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Early Methodism in Richmond Hill.

(CONTINUED FROM LAST WEEK.)

We will now take a rapid glance at early Methodism on the circuit to which we belong.

In 1808 two ministers came up Yonge Street to prepare the way for Methodism. They were the Rev. Nathan Bangs and Presiding Elder Jewel. We may presume that they came on horse back, because Surveyor John Stegman, grandfather of Mrs. James Jenkins and Mrs. O'Brien, of our town, who laid out Yonge Street, reported to the Surveyor-General Jones in 1801 as follows: "From the town of York (Toronto) to Poplar Plains (Yorkville) the road is cut; but as yet the greater part of the said distance is not passable for any carriage whatever," and of our locality he says, "street cut, logs not burnt and a very bad place in the road," and he adds that "he was sorry to say that the most ancient inhabitants of Yonge Street have been most neglectful in clearing the street." The most ancient inhabitants had been here at that time about five years. The ministers report that there were settlers here and there along Yonge Street for thirty miles, but no society. They held a service at the Quaker Settlement. In 1805 Yonge St. Circuit is reported as consisting of York, York Township, Etobicoke, Scarborough, Markham, Vaughan, King, Whitechurch, and all the Gwillimburys. Methodism after this appears to have made but little progress, especially during the war of 1812.

In 1814 Yonge Street Circuit again appears with Messrs. Gatchel, Culp, Yonman and Harman as ministers. In 1818 the first Methodist church was built in York, south of King and near Bay Street, before there was a single member in the town. Elder Ryan mortgaged his farm to build it. In 1827 it was made into a station, and its pulpit supplied twice a month from Yonge Street Circuit. In 1832 Rev. Robt. Corson, father of the editor of the Markham Economist, reported the size of the circuit to be fifty miles long and twenty-five miles wide. Many of the ministers who endeavored to cover this great territory with the words of salvation endured hardships and privations that would dishearten many of their fellow itinerants in these days of easy traveling and comfortable conveyances.

As population and membership increased, Yonge Street Circuit has been divided many times. The last was in 1873, when it was made to consist of Richmond Hill, Maple, Bethel, Victoria Square, Headford and Patterson. At the union of the Methodist B. dies in 1884, Maple and Bethel were transferred to another circuit by the Conference.

Among the revival influences of those days were the ever popular Camp Meetings. Held periodically for two or three weeks at a time, they were attended by crowds of people from many miles around. Members of the church went with provisions for themselves and everybody else, intending to stay from start to finish. Sermons and addresses by the most able and eloquent ministers that could be obtained, and prayers going up from the hearts of scores of devoted men and women sometimes resulted in a revival that would sweep like a wave over the assembled thousands, and hundreds would be led to give their hearts to God. Two of these camp meetings were held; one in 1856, the other in 1873, under the auspices of the officials of Yonge Street Circuit. The writer has read the lives of Peter Cartwright and Lorenzo Dow, and of the strange incidents connected with the camp meetings of those days. "Manifestations," being "under the influence," trances and other remarkable experiences recorded of those gatherings, but was very skeptical and supposed that if they really occurred they were the outcome of ignorance or backwoods eccentricities. The following, however, happened at the camp meeting held in 1856: The meetings were conducted by very able men and the gathering of people was very large. Among those who came from a long distance was a merchant, a tall, muscular, intelligent and handsome looking gentleman. He came with his wife and all the necessaries for a long stay. The couple sat near the front, opposite to the preacher's platform, and the gentleman always paid the greatest attention to the exhortations of the ministers. After the service on one occasion there was the usual prayer meeting, and a pretty lively one it was. The writer, sitting on a back seat, could see the whole front of the compartment. The gentleman rose as if to go forward to the penitential form, when he suddenly fell to the earth as if dead. He lay for more than an hour perfectly stiff and motionless. The prayer service was interrupted and hundreds gathered round supposing it was a case of sudden death. When, as suddenly as he fell, he rose to his feet and shouted, Glory! Hallelujah! with a voice that startled every one on the ground. He then said that he had come a long distance determined to get if possible the religion that

he knew his wife enjoyed. That when he began to seek for it he found that there was an insuperable barrier between him and salvation. It was a large stock of liquor he had in his cellar at home, it rose like a mountain before him whenever he tried to pray. He resolved to destroy it as soon as he reached home. As soon as he made the resolution he felt the barrier removed, and rising to express his gratitude to God, he became so overcome with joy that he lost consciousness and fell. The merchant went home, knocked every liquor-barrel in the head, letting the contents run in the street. From a semi-infidel he became an exemplary christian.

Another incident connected with that camp meeting which has never been forgotten took place on the last day of the gathering. After a thanksgiving service a farewell procession was formed to march around the inside of the camp, which was a very large one. The ministers, over a dozen in number, walked two and two in front of the procession, followed by the converts, a large number, then came the members of the church, and after them the congregation, many hundreds in number. As they marched the whole procession sang the Coronation Hymn, "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name." When the ministers came opposite the preachers' stand, they divided, the rear of the procession passing between. When it came to the last they were two aged white-haired ministers who had passed through many a trying experience in early Methodism in the backwoods of Canada. When they thought of all the good that was done they were so overcome with joy that they fell on each other's necks and wept. There was scarcely a dry eye on the camp ground.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Our Ottawa Letter.

Last week was a quiet one in Parliament. The Address was adopted in both Houses after debate.

The minority report presented by the Rev. Dr. McLeod, one of the five commissioners appointed to enquire into the liquor traffic and the question of prohibition, is an exhaustive affair. He says in discussing the effect of the liquor traffic upon all interests effected by it:—"There is no room for differences of opinion in regard to the fact the intemperance and its inevitable train of harmful consequences constitute one of the most formidable evils that afflict society, diminish the wealth of the country and impede the progress of civilization."

Mr. Martin has a motion for papers relating to the importation of Jew pedlars from Chicago. One piece of information required by Mr. Martin was the number of those immigrants committed to Calgary jail. Mr. P. E. Daly, a brother of the Minister of the Interior, was in some way concerned with the importation of these undesirable immigrants. Mr. Martin took the Minister of the Interior to task for declaring last session in reply to him that these immigrants were of a desirable class and were taking up homesteads. This was a part of Mr. Daly's vigorous immigration policy, but Mr. Martin quoted from a letter written by Mr. Fortier, an officer of the department, saying that the department had been deceived in importing these foreigners from Chicago, and to use Mr. Fortier's own words, "had dropped them." Mr. Martin declared that the immigration policy of the government was almost as entirely a failure. Mr. Martin also complained that an order of the House made last session for information on this subject had been disobeyed by the executive, and charged that this was a common practice and in gross violation of the rights and privileges of the House. Mr. Daly said the pressure of business had prevented the returns from being brought down, but he would bring it down now. He admitted that a mistake had been made with regard to these Chicago immigrants, but claimed that only one had been committed to the jails. Mr. Daly attacked Mr. Greenway for not doing anything in the way of immigration, and went back to Mr. Mackenzie's record.

In reply to various questions it came out that the total cost of the voters' lists was \$195,000 to date. The lists printed in Montreal has been divided between the offices of the "Gazette," "Trade Union," "Journals of Commerce," the "Presse," "Senecal," the "Monda," and the "Minerve," and in Toronto one batch was given to the "Catholic Register" and another to the "Orange Sentinel," while a third went to the "Mail," office, all at three cents a name.

When the Solicitor General, in reply to Mr. Laurier, stated that a process had been issued against the Connollys for the judgment obtained against them for \$45,000 he evaded the point as to the date of the process. Mr. Laurier returned to the charge and called for the information. Mr. Carrau wiggled a great deal and again endeavored to evade a straight answer, by saying that instructions to issue the process had been given four or

five days ago. Finally Mr. Laurier compelled him to admit that the process had been issued since Mr. Laurier had placed his question on the notice paper.

The Budget speech is to be delivered on Friday.

The answer given in the Senate by Premier Bowell to a question concerning Mr. Fitzsimmons, Deputy Warden of the B. C. Penitentiary, forms an amusing contrast to the diplomacy of the Commons continent of the government. Mr. Curran, on Wednesday answered Mr. Edgar. He said that James Fitzsimmons had not been dismissed or suspended from the office of Deputy Warden of the New Westminster penitentiary. Pending the investigation, he was relieved of his duties, and in October last he was retired from office, without prejudice to consideration for re-employment. He was reinstated on March 25th last. Sir McKenzie Bowell, in reply to the same question in the Senate, said Mr. Fitzsimmons was dismissed by Order-in-Council, and re-appointed by Order-in-Council. Sir John Thompson dismissed him for cause on the report of a commission, and Sir Hibbert Tupper reinstated him also for cause supposed to be political influence.

Madam Laurier held her first reception of the session in the Russell House on Thursday night. It was very largely attended. Sir Mackenzie Bowell and a number of other prominent members were present.

Mr. Davin, M. P. for East Assiniboia, has given notice of the following resolution in favor of female suffrage:—"That in the opinion of this House the privilege of voting for candidates for membership thereof should be extended to women possessing the qualifications which would now entitle men to the electoral franchise."

Introducing his Bill to amend the Railway Act Mr. Bryson explained that the Bill was intended to authorize the Railway Committee of the Privy Council, in the event of ninety days' default of a railway company to pay its employees, after legal service upon the company, to appoint a receiver to take charge of the railway and pay its liabilities for labor.

A Bill to amend the Provincial Court Judges' Act will be introduced by Sir Charles Hibbert Tupper. The proposal is to make the salaries of two judges of the Montreal Circuit Court \$3,000 per annum each; of two Manitoba County Court Judges \$2,000 each, and \$2,400 after three years of service; the salary of the British Columbia Judge in Admiralty \$1,000.

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