

## FUGITIVE SLAVES IN UPPER CANADA.

WE have much pleasure in calling the attention of our friends to the following Report, presented by the Rev. Hiram Wilson to Messrs. George A. Avery, Lindley M. Moore, and O. N. Bush, Executive Committee of the Canada Mission, giving some interesting particulars of the condition and prospects of the coloured refugees in Upper Canada.

### SIXTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CANADA MISSION.

Two years have elapsed since the mission of justice and humanity, among the self-emancipated refugees in Canada, was placed, by a large convention, at Le Roy, N. Y., under your supervision. During this period, our work, though subject to changes and fluctuations, favourable and adverse, has gone steadily forward.

The loving kindness of the Lord has crowned the efforts of the past year. The cause of emigration, from cruel oppression to the land of promise, has prospered. We venture to state, as a moderate estimate, that 1,500 of your countrymen have broken their fetters during the year, and are either safe in Canada, or safely sheltered in the midst of anti-slavery communities on their way. We know not that a much larger number than usual have passed the provincial line the last year; but we are happy to know that the facilities for escape from slavery have greatly increased in the free states. Vigilance committees have been doubly vigilant, and increasingly efficient, particularly on the Philadelphia and New York route. It would seem as if they had received, afresh, the heavenly mandate—"Thou shalt not deliver unto his master the servant which has escaped from his master unto thee." Nothing is more manifest than that a spirit of Samaritan-like kindness towards the wandering fugitive from slavery, is rapidly spreading and prevailing; which will soon mock the decision of judges, and the diabolical enactments of law-making sons of Belial. It is fast becoming unpopular to aid and abet in the delivery of a human being into the hideous fangs of slavery. As evidences of this, we have but to cite the cases of Hackett and Latimer.

In the case of the unfortunate Nelson Hackett, who, by stratagem and duplicity, was imprisoned five months at Sandwich, and conducted, under covert of night, across the Detroit river, and hurried thence into slavery, your agent has held a correspondence with the Committee of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, and communicated to them such facts as the nature of the case would furnish. We trust that, hereafter, the British authorities will act, in similar cases, in accordance with the recent decision of Judge Morrow, of Missouri:—"That a negro slave could not commit forgery, as, by the constitution and laws of the country, negroes are not recognised as persons, any more than any other animals."

Notwithstanding the fate of poor Hackett, the thousands of refugees in Canada never have felt more secure, under the protection of British law, than at present. They generally observe the laws of the land as peaceable subjects, and are prospering under the mild and benignant sway of Victoria's sceptre. The Government under which they have the happiness to live, dispenses favours to its subjects, of different hue, with an impartial hand. Hence, in one of the most inviting regions of the province, between the head of Lake Ontario and Lake Huron, coloured emigrants are rapidly settling upon free grant lots, of fifty acres each, in common with emigrants from England, Scotland, and Ireland. Large numbers, in accordance with oft-repeated advice from our lips, are forsaking their menial and other occupations of cities and villages, and turning their attention to the more honourable and useful employment of husbandry. By reason of prejudice, which prevails among the ignorant and vicious in Canada, as on your side of the line, the common schools of the country are not generally open to them and their children; but public sentiment is gradually changing for the better. The Government has taken far more efficient and liberal measures the past year, to promote education, than ever before; and in the general diffusion of the blessings of science, it is to be hoped that the coloured population will have their full share.

The greatest difficulty we have experienced has been a want of means with which to reward teachers for their services. Could British subjects be had to teach nine months in the year, they could readily draw Government money, which would in part support them. During the first quarter of the year eleven schools were in successful operation, which embraced about 400 pupils. Most of these were suspended through the summer. I am sorry to say that, for want of teachers, and the means of supporting them, six important places, hitherto occupied, are vacant; to wit, Toronto, Niagara, St. Catharine's, Colchester, London, and the Wilberforce colony. Fourteen labourers are now in the field, supplying, but in part, the need of so many thousands. They are variously occupied in doing good to the coloured people. Their names and locations are as follows: Isaac

J. Rice, Amherstburgh; Josiah Henson (agent), Colchester; William P. Newman, Elias E. Kirkland and wife, Fidelia Coburn, Sybil Clary, and Hannah M. Wilson, Dawn; Emerson Prescott, Brantford; Mary C. Sheppard, Norwich; Gilbert O. Field, Queen's Bush; A. Raymond and wife, Oro. John Fishpool, minister of the gospel from England, is extending his ministerial services occasionally to the coloured people of Chatham; whilst his son, who was once imprisoned in New Orleans for teaching slaves to read, is now giving instruction to coloured soldiers, and others, there, in an evening school. Brother Rice has had a flourishing school, the year round, and has done much good otherwise in the neighbourhood of Freedom's West Gate, which has been thronged with emigrants.

Your attention is earnestly invited to the British American Institute of Science and Industry, lately founded in the township of Dawn, which promises to be extensively useful. It is designed not to supersede, but greatly to subserve, the interests of common schools, by training up teachers; and is to be conducted strictly on the manual labour system. Students over fifteen years of age are to have instruction free of cost, and to be furnished with plain but wholesome diet and lodging, at one dollar per week, to be paid in work, for which they will be allowed five cents per hour. They are to be trained thoroughly upon a full and practical discipline, which aims to cultivate the *entire being*, and elicit the fairest and fullest possible developments of the physical, intellectual, and moral powers. A little more than a year ago, 200 acres of unimproved land, were purchased near the head of navigation, on the river Sydenham, sixty miles north by east from Detroit.

Possessing the advantages of a healthy climate, of a milder type than that of Central New York, or the more southern states of New England, a navigable river, abounding with fish, and communicating with the waters of the great American lakes; a fertile and productive soil, well timbered, well watered, and most beautifully situated; the efficient and persevering hand of industry; the protecting shield and fostering care of a powerful Government; the auspices of British and American philanthropy combined; and, above all, the propitious smiles of Heaven, it cannot but flourish and prosper, and be a blessing to the country, and to posterity. We wish our British friends, who contributed their gold and silver into the hands of our trusty friend, James C. Fuller, for the object, to know, that upon this beautiful spot, which seems, by traces left, to have been a pleasure ground for Indians, in by-gone years, a small company, representing three different nations, formed a semi-circle under the spreading branches of a mighty oak, a little more than a year since, gave thanks to God most high, with reverence bowed the knee, and consecrated the ground to the King of kings, and to the cause of humanity. There are now twelve acres cleared, and mostly under good fence; three dwelling-houses up and occupied; as also a school-house, of a story and a half, affording a school-room sufficiently large for fifty or sixty scholars, with a dormitory that will accommodate twenty. The school was organized on the 12th inst. with nine young men. We should not despise the day of small things. By dint of assiduous and persevering toil we have prepared accommodations for thirty boarding students, and expect to have that number the present winter. We hope, ere long, to have the institution chartered by an act of the Provincial Parliament. It is expected, also, that James C. Fuller will, ere long, present its claims to the British public. Should British American philanthropists feel that lively interest in its advancement for which the necessities of the deeply-injured refugees from slavery loudly call, means will not be wanting to prepare accommodations the ensuing year for at least 200 students; nor will teachers be wanting to give them instruction.

Twenty boxes of clothing, bedding, shoes, &c., have been received, and distributed here and elsewhere, and twelve more have been heard from on their way, which failed of arriving before navigation closed. Several of the boxes were highly valuable, and of essential service to the institution. From the developments of philanthropy, it clearly appears that a growing interest is felt among the Dorcas-like women of America, in behalf of the poor exiles from the Bastille of slavery. Boxes should be carefully directed, and seasonably forwarded to Dawn Mills, *via* Buffalo and Detroit, in the care of Martin Wilson, Esq., of the latter place. A list of the articles should come in the box, and a letter at the same time by mail.

Since the removal of your agent from Toronto, large numbers of fugitives have arrived at that place, and have not been provided for, as was desirable they should be. Mr. James C. Brown, a vigilant and trusty gentleman of colour, of that city, has for months been overburdened with care and labour, in attending to the welfare of fresh emigrants from the South, without having received adequate means of sustaining him. We would therefore suggest, that some of the boxes intrusted from time to time to your care, as the com-

mittee, be forwarded to him, for distribution, as also some means of defraying the necessary expenses incurred in the work.

We would not fail to notice the welcome visits to our happy shores, during the summer and autumn, of two zealous friends of humanity, viz. Robert Brown, of the New York Vigilance Committee, and Charles T. Torrey, of Albany. It is hoped that others, of kindred spirit, may be induced to make tours of benevolence through the province.

It has fallen to the lot of your humble agent to superintend the interests of the mission, and education generally, among the refugees. Our cup has been mingled with joy and sorrow. We have had conflicts, powerful and protracted, which were followed by victories, triumphant and glorious. Our labours, at home and abroad, have been more abundant than in any previous year. Like the apostle to the Gentiles, we have learned "both how to be abased, and how to abound; both to be full, and to be hungry; both to abound, and to suffer need;" but we cheerfully testify, that, by the grace of God, "we have not laboured in vain, nor spent our strength for nought." Respectfully submitted.

*Dawn Mills, County of Kent, Canada West, Dec. 31, 1842.*

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