

FIRST ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

BOARD

RELIGIOUS TRUST SOCIETY.

AUXILIARY

TO THE

NATIONAL TRUST SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

LONDON:

PRINTED BY R. P. BELL.

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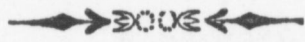
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THE
FIRST ANNUAL REPORT
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NIAGARA
RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY,
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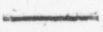
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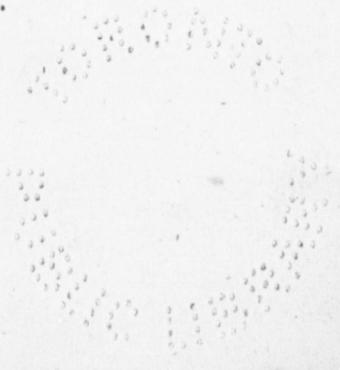
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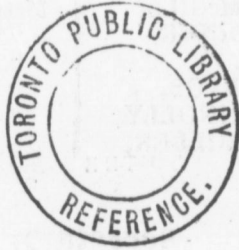
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1834.



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Rev. RO
Messrs. C
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OFFICE BEARERS.

Committee.

Rev. ROBT. MCGILL,
Messrs. GARDINER,
" HILL,
" W. SERVOS,
" G. CONNOLLY,
" W. D. MILLER,

Messrs. J. COOPER, Jr.
" J. LOCKHART,
" C. CULVER,
" J. OAKLEY,
" P. DRUMMOND,
" DR. WHITE LAW.

Secretary,

MR. P. DRUMMOND.

Treasurer,

MR. JOHN ROGERS.

Depositary,

MR. W. D. MILLER.

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MINUTES OF FIRST MEETING.

NIAGARA, 26TH MARCH, 1834.

THE First Meeting of the *Niagara Religious Tract Society* took place in the PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, at 7 o'clock.

The Rev. ROBERT MCGILL in the Chair.

The meeting having been opened with prayer, the following resolutions were moved, seconded, and adopted unanimously:—

1st—Moved by Mr. *John Oakley*, and seconded by the Rev. Mr. *McIntosh*,—That it is the duty of Christians to unite their efforts for disseminating Divine Truth throughout the world, and as the distribution of Religious Tracts, has in many instances promoted this cause, this meeting deem it their duty to form a Religious Tract Society in Niagara.

2d—Moved by *W. D. Miller* and seconded by Mr. *P. Drummond*, that the following constitution and regulations be adopted.

3d—Moved by Mr. *George Connolly* and seconded by Mr. *Chester Culver*, that the following gentlemen be Office Bearers until the first Wednesday in September next.

4th—Moved by Dr. *Whitelaw*, and seconded by Mr. *William Scroves*, that the Committee and members in general, be requested to use their best exertions to establish Branch Societies in the surrounding Townships, that the resources and usefulness of the Society may be extended.

5th—Moved by Mr. GARDNER, and seconded by the Rev. Mr. *McIntosh*, that as the history of the Church in every age, unfolds how much its Divine Head has been pleased to employ the female sex in works of religious beneficence, the ladies of Niagara be specially invited to aid the design of this society, both in the support of funds and the distribution of Tracts. The meeting was then closed with prayer.

PLAN AND REGULATIONS.

1. This Society to be designated the Religious Tract Society of Niagara.
2. The Tracts to be circulated by it, to be those published by the Tract Society in London.
3. One-fourth of the funds shall be annually transmitted to the parent institution through such a channel as the committee may appoint.
4. Each subscriber shall be entitled to receive gratis, Tracts to the amount of one half of his annual or other subscriptions or donations.
5. Each annual subscriber of five shillings and upwards shall be a member.
6. Each subscriber of five pounds at one time shall be a member for life.
7. The business of this society shall be conducted by a Committee of fifteen members, or upwards, together with a Treasurer and Secretary or Secretaries who shall be chosen at the Annual General Meeting of the Society; and that three members of the Committee constitute a quorum.
8. That the Committee shall appoint a depository and collectors who shall pay the amount of their receipts to the Treasurer when required.
9. The Committee shall meet every three months, or oftener if required.
10. A general meeting of the society shall be held on the second Wednesday of September, in each year, when the proceedings of the past year shall be stated, a new Committee appointed, and a report agreed upon to be printed under the direction of the committee.
11. All the meetings of this society shall be opened and concluded with prayer.

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FIRST ANNUAL REPORT.

SOON after the formation of the Society in March of the present year, your committee proceeded to carry into effect the intentions of the Society, and ordered a supply of Tracts from the Depository at Kingston. At the same time they appointed several male and female Collectors, by whose assiduity a considerable fund has been received. An abstract of the Treasurer and Depository's account will be found in the appendix to the report.

Your Committee feel that they ought not to submit their first report without acknowledgement of gratitude to the Most High for that measure of success with which he has been pleased to crown the commencement of our undertaking. When it is considered that the Society has not been in operation for more than five months, and that many whose aid may hereafter be expected, have not yet had an opportunity of extending it; there is reason of gratitude to God on account of the cheering prospects of success and usefulness. - When the objects of the society are better known, it cannot be doubted that many who desire the prosperity of Zion, will be found ready to support and extend its cause.

In the present divided state of the Church in this recent colony, it is pleasing to discover "some common ground on which Christian union may be established and strengthened; Christian affection excited and cherished, and Christian zeal concentrated and rendered proportionally effective."

In the address of the Secretary of the London Religious Tract Society, unfolding the plan and objects of the institution, this common ground is distinctly pointed out. *Our Tracts*, they say, "flowing from the sacred

"fountain of the New Testament, should run from be-
 "ginning to end; uncontaminated with error, undistur-
 "bed with human systems, clear as crystal, like the
 "river of life. There should be nothing in them of the
 "Shibboleth of a Sect; nothing of the accrimony of
 "contending parties, against those that differ from
 "them; but that unity of principle, whereby all, who
 "are looking for the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ,
 "unto eternal life, can unite with pleasure, as in one
 "great common cause. Nor should any wordly scheme
 "be interwoven with the truth, nor attempted to be
 "concealed under its folds. There should not be seen
 "the slightest vestige of any carnal end in any form
 "or for any purpose, however laudible some may think
 "it, nothing but divine truth, unmingled, unadulterated,
 "pure as it came from heaven, and fit for the whole
 "human race to imbibe." In these great principles
 every Christian will agree—by whatever distinctive
 name we may be called; we are free to unite our
 efforts in disseminating those essential fundamental
 truths of our common faith, in which we are all agreed,
 —and in this department of Christian enterprise we
 may forget the minuter differences of sect and party,
 muster under the same banner, and go forth to the
 help of the Lord against the mighty.

Your Committee humbly conceive that the dissemi-
 ation of religious truth by tracts is peculiarly adapted
 to the circumstances of this province. It is not to be
 expected that the regular ministration of divine ordi-
 nances can be often enjoyed amidst its thinly scattered
 population. Without going beyond the boundaries of
 our own district, it is too evident, that there are many
 places, where when the Sabbath day comes, there is
 not the stated ordinances of the sanctuary to which the
 people can repair, to cherish the fervour of holy senti-
 ment, and where there are but few books to preserve the
 knowledge of sacred truth. In such circumstances
 these "silent preachers" might be the means for a time,
 of supplying in some small degree this deficiency, of
 preserving a desire for divine things, which might other-
 wise become extinct, and of promoting union among

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Christians, who might otherwise be disunited; and thus there might be collected in many spots throughout the wilderness, Churches, who might continue "steadfastly in the Apostles doctrine, and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayer."

Besides it cannot be denied, that a large portion of the inhabitants throughout the District, partly from want of a religious education, and partly from long destitution of religious ordinances, have fallen into a state of deep spiritual indifference, in which they care for none of these things, live without God and without religious hope in the world. The Bible is with them a neglected book, and when an opportunity of attending the preaching of the word does occur, they will not make the slightest effort to embrace it. Thus there is no small danger that both the doctrines and institutions of the gospel of salvation will be utterly forgotten by them. The distribution of religious Tracts offers *one* means of checking such a movement towards absolute heathenism. Were such as mourn over the prevailing ungodliness to put now and then into the hands of those around them a few well selected Tracts, accompanied with affectionate remonstrance, and fervent prayer, the divine blessing would not be denied. From these more precious than sybilline leaves, some sentence might catch the eye of one who had practically denied the Lord that bought him, and might bring him back an humble worshipper of the cross, the obligations to which he had almost forgotten.

By efforts of this kind combined as they will always be with other means, ordained for the extension of the Church, we might hope that God will cause her to take deep root, and fill the land; that she will send out her boughs unto the sea, and her branches unto the river.

Your Committee are perfectly aware that the end for which this society is instituted, cannot be answered by the mere collection of funds, and keeping a large supply of Tracts in the Depository. These are only means to an end; funds are necessary for the purchase of Tracts, but the Tracts are only as so much waste paper if they are left to lie on the book shelves of the Depo-

sitory. Agents are wanted to distribute them, and your committee would earnestly urge on every subscriber to take a personal interest in the work of distribution.— By a law of the society every subscriber is entitled to Tracts equal in value to half the sum he has subscribed. Let each subscriber make a judicious distribution of these at least, and the society will have reason to rejoice in the number of its agents.

It forms one part of the plan of this society, to remit a portion of its funds to the parent institution in London—with the view of extending the distribution of Tracts in Heathen Lands. The sum which will be thus appropriated, can for the present only be small, but it becomes us thus to express our interest in the benevolent plans of the parent society, and our obligations as those who have tasted of the good word of God, to bear a part in the evangelization of the world. The Gospel wherever its power is felt, expands the soul with its own heavenly charity, and awakens the desire that all nations may share in its unsearchable riches.

Whether therefore we look upon the promising fields opened up, for the dissemination of religious truth by Tract distribution, in this or in foreign lands, we ought to be encouraged to greater and more persevering exertions. Though few in number and of limited resources, we may bear a part in the blessed work. Nor will the drop we let fall undistinguished by human eye, into the vast tide of Christian enterprize, ever lose its individuality before the eye of God, or fail of its reward.

While the Committee return thanks to the collectors who this night retire from office, they fervently hope that those who shall be appointed to succeed them, may manifest still greater diligence, and meet with still larger success, and be highly honoured as co-workers together with God in the redemption of the world.

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 meet with still
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Dr. Niagara Auxiliary to the London Religious Tract Society, in account with the Treasurer Cr.

		£	s.			£	s.	d.	
1834.	To Cash remitted Tract Society of Kingston.	10	0	0	1834.	By account of Collections received.....	17	16	11
Sept. 7.	To printing Plan and Constitution.....	7	7	6	Sept	To amount of Tracts sold.....	1	—	—
18.	To freight of Tracts, paid.....	0	2	6			18	7	6½
	To balance on hand.....	7	17	6½			18	7	6½
		18	7	6½					

E. E.

JOHN ROGERS,
 TREASURER.

NIAGARA, 17TH SEPTEMBER, 1834.

Dr.

Depositorie's Account.

Cr.

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
To amount of Tracts received from Kingston per George Hardy, Depositary, per bill..	16	15	11½	By amount, paid Subscribers, in Tracts....	4	3	8½
Less for Case and Cartage at Kingston. included in the above bill.....	0	2	6	By amount delivered for distribution.....	2	5	0
	16	13	5½	By amount sold, (see Treasurer's Account.)	0	10	11
	1	13	5½	By balance remaining on hand in Depositary	9	13	10
	£				16	13	5½

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E. E.

NIAGARA, 17TH SEPTEMBER, 1834:

W. D. MILLER, DEPOSITARY.

Addison,
 Atkin, G
 Beamer,
 Berry an
 Brown, J
 Burns, J
 Burns, J
 Burns, R
 Butler, V
 Cameron
 Cathline,
 Clement,
 Clement,
 Clench,
 Cole, M
 Crysler,
 Dickson,
 Drummond
 Field, N
 Friend
 A Friend
 A Friend
 Harrington
 Harvey,
 Heron, C
 Hill, J.
 Hutchiss
 Hutchiss
 Jones, N
 Kounne,
 Lockhar
 Long, M
 Melville
 Menells
 Miller,
 Mills, N
 Moore,
 M'Bride
 M'Gill,
 Macnam
 Newell,
 Ockley,

L

LIST OF SUBSCRIBERS.

				£	s.	d.
Addison, Mrs.	..	..	..	0	5	0
Atkin, George E.	..	..	..	0	1	3
Beamer, Daniel	..	..	..	0	10	0
Berry and Somerside, Rev. Messrs.	..	..	..	0	2	6
Brown, Joseph	..	..	..	0	5	0
Burns, John (St. Catherine's,)	..	..	..	0	2	6
Burns, John (Niagara,)	..	..	..	0	5	0
Burns, R. E.	..	..	..	0	5	0
Butler, William	..	..	..	0	10	0
Cameron, William	..	..	..	0	5	0
Cathline, A. Philip	..	..	..	0	2	8
Clement, Joseph	..	..	..	0	5	0
Clement, Mrs.	..	..	..	0	5	0
Clench, Ralfe	..	..	..	0	1	3
Cole, Mr.	..	..	..	1	0	0
Crysler, R. & J.	..	..	..	1	0	0
Dickson, D. & C.	..	..	..	0	15	0
Drummond, P.	..	..	..	0	5	0
Field, Nathan	..	..	..	0	1	3
A Friend,	..	..	..	0	5	2½
A Friend,	..	..	..	0	5	0
Harrington, Mrs.	..	..	..	0	2	6
Harvey, Mrs. James	..	..	..	0	5	0
Heron, Christopher	..	..	..	0	5	0
Hill, J.	..	..	..	0	2	6
Hutchison, William	..	..	..	0	2	0
Hutchison, Matthew	..	..	..	0	5	6
Jones, Mrs.	..	..	..	0	5	0
Koune, Mrs.	..	..	..	1	5	0
Lockhart, James	..	..	..	0	5	0
Long, Mr.	..	..	..	1	5	0
Melville, Captain	..	..	..	0	2	6
Meneilly, John sen.	..	..	..	0	5	0
Miller, W. D.	..	..	..	0	2	6
Mills, Mary	..	..	..	0	5	0
Moore, Dr.	..	..	..	0	5	0
M'Bride, Anne	..	..	..	0	5	0
M'Gill, Rev. Robert	..	..	..	0	5	0
Macnamara, Mrs.	..	..	..	0	5	0
Newell, Mrs.	..	..	..	0	5	0
Ockley, John	..	..	..	0	5	0

					£	s.	d.
Porter, Dr. ..	..	..	..	..	0	2	6
Raymond, Miss H. ..	..	..	..	..	0	2	6
Richardson and Hall,	..	..	..	..	0	10	0
Rogers, John ..	..	..	..	..	0	10	0
Smith, Miss ..	..	..	..	..	0	5	0
Stevens, George ..	..	..	..	..	0	5	0
Stocking, Mrs. ..	..	..	..	..	1	0	0
Stocking and Grier,	..	..	..	..	0	5	0
Thatcher, Mrs. ..	..	..	..	..	0	2	6
Thorold, Mrs. ..	..	..	..	..	0	5	0
Thorp, Mrs. ..	..	..	..	..	0	5	0
Thorp, Mary ..	..	..	..	..	0	5	0
Whitelaw, Mrs! ..	..	..	..	..	0	5	0
Young, Mrs. ..	..	..	..	..	0	5	0
					<hr/>		
					£17	16	6½
Amount of Sale of Tracts, ..					£0	10	11.
					<hr/>		
					£18	7	6½

Niagara, 17th September, 1834.