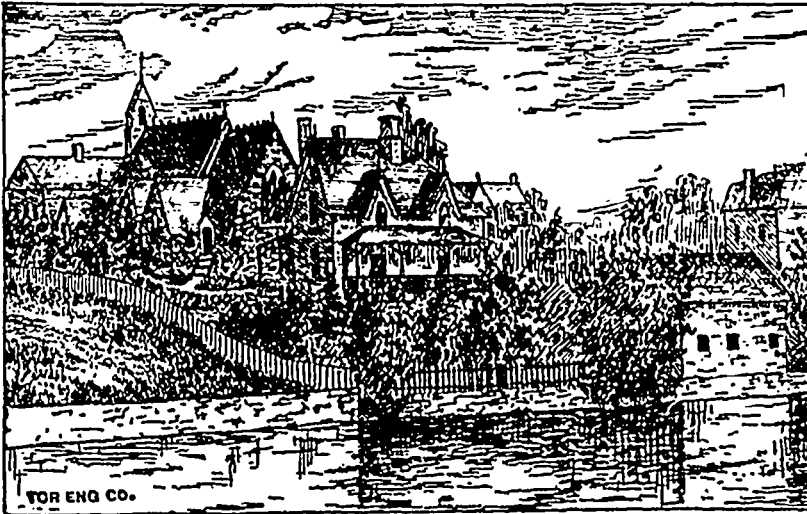




ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, ALMONTE.

MISSIONARY WORK IN COLD REGIONS.

BY THE REV. FRED. E. J. LLOYD, CHARLOTTETOWN, P. E. I.

(Continued.)

TO the settlement of Nain came the Eskimo who lived at a distance of six hundred miles to hear the preaching of the Gospel and to be otherwise instructed by their missionaries. It was, however, soon perceived, that the founding of other settlements was necessary if the people were to be permanently benefitted and their condition improved. Although the fact of their willingness to travel such long distances to receive spiritual instruction was an ample proof of their appreciation thereof and of their determination to profit thereby, still it was felt desirable that their access to the missionaries should be facilitated, and with a view to effecting this purpose, the establishing of two other mission stations was agreed upon, the one to the north and the other to the south of Nain.

In 1774 four of the Brethren attached to Nain undertook a voyage of exploration on the northern coast; and although they fulfilled their object they were again visited with a most severe trial. The event is thus described by one of the missionaries: "On their return the vessel struck on a rock, where she remained fixed till her timbers were dashed to pieces by the waves. Having spent a night of the utmost anxiety upon the wreck they betook themselves early the next morning to the boat, but this also foundered on the craggy shore. Two of the Brethren, together with the sailors, saved themselves by swimming, and reached a barren rock. The other two were drowned. Those who sought security by swimming to a rock, must also inevitably have perished, had they not found means to draw their shattered boat on shore, and

repair it so far, as to allow them to venture into it on the fourth day after the shipwreck. The wind was in their favor, and providentially they soon met an Eskimo who towed them into the harbor of Nain."

In the following year the missionaries Haven and Lister, together with a third missionary, whose name is not given, nothing daunted by the peril which beset their companions on a similar occasion in the previous year, sailed southwards as far as Nisbet's Haven, celebrated as being the first landing-place of the Moravian evangelists several years before. As a

result of this voyage, which was accomplished with safety, a settlement was established hereabout in 1782, which received the very significant name of Hopedale. The northern settlement of Okkak had been founded in 1775, and in the following year it was formally committed to the pastoral care of Mr. Haven, who, accompanied by his family and a few coadjutors, lost no time in establishing himself in his new quarters. Three years afterwards, as the result of the most arduous and unremitting toil, "the first six adults of this place were baptized, and many more were added in a short time." Thus the good work progressed, now under the heavy clouds of trial and adversity, now in the warm and genial sunshine of prosperity, but always under the infinitely wise providence and protection of the Lord of all. For many years, and even at the present time the same is true to some extent, the Moravian missionaries in Labrador were in constant danger, arising either from the treachery of the natives, shipwreck, famine, or the severity of the weather; but, like true soldiers, the greater and more frequent the perils which beset them, the more courageously did they advance in spite of them, and the greater the resistance did they offer to them, until there remained but few obstacles which were not, in their turn, overcome.

The chief difficulties which stood in the way of the missionaries and, for a long time, made the progress slow and uncertain, were those which arose from the migratory habits of the Eskimo, the obstinacy and wickedness of those who came to trade with the natives, and the natural sports in which the natives found a never ceasing source of delight, and relinquished so tardily. The first difficulty exists amongst all nomadic nations, and is a very real one. The true remedy is to be found in the mode which the Moravians have themselves adopted, as well as the missionaries in Central Africa, viz., of founding centres of life and industry at various accessible points, and for which they