

service in this wild and picturesque country on the 18th of April, 1882. What a huge undertaking for a young missionary just admitted to Deacon's Orders! A parish with an area of 2,500 square miles, and a scattered population of 8,000 souls of all shades of belief, aye, and unbelief,—“one hundred miles of forest and plain, of scattered homes and lumber settlements—a tolerable field of work for the most earnest laborer.” To plant the Church of God in this wilderness was his commission. Taking in a rapid survey of the district he found fourteen townships having scattered settlements and desirous of the ministrations of the Church—an ample field of work truly. He established his headquarters at Mattawa, a hundred miles further west than any point at which service had ever been held. Beyond him there was no Church missionary nearer than Port Arthur in Algoma Diocese, nearly seven hundred miles distant. It was virgin soil,—no congregations, no churches, nothing but some scattered settlers known to claim the Church as their spiritual mother. He began his work at Mattawa. Services were held in a shed for several months. Other services were opened at points east and west, in distances of from twenty to ninety miles from Mattawa. Travelling was effected by means of the half finished railway, on gravel trains, box cars, etc., sometimes by canoe, other times on foot, just as circumstances required. Accommodation was of the humblest description. Night after night would be spent resting on a bench, in a box car, or in one of the half finished stations, or in a log cabin. Services were held in shanties, railway work shops, or in the open air.

Here is a specimen of a Sunday service in mid-winter in this wild mission given by Mr. Bliss himself:—“Leaving Mattawa by train at two o'clock in the morning, our destination is reached in an hour, when the missionary, wrapped in his fur coat, lies down on one of the benches in the railway waiting-room and sleeps (and that, too, quite soundly) until about seven o'clock, when, getting up, he walks three miles into the bush and breakfasts at the home of one of the settlers. Thus refreshed, he continues his walk another three miles, arriving at S. Margaret's Church, where he finds the churchwarden (quite a dignitary) has arrived, and is lighting the fire. He is reminded on entering, that there has been, since his former visit, a heavy fall of snow, and his first work before the fire makes itself felt, is to go up to the altar and remove a quantity of snow, that *will* find its way in through almost imperceptible chinks in the wall. Sometimes there is as much as two or three pailfuls. By this time a congregation of thirty or forty has gathered. Morning service over, he goes off to the nearest shanty for dinner, and returns for evensong, having about the same number of congregation. He concludes the day with a return walk of about six miles to the station, where he has to remain till midnight for the train, which, if in time, will land him back at Mattawa, and *bed*—for which he is quite ready—

at one o'clock in the morning.”

Mr. Bliss early associated with himself in the work lay readers, whom he got in England, none being available in Canada for such work, though he advertised for them in the Church papers. These were the early days of the work. It is different now. The visible result of nearly eight years missionary labor is as follows:—

In 1882: Nothing. Now: Eight congregations, six churches, two parsonages or Mission houses, over two hundred baptisms, one hundred and fifty communicants, ninety confirmed during three visits from our Bishop. In prosecuting this work Mr. Bliss has personally collected and expended nearly \$12,000. All the properties with but one exception are free of debt and deeded to the Bishop. On the diocesan clergy list there are now four priests and two deacons, who served their probation in this mission as lay readers.

But the work became too arduous for one clergyman to supervise, and the stations too numerous, so in 1888, the Bishop, on Mr. Bliss' urgent representations, decided to sub-divide it, and form two missions, thus enabling each priest from these two centres to branch out still further and open work which could not be touched from but one centre, the distances being too great. In September, 1889, this was accomplished, and one of the lay readers was ordained, and at the request of Mr. Bliss appointed to the Mattawa section, having assigned him eight townships and five congregations. With characteristic self-denial Mr. Bliss then removed to the new centre at Petawawa, where he is beginning over again and opening up new work over six townships. He built a Mission House here last year and has now five congregations established, for two of which he has churches. His intention is to open service at every public school centre, and then to build churches wherever they may be deemed necessary. The prospects for the Church are very bright and Mr. Bliss assures us that he has felt much encouraged since taking up his residence in his new yet wilder district. He had worked from Mattawa for two years, but a distance of 90 miles rendered it a difficult task and, of course, it has been much more satisfactory since he went there to live. The Bishop of the Diocese, Dr. Lewis, Bishop of Ontario, has expressed very great satisfaction with this work, and last July was pleased to mark his recognition and approval by appointing Mr. Bliss Rural Dean of the District.

One chief obstacle that had to be overcome in getting the Mission divided was the want of funds, the Mission Board not being able to increase their grant. After considerable effort the people themselves were induced to increase their subscriptions, and Mr. Bliss resigned half of the Mission Board grant to the new mission, and this in the end will probably prove best for all.

With the sub-division the name “Upper Ottawa Mission” has, of course, been abandoned, the two Missions taking their name from the places where the missionaries in charge reside.