to the emigration of pauper children to Canada.

Space will not admit of my entering here into an examination of what I must take leave to call Mr. Doyle's one-sided Report. But justice to Miss Macpherson, who is now in Canada, requires me to beg those friends who have taken an interest in the cause, to suspend their judgment on Mr. Doyle's captious criticisms, until Miss Macpherson has had an opportunity of answering for herself, when this whole question may be sifted, and the real merits of this truly benevolent and disinterested work be placed on its right foundation.

In the meanwhile I think it right, in corroboration of my own statements in the foregoing pages, to give the following extracts from the testimony of independent witnesses to the value of Miss Macpherson's work among destitute and friendless children.

At a Workers' Meeting at the Home of Industry in Commercial Street, Spitalfields, Sir Charles Reed, Chairman of the London School Board, made the following statement:—

“That in his visit to Canada last year he had given special attention to Miss Macpherson's work, and, as his inquiries and investigations were made unofficially, the information he obtained might be looked upon as quite impartial. He was gratified by hearing from the Governor-General, Lord Dufferin, at Quebec, that he was well informed as to the work, and bore testimony to its worth. He (Sir Charles) was prepared to say that the children were warmly welcomed and kindly treated. He also, without making his purpose known, visited some of the Homes where the children were located, and what he saw only more confirmed what he had been told, as to the Canadians' appreciation of the children. They were well occupied, well fed, and as happy as they could be. He had entered into conversation with the children as to familiar scenes in the East of London, and learned how pleased they were with their new Homes.

“At Toronto he met Miss B——, a lady in charge of one of the Homes, and a person enthusiastically devoted to this merciful work, who thus became a true ‘Sister of mercy.’ God has endowed woman largely for this Christian ministry. In half-an-hour she thoroughly interested him in the work, and put him in possession of such facts as convinced him that the work was one which in England demanded Christian sympathy and support. It was work which goes on quietly, and is little talked of; but it ought to be, as he trusted it would be, widely known. He was glad to say that through the School Board it was becoming known to intelligent Christian men both in and out of Parliament. It is good to work in faith, as those in charge of this work do; but it is also good to have evidence as an encouragement to faith, and as a corroboration of the work. Such evidence he, as in a sense a special commissioner, had qualified himself to give, and it gave him much pleasure to render it.”

The following is the testimony of Earl Cavan :—

“Having just returned from a six weeks’ visit to Canada, I wish to add my testimony to the many already given of the very valuable work of Miss Macpherson in the three Homes which she has established in Canada for young British destitute children, each Home under the direction of devoted and much esteemed Christian ladies.

“Lady Cavan and I found much pleasure in visiting all these Homes, situated in different parts of the Dominion of Canada, in each of which are located about thirty or forty children, from two to twelve years of age, looked after with motherly affection. The greater number sent out this year had been provided for.

“There is a great demand for young children in this country, where domestic and farming servants are so few, and numbers of these children are adopted into families, the greatest care being taken to place them with kind and good people. They are either trained for the place which they will occupy, or, for the most part, are loved and treated as children of the house.

“It needs but to see for oneself the happy, bright faces of the children, to be satisfied of the value and importance of this transplanting institution for the rescuing of children from their degraded position, for which they are in nowise responsible. May many be brought under the Christian, happy influence of Miss Macpherson, through the liberality of those interested in our poor!

“CAVAN.

“Nov. 5, 1874.”

The following account of his visits to Miss Macpherson’s Homes for boys and girls in Canada, was given by the Rev. A. M. W. Christopher, M.A., Rector of St. Aldate’s, Oxford :—

“Of all the works of Christian benevolence which the great love of Christ constrains His servants to carry on, with which I have become personally acquainted, not one has impressed me more deeply, by its great usefulness, than the work of God by Miss Macpherson and her fellow-labourers. She has in four years transplanted more than fourteen hundred boys and girls from almost hopeless circumstances of misery and temptation in Great Britain, to healthy, happy, industrious homes in Canada. And this has not been all ; daily efforts have been made in faith and love during the period of training, and on the voyage, and in the distributing Homes in Canada, to win these young hearts for Christ by means of the Gospel. There can be no doubt that God has blessed these labours of love to bring many to Himself in the Lord Jesus.

“Many in England know better than I do the great work for God, carried on in connection with Miss Macpherson’s ‘Home of Industry,’ Commercial Street, Spitalfields, and the similar Homes at Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dublin, and Liverpool. Others may visit these, and have their hearts stirred up to help the work by what they see in those Homes : but Canada is a great way off, and, as an independent witness, I desire to bear the strongest testimony to the Christian usefulness of the work, and to the faithful, the wise and careful manner in which it is carried on. A far greater number of children might be thus transplanted with the best results, under God’s blessing, if sufficient means were supplied to Miss Macpherson.”

Further equally strong testimony in regard to the leading features of the work could be adduced ; but the above extracts may be considered sufficient to show that, notwithstanding any shortcomings, the actual results of the movement have been most successful.

