

## V.—THE GOOD SEED.

"The good seed is the word of God."—Luke viii:11.

"In the morning sow thy seed, in the evening withhold not thy hand."—  
Ecclesiastes xi:6.

"Doth the ploughman plough all day to sow?"—Isaiah xxviii:24.

"They that sow in tears shall reap in joy."—Psalms cxxvi:5.

OPEN-AIR services had been held six Sundays, the crops were secured and winter was approaching, when the people set about providing a house of worship. Father disliked to hurry them, because they were poor and worked hard. At last they made a "bee," cut and drew logs, split troughs for the roof and quickly reared a rough building. It was cold, smoky and exceedingly uncomfortable in winter, but the services were always well attended. At a meeting to fix the minister's salary it was agreed that each family should pay three dollars a year, or one dollar and two bushels of wheat. Alexander Dewar, John Carmichael, John Ferguson and Duncan McDonald were elected elders and solemnly ordained in due time. It was arranged that all the families in a section should meet father at one house to be examined and catechized. Owing to bad roads and great distances it was not possible to visit them separately. His first visit under this arrangement was at Donald McLaurin's, where the whole neighborhood assembled. He examined old and young as to their knowledge of the Bible, the Catechism, and the fundamental doctrines of Christianity. Other meetings followed, until every section and family had been reached. A few Irish settlers, members of the Episcopal church, attended services regularly and, in cases of sickness or death, would send for father as readily as though he were their rector. The heads of Presbyterian families, as nearly as they can be recalled, the register having been burned fifty years ago, were:

John Carmichael.  
Peter Carmichael.  
Donald Kennedy.  
Alexander Kennedy.  
Donald Anderson.  
John Anderson.  
Peter Anderson.  
Alexander McTavish.  
John McTavish.  
Duncan McDermid.  
James McDermid.  
Alexander McGregor.

Alexander Dewar.  
Archibald Dewar.  
Malcolm Dewar.  
Peter Dewar.  
John Dewar.  
Alexander Stewart.  
Duncan Stewart.  
John Stewart.  
Duncan Cram.  
John Cram.  
Duncan McEwen.  
Finley McEwen.

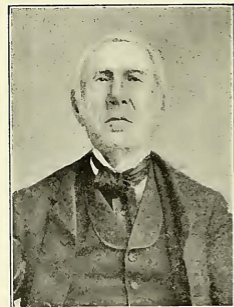
John Ferguson.  
James Ferguson.  
Duncan Ferguson.  
Duncan Campbell.  
Duncan Robertson.  
Duncan McNab.  
Duncan McNee.  
Duncan McCuan.  
Duncan McDonald.  
Duncan McLaurin.  
Donald McLaurin.  
Colin McLaren.

Donald McGregor.  
John McGregor.  
Peter McGregor.  
James McArthur.  
John Goodfellow.  
Robert Goodfellow.

John McEwen.  
Duncan King.  
Colin King.  
Donald McDougall.  
Peter McDougall.  
Peter Comrie.

Colin Sinclair.  
Alexander Scott.  
John Scott.  
James McKinnis.  
James Stewart.  
Donald McIntosh.

Many of the families these names represented have disappeared from Beckwith. The Dewars, Andersons, McDougalls and Fergusons settled in Lambton county. Alexander Dewar, "one of Nature's noble-



ARCHIBALD McPHAIL.  
Died 1887, aged 94.

men," entered into rest at ninety-five, and his brother John, who survived all his contemporaries, died at ninety-three. Alexander and Donald Kennedy ended their days in or near Ottawa. Duncan and John Cram, John and Robert Goodfellow, James Stuart, James McArthur, Donald McLaurin, Finley McEwen, John Carmichael and others lived and died near the old homesteads. Archibald McPhail, who died three years ago, at ninety-four, was the last survivor of the adults who heard the first sermon in Beckwith, and the last resident to conduct family-worship invariably in Gaelic. He removed to Carleton county in the fifties. Not a few slumber in neglected, unmarked, forgotten graves. Over the mounds of all the snows of many winters have drifted. What matters it to the unconscious sleepers awaiting the resurrection morn? Although not carved in marble, nor blazoned on history's page, "are their names not written in the Lamb's Book of Life?"

These visitations revealed the fact that numbers of young people were growing up in comparative ignorance from lack of educational advantages. The township had no school of any kind, hence many boys and girls were unable to read and write. Father volunteered to teach if accommodations were provided. The parents erected a small, miserable structure. From the first eager pupils crowded it. They had no text-books. He gave them the Mother's Catechism, the Shorter Catechism, and necessary supplies he had brought from Scotland. All progressed rapidly in reading, spelling, writing and arithmetic, each striving zealously to be at the head. Very soon a large class read flu-

ently in the Bible, the highest reader used. In winter when the grown pupils attended, having to work in summer, grammars and geographies were procured from Perth. Mud, wolves, deep snow and storms would not keep the scholars at home. Some walked five or six miles every morning and evening and were never absent nor tardy. Steady advances in knowledge rewarded their persistence. The school improved greatly after moving into the building that was our dwelling for a year, before we occupied the two-story house. From that unpretentious school, with its long benches and desks of split logs, its utter lack of maps and apparatus, its poverty and general wretchedness, young men went forth to prepare for the ministry, to acquire a profession, to engage in business and to fill positions of usefulness. Young women were equipped for teaching or other duties. In father's absence, visiting the sick or making pastoral calls, one of my sisters took charge of the school. A big leather-strap hung on the wall, but it was never needed. Pupils underwent too much hardship, in order to attend at all, to be indolent or disobedient. The privilege cost too much real labor to be esteemed lightly. The benefit to the community of that school, which in summer was sometimes held in our barn, for greater room and better air, could not be estimated. It continued until the public-school system was adopted and schools were established throughout the township. With father it was purely a labor of love, as he never received a penny for his years of teaching in Beckwith.

One of these early pupils was the son of Donald McLaurin. The parents urged father to take the boy into his house to do the chores for his boarding and attend school. The lad, who came next day, knew scarcely a word of English. He stayed with us for years, making fine progress as a student. He learned Greek, Latin and Hebrew, paid his way through Edinburgh University by working morning and evening, was licensed to preach and returned to Canada. He became pastor of the Presbyterian church at Martintown, where he labored zealously many years and ended his days. Such was the course of one graduate from father's modest school, Rev. John McLaurin.\*

Father was extremely diligent, shirking no responsibility and evading no duty. "Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord," he possessed the zeal of an apostle and the pertinacity of a genuine Scotch Highlander. As though the day-school, preaching, and performing the manifold offices of a pastor were not enough, he opened a Sunday-school, in which my sisters taught the younger children, and

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\*McLAURIN.—At the residence of her son-in-law, Mr. Bidwell Way, Hamilton, on Thursday, November 12, 1903, Annie Macdonell, widow of the late Rev. John McLaurin, M. A., Martintown, Glengarry, aged 82 years.—Hamilton Spectator.

conducted a large Bible-class. Each member of the class learned three pages of the Catechism, one or two chapters of the New Testament and at least one Psalm weekly. In good sleighing father would visit McNabb, Horton and the back townships, to preach, baptize infants and marry young couples. Mother always accompanied him on such trips, which extended over two Sundays, furnishing the only religious services in these remote sections for years. He likewise preached occasionally at Richmond and Smith's Falls, then places of very small importance. His mission-field comprised nearly the entire country between Perth and Ottawa, in which extensive section he was long the only minister. The good seed sown with infinite toil and patience brought forth abundant fruit, "some thirty, some sixty, and some an hundred fold."

Caring for the sick added greatly to father's arduous labors. Frequently he would be roused at midnight to attend a poor woman in childbirth or relieve a case of sudden illness, walking miles on logs set lengthwise to reach the scene of distress. To slip off a log or make a mis-step meant a plunge into the swamp-mud and water to the waist or neck. The men who summoned him carried large torches, which most families kept ready for emergencies. The torches threw a feeble light on the path and scared the wolves. These fatiguing night-journeys were quite unlike the carriage-drives of physicians now-a-days. Self-denying Dr. Willyum McClure, riding faithful Jess to visit his Drumtochty patients, had few experiences to compare with Dr. George Buchanan's perilous trips afoot in storm and darkness. Later he bought a stout pony, which bore him over a portion of the territory, but to the last he was obliged to walk to districts lying beyond the big swamps. No thought of remunerating him for his medical services entered the minds of patients belonging to the congregation. They took it for granted that his meagre salary as a minister entitled them to command his talents as a doctor and a teacher also. He was expected to officiate at births, baptisms, marriages and funerals, to heal the sick and educate the rising generation without charge. His work as a doctor alone would have been ample for the average practitioner, yet none suffered from his neglect to be at the bedside until recovery or dissolution rendered further attendance needless. He smoothed the pillow of the dying, consoled the sorrowing, bestowed his skill and medicines freely, set fractured limbs and performed all kinds of surgical operations. To him many a Beckwith mother and child owed the preservation of their lives, and many a man was indebted for his rescue from the jaws of death.

The population increased gradually, new settlers filled up the township and ministers and doctors followed in their wake. Rev. Jonathan

Short, D.D., a man of admirable spirit and culture, had the Episcopal charge at Franktown until transferred to Port Hope. Rev. Michael Harris was long rector of the Perth congregation. Rev. George Romaine, the first Presbyterian minister at Smith's Falls, was an excellent preacher and faithful servant of Christ. He married the youngest sister of Rev. John Smith, second minister in Beckwith, inherited a large fortune in Scotland and died there at a goodly age. Every winter father had been accustomed to visit what is now the flourishing town of Smith's Falls, to hold services, baptise children and dispense the Communion. On such occasions he usually stayed with the Simpsons or the Goulds, then the principal business-people of the infant settlement. Miss Simpson married the father of the late Jason Gould, who was related to Jay Gould, the great New York financier. Smith's Falls has grown wonderfully since Simpson and Gould erected flour- and saw-mills and started general stores. Richmond was a small, muddy patch, the abode of some half-pay officers and a mixed population. Captain Lyon built a grist-mill and carried on a large store. Hinton and Molloch also had stores. Richmond was named from the unfortunate Duke



DUKE OF RICHMOND.

of Richmond, Governor of Canada, who died there in 1818 from hydrophobia induced by the bite of a pet fox. Chief McNab, who to the last retained the bearing and feudal state of a Highland laird, was conspicuous in the northern townships.

Rev. John Cruikshank, a superior man in every way and first Presbyterian minister of Bytown, now Ottawa, visited at our house repeatedly. Rev. John McLaghlan held Covenanter services in Perth occasionally for many years. He was sincere, earnest and eloquent, and was settled at Carleton Place. Rev. Dr. Gemmill of Lanark, Rev. Wm. Boyd of Prescott, and Rev. Wm. Smart of Brockville, distinguished preachers, were members of the first Presbtery. Once Mr. Smart came to assist father at the Sacrament. The meeting-house had been burned and the service was in the open air, with a platform for the ministers and logs to seat the people, who came in crowds from points as far as Ramsay and Carleton Place. Mr. Smart

had prepared an elaborate sermon. Strangely enough, he marked the text in the wrong chapter of the Bible and could not at the moment recall the correct place. Every man and woman had a copy of the sacred volume, waiting to turn to the text. In this emergency Mr. Smart suddenly recalled a sermon he had delivered years before from the words of Zephaniah: "It may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger." He discoursed with great power and fervency. Rev. Thomas Wilson and Rev. Mr. Fairbairn were gifted preachers of the Established Church. Rev. Mr. McAllister succeeded Dr. Gemmill and later joined the Old Kirk. All were faithful expounders of the pure gospel, untainted by recent fads and the vagaries of the Higher Criticism.

Although these additions lessened the distances father needed travel, the wants of the Beckwith folk multiplied constantly. For twelve years he toiled incessantly, never sparing himself or his substance, never seeking his own comfort, never enjoying a period of relaxation, never tiring of ministering to the souls and bodies of those committed to his care. Others built on the foundations he laid, reaped part of the harvest he planted and watered, gathered some of the sheaves long after he had gone to his reward; but father, the pioneer herald of salvation, first sowed in and around Beckwith the good seed that was to spring up and bear much fruit to the glory of the Great Head of the church.

Sow the good seed! Sow the good seed!

The world hath need  
Of each kind deed  
That love doth breed—  
Earth's richest need—  
With no vile weed—  
Of selfish greed  
Or narrow creed.  
Let Duty lead  
Thy feet with speed  
When suff'rers plead;  
The hungry feed,  
Heal hearts that bleed—

Sow the good seed! Sow the good seed!

The Sunday-School is the hopper of the church.—Archibald McArthur.  
 "Give us this day our daily bread" sums up earthly needs.—John Dewar.  
 Who does his duty promptly and cheerfully does it best.—David L. Philip.  
 He who bears no cross here will wear no crown hereafter.—Alexander Dewar.

Excess of zeal to-morrow will not excuse neglect of duty to-day.—Duncan Cram.

Pity the man or woman who finds the blessed Sabbath wearisome.—Ann Campbell Smith.

The Shorter Catechism is the marrow of Scriptural truth and sound theology.—Catharine Buchanan.

Piety that will not reach out to bring others into the Kingdom lacks the true ring.—Duncan Campbell.

The best student of the Bible has the best knowledge of subjects of infinite moment.—Rev. William Bell.

Religion worth having at death is worth possessing and enjoying all through life.—Rev. Walter Aitkin.

Intelligent design in the work of creation is as certain as a demonstration in geometry.—Colin McLaurin, A. D. 1730.

The man whose money owns him has paid more than twenty shillings on the pound for his wealth.—John MacLaren.

When a gude man gangs tae Heaven dinna ye think th' angels greet him wi' "Cumar asham dhu?"—Beckwith Woman.

Hout, mon, nane o' oor kin gaed wi' Noah in th' ark, syne the Buchanans had aye a boat o' their ain.—Old Chief of Clan.

I remembered my Creator in my youth and he remembers me in my old age.—John McLaurin, Glengarry, when 100 years old.

We are healed meritoriously by Christ's blood and efficaciously by the Holy Spirit's sanctifying power.—Rev. George Buchanan.

A profession of religion that fails to regulate the life and touch the pocket is not straight goods.—George Buchanan Ferguson.

Faith is not the ark of safety, but the arm by which the sinner may lay hold of Christ and inherit eternal life.—Rev. James B. Duncan.

The boy or girl well versed in the Bible and Catechism has laid a solid foundation for a useful and successful career.—Jessie Buchanan Campbell.

Nae doot th' Almighty kens English weel eneuch, yet I canna feel ower sure He hears me ava when I dinna speir in Gaelic.—Beckwith Pioneer.

It will be a glorious step towards the Millenium when all professing Christians stand shoulder to shoulder to wipe out the accursed liquor-traffic.—George Buchanan.

It is my heart's desire to be consecrated wholly to God's service and help carry out the Master's command: "Preach the gospel to every creature."—Rev. David P. Buchanan.

Intemperance is the scourge of fallen humanity. Christians should give it no quarter, but seek by fervent prayer and active effort to blot it out forever.—Rev. Thomas Wilson.

Good people who pray "Thy Kingdom Come" would do much to answer the petition by striving diligently to destroy intemperance, the fruitful source of misery and crime.—Peter McLaurin.

Some folk aye think they haud a title tae a front seat afore the Throne syne they gie some puir buidy a sowp o' cauld kail or an auld coat they canna use ony mair.—Archibald McPhail.

If we did not know the gloom of Night,

We would not see the wondrous light

That comes with Dawn.—Bessie Glen Buchanan.

Live right if you would die right; care for God in your youth and he will care for you in your old age; stay close to Christ in health and strength and He will be with you in sickness and death.—Ann Buchanan McLaurin.

There will be no service next Lord's Day, on account of my going to assist Dr. McGilvray at the Communion. Do not wander after strange gods, but stay at home for self-examination and prayer, to study the Scriptures, to hold godly conversation, to catechize the children and to enjoy the blessed influences of a well-spent Sabbath.—Rev. John McLaurin, M. A., Martintown.

To win the world for Christ we must have more of the missionary spirit that inspired the Master, that animated Paul, that imbued Augustine and Xavier, that took the self-denying Moravians to Greenland, that sent Cary and Judson and Claudius Buchanan to India, that gave Morrison and Burns to China, that carried David Buchanan and John Scott to Jamaica, and that has impelled a cloud of faithful witnesses to bear the glad tidings to the uttermost parts of the earth.—Rev. John McLaurin, Vankleek Hill.

